
Nomadic Migration and Rural Violence in Nigeria

Interrogating the Conflicts between Fulani Herdsmen and Farmers in Taraba State

ABSTRACT The relationship between Fulani herdsmen and farmers has in recent years become hot-tempered motivated by competitive control of land resources, particularly in central and north-east Nigeria. In Taraba State, the ongoing nomadic migration pattern from the Sahel in quest of pastures has led to violent confrontation between Fulani herdsmen and farming indigenous natives. Using a descriptive approach consisting of documented evidence, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions, the analysis revealed that conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and indigenous native farmers have culminated in population displacement and destruction of life and property in numerous rural enclaves in Taraba State. Despite the consequences of the conflicts, the Taraba State government was unable to act proactively because of the centralization of command over Nigerian security agencies. Accordingly, the study suggests decentralization of security agencies in Nigeria, especially the police, as the way forward for effective security governance in Nigeria. **KEYWORDS** Herdsmen-Farmers Conflicts, Nomadic Migration, Nigeria, Rural Violence, Taraba State

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is a country that is trapped in many conflicts that, though not recent, have been volatile and deleterious to the corporate existence of the country. The conflicts in contemporary time date to the 1980s; however, the intensity of the conflicts is much more glaring in the post-2015 General Elections in Nigeria.¹ Of the several conflicts that tend to undermine intergroup relations and challenge the security architecture of Nigeria in recent years are the conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers.

The increasing clashes between farmers and the Fulani herdsmen have recently become worrisome, especially in the wetlands of Middle Belt Nigeria.² Because of the dynamics and volatility of the conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers in sub-Saharan Africa, Fulani militants in Nigeria and Central Africa are seen as the fourth most deadly

1. Abdulrahman Usman Leme, "Understanding Farmers-Herdsmen Conflict and the Way Forward," *International Centre for Investigative Reporting*, August 5, 2017, <https://www.icirnigeria.org/understanding-farmers-herdsmen-conflict-and-the-way-forward/>.

2. Roger Blench, *National Resources Conflict in North-North Central Nigeria: A Handbook and Case Studies* (Cambridge: Mandarax Publishing, United Kingdom, 2004).

terror group in the world, after the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), al-Shabaab, and the Boko Haram.³

At the center of the conflicts involving the Fulani herdsmen and farmers in Nigeria is the pursuit of land, which is the means of survival for both farmers and Fulani herdsmen.⁴ The conflicts in Nigeria's central and north-east States have led to the destruction of lives and properties, with many people displaced internally.⁵ In Nigeria, the Fulani group is accused of being responsible for the death of many people, predominantly farmers. An investigation by Rose Troup Buchanan revealed that the dramatic escalation of the pastoral activities of the Fulani herdsmen has led to unprecedented bloodletting due to cattle rustling phenomenon and the competition for land resources.

The conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers over land claims have increased the level of misunderstanding and distrust among Nigerians. The feelings of ethnic native communities over the commandeering and colonization of their land by Fulani herdsmen have reached an unprecedented level in Nigeria. With President Mohamadu Buhari as the sitting President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Fulani herdsmen attacks in native communities in the Savanna region have continued without mitigation.

In several states in Nigeria where the Fulani herdsmen and farmers conflicts are manifest and prevalent, some people presume that the killings by Fulani herdsmen are retribution over the loss of cattle and the demand for grazing land. Specifically, Miyatti Allah Cattle Breeder Association of Nigeria (MACBAN) confirmed this assertion that "the attacks are likely reprisals for the loss of over 1,000 Fulani people and over 2 million cattle in attacks carried out by state-sponsored militias."⁶ Ayih claimed that rapid growth in population is one of the major factors in the conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers in States where they are evident.⁷

The claims by El-Rufai and Ayih are not tenable as the incidences of Fulani herdsmen violence are predominantly in the non-Fulani communities where they have no stakes to claim-making as far native land tenure system is concerned. In Taraba State shreds of evidence point to the enormity of the Fulani herdsmen and farmers conflicts. In local governments where conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers are

3. Rose Troup Buchanan, "Global Terrorism Index: Nigerian Fulani Militants Named as Fourth Deadliest Terror Group in World," *Independent*, November 18, 2015, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/global-terrorism-index-nigerian-fulani-militants-named-as-fourth-deadliest-terror-group-in-world-a6739851.html>.

4. Patience Martin, "Nigeria's Deadly Battle for Land: Herdsmen v Farmers," *British Broadcasting Corporation*, August 10, 2016, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-37021044>.

5. Philip A. Olayoku, "Trends and Patterns of Cattle Grazing and Rural Violence in Nigeria (2006-2014)," IFRA-Nigeria Working Papers Series (Ibadan, 2014); Nneka Perpetua Oli, Christopher Chimaobi Ibekwe, and Ignatius Uche Nwankwo, "Prevalence of Herdsmen and Farmers Conflict in Nigeria," *International Journal of Innovative Studies in Sociology and Humanities* 3, no. 1 (2018): 30-39, <http://ijiss.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/IJISSH-030103.pdf>.

6. Samson Toromade, "Benue Crisis - What You Need to Know about Fulani Herdsmen, Anti-Open Grazing Law, Miyetti Allah," *Pulse.Ng*, 2018, line 32, <https://www.pulse.ng/news/local/what-you-need-to-know-about-benues-fulani-herdsmen-crisis-id7849010.html>.

7. Al Chukwuma Okoli and George Atelhe Atelhe, "Nomads against Natives: A Political Ecology of Herder/Farmer Conflicts in Nasarawa State, Nigeria," *American International Journal of Contemporary Research* 4, no. 2 (2014): 76-88, http://www.aijcnrnet.com/journals/Vol_4_No_2_February_2014/11.pdf.

manifest, several people have been killed and displaced from their communities.⁸ The conflict has further rendered more difficult interethnic and interreligious relations in Taraba State.

The conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers have occurred particularly after the return to democracy in 1999, and reached an alarming rate following the 2011 post-election violence. The 2015 General Election in Nigeria was specifically dramatic and deleterious for Taraba State. There are several explanations for the various dimensions of the conflicts. Some have situated the conflicts in the context of declining economic conditions for grazing caused by climate change in Northern Nigeria, while others have considered the conflicts as stemming from increasing population, leading to demand for land for housing and farming.⁹ Nevertheless, some other people claim that it is a deliberate Fulani attempt to complete the messianic mission of their grandfather, Uthman Danfodio, to conquer Nigeria. The various explanations for the conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers in Taraba State, as in other parts of the country, generate complex narratives and make the situation even more complicated. In this context, this study interrogates the Fulani herdsmen militancy against farmers in Nigeria, with specific interest on the understanding of the dynamics and complexities of the conflicts in Taraba State.

The study also investigates how Fulani herdsmen militancy has given rise to rural violence leading to the destruction of lives and properties in predominantly farming communities in Taraba State in recent times, as well as the role of the government and the elites in mitigating the conflicts. Although Fulani herdsmen and farmers conflicts are not new, they have intensified since 2015. Consequently, the conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers are currently intense in southern and central Nigeria, with deleterious effects on personal and national security. It is therefore imperative to examine the intricate nature of the conflicts involving Fulani herdsmen and farmers in Taraba State.

To achieve this aim, this study is divided into seven sections. The first section consists of an introduction. The second and third sections present the study area and methodology used in the study. The fourth section provides an in-depth understanding of nomadic migration and rural violence. The fifth section concentrates on the problems associated with Fulani herdsmen and farmers conflicts in Nigeria, while the sixth section considers the complexities and dynamics of the conflicts in Taraba State. The seventh section discusses the implications and contradictions of the Fulani herdsmen and farmers conflicts for the state, and the eighth section offers a conclusion.

8. Afakriya A. Gadzama, "Herdsman Attacks and Implications for National Security," *Daily Trust*, 2018, <https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/herdsmen-attacks-and-implications-for-national-security.html>.

9. Sunday I. Odoh and Chilaka Francis Chigozie, "Climate Change and Conflict in Nigeria: A Theoretical and Empirical Examination of the Worsening Incidence of Conflict between Fulani Herdsmen and Farmers in NorthNorthern Nigeria," *Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review* 2, no. 1 (2012): 110–24, [https://www.arabianjbm.com/pdfs/OM_VOL_2_\(1\)/7.pdf](https://www.arabianjbm.com/pdfs/OM_VOL_2_(1)/7.pdf); Jonathan Maiangwa and Hamman Jumba Ahmadu, "Reflections on and Insights into the Nigeria's Political Instability since Independence: Alternative Proposal for Consideration," *Maiduguri Journal of Arts and Social Sciences* 5, no. 2 (2007): 154–64.

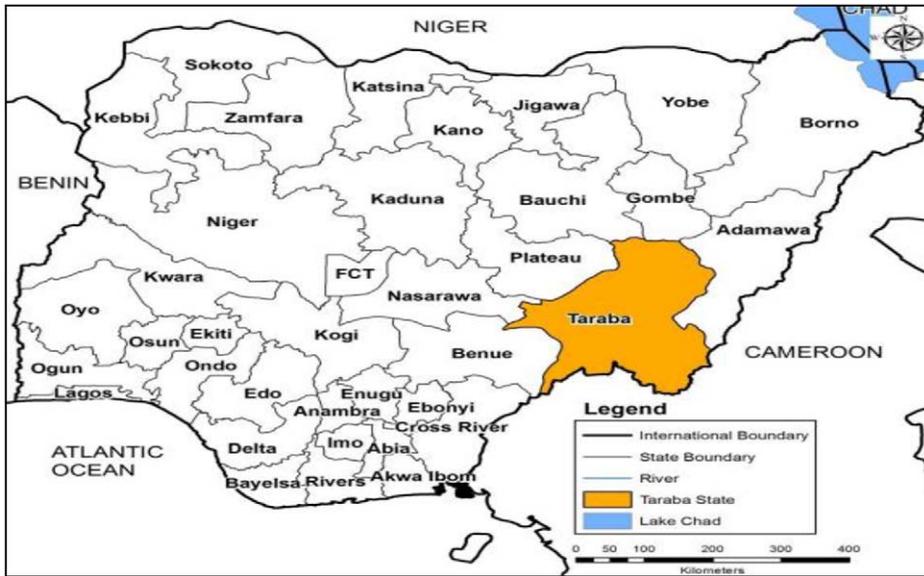


FIGURE 1. Map showing the position of Taraba State in Nigeria

Source: Taraba State Government Diary, 2017.

THE STUDY AREA

The study of the conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers is situated in Taraba State. Taraba State is geopolitically located on the north-east zone of Nigeria. It was created on August 27, 1991, from the defunct Gongola State. The State is bounded in the west by Nasarawa State and Benue State, the north-west by Plateau State, and the north by Bauchi State and Gombe State. In the north-east, it shares boundaries with Adamawa State and in the east and south by Cameroon (figure 1). Taraba State is located approximately on latitude $7^{\circ} 59' N$, $10^{\circ} 00'$ and longitude $10^{\circ} 58' E$, $13^{\circ} 00' E$. It covers a landmass area of about 54,473 km², and a population of approximately 2,940,800.¹⁰

Taraba State is divided into three Senatorial zones, which consist of Northern Senatorial District (Jalingo, Zing, Lau, Ardo-Kola, and Karim-Lamido LGAs), Central Senatorial District (Gassol, Bali, Kurmi, Gashaka and Sardauna LGAs), and Southern Senatorial District (Takum, Ussa, Wukari, Ibi and Donga). Taraba State is multi-ethnic and multi-religious across the three Senatorial zones of the State. Ethnically, the State has the Jukun, Chamba, Ichen, Kuteb, Tigun, Ndola, and Jibu, as some of the dominant ethnic groups in the south. The Mambilla, Kaka, Kambu, Panso, and Jibawa are dominantly in the central part of the State. The Wurkum, Jenjo, Karimjo, Mumuye, and the Jukun-Kona dominate the northern zone of the State. However, the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group is spatially distributed across the several settlements in Taraba State. The major settlements of the Hausa-Fulani can be predominantly found in Sardauna, Jalingo, and Gassol

10. City Population, "Taraba State in Nigeria," n.d., <https://www.citypopulation.de/php/nigeria-admin.php?admtid=NGA035>.

LGAs respectively. These ethnic groups have coexisted for several decades, engaging one another over claims to valued resources that often turn violent. Christianity, Islam, and Traditional Religion are the major religions in Taraba State, with varying levels of denominational and doctrinal differences, even within the same religious faith.

Taraba State is like any other state in northern Nigeria, with a wet and dry climate. On average, the wet climate lasts from April to October with a varying mean of annual rainfall between 1,058 mm to over 1,300 mm. However, the State experiences much rainfall between August and September of every year. The State also experiences a dry season, which is between November and March of every year. Between December and January, which are the driest months, relative humidity drops to about 15 percent. Nevertheless, the Mambilla Plateau, which is located on an altitude of 1,800 meters (6,000 feet) above sea level is characterized by a temperate climate.¹¹ It has an undulating landscape dotted with a few mountainous and scenic features spanning almost the entire length of the State.

The major occupation of the people of Taraba State is subsistence and commercial agriculture. The cash crops produced in the state include coffee, tea, groundnuts, and cotton. Crops such as maize, rice, sorghum, millet, cassava, and yam are also produced in commercial quantities. Because of its farming capacity, Taraba State is reputed to be the supply state to other states in northern Nigeria.

Cattle, sheep, and goats are also reared in large numbers, especially on the Mambilla Plateau, and along the Benue and Taraba valleys. Similarly, the people undertake other livestock production activities such as poultry production, rabbit breeding, and pig farming on a fairly large scale. Communities living on the banks of River Benue, River Taraba, River Donga, and River Ibi engage in fishing all year round. Other occupational activities such as pottery, cloth-weaving, dyeing, mat-making, carving, embroidery, and blacksmithing are also carried out in various parts of the State.

METHODOLOGY

According to Remenyi, Williams, Money, and Swartz (2003), methodology is the “overall approach to a problem which could be put into practice in a research process, from the theoretical underpinning to the collection and analysis of data.”¹² The methodology this study adopted is the qualitative approach based on phenomenology and case study.¹³ The phenomenology is a qualitative research method that is also referred to as the interpretive

11. Adeyemi Adisa, “Taraba State—Nature’s Gift to the Nation,” March 21, 2011, <https://www.cometonigeria.com/region/northnorth-east/taraba-state/>.

12. Dan Remenyi et al., *Doing Research in Business and Management: An Introduction to Process and Method* (London: SAGE Publications, 2003), <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781446280416>.

13. Khairul Baharein Mohd Noor, “Case Study: A Strategic Research Methodology,” *American Journal of Applied Sciences* 5, no. 11 (2008): 1602–4, <https://thescipub.com/pdf/10.3844/ajassp.2008.1602.1604>; Williams D. Smith, “Phenomenology,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2003, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/phenomenology/>; John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994); Patricia Sanders, “Phenomenology: A New Way of Viewing Organizational Research,” *The Academy of Management Review* 7, no. 3 (1982): 353 – 360.

approach.¹⁴ Leedy and Ormrod argue that the basis of the approach is to appreciate the experiences of the participants from their point of view.¹⁵ To Creswell, the phenomenological approach explores the underlying meanings that are central to the experiences of participants and provide new and fresh perspectives to those experiences.¹⁶

The approach is concerned with the beliefs, feelings, behavior, and value judgments about the phenomenon being investigated.¹⁷ It is also interested in generating data to explain the complex social world by going beyond the surface of social reality through in-depth investigations of the elements, usually the sample that is used for the investigation.¹⁸ The phenomenological approach deals with a small-sized sample, rather than the entire population size under investigation, and because of that, it has been criticized for being unable to explain the context, place, and time-bound nature of the research.¹⁹ This is why the adoption of the approach is augmented with the case study design. The case study is interested in the exploration of in-depth phenomenon using a single or a small number of cases unfolding in a real-life situational context, and at a particular time and place.²⁰

The data generated from the case study is analyzed using the qualitative approach.²¹ The collection of data for the case study was obtained from a variety of sources such as interviews, historical data, or documents, recording from both audio and visual materials, artefacts, and observations.²² For this study, the small size of the population generated from across religious groups, gender, educated class, and the three Senatorial Districts in Taraba State, using both In-Depth Interview (IDI) and Focus Group Discussion (FGD).

Since Taraba State is divided into three Senatorial Districts, two local governments each, to include in central zone, Sardauna and Bali, and southern zone, Takum and Ibi, and northern zone, Lau and Yoro Local Government Areas have been selected for investigation of the subject matter. For IDI, the sampled population engaged consisted of learned and or experienced people from the LGAs, who understand the dynamics and complexities of the conflicts. In these LGAs the population sampled for

14. Smith, "Phenomenology"; Lister Stan, *An Introduction to Phenomenological Research* (England, United Kingdom: Middlesex University, 1998).

15. Paul D. Leedy And Jeanne Ellis Ormrod, *Practical Research Planning and Design*, 7th Edition (NJ and Thousand Oaks, CA: Merrill Prentice Hall and SAGE Publications, Upper Saddle River, 2001).

16. John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Traditions* (London: Sage, 1998).

17. Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis, and Adrian Thornhill, *Research Methods for Business Students*, 5th Edition (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2009).

18. Martyn Denscombe, *The Good Research Guide: For Small Social Research Projects*, 3rd Edition (Glasgow: McGraw-Hill House, 2010); Michael Crotty, *The Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and Perspectives in the Research Process*, 6th Edition (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2007).

19. John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 2nd Edition (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2003); Denscombe, *The Good Research Guide: For Small Social Research Projects*.

20. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Traditions*; Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*; Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 3rd Edition (London: SAGE Publications, 2003); John Gerring, *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Noor, "Case Study: A Strategic Research Methodology."

21. Jan Dul and Tony Hak, *Case Study Methodology in Business Research*, First (Oxford: Elsevier Ltd, 2008).

22. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*; Gerring, *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*; Noor, "Case Study: A Strategic Research Methodology."

IDI was snowballed in terms of method of collecting data so that related data to the study can be generated.

The participants in each of the FGDs ranged from a population of five to seven people, based on their availability at the time the fieldwork was conducted and their willingness to avail themselves for the FGD. Policy appraisal regarding the secondary literature was used in the FGD while observing to find out the information provided by the FGD that relates to information or claims published in the literature or that are sermonized in the media as the challenges associated with the Fulani herdsmen and farmers conflicts from 2015 in Taraba State. In executing the IDIs, three interviewees each, making a total of eighteen interviewees, were selected using snowball in six LGAs. The sampled LGAs and communities for the IDI and FGD were based on the consideration of the level of Fulani herdsmen and farmers conflicts in those areas.

The data collected for the study were accessed during several sessions of fieldwork started in April 2016 and concluded in July 2018. The IDIs and FGDs were carried out at intervals to generate opinions on the causes, consequences, and resolution of the Fulani herdsmen and farmers conflicts in Taraba State. The data generated in the process were reviewed constantly in order to confirm or reject the data while reflecting on the social dynamics and complexities of the social world. This constancy in comparing collected data, also enabled us to determine the validity and reliability of the generated data for the study.²³ Both IDIs and FGDs were conducted using English, Jukun, Kuteb, Ichen, Hausa, and Fulani languages in the selected LGAs and communities, in which data generated from the native languages of the participants and interviewees were translated to English and then organized thematically to reflect the context of the Fulani herdsmen and farmers conflicts in Taraba State.

UNDERSTANDING NOMADIC MIGRATION AND RURAL VIOLENCE

Human history has been that of migration and transmigration. This implies that migration is a fact of life. It is a conception that relates to the past, particularly to the era of pre-modern State creation globally.²⁴ An examination of contemporary migration, whether by geographical or economic mobility of labor to any part of a country or the world, must establish that the migrants originated from a territory, created from the prehistoric times, to which they are indigenous. Historical relics or evidence beyond reasonable doubt can prove their indigeness. To the extent where such evidence is lacking, the claimant loses claim to the territory.

Indigeness goes beyond the Westphalia conception of citizenship in modern states that guarantees opportunity for migrants upon meeting the conditions required of them

23. Louise Camila Bjerkli, "Governance on the Ground: A Study of Solid Waste Management in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 37 (2013): 1273–87, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.2013.01214.x>.

24. Helen Lee, "Pacific Migration and Transnationalism: Historical Perspectives," in *Migration and Transnationalism: Pacific Perspectives*, eds. Helen Lee and Steve Tupai Francis (Australia: ANU E Press, The Australian National University, 2009), 7–42, <https://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/p32931/pdf/book.pdf>.

for citizenship. They can be conferred with the right to claim that status with others in the state, as in the case of France, the United States of America, and the United Kingdom. In most parts of Africa, indigenosity is central to determine one's citizenship of any country. Like in other African countries, for any individual to become a citizen of any state in Nigeria by birth or descent, the individual must unambiguously locate his or her origin within that state. The individual's origin has to be a place within the geographical boundaries of the state that the individual calls their homeland, and has to be acknowledged and accepted by the community affirming that he or she belongs there.²⁵

Nomads are individuals or populations who culturally and occupationally herd year round.²⁶ Therefore, nomadic migration is an extensive grazing system based on free-range or movement from one point of grazing to another for settlement either on a temporary or a permanent basis.²⁷ In other words, it is a pastoralist transhumant practice that entails periodic movement of the majority of the pastoralist community with their herds from areas with less green pastures to areas where there is a relatively larger concentration of pastures to graze upon.²⁸

The nomadic community sees nomadic migration as an essential means of its livelihood. According to McDowell and de Haan, their livelihood is tied to such practice because it is a system that enables them to curb the ecological and social hazards that they confront in order to ensure their survival.²⁹ It is also important to note that it is a veritable source of livelihood because it enables them to access rangelands, establish transhumant networks, and locate new markets for their commodities.³⁰

The dynamics of nomadic migration are both trans-local and transnational. Trans-locally, the pattern of nomadic migration takes the form of mobility across different locations within the country of origin for grazing herds while trans-nationally, nomadic migration involves crossing national boundaries of one state into another for grazing.³¹ In the context of nomadic migration across international boundaries of countries, the

25. N.E. Lenshie, "Ties That Bind and Differences That Divide: Exploring the Resurgence of Ethno-Cultural Identity in Nigeria," *Africa Development* 39, no. 2 (2014): 153–212.

26. Rahimberdi Annamoradnejad and Sedigheh Lotfi, "Demographic Changes of Nomadic Communities in Iran (1956–2008)," *Asian Population Studies* 6 (2010): 335–45, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/17441730.2010.512764>; Mark Moritz, "Understanding Herder-Farmer Conflicts in WestWest Africa: Outline of a Processual Approach," *Human Organization* 69, no. 2 (2010): 138–48, <https://mlab.osu.edu/sites/mlab.osu.edu/files/Moritz2010Processualanalysis.pdf>.

27. Sarah K. Goodall, "From Plateau Pastures to Urban Fringe: Sedentarisation of Nomadic Pastoralists in Ladakh, NorthNorth-WestWest India" (University of Adelaide, 2007), <https://digital.library.adelaide.edu.au/dspace/bitstream/2440/46332/8/02whole.pdf>.

28. Hanne Kirstine Adriansen, "Pastoral Mobility: A Review," *Nomadic Peoples* NS 9, no. 182 (2005): 207–14, http://pure.au.dk/portal/files/53691394/pastoral_mobility_a_review.pdf; Moritz, "Understanding Herder-Farmer Conflicts in WestWest Africa: Outline of a Processual Approach."

29. Christopher MacDowell and Arjan de Haan, "Migration and Sustainable Livelihoods: A Critical Review of the Literature," IDs Working Paper (Brighton, 1997), <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/20.500.12413/3369>.

30. Betty Alosa Mulianga, "Modeling Pastoral Mobility to Accommodate Pastoral Land Use in Land Administration: A Case Study of the Isiolo Area, Kenya" (University of SouthSouthampton, United Kingdom, 2009), https://webapps.itc.utwente.nl/librarywww/papers_2009/msc/gem/mulianga.pdf.

31. Lee, "Pacific Migration and Transnationalism: Historical Perspectives."

practice is an irregular migration because it differs in many ways with the existing regulatory migration norms of sending, transiting, and receiving countries.³²

In a general sense, although nomadic migration is a global phenomenon, the practice is on different scales in different continents and countries of the world. The pattern of nomadic migration globally has produced different degrees of conflicts in different countries, especially in rural areas where the practice is most evident. In rural areas nomadic practices have led to violence, in most cases involving the nomads and farmers, and the consequences of such conflicting relations have deleterious effects on the parties in conflicts.³³

Rural violence as a consequence of the pattern of nomadic migration in southward communities involves “the intentional use of force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either result in or has the likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation.”³⁴ Rural violence across the world, particularly in developing countries, stems from struggles related to identity politics, power-sharing, resource control, chieftaincy tussles, etc.

In the context of the Fulani herdsmen and farmers conflicts, as Gilbert postulated, the root of violence comes from the dichotomy between nomadic and the farming populations caused by confrontation over the sharing of land.³⁵ Several pieces of evidence attest to Gilbert’s assertion globally. In Asia, particularly in countries such as India, Afghanistan, and other parts of Asia, the struggles over land claims are not new between settled and nomadic populations. Conflicting relations between herders and farmers in Afghanistan involve Pashtun nomads and Pashtun farmers, Pashtun nomads and Hazara farmers, Pashtun nomads and Baluch Farmers, Baluch nomads and Baluch farmers, Pashtun farmers and Uzbek nomads, and Pashtun nomads and Tajik farmers.³⁶ The same situation is also in India between nomads and the people of Reasi district of Jammu and in several other places across India, which often generate national concerns.³⁷ In Tibet, studies

32. Philip Martin, “Bordering on Control: Combating Irregular Migration in North America and Europe,” Migration Research Series (Geneva, 2003), https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/mrs_13_2003.pdf.

33. Abba Gana Shettima and Usman Tar, “Farmers and Pastoralist Conflict in West Africa: Exploring the Causes and Consequence,” *Journal of Information, Society and Justice* 1, no. 2 (2008): 163–184, http://repository.londonmet.ac.uk/55/1/InformationSocietyAndJustice_v1n2_p163-184.pdf.

34. Etienne G. Krug et al., *World Report on Violence and Health*, ed. Etienne G. Krug et al. (Geneva: World Health Organization, 2002), 6, https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/world_report/en/introduction.pdf.

35. Jérémie Gilbert, “Nomadic Territories: A Human Rights Approach to Nomadic Peoples’ Land Rights,” *Human Rights Law Review* 7, no. 4 (2007): 681–716, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1093/hrlr/ngm030>.

36. Antonio Giustozzi, *Typologies of Nomad-Settler Conflict in Afghanistan*, ed. Kelsey Jensen and Matthew Longmore (Kabul: The Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU), 2018), <https://areu.org.af/publication/1801/>.

37. Abhishek Saha, “In Kashmir, Nomads’ Battle Cow Vigilantes to Keep Alive Traditional Practice,” *Hindustan Times*, 2017, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/in-kashmir-nomads-battle-cow-vigilantes-to-keep-alive-traditional-practice/story-iB8JnnAfx97xiHoCI8IFIM.html>; Thomas Nail, “Violence at the Borders: Nomadic Solidarity and Non-Status Migrant Resistance,” *Radical Philosophy Review* 15, no. 1 (2012): 241–57, <https://doi.org/DOL:10.5840/radphilrev201215117>.

revealed that the Amdo nomads demonstrate violent behavior toward settled populations, especially when it is associated with attacks and injury meted to them.³⁸

In sub-Saharan Africa, the nomadic practice has been widely evident and has not been without an intense level of contestation and violence between nomads and farmers with deleterious consequences for both communities.³⁹ Nomadic practices in the Sahel and Sahara have been the mainstay of the nomadic lifestyle.⁴⁰ The arid nature of the Sahel and Sahara creates scarce and contested access to rangeland vegetation. Therefore, the scarcity of the limited resources to herds as a result of drought and desertification necessitates southward migration into humid territories that are already overcrowded with a population that predominantly engages in farming.⁴¹ This leads to competition between Fulani herdsmen and farmers and subsequently confrontation, civil strife, violence, and insurgency, especially in communities where a symbiotic relationship between the Fulani herdsmen and farmers is difficult.⁴² The reason for the violent conflict is informed by the consequent crop and soil damages in southward rural communities where the cattle are grazing.⁴³

The context in which Fulani herdsmen and farmers violence occur is related to nomadic practice, which presents a situation in which individuals, groups, or communities in the rural areas suffer injury, death, or psychosocial harm, driven by competition for valued resources, usually in the context of over competition and confrontation to access agrarian land.⁴⁴ The dynamics of rural violence between Fulani herdsmen

38. Fernanda Pirie, "Segmentation within the State: The Reconfiguration of Tibetan Tribes in China's Reform Period," *Nomadic Peoples* NS 9, no. 1 (2005): 83–102, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43123748%0A>; Fernanda Pirie, "Violence and Opposition among the Nomads of Amdo: Expectations of Leadership and Religious Authority," in *Conflict and Social Order in Tibet and Inner Asia*, eds. Fernanda Pirie and Tony Huber (Brill, Asian Studies E-Books Online, 2008), 217–40, <https://doi.org/10.1163/ej.9789004158177.i-274.82>.

39. Karim Hussein, James Sumberg, and David Seddon, "Increasing Violent Conflict between Herders and Farmers in Africa: Claims and Evidence," *Development Policy Review* 17 (2017): 397–418, <https://doi.org/https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/1467-7679.00094>.

40. Cees De Haan et al., "Pastoralism Development in the Sahel: A Road to Stability?" (Washington, DC, 2016), http://cega.berkeley.edu/assets/miscellaneous_files/18-ABCA_-Pastoralism_and_stability_in_the_Sahel_master_-_Final_for_translation_-_June_9_2014.pdf.

41. Anatoly M. Khazanov and Julia Crookden, *Nomads and the Outside World*, 2nd edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); A. Sheik-Mohamed and J. P. Velema, "Where Health Care Has No Access: The Nomadic Populations of Sub-Saharan Africa," *Tropical Medicine and International Health* 4, no. 10 (1999): 695–707, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/10583904>.

42. Sheik-Mohamed and Velema Adriansen, "Pastoral Mobility: A Review"; Mulianga, "Modeling Pastoral Mobility to Accommodate Pastoral Land Use in Land Administration: A Case Study of the Isiolo Area, Kenya"; Al Chukwuma Okoli, "Cows, Cash and Terror: How Cattle Rustling Proceeds Fuel Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria," CODESRIA Policy Dialogue Conference on 'Money, Security and Democratic Governance in Africa,' held in Bamako-Mali, October 19–20, 2017, n.d.

43. Roy H. Behnke and Ian Scones, "Rethinking Range Ecology: Implications for Rangeland Management in Africa" (United Kingdom, 1992), <http://agris.fao.org/agris-search/search.do?recordID=GBt9960037223>; Camilla Lyn Harshbarger, "Farmer-Herder Conflict and State Legitimacy in Cameroon" (University of Florida, 1995), <https://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00003196/00001>; A.C. Picardi and W.W. Seifert, "A Tragedy of the Commons in the Sahel," *Technology Review*, n.d., 42–51; Thomas J. Bassett, "The Political Ecology of Peasant-Herder Conflicts in the NorthNorthern Ivory Coast," *Association of American Geographers Annals* 78, no. 3 (1988): 453–72, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2563750%0A>.

44. Cristóbal Kay, "Reflections on Rural Violence in Latin America," *Third World Quarterly* 22, no. 5 (2001): 741–775, <https://doi.org/doi:10.1080/01436590120084584>; Vania Ceccato and Heloise Ceccato, "Violence in

and farmers tend to involve the use of small and light weapons against their perceived enemies.⁴⁵

Studies have revealed that over 100 million small arms and light weapons are proliferated in sub-Saharan Africa.⁴⁶ Of the proliferation of these weapons, the nomads are accused of using the weapons to overrun rural farming communities in sub-Saharan Africa, claiming that they are protecting their cattle and defending themselves. In countries such as Nigeria, the consequences of Fulani herdsmen and farmers conflicts are great and have deleterious effects on both national and personal security.⁴⁷

FULANI HERDSMEN AND FARMERS CONFLICTS IN NIGERIA

In Nigeria, Fulani herdsmen as an arrogated identity are not limited to a particular group, as many groups are into nomadic practice, not only in Nigeria but globally. In sub-Saharan Africa, and specifically, in Nigeria, nomadic practice is ascribed mainly to the Fulani ethnic group, predominantly Muslim, whose livelihood is characterized by nomadic migration.⁴⁸ The Fulani population is estimated to be at 25 million across 21 countries in Africa, from the Red Sea coast in Sudan to Mauritania's Atlantic coast. They are, however, concentrated in the Sahel region of West Africa.

The countries in which the Fulani are spread include Nigeria, Benin, Egypt, Liberia, Mauritania, Sudan, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Togo, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ghana, Mali, The Gambia, Cameroon, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau, Côte d'Ivoire, Niger, Chad, and the Central African Republic. The Fulani ethnic populations are referred to as Fulbe, Peul, Fula, Fellata, and Peulh, depending on the host community across different countries. The Fulani speak a language common to all the Fulani groups called Fulfulde or Pulaar.⁴⁹

the Rural Global SouthSouth: Trends, Patterns and Tales from Brazilian Countryside," *Criminal Justice Review* 42, no. 3 (2017): 270–90, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/2Fo734016817724504>.

45. Kennedy A. Mkutu, "Pastoralist Conflict, Governance and Small Arms in NorthNorth Rift, NorthNorth-EastEast Africa" (University of Bradford, 2005), <https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/tel-01266773/file/THESES%28PHDs%29PastoralistConflict%2CGovernanceandSmallArmsinNorthNorthRift%2CNorthNorthEastEastAfrica00000001.pdf>; Mucyo Mulinzi and Napoleon Kurantin, "Effects of Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in NorthNorthern Region of Kenya," *International Journal of Thesis Projects and Dissertations* 4, no. 2 (2016): 176–95; International Crisis Group, "Herders against Farmers: Nigeria's Expanding Deadly Conflict," Africa Report, September 19, 2017, <https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/herders-against-farmers-nigeria-s-expanding-deadly-conflict-africa-report-n-252-19>.

46. Emeka Ibemere, "Proliferation of Illegal Arms: A Time Bomb Awaiting Explosion?" *National Business Extra*, February 12, 2018, <http://nationalbusextra.com/2018/02/12/proliferation-illegal-arms-time-bomb-awaiting-explosion/>.

47. Olayoku, "Trends and Patterns of Cattle Grazing and Rural Violence in Nigeria (2006–2014)."

48. Martin, "Bordering on Control: Combating Irregular Migration in NorthNorth America and Europe"; Andrew McGregor, "The Fulani Crisis: Communal Violence and Radicalization in the Sahel," *CTC Sentinel* 10, no. 2 (2017): 34–40, <https://ctc.usma.edu/the-fulani-crisis-communal-violence-and-radicalization-in-the-sahel/>; Mark Davidheiser and Aniuska M. Luna, "From Complementarity to Conflict: A Historical Analysis of Farmer-Fulbe Relations in WestWest Africa," *African Journal on Conflict Resolution* 8, no. 1 (2008): 77–104, <https://doi.org/doi:10.4314/ajcr.v8i1.39421>; International Crisis Group, "Herders against Farmers: Nigeria's Expanding Deadly Conflict."

49. McGregor, "The Fulani Crisis: Communal Violence and Radicalization in the Sahel"; Davidheiser and Luna, "From Complementarity to Conflict: A Historical Analysis of Farmer-Fulbe Relations in WestWest Africa."

Apart from Nigeria, nomadic practice is also evident among the Koyama, Shuwa Arabs, Toureg, Kanuri, and Kanembu in Niger, Chad, Mali, and Nigeria. The nomadic practice of migration among Fulani herdsmen is motivated by economic rationality of cost-benefit consideration associated with their livelihood. Historically, as the International Crisis Group stated, the relationship between Fulani herdsmen and farmers has been peaceful and symbiotic such that the cattle fertilize the farmlands to have grazing rights. The relationship between these groups grew unpalatable following the drought of the 1970s and 1980s, which became hard for the nomadic population to cope with, forcing them to graze beyond their enclaves into the humid regions of Nigeria, where there are readily available grazing resources.⁵⁰

In contemporary times the situation has worsened for the Fulani herdsmen, and they are increasingly confronted with the lack of space to exercise their nomadic cultural tradition of grazing.⁵¹ McGregor reported that the nomadic lifestyle of grazing of herds brings them into conflict with farmers while searching for pastureland and water.⁵² Therefore, it is not uncommon to find Fulani herdsmen carrying an AK-47, which has replaced the common use of machetes against herd rustlers, wild animals, and other threats.⁵³ It is feared that the Fulani herdsmen's militancy tends to slide the country into a civil war.⁵⁴

Maiangwa and Ahmadu have revealed that the return to democracy came with renewed resource-related conflicts and convolutions that tend to weaken national cohesion and integration.⁵⁵ One of the most prominent resource conflicts in contemporary Nigeria is the Fulani herdsmen and farmers conflicts in parts of north-east, north-central, and southern Nigeria.⁵⁶ As previously mentioned, there has been a high tendency for nomadic practices to be transformed into violence mostly in the rural areas of Nigeria. Since the end of the Civil War (1967–1970), Boko Haram insurgency and the Fulani herdsmen and farmers conflicts compete with one another as the gravest security threats to the corporate

50. International Crisis Group, "Herders against Farmers: Nigeria's Expanding Deadly Conflict."

51. Mirjam de Bruijn et al., "New Mobilities and Insecurities in Fulbe Nomadic Societies: A Multi-Country Study in WestWest-Central Africa (Niger-Nigeria)," ASC Working Paper (The Netherlands, 2011).

52. McGregor, "The Fulani Crisis: Communal Violence and Radicalization in the Sahel."

53. Shettima and Tar, "Farmers and Pastoralist Conflict in WestWest Africa: Exploring the Causes and Consequence."

54. Andrew McGregor, "Alleged Connection between Boko Haram and Nigeria's Fulani Herdsmen Could Spark a Nigerian Civil War," *Terrorism Monitor* 12, no. 10 (2014): 8–10, <https://jamestown.org/program/alleged-connection-between-boko-haram-and-nigerias-fulani-herdsmen-could-spark-a-nigerian-civil-war/>.

55. Maiangwa and Ahmadu, "Reflections on and Insights into Nigeria's Political Instability since Independence: Alternative Proposal for Consideration."

56. Isaac Tersoo Apenda, "An Assessment of the Impact of Farmers-Herder's Conflict on Food Security in Benue State, Nigeria," *International Journal of Development Strategies in Humanities, Management and Social Sciences* 6, no. 2 (2016): 187–200, <http://www.internationalpolicybrief.org/images/2016/IJDSH/ARTICLE16.pdf>; Ibrahim S. Usman, U. M. Bakari, and Aliyu Abdullahi, "Crop Farmers and Herders Conflicts in Girei Local Government Area, Adamawa State, Nigeria: Causes, Repercussions and Resolutions," *Scientific Papers Series Management, Economic Engineering in Agriculture and Rural Development* 17, no. 1 (2017): 467–72, http://managementjournal.usamv.ro/pdf/vol.17_1/Art68.pdf; Clement E Ikezue and Peter Ezeah, "Recurrent Conflicts among Migrant Fulani Herdsmen and Indigenous Communities of SouthSouthern Nigeria: A Review of Literature," *International Journal of Health and Social Inquiry* 3, no. 1 (2017): 152–69, <https://journals.aphriapub.com/index.php/IJHSI/article/view/331/318>.



FIGURE 2. Map of Nigeria showing states with high incidences of herders-farmers conflicts
Source: International Crisis Group, 2017. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/nigeria/252-herders-against-farmers-nigerias-expanding-deadly-conflict#map-5654-3>

existence of Nigeria. The Fulani herdsmen militancy in contemporary Nigeria has been rated the worst since independence on October 1, 1960.

The nature and pattern of Fulani herdsmen attacks across Nigeria have earned this group a reputation of being the fourth worst terrorist group in the world after the Boko Haram.⁵⁷ The rating of the Fulani herdsmen came in 2015 by the Global Terrorism Index after being responsible for the death of over 1,229 people in 2014.⁵⁸ Since then the Fulani herdsmen have rendered most of the rural communities in the Middle Belt of Nigeria ungovernable. They attributed cattle rustling and the prevention of free-range grazing as some of the reasons why their attacks have been carried out in most of the rural communities in Kaduna, Plateau, Nasarawa, Benue, and Taraba States (figure 2).

CNN journalist Stephanie Busari stated that the incidents of “violence between the nomadic herdsmen, who are mostly Muslims, and farmers, who are predominantly Christians, have rocked Nigeria’s Middle Belt since 2013 and are becoming more common.”⁵⁹ Three fundamental claims can be deduced from the assertion; the conflicts are predominantly in the Middle Belt of Nigeria, mainly involve Fulani herdsmen and farmers, and above all the government has not made any serious effort to mitigate the conflicts. It is in this context that a famous veteran war reporter with CNN, Christiana Amanpour, lends

57. Buchanan, “Global Terrorism Index: Nigerian Fulani Militants Named as Fourth Deadliest Terror Group in World.”

58. Toromade, “Benue Crisis—What You Need to Know about Fulani Herdsmen, Anti-Open Grazing Law, Miyetti Allah.”

59. Stephanie Busari, “Nigeria: Scores Killed, Homes Burned in Plateau State Attacks,” *CNN*, June 25, 2018, <https://edition.cnn.com/2018/06/25/africa/nigeria-attacks-intl/index.html>.

her voice to the unmitigated Fulani herdsmen and farmers conflicts that have claimed many lives, particularly in the rural communities in Plateau State stating that:

By all definitions and descriptions, Nigeria's so-called herdsmen are terrorists and if President Buhari doesn't believe so, then it would be difficult for anyone to reasonably absolve him (Buhari) from complicity. I cover wars and crisis as a journalist, I think I know, and the world also knows how terrorists operate. The fact that herdsmen's attacking pattern is focused primarily on wiping off farmers should rob Buhari who has achieved only little in his economic agenda that's expected to be powered mainly by farmers. The impact of these well-defined attacks on Nigeria's economy is expected to be grave, maybe in the long run greater than that of Boko Haram which has been largely localized to the northeast.⁶⁰

The Global human rights group Amnesty International affirmed the assertion above that "at least 1,813 persons have been murdered across 17 states, which has doubled the 894 people killed in 2017."⁶¹ The group attributed the killing to the conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers, Boko Haram attacks, and armed banditry, among other factors, which "the Nigeria government has been accused of encouraging the impunity fueling the increasing insecurity in the country by failing to hold murderers to account."⁶² As Fajonyomi, Fatile, and Ejalonibu posited, the failure of the government to respond proactively is accountable for the violence perpetrated by the Fulani herdsmen. These scholars stated that farmers believe that "the nomadic herdsmen exchange their cattle in return for cash to bribe government officials and some traditional rulers to twist judgments in their favour."⁶³

Nevertheless, the conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers in rural areas of Nigeria have been attributed to the *en masse* movement of the Fulani herdsmen with their herds straddling several States for the grazing of cattle. This pattern of migration is what Mitchell called "overcrowding migration."⁶⁴ The overcrowding migration of the Fulani herdsmen has led to "resource scarcity, increase in the population of resource users, lack of adequate grazing reserves and the poor state of the existing ones, unequal resource distribution and the consequent failure of patrimonial States."⁶⁵

The consequence of the conflicts is a result of the blame game between farmers and Fulani herdsmen over access to land. The farmers have accused Fulani herdsmen of taking over their land and the Fulani herdsmen have also accused farmers of encroaching on

60. The Telegraph, "Breaking!!! Buhari Is Responsible for the Bloody Attacks by the Fulani Militia. - CNN'S Christie Amampour," *The Telegraph*, 2018, <http://telegraph.ng/nigeria/breaking-buhari-responsible-bloody-attacks-fulani/>.

61. International Crisis Group, "Herders against Farmers: Nigeria's Expanding Deadly Conflict."

62. Channels Television, "Killings: Amnesty Accuses FG of Impunity, Says over 1,813 Killed since January," *Channels Television*, June 28, 2018, <https://www.channelstv.com/2018/06/28/killings-amnesty-international-accuses-nigerian-government-of-encouraging-impunity/>.

63. Fajonyomi Sylvester Olubani, Jacob Olufemi Fatile, and Ganiyu Layi Ejalonibu, "Fulani Herdsmen-Farmers Conflicts: Implications for Socio-Economic Development in Nigeria," *International Journal of Development Strategies in Humanities, Management and Social Sciences* 6, no. 2 (2016): 226-43, <http://www.internationalpolicybrief.org/images/2016/IJDSH/ARTICLE19.pdf>.

64. Christopher Roger Mitchell, *The Structure of International Conflict* (Virginia: St. Martin's Press, 1981).

65. Fajonyomi, Fatile, and Ejalonibu, "Fulani Herdsmen-Farmers Conflicts: Implications for Socio-Economic Development in Nigeria."

TABLE 1: List of States and titles of anti-grazing bill/law passed and consequences

S/N	State(s)	Title(s) of Anti-Grazing Bill/Law Passed	Consequences of Passage of Anti-Grazing Bill/Law
1.	Ekiti State	Prohibition of Cattle and Other Ruminants Grazing in Ekiti, 2016	Destruction of farms with planted crops, increasing level of attacks of people on their farms mostly in rural areas, killings of humans and animals, population displacement.
2.	Taraba State	Anti-Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Bill 2017. 'A bill for a law to prohibit open rearing and grazing of livestock and provide for the establishment of ranches and the Taraba State livestock and ranches administration and control committee and for others connected thereto 2017.'	Increasing level of mutual distrust between the herdsmen and farmers, tension and volatility of ethnic and religious groups, killing of humans and animals, burning of housing accommodation, churches and mosques, and undermining of framing activities, and population displacement.
3.	Edo State	A Bill for A Law to Establish the Edo State Control of Nomadic Cattle Rearing/Grazing Law and for Other Purposes.	Increasing level of mutual distrust and the challenges of human security for both herdsmen and farmers, and population displacement.
4.	Benue State	A Law to Prohibit Open Rearing and Grazing of Livestock and Provide for the Establishment of Ranches and Livestock Administration, Regulation and Control and for Other Matters Connected Therewith, 2017	Increasing level of attacks on the people, killing of humans and animals, burning of housing accommodation and churches, and displacement of native populations across the State.

Source: Daily Trust, January 9, 2018. <https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/pastoralist-farmers-conflicts-and-the-search-for-peaceful-resolution.html>

their grazing land, denying them access to transhumance tracks and watering points.⁶⁶ In the various states where the intensity of the conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers are high, the governments of these states have instituted anti-grazing bills and have them passed into law to improve the relationship between Fulani herdsmen and farmers (table 1).

Unfortunately, such laws have received mixed responses from both parties in conflict. The Fulani herdsmen felt disenchanted thereby further driving the already soured relationship toward violence. The MACBAN stated that “the anti-open-grazing law in Benue, Taraba, and other states is nothing more than a symbol of intolerance and does not in any way intend to solve the farmers/grazers conflict as the livestock breeders’

66. Fajonyomi, Fatile, and Ejalonibu, “Fulani Herdsmen-Farmers Conflicts: Implications for Socio-Economic Development in Nigeria”; Akanmu G. Adebayo, “Contemporary Dimensions of Migration among Historically Migrant Nigerians: Fulani Pastoralists in SouthSouthwestern Nigeria,” *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 32, no. 1–2 (1997): 93–109, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1163/15685217-90007284>; Nathaniel Olugbade Adeoye, “Land Use Conflict between Farmers and Herdsmen in Parts of Kano, Yobe and Borno States of Nigeria: Nomads’ Viewpoints,” *Ghana Journal of Geography* 9, no. 1 (2017): 127–151, <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/gjg/article/view/154660/144240>.

interest is neither captured in the law nor its implementation mechanism.”⁶⁷ They further asserted that the anti-grazing law impinges on the constitutional principle on the free movement of persons and goods. They refer to Section 41(1) of the Constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended) to situate these fears:

Every citizen of Nigeria is entitled to move freely throughout Nigeria and to reside in any part thereof, and no citizen of Nigeria shall be expelled from Nigeria or refused entry thereby or exit therefrom.⁶⁸

The free movement of persons and goods is also contested by the farmers whose communities the Fulani herdsmen straddle for grazing since the grazing of herds is usually uncontrolled by the Fulani herdsmen, a major factor driving the tide of conflict between Fulani herdsmen and farmers in Nigeria.⁶⁹ In the context of the constitutional provisions related to indigenous claims, Fulani herdsmen do not have the right to claim indigeneship in the rural communities where they graze their herds because they are not aboriginal to those communities.

It is known that the Fulani herdsmen are responsible for the conflicts that the farmers across the Middle Belt suffer. President Muhammadu Buhari recognized the consequences of relying on the herding tradition, so he encouraged the people to allow their children to go to school. While pointing to the consequence of not going to school, he stated

Now, look at the farmers/herdsmen’s clashes in the Northern part of this country. I have been telling people that if I had not gone to school, I would not have gone into the military and where I come from since my cows are finished; maybe I would have been involved in this fight.⁷⁰

This explains that beyond cattle rustling, the Fulani herdsmen attacks on farmers is simply a reaction because their cattle are finished and there are no alternative means of survival for them. Beyond the shore of Nigeria, President Buhari contradicted himself while discussing the issue with Donald Trump, president of the United States, in Washington DC. He made the following statement:

The problem of herders in Nigeria is a very long historical thing. The Nigerian herders don’t carry anything more than a stick and occasionally a machete to cut down foliage and give it to their animals, these are carrying AK-47. So, people should not underrate what happened in Libya. Forty-three years of Ghaddafi, people were recruited from the Sahel and trained to shoot and kill. With the demise of Ghaddafi, they moved to other countries and regions and carried the experience with them.⁷¹

67. Toromade, “Benue Crisis—What You Need to Know about Fulani Herdsmen, Anti-Open Grazing Law, Miyetti Allah.”

68. Constitutional Rights Awareness and Liberty Initiative, “My Right to Freedom of Movement,” 2018, <https://knowyourrightsnigeria.com/my-right-to-freedom-of-movement/>.

69. Blench, *National Resources Conflict in NorthNorth Central Nigeria: A Handbook and Case Studies*.

70. Armstrong Bakam, “I Might’ve Been Part of Herders, Farmers’ Crisis –Buhari,” *Punch*, April 27, 2018, <https://punchng.com/i-mightve-been-part-of-herders-farmers-crisis-buhari/>.

71. Sahara Reporters, “Buhari: Herdsmen Don’t Carry AK-47,” *Sahara Reporters*, April 30, 2018, <http://saharareporters.com/2018/04/30/buhari-herdsmen-donot-carry-ak-47>.

These contradicting statements indicated the lack of seriousness and commitment on the part of the government to ensure the security of lives and properties in Nigeria. If it is true that those who claimed to have been recruited from the Sahel and were trained to shoot and kill are only masquerading as Fulani herdsmen to kill farmers mostly in central Nigeria, then it is pertinent to question how they penetrated the northern borders of Nigeria considering the huge security spending to secure lives and properties within the hinterlands and frontiers of the country. It is also pertinent to question whether the violence by Fulani herdsmen is an expression of transitional ethnic nationalism to displace the native population in rural communities in Nigeria. Many Nigerians insinuate that the failure of the government to proactively react against the militancy of Fulani herdsmen is because President Muhammadu Buhari is Fulani by ethnic nationality.

Despite several insinuations about the reasons the government has failed to respond to the conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers, it is also plausible that the porous borders of Nigeria are a contributing factor to illegal migration, arms smuggling, and trafficking in Nigeria.⁷² Most of the arms are used by Fulani herdsmen to battle land from farmers to graze cattle. Shifting blame to Gaddafi's forty-three-year rule in Libya as the reason for arms proliferation and the Fulani herdsmen militancy that is causing havoc in Nigeria indicates the irresponsibility of the government to secure the country from external infiltration and internal insurrections.⁷³

It is also not doubtful that the president belongs to the ethnic group, therefore the reading of his non-responsiveness to the existential security threat to lives and the means of livelihood suggests his attachment and commitment to ethnic identity rather than the national interest that is to ensure the unity and survival of Nigeria. It is arguable that the nomadic infiltration of Nigeria's borders and the violence in rural areas of Nigeria caused by Fulani herdsmen plausibly point to the pattern of the old tradition of the ethnic wars demonstrated by the Fulani in most parts of Africa. McGregor reported that the complacency of the government of Nigeria toward mitigating the challenge the Fulani herdsmen are posing to the country is informed by Buhari's subtle effort to Islamize Nigeria.⁷⁴

COMPLEXITIES AND DYNAMICS OF NOMADIC MIGRATION AND RURAL VIOLENCE IN TARABA STATE

Taraba State is complex socially, politically, and religiously. The state is highly divided along with ethnolinguistic and religious identities. These identities play out vehemently in the social, political, and religious landscape of the State. Since the creation of the State from the defunct Gongola State in 1991, intergroup relations have remained unstable. The Benue Valley area that is Taraba State has had tribal wars since the pre-colonial era.

72. Omeiza Ajayi, "FG Alarmed over Porous Borders, Says 350m Illegal Weapons Threaten Polls," *Vanguard*, January 24, 2018, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2018/01/2019-fg-alarmed-porous-borders/>.

73. Ajayi, "FG Alarmed over Porous Borders, Says 350m Illegal Weapons Threaten Polls"; The Nation, "Porous Borders, Illegal Migration, Arms Proliferations Threaten Nigeria's Security," *The Nation*, December 3, 2017, <http://thenationonlineng.net/porous-borders-illegal-migration-arms-proliferations-threaten-nigerias-security/>.

74. McGregor, "The Fulani Crisis: Communal Violence and Radicalization in the Sahel."

Specifically, Dansonka revealed that at one point or another, Wukari and Donga were under the domination of the Bauchi and Muri emirates, brought about by tribal wars.⁷⁵ The colonial era changed the balance but did not bring an end to the tribal wars. In post-colonial Nigeria, Taraba State has had enormous conflicts between ethnic and religious identities, motivated and driven by the need to have social, economic, and political dominance or control.

Conflicts defined by identities in Taraba State have been common. In the southern part of the state; conflicts over indigenous claims have been between the Tiv and Jukun ethnic groups and between the Jukun and Hausa-Fulani ethnic groups in Wukari LGA. In Takum LGA, the conflict between Kuteb and Chamba ethnic groups has been incessant. In the central part of the state, there has been a conflict between the Mambilla ethnic group with Panso and Kambu ethnic groups. It has also occurred between the Mambilla and Fulani ethnic groups. In the northern part of the state, there have been conflicts between the Jukun Kona and Mumuye ethnic groups and between the Hausa-Fulani with other ethnic groups in Jalingo and the suburbs, specifically the Jukun Kona. Most of these conflicts occurred immediately after the creation of Taraba State, and are well documented in the literatures.⁷⁶

The conflicting relations in Taraba State increasingly became visible in the face of democratization, which according to many people marked the end of the dominant Muslim controlled military regimes in Nigeria. Of the several military rulers after the civil war in Nigeria (1967–1970), the power to determine who gets what and when and to allocate values was for more than two decades was controlled by the northern military class, mainly Muslims, who utilized such power to benefit the predominantly Muslim population of northern Nigeria.

After the changed balance of power relations with democracy in place, there has been the perception that power has escaped Muslim dominance in different states, particularly in Taraba, Benue, and Plateau States in the Middle-Belt of the country. The various ethnic groups, the majority of them Christians and practitioners of traditional religion, took over the control of the government since 1999, rendering the Muslims at the margin of politics in Taraba State. The countervailing efforts among competing groups struggling for the control of political power have brought the state into violence. The conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers in Taraba State are considered to be spilt over the effect of power struggles among the various competing social forces. The conflicts have

75. Mordakai Sule Dansonka, "Inter-Group Relations in Wukari and Donga Areas, 1900–1992: A Case Study of the Jukun and Chamba Peoples" (Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 2016), <http://hdl.handle.net/123456789/8909>.

76. Nsemba Edward Lenshie and Abel Johnson, "Ethnicity and Citizenship Crisis in Nigeria: Interrogating Inter-Ethnic Relations in Sardauna Local Government Area, Taraba State," *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations* 6, no. 3 (2012): 48–61, <https://doi.org/DOI:10.5897/AJPSIR11.069>; Dansonka, "Inter-Group Relations in Wukari and Donga Areas, 1900–1992: A Case Study of the Jukun and Chamba Peoples"; Elijah Ityavkase Akombo, "Jukun-Tiv Relations since 1850: A Case Study of Inter-Group Relations in Wukari Local Government Area of Taraba State" (University of Jos, 2005), <https://irepos.unijos.edu.ng/jspui/handle/123456789/156>; Emeka Daniel Oruonye, "The Socio-Economic Impact of Land Resource Conflict in Taraba State: A Case Study of Kona – Minda Crisis in NorthNorthern Taraba," *International Journal of Environmental Sciences* 1, no. 2 (2012): 46–49.

manifested continuously in the Southern and Central Senatorial District of Taraba State. The consequences have been indeed great on both Fulani herdsmen and farmers (table 2).

However, of the 415 national grazing reserves in Nigeria, Taraba State has the highest number of grazing reserves with 255 or 61 percent of the identified grazing reserves. The concentration of Fulani herdsmen and farmers conflicts in the Southern and Central Senatorial District of Taraba State generates concern over whether historically there were rangelands for the grazing of herds in those zones. Muhammed, Ismaila, and Bibi presented a map with shaded and dotted spots to reveal the overlapping intensive crop production on extensive grazing land since 1976, which have become major spots of conflict between Fulani herdsmen and farmers in recent years in Nigeria (figure 3).⁷⁷

As presented on the map, it is deducible that grazing land was in and around Ibi and Wukari LGAs in Southern Senatorial District and Sardauna LGA in Central Senatorial District of Taraba State. However, the natives of Wukari, Ibi, and Sardauna LGAs have disputed claims that the Fulani herdsmen have had the tradition of illegally and forcefully displacing ethnic natives of the areas and turning those areas into grazing land. In Wukari and Ibi, even though the Fulani herdsmen were found grazing their herds in the area, it was for the most part temporarily, within the period of foliage shortages for herds in the territories they migrated from.

Despite the cordial relationship farmers and Fulani herdsmen have enjoyed, it was often strained by the insensitivity of the Fulani herdsmen to the needs of the farmers, which are to preserve their farmlands from the infiltration of herds. On the Mambilla Plateau, following the enactment of the Grazing Reserve Law of the Northern Nigeria in 1965, a grazing reserve was established.⁷⁸ The purpose of the grazing reserve law as it was across other parts of Northern Nigeria was to provide and protect exclusive grazing land allocated to the pastoral Fulani from the encroachment of farmers.

Often, nomadic practice in the area relied on the goodwill of the farmers, but because of the traditional dispensation of land governance, they worried over eviction from the land thereby straining the existing cordial relationship.⁷⁹ It was on this account that it necessitated the grazing reserve on the Mambilla Plateau. With this enactment, the population of the Fulani herdsmen started to increase, a condition that many ethnic natives attributed to the enactment of the grazing reserve law. The Fulani had exceptional rights to land space without taking into consideration the population of farmers who constituted the majority.

However, the grazing reserve over time started to generate conflicts, often violent, between the ethnic natives and Fulani herdsmen over land claims due to what they considered to be overcrowding migration designed to take over their land. The grazing

77. Ibrahim Muhammed, Abdurrahman Belel Ismaila, and Umar Muhammed Bibi, "An Assessment of Farmer-Pastoralist Conflict in Nigeria Using GIS," *International Journal of Engineering Science Invention* 4, no. 7 (2015): 23–33, [http://www.ijesi.org/papers/Vol\(4\)7/Eo47023033.pdf](http://www.ijesi.org/papers/Vol(4)7/Eo47023033.pdf).

78. "Grazing Reserve Law of NorthNorthern Nigeria" (1965).

79. Ann Waters-Bayer and E. Taylor-Powell, "Settlement and Land Use by Fulani Pastoralists in Case Study Area," *Livestock Systems Research in Nigeria's Sub-Humid Zone*, 1986, <https://cgspace.cgiar.org/bitstream/handle/10568/49899/Settlement.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

TABLE 2. Some Reported Incidences of Herdsmen and Farmer Conflicts in Taraba State

S/N	Date of Incidence(s)	Location of Incidence(s)	Nature of Reported Incidence and Claim	Source(s) of Information
1.	April 10, 2016	Dori and Mesuma villages, Gashaka LGA	The Taraba State Police Commissioner, Shaba Alkali, on Tuesday said suspected Fulani herdsmen attacked Dori and Mesuma villages in Gashaka Local Government Area of the state.	<i>Daily Post</i> , "Fulani herdsmen attack Taraba villages, kill 15," April 13, 2016, http://dailypost.ng/2016/04/13/fulani-herdsmen-attack-taraba-villages-kill-15/ .
2.	April 11, 2016	Angai and Ndole villages, Gashaka LGA	Fulani herdsmen attacked four villages in Angai and Ndole villages in Gashaka LGA, killing about 44 people and a large number of the local population reportedly fled to the neighbouring Cameroon and other villages in Nigeria.	<i>TheGuardian</i> , "Scores killed in Taraba, as Fulani Herdsmen attack villages," April 12, 2016, https://guardian.ng/news/scores-killed-in-taraba-as-fulani-herdsmen-attack-villages/ .
3.	April 24, 2016	Bornu Kurkuru, Bali LGA	Herdsmen and famers clashed in Bornu Kurkuru of Bali local government area, leaving people killed and others displaced.	<i>Vanguard</i> , "13 killed in Taraba herdsmen reprisal attack," April 13, 2016, https://www.vanguardngr.com/2016/04/13-killed-taraba-herdsmen-reprisal-attack/ .
4.	April 24, 2016	Mutum-Biyu and suburb, Gassol LGA	No fewer than 13 persons may have been killed in herdsmen and farmers clashes in Taraba State including farmers in about three local government areas as a result of a Fulani herdsmen reprisal attack.	<i>Vanguard</i> , "13 killed in Taraba herdsmen reprisal attack," April 13, 2016, https://www.vanguardngr.com/2016/04/13-killed-taraba-herdsmen-reprisal-attack/ .
5.	May 12, 2017	Megoge, Bali LGA	Over 11 persons were killed and 15,000 others displaced in the herdsmen and farmers' clash in Bali Local Government Area of Taraba State.	<i>Vanguard</i> , "12 killed, 15,000 displaced in Taraba farmers, herdsmen's clash," May 12, 2017, https://www.vanguardngr.com/2017/05/12-killed-15000-displaced-taraba-farmers-herdsmens-clash/ .
6.	June 22, 2017	Mambilla Plateau, Sardauna LGA	More than 200 people were killed in ongoing attacks on the Fulani community in the Sardauna Local Government Area of Taraba State. Over 4,000 cattle were also killed.	<i>New Telegraph</i> , "200 killed in Taraba attacks, say Fulani elders," June 22, 2017, https://newtelegraphonline.com/2017/06/200-killed-taraba-attacks-say-fulani-elders/ .
7.	December 29, 2017	Minda village, Lau LGA	Four persons were killed in a clash between the Fulani herdsmen and farmers in Minda, Lau Local Government Area of Taraba State.	<i>Daily Post</i> , "Four killed as Fulani herdsmen, farmers clash in Taraba," December 30, 2017, http://dailypost.ng/2017/12/30/four-killed-fulani-herdsmen-farmers-clash-taraba/ .
8.	January 9, 2018	Donada and the suburb, Lau LGA	At least 55 people were killed by Fulani herdsmen in the Lau local government area of Taraba State.	<i>SaharaReporters</i> , "55 Feared To Be Killed By Herdsmen In Taraba," January 10, 2018, http://saharareporters.com/2018/01/10/55-feared-be-killed-herdsmen-taraba/ .

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TABLE 2. (continued)

S/N	Date of Incidence(s)	Location of Incidence(s)	Nature of Reported Incidence and Claim	Source(s) of Information
9.	January 5, 2018	Bujum, Didango, Donada, Katibu, and two other Fulani settlements, Lau LGA	The Bachama militias from Numan, Adamawa State, attacked Bujum, Didango, Donada, Katibu, and two other Fulani settlements, Mayo-Lope and Abbare, all in Lau LGA and killed over 13 with many injured. They were assisted by Yandamawa. The attack was said to be a reprisal to the attack led by 300 herdsmen on a community in Bwam in which five people from the community were killed.	<i>Premium Times</i> , "Taraba communities 'attacked'; Fulani, Bachama groups accuse each other," January 6, 2018, https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/254650-taraba-communities-attacked-fulani-bachama-groups-accuse.html .
10.	January 10, 2018	Lau LGA	At least 55 people were killed by Fulani herdsmen in the Lau local government area of Taraba State.	The Nation online, "BREAKING: 55 feared killed by herdsmen in Taraba," January 10, 2018, http://thenationonlineng.net/breaking-55-feared-killed-herdsmen-taraba/ .
11.	January 20, 2018	Gishiri, Dooshima, and Danwaza villages, Ibi LGA	No fewer than nine people were cruelly killed in separate attacks in Gishiri, Dooshima, and Danwaza villages of Taraba State, while another attack by the herdsmen on Karmen village, Ibi Local Government Area, left the traditional ruler, Zaki Gabriel Ukovur, dead.	The Nation online, "Herdsmen kill Taraba monarch, 28 others in fresh attacks," January 20, 2018, http://thenationonlineng.net/herdsmen-kill-taraba-monarch-28-others-fresh-attacks/ .
12.	March 5, 2018	Mambilla Plateau, Sardauna LGA	No fewer than twenty persons were reportedly killed while about three hundred cows were stolen after a fresh outbreak of ethnic violence on the Mambilla Plateau in the Sardauna area of Taraba State.	Pulse.ng, "Herdsmen/Farmers Clash: 20 killed, 300 cows stolen in Taraba after Buhari's visit," March 6, 2018, http://www.pulse.ng/news/local/20-killed-300-cows-stolen-in-taraba-after-buhari-s-visit-id8073939.html .
13.	March 7, 2018	Takum LGA	The Taraba State Police Command has confirmed that at least two persons died as herdsmen attacked villages in Takum Local Government Area of Taraba State; barely hours after President Muhammadu Buhari visited the state.	"Two Hours After Buhari's Visit, Fulani Herdsmen Kill 2 In Taraba," March 8, 2018, http://247ureports.com/two-hours-after-buharis-visit-fulani-herdsmen-kill-2-in-taraba/ .
14.	March 11, 2018	Leme Tela, Mambilla Plateau, Sardauna LGA	A 9-month old baby was shot when Fulani herdsmen attacked Leme Tela in Mambilla, Taraba State. The baby survived the attack while the mother died. Concerted efforts were made to stabilize the child.	"9-Month-Old Baby Shot By Fulani Herdsmen In Taraba, Mother Killed (Graphic Photos)," March 11, 2018, http://www.informationng.com/2018/03/9-month-old-baby-shot-by-fulani-herdsmen-in-taraba-mother-killed-graphic-photos.html .

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TABLE 2. (continued)

S/N	Date of Incidence(s)	Location of Incidence(s)	Nature of Reported Incidence and Claim	Source(s) of Information
15.	March 17, 2018	Takum and Ussa LGAs	At least seven people are feared to have been killed and property worth millions of naira destroyed following a series of attacks on Takum and Ussa local government areas of Taraba State by suspected Fulani herdsmen.	Today.ng, "Seven killed by suspected herdsmen in Taraba," March 17, 2018, https://www.today.ng/news/metro/killed-suspected-herdsmen-taraba-97172 .
16.	April 4, 2018	Mbiya Village, Takum LGA	Four members of a family were killed by herdsmen at Mbiya village in Takum Local Government Area of Taraba State, leaving the entire village razed down.	ThisDay online, "Herdsmen Kill Four in Fresh Attack in Taraba," April 5, 2018, https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2018/04/05/herdsmen-kill-four-in-fresh-attack-in-taraba/ .
17.	April 4, 2018	Basam village, Takum LGA	The attackers, suspected to be Fulani herdsmen, also attacked Basam, a village close to Gen. T.Y. Danjuma's farm and set the whole village ablaze.	ThisDay online, "Herdsmen Kill Four in Fresh Attack in Taraba," April 5, 2018, https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2018/04/05/herdsmen-kill-four-in-fresh-attack-in-taraba/ .
18.	April 5, 2018	Utile community, Donga LGA	The attackers, numbering over 30, invaded Utile community along Donga-Isha Road, and killed five persons.	Punch, "Herdsmen kill five in fresh Taraba attack," April 6, 2018, http://punchng.com/herdsmen-kill-five-in-fresh-taraba-attack/ .
19.	April 5, 2018	Shaakaa village, Donga LGA	The attacks spread to Shaakaa village; five corpses were recovered and the attacks remained ongoing.	Punch, "Herdsmen kill five in fresh Taraba attack," April 6, 2018, http://punchng.com/herdsmen-kill-five-in-fresh-taraba-attack/ .
20.	April 6 & 7, 2018	Kokotye, Bornon Kurku, Bali LGA	About four people were feared killed when armed gunmen, suspected to be Fulani herdsmen, invaded a Tiv village and killed a family of four in Kokotye on the outskirts of Bornon Kurku in the Bali Local Government Area of Taraba State.	Punch, "Family of four killed in fresh Taraba attack—LG boss," April 8, 2018, http://punchng.com/family-of-four-killed-in-fresh-taraba-attack-lg-boss/ .
21.	April 12 & 13, 2018	Jandeikyula village, Wukari LGA	Twenty-five people were killed in Taraba State. Those killed in Taraba State were hacked down in Jandeikyula village, Wukari Local Government Area.	The Eagle Online, "Herdsmen Kill 30 In Taraba, Benue. The killings took place between Wednesday and Thursday." April 12, 2018, https://theeagleonline.com.ng/herdsmen-kill-56-in-taraba-benue/ .
22.	May 23, 2018	Yoro LGA	At least six people were confirmed dead as herdsmen clashed with farmers in Yoro local government of Taraba State after herdsmen allegedly strayed into some farms destroying crops.	Ikenga Chronicles, "Six Killed in Renewed Herdsmen Attack on Taraba Community," May 24, 2018, https://ikengachronicles.com/six-killed-in-renewed-herdsmen-attack-on-taraba-community/ .

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TABLE 2. (continued)

S/N	Date of Incidence(s)	Location of Incidence(s)	Nature of Reported Incidence and Claim	Source(s) of Information
23.	May 29, 2018	Jauro Yinu village, Ardo-Kola LGA	Fulani herdsmen killed a man and his wife in Taraba State. "Sophisticated armed Fulani herdsmen" attacked Sacred Heart Minor Seminary in Jauro Yinu and "shot and injured one of the priests, Rev. Fr. Cornelius Kobah on the leg and beat up Fr. Stephen Bakari in Jalingo.	ElombahNews, "Fulani Herdsmen Kill Husband And Wife In Taraba State," May 30, 2018, https://elombah.com/index.php/news/fulani-herdsmen-kill-husband-wife-taraba-state/ .
24.	June 3, 2018	Hembaor and Dinya villages, Danacha, Gassol LGA	At least eight persons were confirmed dead, including Chief Hembaor Baki, the chief of Angwan Hembaor, alongside his wife and two children, while four others were killed in the neighbouring Dinya village, also on their farm in Danacha in Gasol local government area.	<i>The Sun News</i> online, "Taraba: Monarch, 7 villagers killed in savage herdsmen attack," June 4, 2018, http://sunnewsonline.com/taraba-monarch-7-villagers-killed-savage-herdsmen-attack/ .
25.	July 2, 2018	Gishiri Hassan village, Sariki Kudu district of Ibi LGA	No fewer than five people were reportedly killed and several houses razed in Gishiri Hassan village, Sariki Kudu district of Ibi Local Government Area of Taraba State, by gunmen suspected to be Fulani herdsmen.	The Pointer, "Five Killed, As Fulani Herdsmen Attack Tivs In Taraba, Monday," July 2, 2018, http://thepointernews.com/?p=29605 .
26.	July 4, 2018	Santuraki, Abbare and Nnega villages, Lau LGA	No fewer than 20 people were killed following an attack by gunmen suspected to be Nyandan militia on some villages in Lau Local Government Area of Taraba State. They attacked Santuraki, Abbare, and Nnega villages predominantly Hausa/Fulani settlements, killing over 20 people and burning several houses.	News Telegraph, "Again, gunmen attack Taraba villages, kill 20, burn houses," July 6, 2018, https://newtelegraphonline.com/2018/07/again-gunmen-attack-taraba-villages-kill-20-burn-houses/ .

Source: Authors' compilation, 2019.

reserve law was later repealed by the government and was replaced with the Land Use Act of 1978, thereby complicating the already existing problems over land use, not only in Mambilla Plateau, but across the country.

Most ethnic natives in the Middle-Belt felt it was a deliberate decision taken by the government to seize and redistribute their land to those who have no traditional titles defined by ancestry or descent in the rural communities to which they belonged, particularly to the population who are transhumant. Because of the societal dynamics of Nigeria, the Land Use Act of 1978 has been dysfunctional. A majority of people would rather die than to permit the land that they have legitimate right to claim to be taken by the State and given to Fulani herdsmen.

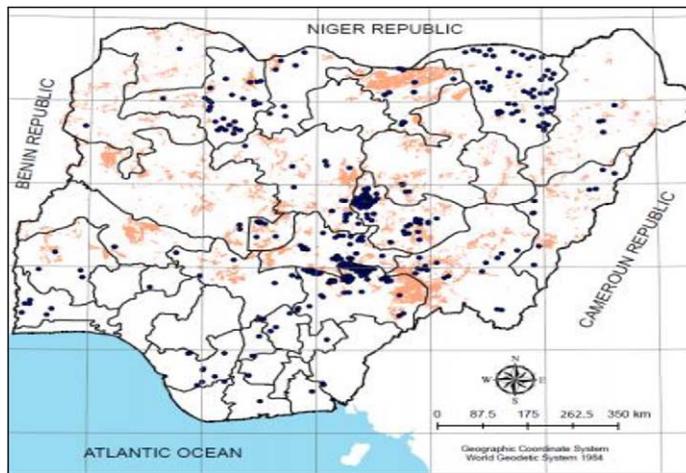


FIGURE 3. Map showing herdsman-farmers conflict hot spots since 1976.

Source: Muhammed, Ismaila and Bibi, (2015, p. 30). Shaded and dotted spots are overlapping intensive crop production on extensive grazing land.

The Fulani herdsmen and farmers conflicts in Taraba State present dialectics of national dynamics associated with rural violence involving Fulani herdsmen and farmers in other States in Nigeria. The conflicts in Taraba State are motivated by the lush vegetation in the plains and mountainous areas, particularly in the Mambilla Plateau, which has attracted Fulani herdsmen to graze their herds. The consequence of such a venture is the intractability of the conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers competing over grazing land.

In several rural communities where conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers have been reported, the Fulani herdsmen have been accused, particularly the MACBAN, of being responsible for generating and supporting their fellow kinsmen to stir up violence in rural communities where they graze their herds. The MACBAN has also accused farmers generally of occupying grazing land where their herds are supposed to graze and of denying transhumant routes, prompting the violence against the farmers by Fulani herdsmen.

Though rural violence between the Fulani herdsmen and farmers has been common, it became incessant with the passage of the anti-grazing bill into law. The leader of MACBAN in Taraba State had warned that the government passing the bill into law was targeted against their people. In Mambilla Plateau where a ranching grazing system has been in existence since the early period of independence, herdsmen demonstrated against the bill thereby adding to the already tense situation in the state.

The demonstration by the Fulani in Mambilla Plateau was not without attacks on the farmers, which eventually led to violent confrontations. It was reported that the conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers started as a result of armed Fulani herdsmen attacking armless Mambilla farmers at Nyiwa Village. The Sardauna Stakeholders Forum describes the situation:

The Fulani militia attacks began with the shooting to death of two Mambilla men of Nyiwa Community, in their farmland at Nyiwa by some armed herdsmen led in the attack by a certain “Maigari Alhaji Gagarau” and his younger brother. The Fulani herders had previous day destroyed the fence around the farm which the farmers quickly and peacefully repaired but which the Fulani destroyed for a second time within a space of about 2.4 hours. When the farmers returned to the farm and were about to re-erect the fence, the Fulani gunmen, led by the said Maigari Gagarau and brother opened fire on them from a nearby bush in which they had laid in ambush, killing two farmers instantly. The head of one of their victims was further machete to pieces by Maigari’s team. They subsequently shot dead two other Mambilla men. As the alarm of these gruesome killings went round the village, residents scampered about in panic, some rushing to attempt to rescue those trapped by the attack. These, however, similarly came under the same gunfire. The villagers inevitably clashed with these armed herdsmen in the farm resulting in further casualties. . . . [S]ome of the Fulani armed assailants became the victim of their device too.⁸⁰

The conflicts between the Mambilla ethnic farmers and Fulani herdsmen spread to other villages such as Yerimaru, Ngesso, Tela, Yelwa, and Maisamari, in which both Mambilla and Fulani suffered deleterious casualties, attracting the attention of the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) to Mambilla Plateau.⁸¹ Accordingly, it was alleged that the attacks were planned to take place simultaneously in all the villages with harmful consequences for the Fulani population on the Mambilla Plateau, who claimed several of their people and herds were killed and many made homeless and displaced.⁸²

The Fulani ethnic group led by their elders, Alhaji Ahmadu Adamu, Malam Suleiman Musa, Alhaji Hassan Ardo, and Alhaji Dauda Jae, claimed that they had “over 180 Fulani villages in the Mambilla Plateau completely burnt down while over 200 persons, including women and children, were butchered, and over 4,000 cattle were killed while some were carted away.”⁸³ These elders blamed the Taraba State government for not showing any concern about the brutality meted out on them on the Mambilla Plateau. They stated their dismay about the callousness of the government:

We are not ready to accept any more window dressing by Taraba State government because this is four days since the killings started and the government has refused to utter a word or issue a statement condemning the killings of our people. We are citizens of this country, why should the Taraba State government continue to show indifference to our case without taking any action to protect our lives and property?⁸⁴

80. Scan News, “Fresh Mercenary Herdsmen Attacks in Mambilla,” *Scan News*, March 5, 2018, <https://scannewsigeria.com/news/fresh-mercenary-herdsmen-attacks-in-mambilla/>.

81. Ikenga Chronicles, “Report: The Real Cause of the Mambilla-Fulani Crises,” *Ikenga Chronicles*, June 25, 2017, <https://ikengachronicles.com/report-the-real-cause-of-the-mambilla-fulani-crises/>; Scan News, “Fresh Mercenary Herdsmen Attacks in Mambilla.”

82. Magaji Isa Hunkuyi, “Survivors of Mambilla Attacks Recount ‘Harrowing’ Ordeal,” *Daily Trust*, July 8, 2017, <https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/survivors-of-mambilla-attacks-recount-harrowing-ordeal.html>.

83. Ben Adaji, “200 Killed in Taraba Attacks, Say Fulani Elders,” *New Telegraph*, June 22, 2017, <https://newtelegraphonline.com/2017/06/200-killed-taraba-attacks-say-fulani-elders/>.

84. Adaji, “200 Killed in Taraba Attacks, Say Fulani Elders.”

The FGN ordered the military to intervene in the conflict. The Acting General Officer Commanding (GOC) 3 Division of the Nigerian Army in Jos, Plateau State, Brigadier General Benjamin Ahanotu, stated that “from the briefs he got from the Brigade Commander of 23 Brigade in Yola, Brigadier General Bello Mohammed proved that prominent politicians from the area played roles that fueled the situation.”⁸⁵ In response to the Fulani herdsmen and farmers conflict in Mambilla Plateau, President Buhari came to Taraba State. His arrival was treated as being ethnically driven rather than by national concern over the conflicts across other parts of the country. Instead of mitigating the conflicts, it further infuriated and exacerbated them.⁸⁶

The response of FGN to establish the Nigerian Air Force Base on the Mambilla Plateau to many is considered to be deliberate, purported to support and enhance the capacity of the Fulani to continue to claim and take over indigenous peoples’ land. From the field study, many participants suggest that if the Fulani people were not affected, the Buhari-led government would not have responded proactively. To the Fulani people, it was what the people in the Mambilla Plateau wanted. A Fulani interviewed in Ngoruje stated that it was quite unfortunate such a conflict happened, but it was good that the military is in Mambilla Plateau to foster peace.

The conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers also were consequential in other parts of the State. In the Southern Senatorial District of Taraba State, where the conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers have remained unmitigated, the farmers have complained that they have no protection from the Fulani herdsmen attacks. The Care-Taker Chairman of Ibi Local Government Council, Bala Bako, attributed the security challenges they have continued to face to Fulani herdsmen attacks. In one of the meetings to tackle security challenges in the local government area, the traditional ruler of Ibi was killed by Fulani gunmen. Bala Bako made the following statement:

We are having security challenges in Ibi Council, and we have been making efforts to ensure that all the ethnic groups in our domain accommodate one another and live together peacefully. The chief (traditional ruler) of Ibi was able to set up a committee that was sitting to find a lasting solution to the problem. It was in one of the meetings that the Fulani gunmen attacked and killed the monarch. The people had gathered and were waiting for us for the security meeting when suddenly an armed Fulani man emerged and started shooting. The local chief was killed during the attack.⁸⁷

The situation has not been different in the Ussa and Takum Local Government Area. These areas have witnessed countless attacks by the Fulani herdsmen. The natives of Takum LGA alleged that Fulani herdsmen have for the most part of the conflict received

85. Wale Odunsi, “Taraba Killings: Prominent Politicians Escalated Violence – Army,” *Daily Post*, June 25, 2017, <https://dailypost.ng/2017/06/25/taraba-killings-prominent-politicians-escalated-violence-army/>.

86. Pulse.ng, “Herdsmen/Farmers Clash: 20 Killed, 300 Cows Stolen in Taraba after Buhari’s Visit,” *Pulse.Ng*, March 6, 2018, <http://www.pulse.ng/news/local/20-killed-300-cows-stolen-in-taraba-after-buhari-s-visit-id8073939.html>.

87. Sahara Reporter, “Herdsmen Kill Taraba Monarch and 28 Others in Fresh Attacks,” *Sahara Reporter*, January 20, 2018, <http://saharareporters.com/2018/01/20/herdsmen-kill-taraba-monarch-and-28-others-fresh-attacks>.

support from the army. They also alleged that Fulani herdsmen have boasted that they have penetrated and annihilated the sophisticated vigilante groups sponsored by the state government and the youths who had proved difficult to fight. Despite the attacks on several communities in the Takum local government area, there was no military intervention even when the local government has a military barrack.

The military has been accused of protecting the killer Fulani herdsmen and enabling them to have access to weapons from the choppers used to attack the native communities mainly in central and southern parts of the state. The attacks have continued despite the military's Operation *Ayem A Kpatuma* (Cat Race). Some statesmen under the Concerned Elders Forum (CEF) represented by its President, Elder Joshua Ande, made the following statement in connection with the Fulani herdsmen attacks:

We are worried that the security agencies do not seem perturbed by happenings in Taraba state, especially in Takum LGA where the security concern has reached the level of Red Alerts. Daily stories of kidnapping and killings are now almost a staple.⁸⁸

Similarly, Esther Yakubu from Takum LGA also raised concerned over Fulani attacks, alleging that the military, rather than protecting the vulnerable population, support the Fulani herdsmen by demilitarizing the native population in Ussa and Takum LGAs. As an eyewitness, provided the following revelation:

Houses are being searched by soldiers. Kitchen knives and cutlasses are being taken away. Children are being harassed. Youths looking strong enough to defend the community are whisked away. The youth whose names have appeared on a "gossip list" as youth defence vanguard has been arrested. Our people are now left at the mercy of Fulani herdsmen whose business of killing and destroying lives and property continues. The army should go into the bush and disarm those killing us so that we shall return to our farms.⁸⁹

The Chairman of Ussa LGA, Rimamsikwe Karma, revealed that the military in support of the Fulani herdsmen brought them to their communities, which means the military granted the Fulani herdsmen maximum security against the sedentary population. With the protection of the military, the Fulani herdsmen are not only unfriendly, but are strange to their respective communities. Karma made the following statement:

The herdsmen that followed the army to our Council are not friendly with our people, they are strange faces to us and they are killing people. We expect the soldiers to go into the bush and help us flush out killer herdsmen and kidnappers instead of beating up people in the town. The herdsmen that are coming into our community now with machine guns are not the traditional herdsmen we know and lived with over the years; I suspect they may [be] the released Boko Haram members.⁹⁰

88. Wale Odunsi, "Fulani Herdsmen Planning Fresh Killings – Taraba Elders Allege," *Daily Post*, January 30, 2018, <https://dailypost.ng/2018/01/30/fulani-herdsmen-planning-fresh-killings-taraba-elders-allege/>.

89. Fanen Ihyongo, "Death Toll Hits 32 in Taraba Herdsmen Attack," *The Nation*, April 14, 2018, <http://thenationonlineng.net/death-toll-hits-32-in-taraba-herdsmen-attack/>.

90. Sylvester Ugwuanyi, "Herdsmen Now Attack Us with Machine Guns – Taraba Residents," *Daily Post*, March 23, 2018, <http://dailypost.ng/2018/03/23/herdsmen-now-attack-us-machine-guns-taraba-residents/>.

It was in this context that General Theophilus Yakubu Danjuma (ret'd), a native of Takum LGA, raised concern over the role of the Nigerian military in the Fulani herds-men and farmers conflicts, not only in Taraba State, but also across the country. General Danjuma called on the people of Taraba State specifically and Nigeria generally to defend themselves and protect their land against “armed bandits.”⁹¹ General Danjuma made the following statement:

The peace in this state is under assault. There is an attempt at ethnic cleansing in this state and, of course, in all the riverine state of Nigeria. We must resist it. We must stop it. Every one of us must rise up. The armed forces are not neutral; they collude with the armed bandits that kill people, kill Nigerians. They facilitate their movement. They cover them. If you are depending on the Armed Forces to stop the killings, you will all die one by one. The ethnic cleansing must stop in Taraba State, it must stop in all the states of Nigeria; otherwise, Somalia will be a child's play. I ask every one of you to be at alert and defend your country, defend your territory, and defend your state. You have nowhere else to go.⁹²

In the context of the foregoing statement, the military faulted Danjuma's claim against them.⁹³ They associated the Fulani herds-men and farmers conflicts in Taraba State to the proliferation of illegal weapons, which the military was poised to demilitarize. Unfortunately, the demilitarization effort of the military that embarked in the north-central region of Nigeria, which also includes Taraba State, under the platform of the *Ayem A kpatuma* could not yield results due to a lack of cooperation from the government of the Taraba State.⁹⁴

The Aku Uka of Wukari and Chairman, Taraba State Council of Chiefs, Dr. Shekar-au Angyu Masa Ibi, reiterated Danjuma's statement that “it is a known fact that citizens of Nigeria have lost confidence in the military in spite of their track record of successful peace missions in other parts of the world.”⁹⁵ Similarly, Alhaji Attahiru Ahmed, Emir of Anka in Zamfara State, also expressed the loss of confidence in the Nigerian military in protecting the lives and properties of his people.⁹⁶ Therefore, the Nigeria military, even though it has engaged in successful peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations in

91. Magaji Isa Hunkuyi, “Military Colluding with Armed Bandits – TY Danjuma,” *Daily Trust*, March 25, 2018, <https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/military-colluding-with-armed-bandits-ty-danjuma.html>.

92. Daily Trust, “Pastoralist-Farmers Conflicts and the Search for Peaceful Resolution,” *Daily Trust*, 2018, <https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/pastoralist-farmers-conflicts-and-the-search-for-peaceful-resolution.html>; Ben Adaji, “T.Y. Danjuma Slams Military over Herdsmen Killings,” *New Telegraph*, March 25, 2018, <https://newtelegraphonline.com/2018/03/ty-danjuma-slams-military-over-herdsmen-killings/>.

93. Nwafor Sunday, “Breaking: Nigerian Army Tackles TY Danjuma, Warns Nigerians to Be Law Abiding,” *Vanguard*, March 25, 2018, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2018/03/breaking-nigerian-army-tackles-ty-danjuma-warns-nigerians-law-abiding/>.

94. Azimazi Momoh Jimoh, “Army Faults Danjuma's Stance, Moves against Illegal Arms' Bearers,” *The Guardian*, March 26, 2018, <https://guardian.ng/news/army-faults-danjumas-stance-moves-against-illegal-arms-bearers/>.

95. Justin Tyopuusu, “Nigerians Have Lost Confidence in the Military, Monarch Tells Army Panel,” *Punch*, April 17, 2018, <http://punchng.com/nigerians-have-lost-confidence-in-the-military-monarch-tells-army-panel/>.

96. PM News, “I Have Lost Confidence in Army to Protect My People – Emir,” *PM News*, March 30, 2018, <https://www.pmnewsnigeria.com/2018/03/30/i-have-lost-confidence-in-army-to-protect-my-people-emir/>.

Africa, has failed to prevent the incessant killings of people by the marauding Fulani herdsmen in these states of the federation.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRADICTIONS OF CONFLICTS BETWEEN FULANI HERDSMEN AND FARMERS IN TARABA STATE

Contextually, the conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers have had and are still having serious consequences for national and personal security in Nigeria. The constant occurrence of Fulani herdsmen and farmers conflicts have consequences for subsistence farmers, commercial farmers, and cattle breeders, and the scale of the killings and reprisals between them has further undermined the prospect for a most coveted peaceful coexistence.⁹⁷

The complacency of the FGN toward the level of insecurity created by the Fulani herdsmen not only in Taraba State but throughout the country is a serious cause for concern. The natives of Kashimbila have raised concern over the overcrowding migration of the Fulani herdsmen to the area. According to the natives, the Fulani herdsmen are security threats to their lives and means of livelihood. They accused them of crimes such as the destruction of crops, rural banditry, and kidnapping, which have undermined farming activities in the area.

Similar concerns have also been raised in Lau LGA. The Fulani herdsmen have attacked several villages in the local government area, as a result, several people were killed, houses burnt, and many people displaced. The same situation is also evident in several native enclaves in Ardo-Kola, Bali, Donga, and Gassol LGAs. With the Fulani herdsmen and farmers conflicts, Taraba, which is agrarian, presents the likelihood of suffering from food insecurity, not only for Tarabans, but also for people in other states in north-east Nigeria who rely on the Taraba State as a source of their food supply.

Principally, the role of the government globally is to ensure and guarantee the safety and security of the lives and the property of the people, whether at the national, state, or local level. How the conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers are playing out proves that the government is incapable of performing this one important statutory function of security governance. This explains why the conflicts have remained difficult to mitigate with many lives and properties destroyed across the country where the conflicts are prevalent.

In Nigeria, even though the Governors as Chief Security Officers of their respective states are responsible for ensuring the safety and security of the lives and property of citizens in their respective states, the power to do so is undermined by the fact that the security agencies are not responsible to them. The Security Chiefs in the various States of Nigeria receive directives from the Security Chiefs at the national government.

The implication is the government at the State level may be experiencing an existential threat but cannot take any security action because for a security agency among others, for

97. Okoli and Atelhe, "Nomads against Natives: A Political Ecology of Herder/Farmer Conflicts in Nasarawa State, Nigeria."

example, the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), to counter such an existential threat in the state, it has to receive directives from the Inspector General of Police (IGP), who in turn receives directives from the President, who is also the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces. An elder statesman in Jalingo commented on the capacity of the state government to respond to the insecurity in the state:

The government of Taraba State is lacking in the capacity to secure the State from the killer herdsmen, who are terrorizing the various rural communities in various LGAs. It is not as if in the real sense, the government cannot afford to ensure safety and security of the people as the Chief Security Officer of Taraba State. The difficulty faced by the government to secure lives and properties of the people most often comes from the lack of cooperation from the security agencies, who always claim they have no independence to execute the function of a certain magnitude without receiving orders from the IGP. Therefore, this situation limits the security governance responsibility of the State in dealing with the issue related to the crises which we are confronting in the State.

Recently, because of the incapacitation of the security governance of the State, six natives of Mayo Lope in Lau LGA were massacred and several others injured by herdsmen at the Iwara cattle market in Ardo-Kola LGA. Accordingly, the Fulani herdsmen acted on the information that the cows brought by the persons were stolen cattle belonging to Fulani herdsmen. An interview with an internally displaced woman from Mayo Lope revealed that it is common to find natives owning cattle in their enclaves. Therefore, it was erroneous to state that the cattle taken to be traded by their natives who were massacred at the Iwara cattle market were stolen.

Contrary to the claim by the Fulani herdsmen at the Iwara cattle market, a representative of the government who is also a representative of the Yandang ethnic group, Alfred Kobbiba, made the following statement:

All the six people killed yesterday (Tuesday) in the Iwara cattle market are well known to me and I can attest to their good character. The cows they brought to the market for sale were their cows. Our people are in the business of cattle rearing too, contrary to the claims of the attackers.⁹⁸

According to Tyopuusu, “[T]he killing of six of their people has brought the total number of those killed in the Lau conflict to sixty-two.”⁹⁹ The abrogation of the law by citizens poses constant security challenges in Taraba State and elsewhere, and the FGN’s complacency empowers the government at the state level to tackle security challenges in their respective areas of territorial control and challenge the basis of the FGN’s existence.

To demonstrate the incapacity of the state in security governance, the IGP was recently asked to strengthen security to mitigate the tendency of violence escalating between Fulani herdsmen and farmers in Mayo Belwa LGA of Adamawa State, which

98. Justin Tyopuusu, “Taraba Market Killings: Yandang Community Seeks Justice for Victims,” *Punch*, July 18, 2018, <http://punchng.com/taraba-market-killings-yandang-community-seeks-justice-for-victims/>.

99. Tyopuusu, “Taraba Market Killings.”

has led to the destruction of lives and property, and population displacement.¹⁰⁰ This implies that the police can perform their statutory function in violent, conflict-ridden communities in the states where such incidences are prevalent, but when they are directed not to intervene, they cannot do otherwise. The Commissioner of the Police receives directives from the IGP who in turn is responsible to the Presidency.

The chain of order in the police account for the delay often experienced in intervention and sometimes non-intervention in a complex emergency like the one the Fulani herdsmen-farmer conflicts have created, not only in Taraba State but across the country. Recognizing the critical security threats posed by the conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers in these parts of the country, Mohammed Ibn Chambas, who is the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel and the head of UNOWAS, cautioned that if efforts by the government are not increased to mitigate the situation, there is a high risk of the conflict morphing into the terrorist attacks that have over the years defined the security landscape of north-east Nigeria. The response pattern of the government must be that which matches the security challenges currently confronting Nigeria.¹⁰¹

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Fulani herdsmen and farmers conflicts have rendered unstable intergroup relations in Nigeria. The conflicts in most parts of the country have led to wanton killing and the destruction of lives and property and have rendered several thousand people displaced internally. Although the Fulani herdsmen and farmers conflicts are evident in the Middle-Belt and southern Nigeria, the intensity and volatility of the conflicts is dominant in the Middle-Belt region, manifesting mainly in states such as Benue, Nasarawa, Plateau, Taraba, and the southern parts of Adamawa State.

In Taraba State, since 2015, the Fulani herdsmen and farmers conflicts have engulfed LGAs in the Southern and Central Senatorial Districts and some parts of the Northern Senatorial District, such as Lau, Ardo-Kola, and Yorro LGAs. The conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers are prevalent where the population is non-Fulani and the majority practice Christianity or the traditional religion. Although the dynamics and complexities of the conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers are factored from competition for land resources and water sources, it is, however, prevalent in non-Fulani- and non-Muslim-dominated communities in Taraba State. In most circumstances, the conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers find expression in ethnic, but importantly, religious interpretations.

The effort by the Taraba State government has not produced the desired result in mitigating the conflicts because security agencies are not responsible to the State government but to the national government. Unfortunately, the national government has

100. Adebisi Adedapo, "Reps Seek Improved Security in Adamawa Communities," *Leadership*, July 18, 2018, <https://leadership.ng/2018/07/18/reps-seeks-improved-security-in-adamawa-communities/>.

101. Wale Odunsi, "UN Raises Alarm over Herdsmen Killings, Warns Nigeria," *Daily Post*, July 18, 2018, <http://dailypost.ng/2018/07/18/un-raises-alarm-herdsmen-killings-warns-nigeria/>.

remained complacent and has failed to prosecute the Fulani herdsmen who have not only constituted an existential threat but also insecurity to lives and property of the farming population in the State. The security agencies including the military and police, even though they have achieved great results in several peacekeeping operations in other parts of Africa, have failed to demonstrate similar effectiveness in mitigating their own nation's security challenges.

The security challenges in Taraba State are construed by the conflicts involving Fulani herdsmen and farmers. It is a consequence of the noneffective security responsiveness to existential threats in Nigeria. The fact that the security agencies are not independent themselves, but dependent on directives from the president further undermines their security effectiveness in complex emergencies of the magnitude faced in the Taraba State. The government complacency is likely defined by the shared affective nature of ethnic and religious identities between those in power and the Fulani herdsmen, who the government authoritatively is aware are non-Nigerians, and nothing has been done to control entry into the country or to evict the population out of Nigeria.

This study concludes that if the government claims to be responsive as a representative of the people, it must change its attitude and its strategies for securing Nigeria. It must be proactive in responding to early warnings and security challenges in complex emergencies. The government must secure the borders by developing a mechanism that controls the entry of Fulani herdsmen who constitute security challenges to Nigerian citizens. Those who control power must be patriotic and nationalistic in opposition to ethnic and religious bigotry that traverses international boundaries, thereby undermining the safety and security of Nigeria.

Above all, the complacency of the FGN to the conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers across the country necessitates and justifies the demand for the adoption of a state and community policing system in Nigeria. With a state and community policing system, the government at the state level becomes empowered to respond adequately to security challenges of the magnitude faced currently in various states in Nigeria and the Taraba State specifically. ■