

**CLIMATE CHANGE, FOOD SECURITY, NATIONAL SECURITY and  
ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES**

**GLOBAL ISSUES & LOCAL PERSPECTIVES**

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**Climate Change, Food Security, National Security and Environmental Resources**

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## **Preface**

This book adopts an exegetical approach as well as a pedagogic model, making it attractive agriculture and environmental economics teachers, professional practitioners and scholars. It eschews pedantry and lays bare the issues in such clarity that conduces to learning. The book elaborates on contemporaneous climate change, food security, national security and environmental resources issues of global significance and at the same time, is mindful of local or national perspectives making it appealing both to international and national interests. The book explores the ways in which climate change, food security, national security and environmental resources issues are and should be presented to increase the public's stock of knowledge, increase awareness about burning issues and empower the scholars and public to engage in the participatory dialogue climate change, food security, national security and environmental resources necessary in policy making process that will stimulate increase in food production and environmental sustainability.

*Climate Change, Food Security, National Security and Environmental resources: Global issues and Local Perspectives* is organized in four parts. Part One deals with Climate Change with Six Chapters, Part Two is concerned with Food Security with Nine chapters, Part Three deals with National Security with Five Chapters, while Part Four pertains Environmental Resources, has Five Chapters.

**Ahmed Makarfi / Eteyen Nyong**

**April 2024**

## CHAPTER 11

### **Insecurity: Impacts on Agro-Allied Industries and Food Production**

Salami, Azeez Oyeniyi

#### **Abstract**

*An in-depth study was portrayed into the scenario of insecurity in Nigeria as it affects food production and food security, which is perpetrated through the acts of insurgency, banditry and kidnapping, spanning upward of two decades, and threatening the country's existence. Inferences were drawn sporadically within the 6 geopolitical zones and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), but emphasized on 2 states/region recognized as hotspot for identified vices. These are Katsina/Zamfara for the North-west; Borno/Adamawa for North-east; Niger/Plateau for North-central; Ekiti/Ogun for South-west; South-east had Imo/Ebonyi, and the South-south had Rivers/Cross River States, alongside the FCT, Abuja. The activities of Boko Haram and other related bandits were observed and recorded for 5 years between 2019 and 2023, through a semi structured interview and focus group discussion, using availability sampling technique. Respondents were 1200 from the 6 geopolitical zones, and 100 only from the FCT, totaling 1300. Respondents were 30% for Hausa-Fulani and 25% each for Yoruba and Ibo, while 20% were for other minorities. The imbroglios were noted and recorded for 5 years between 2019 and 2023, through a semi structured interview with focus group discussion, alongside 3 research assistances from each of the 6 geopolitical zones who were familiar with the culture and local languages. The interview documents were reviewed by senior colleagues for reliability, and also subjected to Cronbach's alpha analysis to test for coefficient of consistencies which indicated 0.85 reliability contexts and high enough for a good result. The causes of insecurities against food production and security were analyzed to be poverty, unemployment, corruption, bad governance, cultism and ritual killings, among others, and the effects include communal conflicts, invasion of communities and village pillage, ransom payment, etc. Secondary data were obtained from the internet, visual and audio-visual platforms, and from the print media. As farming activities are impossible in a crisis-laden environment, supply pull inflation had pushed Nigeria into food insecurity with senseless killings of the rural farmers. The imminent contention of the inflation is also scary, with*

*the records of 25.12% in the year 2023, and on foods as 33.93% on a year-on-year basis. Acquisition of compulsory basic education for all; spirit of patriotism with good governance; and equal distribution of resources were however recommended as remediation measures.*

**Key-words:** Insecurity; Senseless killings; National embarrassment, Food security; Inflation

## **Introduction**

Insecurity is a form of public engagement that is disruptive to public order which may threaten public safety. It is synonymous with the evils of essential development in the third world, where resources are limited to service deliveries in a contemporary competitive society, especially within the African context, and had played very significant role in jeopardizing the efforts of economic and socio-cultural growth of the Sub Saharan Africa. In African region, Nigeria is one of the most devastating societies, despite being the giant of the region, and had not seen complete social peace for over two decades now. These put the country on the verge of upheavals and social damages, constituting a national embarrassment, and threatening its survival as a nation. Nonetheless, insecurity can severely disrupt economic activities through the destruction of productive assets, diversion of resources, death and injury to the population, and damage to health and education facilities (Shafiu, 2018).

In Nigeria, the insecurity phenomenon are diversified in several volumes which include insurgency, banditry and kidnapping, farmers and herders conflict, cattle rustling, village pillage, ethnic and religious conflicts, end SARs protesters, IPOB, the Yoruba self determinants, labour smack, and the Niger Delta militants, among others. These had caused national embarrassment as well as immense damage to vital socio-economic infrastructures meant for sustainable development, which also affects the political stability of the country. In essence, insecurity is a powerful mode of expression and organized form of behaviour involving civil disorders and acts of mass civil disobedience, among other behaviours (Oladele and Ayetiran, 2022).

Moreover, the above are mere effects of the vulnerable causes of insecurity when the issue at stake remained unattended to in the early stage of occurrence, thus aggravated into the unwarranted imbroglios, causing havoc in the society. Some of these causes are poverty, unemployment, socio-economic marginalization and injustice, inequality, corruption, nepotism, bad governance, cultism and ritual killings, proliferation of small arms, and a host of others.

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Consequently, the United States Department of State-USDS reiterated that security remains a major concern to investors in Nigeria due to the high rates of violent crime, kidnappings for ransom, and terrorism, which lowers confidence and increases uncertainty. Nonetheless, countries that are prone to insecurity could be stigmatized and consequently lose investments and tourism, as no investor would want to invest in an environment where their investment cannot be protected (Onyebuchi, 2018). With the current situation of insecurity in Nigeria therefore, several significant investors have fled Nigeria for nations with more secured and stabled atmosphere, notably Ghana and Rwanda which are neighbouring African countries, thereby leaving the Nigerian economy in its dilapidating state. In view of these, Nigeria has adopted the Sustainable Development Goals to create national policies that address social development problems of the society (Shafiu, 2018). Even, though, agriculture is the mainstay of Nigeria's economy. It employed approximately two thirds of the country's total labour force, and contributing 40% to its GDP. At that, Nigeria is the world's largest producer of cassava, yam, and cowpea, yet it is a food-deficit nation and depends on imports of grains, livestock products, and fish for sustenance. Moreover, despite its vast agricultural potential, the country is yet a net importer of foods, with the vast majorities engaged in subsistence agriculture (Salami, Dalibi, Nwadike, and Yunusa 2020). Hence, poverty remains widespread in Nigeria, and has continued to increase in some areas since the late 1990s because of bad governance and egocentric indulgence to gather resources and competitively in bad leadership styles (Salami, *et al*, 2020), which are some of the causes of insecurity in Nigeria. This is also aggravated by the incessant and high level of social insecurity embedded through insurgency, banditry and kidnapping which now create a gross and magnanimous gap in the sustainable food production and security prowess in the country (Ladan and Matawalli, 2020).

Moreover, at the world food conference of 1974, food security was defined as the availability at all times of adequate, nourishing, diverse, balanced, and moderate world food supplies of basic foodstuffs to sustain a steady expansion of food consumption and to offset fluctuations in production and prices. Furthermore, the final report of the World Food Summit of 1996 conversely stated that food security exists when all people at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for active and healthy life (FAO, 2003). Additionally, according to the United States

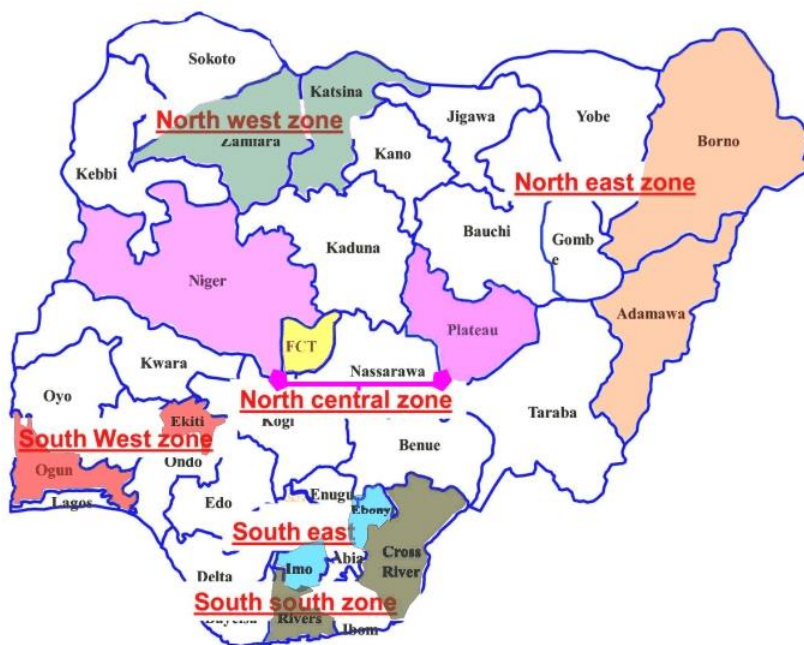
Department of Agriculture (USDA), food insecurity is a situation of limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways (FAO, 2003). With the above trends therefore, it deemed necessary to explore the effects of insecurities instigated especially: by insurgency, banditry and kidnapping, which are the main common phenomenon of the insecurity pandemic in Nigeria, which invariably works against the agro allied industries, food production and food security in the country.

### **Methodology**

An in-depth study was instigated into the turmoil activities of insecurities within the concert of insurgency, banditry and kidnapping imbroglios in Nigeria between 2019 and 2023. The six geo-political zones of the country were captured for the exercise, but enlisting emphasis on 2 states from each region. These states are Katsina and Zamfara for the North-west; Borno, and Adamawa for the North-east; Niger and Plateau for the North-central; Ekiti and Ogun for the South-west; while the South-east had Imo and Ebonyi States, and the South-south geopolitical zone had Rivers and Cross River States selected for the exercise, inclusive of the FCT (Fig. 1).

**Population of respondents:** These numbered 1200 from the 6 geopolitical zones at 200 each, while 100 respondents only featured from the FCT, totaling 1300 over the years under review. The sum of 30% respondents was marked out for the Hausa-Fulani and 25% each for Yoruba and Ibo, while the remaining 20% were earmarked for the other minorities.

**Research design:** Within the above layout therefore, the activities of Boko Haram and other related insurgent bandits in the country were noted and recorded for 5 years between 2019 and 2023, through a semi structured interview with focus group discussion, while secondary data were obtained electronically from the internet through visual and audio-visual platforms, as well as from the print media, among other sources. The semi structured interview with focus group



**Fig. 1: the Study Areas**

discussion is an informal dialogue applied in a very flexible way towards approaching a group number of individuals that participated or have concerted knowledge on a particular subject. Military and police personnel, the civil society, the civil aids workers, and the elderly people were amply consulted for information, using availability or convenience sampling technique.

**Methods of data collection:** The research was carried out alongside 3 research assistances from each of the 6 geopolitical zones with those that are familiar with the terrain of each of the zones, and again speak the uttermost languages of the area unitarily or collectively. In most cases, telephone conversations were used to divulge information across the two ends. The interview documents were reviewed by senior colleagues, and also subjected to Cronbach’s alpha analysis to test the coefficient of their consistencies, by administering copies of the interview documents to 10% of the respondents which indicated 0.85 reliability contexts and high enough for a good result.

**Data analysis technique:** The information gathered from secondary data was scrutinized through the internet for correctness and reliability, and was therefore related with the primary data within the causes of the scenario and its effects on the society as it affects food production and agro allied

industries for food security in Nigeria. These were inclusively presented with descriptive statistics in the realms of pictograms, histograms and bar charts.

### **Results and Discussion: Pointers of Insecurities in Nigeria**

**The Boko Haram insurgents:** Boko Haram is an Islamic sectarian movement that was initiated by Muhammed Yusuf. He was a well known preacher and crusader of the Izala sect of Islam, whose campaign on Boko Haram began in the year 2002 in Maiduguri, the north-eastern region of Nigeria, with a view of opposing western education alongside with his followers. The initial intent proclaimed was to uproot corruption and injustice in Nigeria, which the group blamed on Western influences, and invariably to impose Shari'ah (Islamic law) as a medium of justice in Nigeria, according to respondents. To achieve this, they began to radicalize their discourse to reject all secular aspects of Nigerian society (*The Guardian 2018*).

The movement consequently fractured into autonomous groups and started an insurgency in the country in the year 2009 when Yusuf was killed during the sect's uprising where many of the Jihadis groups were also killed. According to respondents, the uprising started from Bauchi, and escalated to Borno, Yobe and Kano, upon which the BBC News reported the killing of over 700 of the militant sect by Nigerian military forces in a bid to suppress the uprisings (Omeni, 2017). Afterwards, the radicals regrouped under the leadership of the deputy to late Yusuff, Abubakar Shekau, with the support of external influences, according to respondents, which the BBC News reported as other jihadist organizations including al-Qaeda and al-Shabaab. However, with the primacy of Shekau among the insurgents, therefore, they were collectively focusing on overthrowing the Nigerian government, despite internal bewilderment and challenges of authority within the group from rivals such as Abu Usmatul al-Ansari's Salafist conservative faction and the Ansaru faction (Okoroafor and Ukpabi, 2016).

The coming in of President Goodluck Jonathan, a Christian faithful, after the death of President Yar'adua further provoked the rebel group, and they carried out dastardly activities during his tenure as Nigerian President, according to respondents. These were the expansions of hostages for territorial captivity in the northeastern Nigeria, the bombings and shootings at the Abuja police headquarters, the United Nations building in Abuja, as well as accelerated attacks in Damaturu (Yobe), Maiduguri (Borno), Kano, Jos (Plateau), and a host of other locations, including



several churches and mosques. These led to the death of scores of people at the time, including the military personnel, the police and the civilian Joint Task Force that were assisting the law enforcement agencies in the crusade of counter-insurgency (COIN) campaign against the Boko Haram (Omeni, 2017).

**Banditry and Kidnapping:** Banditry in Nigeria actually commenced in the early 70s with armed robbery, when Oyenusi and his gang engaged Nigerians in their robbery sagas. Concordance report however enumerated that Babatunde Folorunsho reigned and operated almost the same time with Dr. Oyenusi: while Shina Rambo, Lawrence Anini and Monday Osunbor followed in the 80s, but not as ruthless as Oyenusi and his contemporaries. Additionally, Inspector George Iyamu was however a police-officer-accomplish aiding the Anini group to succeed in their operations (Oluwaseun Osewa, 2024).

On the other hands, the robbers of the 2000s were ruthlessly inclusive, but, particularly, of Abiodun Egunjobi, a one-eyed man, notorious for callous armed robbery that operated covering the whole of South-west, Kogi and Kwara States. Concordant report moreover informed that Abiodun was more ruthless than any armed bandit in the history of Nigeria, and that Obidiozor Otokoto was only a ritualistic robber, with general crime merchandise, among other notorious robbers in the country (Ejiogu Enyeribe, 2017).

Respondents information also affirmed that armed robbery act is nowadays replaced with kidnapping because people no longer carry cash about unlike those days. This was reiterated in agreement with the recent Nuhu Ribadu's public address during the second day of All Nigerian Editors Conference in Akwa Ibom State, identifying with the metamorphosis of insecurity from armed robbery to kidnapping for ransom as analyzed in Yafugborhi, Alechenu, Oniegbu, Agbo, Obahopo, and Hassan (2023) report. Conversely, kidnapping is the act of abducting someone and holding them captive. In other words, it is the crime of taking away a person by force, deceit, or threat, and detaining that person against their will, with the aims of enslavement of such victims, forceful marriage to the victim, and extortion of ransom money from them as the case may be.

Kidnapping is the greatest crime in Nigeria today, and it cuts across the 6 geopolitical zones and the FCT, Abuja. It had become a lucrative business which most over-excited youths

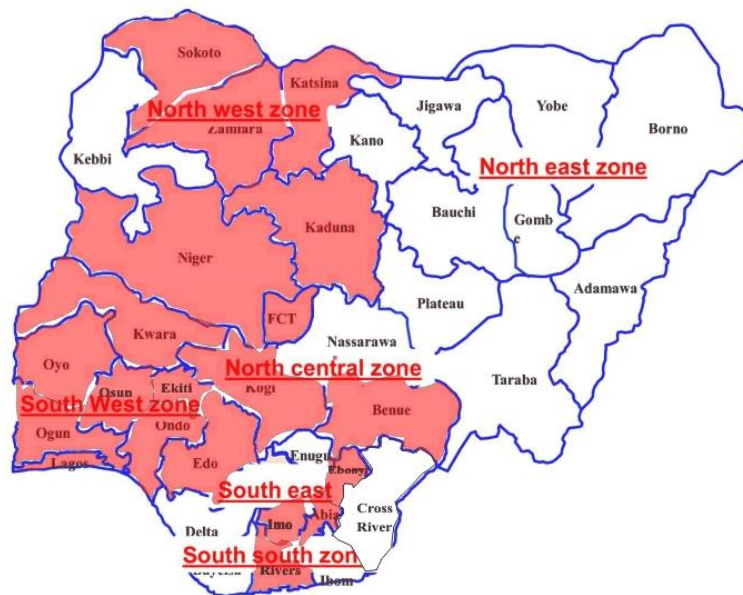
tends to venture into for quick wealth (Emanemua and Akinlosotu, 2016). However, the evil act is not peculiar to Nigeria alone but is a global problem. This dastard act started and was mainly isolated to the Niger Delta (South-south) region, where militants mostly went after oil workers in the early 2000s. However, kidnapping for ransom on a commercial scale became rampant in Nigeria in 2011, spreading across all the 36 states and the country's capital, FCT Abuja, and a few years later, particularly in 2020, 2021, and 2022, the North-central and North-west became the hardest-hit regions due to the spread of terrorism and banditry (Olayinka, 2023) fig. 2.

In the north-west, notorious armed bandits emerged across the zone after the leading climax of Boko Haram militants. Notorious bandit leader such as Ali Kachalla had many followers with several villages of Zamfara and Sokoto States under his hostage control, and collecting royalties from the rural farmer victims. This is corroborated in the report from Daily Trust which confirmed the activities of Ali Kachalla who had over 200 bandit group habituating inside the Kuyambana Forest, and having Nigerian villages of Zamfara and Sokoto States such as Dandalla, Madada and Gobirawa Kwacha under their hostage, from where they launch attacks into various other villages in the vicinity (Bello and Abdullahi, 2021). Other militant groups' leaders, according to respondents include Abubakar Abdullahi, known as Dogo Gide, Kachalla Halilu, Sububu Seno, Dan Karami, Adamu Aliero Yankuzo, Bello Turji, among many others.

The South-east region is also one of the deadliest hotbeds of abduction and kidnappings, and it is usually very unsafe in the region to thrive carelessly, especially the non-natives, according to respondents. In late April 2019, two Chinese construction workers were abducted on their site at Ohaozara, Ebonyi State as reported in the Channels Television News of 4<sup>th</sup> June, 2020 (Urwah and Usman, 2022). Also, the abduction and kidnapping of the head of Methodist church in Nigeria, Samuel Kanu on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> May, 2022, on their way to Oweri airport after a church event, and many other abduction and killings of innocent citizens and traditional rulers in the communities, among many defaced attitudes of the IPOB members and other bandits were reported on the Punch Newspapers and BBC in July, 2022. The abduction of the bishop resulted in the payments of an eventful ransom of one hundred million naira (Urwah and Usman, 2022).

The central states of Plateau, Niger, and Benue among others usually witness farmer-herder clash and the Muslim-Christian religious crisis. These calamities had spanned several decades in

these communities, according to respondents. The Plateau State abduction and massacres of 10<sup>th</sup> April, 2022, and the kidnapping of dozens and killing of about 55 persons on



**Fig. 2: hotspots for Kidnapping for Ransom in Nigeria as of December, 2023**

the 10<sup>th</sup> of June, 2023 in two villages of Niger State, and 3 students from the Federal University of Agriculture, Markurdi, Benue State that were kidnapped and released on the 24<sup>th</sup> April, 2021, at 10:20 pm (Nanlong, Hassan-Wuyo, and Abubakar, 2022), among others, had been reported.

In addition to the above, respondents also indicated that abduction for ritual killings are more synonymous to the South-west among the social ills that bedevils Nigeria. Although, Ayodele Oluwafemi (2021) reiterated that abduction for rituals' pandemic are widespread across many states in Nigeria, which spanned from Kano, Edo, Zamfara, Imo, Enugu, Osun, Oyo, Nassarawa, Niger, Rivers, Abia to Ogun States, among others. On March 24, 2014, there was the discovery of a kidnappers den in Soka community, Ibadan, where several human skulls and body parts were discovered. May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015, witnessed the decomposing body of Precious Kessington Omorodion, a 23 year old, who was discovered in a kidnappers den in Ota, Ogun State after 18 days of disappearance (Ayodele Oluwafemi, 2021).

Capturing of school children in Nigeria is now one of the new dimensions of banditry attack, which varies from targeted individuals to kidnappings in schools and communities, according to respondents. More than 1,680 school children have been kidnapped and abducted in

Nigeria since the commencement of the calamity in the year 2014 when 276 school girls from Chibok Girls Secondary School, Borno State were abducted. The fear of such attack that becomes a recurrent decimal in Nigeria created fear and stopping some children from attending school, according to field report and as reported in Olukoya (2021) analysis.

### **Causes of Insecurity in Nigeria**

**Poverty:** Information received across varying respondents indicated that wide populations of Nigerians are very poor, and that no substantial piteous assistance is coming from the privileged ones in the society to assist even their blood relations, making poverty widespread and severe in Nigeria. It is so amazing to wonder how severe poor people in the country manage to survive for lack of basic necessity of life, and little wonder to these effects as Nigeria was described as having the awful distinction of being the world capital of poverty. Furtherance to the above, in the year 2022, it was estimated that 88.4 million people in Nigeria lived in extreme poverty, as the number of men living on less than \$1.90 a day in the country reached about 44.7 million, while that of women was reported as 43.7 million. This however, is one of the basic causes of insecurity in Nigeria (World Poverty Clock, 2023).

**Unemployment:** Situation of unemployment in Nigeria is also one of the causes identified by the respondents as responsible to the incessant insecurity in the country. Most adult wakes up in the morning without having a specific operational target of where to proceed for the day. The main cause of underlying unemployment has been described as the disparity between job opportunities and the growing number of young people entering the labour market each year. Furthermore, the unemployment rate in Q2 2023 was 4.2% representing an increase of 0.1% from the figure recorded in Q1 of 2023 which was 4.1%, according to NBS (2023). The implication of the above statistics is that many Nigerians may not be able to cater for their primary needs such as food, shelter, clothing etc. When this happens, the resultant consequence is that a large numbers of people willing to work but unable to secure gainful employment may deviate and embrace anti-social behaviour (Ugba Dajo and Linus Akor (2022).

**Socio-economic and political marginalization:** Nigeria is in the rumbles of socio-economic and political marginalization syndrome for many years now. Every tribal group cries woes of this

calamity. It was further portrayed that almost all the geographical regions would always complain when it is not their kinsman on the mantle of leadership in the country. The Igbo people of the south-east, especially, had cried woefully of political marginalization and injustice in Nigeria since the end of the civil war that ravaged Nigeria, losing about one million lives. So also are the Yoruba, seeking independence through self determination with Sunday Igboho (Ugba Dajo and Linus Akor, 2022).

**Corruption:** Corruption is dynamic, and varies from one region to another. In Nigeria, it is observed to be an hydra-headed problem, and a constant phenomenon that had defied solutions for several years due to the type of people that are involved, mostly sacred and untouchable, leading to the backward retrogression in the country's economic growth and development in view of bad governance, according to respondents. Nigeria was estimated recently to have lost over \$400 billion to corruption since independence. Moreover, it is perceived in the 2020 Transparency International Corruption Perception Index that Nigeria is a highly corrupt country, with a score of 25%, while its corruption ranking increased from 146 in 2019 to 149 in 2020 out of 180 countries surveyed (Salisu Ahmed Kabiru, 2019).

**Cultism and ritual killings:** Cultism and ritual killing is another twin epidemic in Nigeria eating deep into the fabrics of the country's national trust and cohesion. Cultism is practiced within the society, covering the communities, schools, markets, worship places, etc, and ritual killing may be carried out by traditional worshippers and within other socio-cultural activities in schools, markets, clubs, and other extramural worship centres, according to respondents. The hallmark of a ritual killing however is evidence of acts not necessary to bring about death, but bite marks, excessive violence, and sexual assault which may be found in connection with a ritual killing. On October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017, the Ogun State police arrested 6 members of a syndicate allegedly involved in killing people for ritual purposes across the state, and on Oct 5<sup>th</sup> 2019, Emmanuel Aro and Anu Olofin, both aged 25, were arrested with a human skull along Ijoun road Eggua axis of Abeokuta, Ogun State; and in Osun State, ritualists' den allegedly operated by 2 siblings known as Monsuru Tajudeen and Lawal Tajudeen, located around Yemoja area in Iwo, Osun State was discovered on December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020 (Ayodele Oluwafemi, 2021), among others.

**Proliferation of small arms and light weapons:** Small arms and light weapons are a weapon of choice for the militaries, insurgents, terrorists, vigilantes, armed herders, armed bandits, and other criminal syndicates (Aja, 2023). The proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) started in Nigeria after the civil war of 1967-1970, as the participants of the war were not properly rehabilitated but grossly neglected by the relevant authorities, according to respondents. Additionally, after the forceful ouster of President Mamman Gaddafi of Libiya, effective administrative control became lose in the country, which make ways for free flow of SALWs into Nigeria and other African countries.

### **Effects on the Society and Food Security**

The several insecurity delinquencies in Nigeria had been identified as the indices against food production activities and food security (Ladan, 2017). This is because the underlining unrests are the declining factors undermining effective food production activities of agro allied industries for food sufficiency in the country, as most places where any of these indices manifests are the dwelling places of the rural farmers, which is the food production unit of the country. The following are therefore some of the indices against food security orchestrated by the emergence of insecurities in Nigeria.

**Communal conflicts:** Communal clashes can be divided into 2 broad spectrums. These are ethno-religious conflicts and herder-farmer conflicts, particularly over land and/or cattle (OCHA, 2024). It was further reiterated that ethno-religious conflicts are attributable primarily to cultural, ethnic, or religious divides such as religious crisis between Muslims and Christian communities. These clashes occur in several parts of Nigeria in different dimensions, and none of the six regions, including the FCT is excluded from the catastrophes. However, the most impacted states are those of the Middle Belt like Kwara, Niger, Benue, and Plateau, extending to Adamawa and Taraba States, with a gross devastation in Benue State where many lives and properties had gone down (Nte, 2016).

Communal clashes had emanated from land ownership crisis like the imbroglios between the Dumna Ward of the Boshikiri communities in Guyuk LGA and Laya Ward of the Kupte, Wuro, Mallam Isa and Tudun Wada communities of Adamawa State between 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> June, 2022 (OCHA, 2024). Furthermore, the Kwara conflicts between the Fulani and the Nupe people where

a farmer identified as Usman Baba was killed in the defense of his farm being grazed by herders at night, and with the razing down of several settlements at Eshijiko, Pada district of Pategi LGA of Kwara state are critical examples. The clash also led to the destruction of farm crops such as maize, guinea corn, and cassava (Oyekola, 2023).

**Invasion of communities and village pillage:** Invasion of communities and village pillage is also one of the effects of social unrest, and it constitute greatly to food insecurity in Nigeria. The invaders are usually armed against the armless communities, dredging havocs with gross fatalities, according to respondents and field observation, and disrupting farming activities (Ladan, 2017). Examples of these in recent times are the invasion and attack of about 28 communities on Christmas Eve at Mangu, Bokkos, and Barkin Ladi LGAs of Plateau State where over 185 people were killed in their sleep, about 221 houses burnt, and over 10,000 persons displaced. Additionally, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January, 2015, the Boko Haram fighters invaded and kidnapped about 40 boys and young men from Malari village, a farming community in Borno State (Okoronkwo, 2024). As such, parents and relatives of these children would not be able to engage in any farming activities or agro-businesses, but rather struggling to get the demanded ransom to free their wards.

**Kidnapping and killing of farmers:** Most rural farmers are heads of families upon which huge dependences are based. Such families that lose their heads to the kidnappings and killings from bandits often experience food insecurity in the absence of their benefactors who supply them (wives and children) with basic food necessities, according to respondents. Killing of 15 farmers by bandits at Yargamji village of Batsari LGA, Katsina State on the 6<sup>th</sup> of July, 2020 after shooting sporadically and injuring several others was reported (Aminu, 2020). In Ondo State, suspected Fulani herdsmen attacked the farm of a former Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Chief Olu Falae, at Ilado village in Akure North Local Government Area of Ondo State. The hoodlum burnt down five hectares of the oil palm farm. This attack preceded the attacks later carried out in his farm killing his security guards after his earlier kidnap by the bandits in September, 2015 and released after three days (Oke and Olawale, 2019).

The current state of insecurity from kidnapping bandits is however one among the most devastating challenges crippling Nigeria. According to Nigeria Security Tracker (NST), 19,366 Nigerians have been kidnapped in 2,694 kidnapping instances over the last ten years as of the end

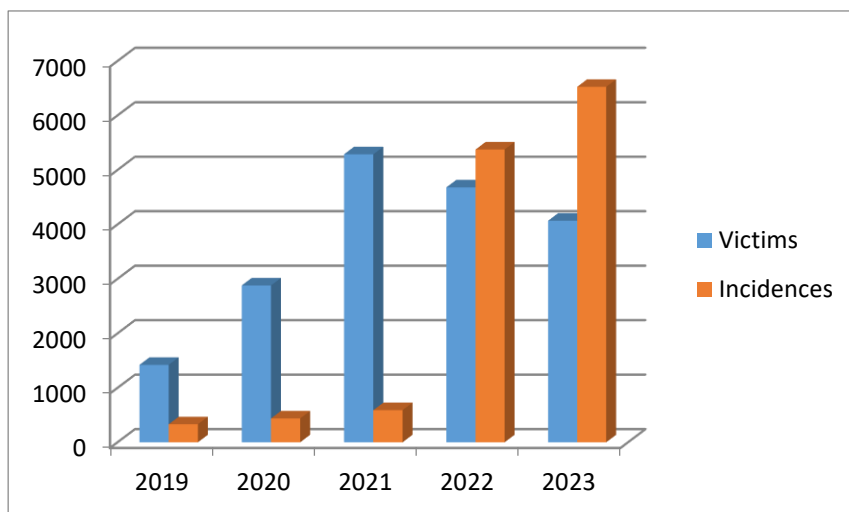
of June 2023 (NST, 2023). Since 2014, kidnapping had increased tremendously across Nigeria due to insecurity, and it got to the peak in 2021 compared to previous years (Olayinka, 2023). Available data also further indicated that more people are dying in Nigeria from the security lapses over any other means. In the year 2019, 1,421 victims fell to insecurity mishaps with 331 security incidences, while it was 2,879 victims in 2020 with 439 incidences. The year 2021 had 5,287 victims, within 590 security incidences, and in 2022, it was 4,680 victims with 5,375 security incidences. Also in 2023, it was 4,067 victims amidst 6,525 security incidences including security operations, fig. 3 (Olayinka, 2023). In essence, insecurity affects food production by 96.4%, and specifically, kidnapping accounts for 79.1% of why the farmers cannot access their farms and farm businesses (Usman Birat, 2022).

**Inhibition of domestic agricultural production:** Respondent reports and field observation also informed that it is impossible to carry out farming activities in an insecure environment, and crisis laden society tends to affect food security and creating avenue for food shortage. The invasion of herdsmen on farmers' farmlands creates scarcity of arable land for the cultivation of food crops which in turn threatens food security and disrupts both the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Net Domestic Product (NDP) of the country (Usman Birat, 2022). Moreover, the recent attacks on the South East and South Western part of Nigeria by Fulani herdsmen on their hosting community in Imo, Ebonyi, Abia, Ekiti, Osun, Oyo, Ogun and Ondo States called for proactive actions as many souls were brutally murdered and landed properties, like vegetative, totally destroyed by this marauding Fulani herdsmen (Oke and Olawale, 2019).

**Blocking of local trade routes:** Local trade routes found along roads linking rural markets where buyers and sellers of foodstuffs trends through, especially on market days are sometimes blocked by the bandits to intersect the traders vehicles, snatching the foodstuff meant for sales in the market, as well as the money meant for the purchase, and then, kidnap the traders till large sum of monies are paid as ransom, according to respondents. This prevents good access to marketing and distribution of food items, thereby causing hike in prices of food items as the supply of basic goods is disrupted, absorbing the contents of food insecurity in the neighbourhoods. On Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> January, 2020, a section of Jibia to Batsari road was barricaded, and 38 traders returning from Jibia weekly market were kidnapped, and On 28<sup>th</sup> October, 2020, bandits also blocked Danmusa to Runka road, robbing traders coming to Runka weekly



market. Nonetheless, insecurity affects food production by 96.4%, with food shortage and high food prices accounting for 63.5% and 34.1% respectively, according to Usman Birat (2022) analysis.



**Fig. 3: Analysis of Kidnapped Victims and incidences in Nigeria between 2019 and 2023**

**Relocation of farming communities:** Farming communities are habitually relocated to IDP camps or safer locations at the event of incessant attack and invasion of the communities. These camps inconveniently serve as temporary abodes pending better atmosphere to return to their community, according to respondents and field observation. Available data further indicated that as of June, 2023, a total number of 2,295,534 IDPs mostly from the rural farming communities of 471,346 households were available in North-eastern Nigeria alone, comprising Adamawa, Borno, Yobe, Gombe, Taraba, and Bauchi States (IOM, 2023). Additionally, as the security landscape in Benue State continues to be fluid and uncertain with over 5 security incidences by herders on farmers in various communities, thousands of people, mostly women and children were hosted in the already overcrowded IDP camps and communities in 5 LGAs (UNHCR, 2023). Farming communities in IDPs cannot produce food and participate in any agro allied business activities.

**Payment of Ransom:** When people are kidnapped, the expectation of the bandits is to get ransom from the family of the victim before securing release and freedom. This is very devastating on the paths of the people, especially the peasant farmers who at times sell off their (collective) properties including farmlands before raising the soaring ransom bids. Ransom payment is argued to be the

reason why kidnapping persists in Nigeria, despite the available legislation against it (Ayinde, Otekunrin, and Akinbode, 2020).

A report on the official website of Premium Times Nigeria on August 13, 2022 cited SBM Intelligence reported in 2020 that between June 2011 and end of March 2020, kidnappers received at least \$18.34 million in Nigeria as ransom. Punch newspaper in Nigeria also reported in their official website of 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 2022 that a cumulative of over N13 billion have been paid to non-state actors as ransom between June 2011 and July 2022 (Urwah and Usman, 2022).

Hence, the acts had become a lucrative business which prevalent avarice youths ventures into for aberration behaviours, according to respondents. Nonetheless, Nigeria ranked top ten countries for kidnapping foreign citizens in 2022, and in recent years had the highest number of kidnapping for ransom cases worldwide (Urwah and Usman (2022)). These payments impoverish the farmers and render them incapable to finance any potential farming activities at the detriments of food security in the society, thus contributing very immensely to the deficiency of foods, and consequently threatening food security. In July 2022, Daily Trust reported that N800 million was paid to terrorists to secure the release of seven captives seized from the AK9 train service attacked on the Abuja–Kaduna route. The released victims were among the dozens of passengers abducted on March 28 by gunmen who derailed the moving train, as analyzed in Urwah and Usman (2022).

**Seizing of Farmlands:** Farmers are chased out of their farms and their farmlands seized. Seizing of farmlands from legitimate farmers occurs where farmlands are close to the forest hideouts of bandits or villages that have been completely deserted due to incessant attacks by bandit (Ahmed-Gamgum 2018). The seized farmlands are used as grazing fields by the bandits for the cattle they acquired illegally through rustling, according to respondents. Additionally, in some areas and instances, the bandits drive in their cattle to graze and destroy the farmers' crops that are at advanced stages when enrichment plantings may be impossible or too late to meet up the remaining period of crop-growth. In Tangaza LGA of Sokoto State, the herdsmen seized and invaded farmlands belonging to farmers (Ladan and Matawalli, 2020). These acts create scarcity of land for the cultivation of food crops which in turn threatened food security, as well as the security of the state and its economic productivity. Also, in Ogun State, some farm communities of Ikotun,

Ologiri, Akeru, Ilukan, Ijege and Ajibode in Ketu Local Council Development Area had their farms invaded, hewed down their palm trees, vegetables plants and cassava, and opened fires on the farmers that challenged them (Oke and Olawale, 2019).

**Cattle Rustling/Theft of Cattle:** Cattle rustling are another form of crime reigning in Nigerian rural communities whereby heavily armed men raids communities and stealing large flocks of cattle and other farm animals like horses, camels, and sheep. The bandits shoot into the air sporadically, scared the villagers, and enters the yards of the common rural farmers, untie their cattle and other animals and cart them away, according to field report. The pervasiveness of cattle rustling especially in the northern part of Nigeria has been extensive with thousands of the incidence reported by the cattle, rearers every year (Oke and Olawale, 2019). In Safana LGA of Katsina State, the bandits had rustled about 110 cows, 350 goats and sheep in a series of attacks on the village of Kunkunna in the months of June and July, 2020, according to Freedom Radio (2020) daily enlightenment programme “Indaranka”.

This is not limited to Katsina State, but runs through other parts of the 6 ecological regions of the country, and particularly the North-east, North-west and the Central region, as it diffused southwards to the South-east, South-west and the Niger Delta, according to information from respondents. The act of cattle rustling is brutal, often become lethal, and leading to deaths, displacement of people and destruction of properties, with inimical political, economic, and social consequences on the people, and debilitating impact on the stability of the country (Madueke, 2023). In Niger State, the activities of cattle rustlers who often invade communities in the state to steal cows and unleash terror on villagers like in Efogi in Mokwa local government area of the state resulted in no less than 27 people gruesomely murdered including the Chief Imam of the village (Ahmed-Gamgum 2018).

**Burning and Raiding of Food Reservoirs:** Bandits often engage in the burning and looting of food reserves (silos), thus creating food scarcity and food insecurity in the community and the society at large. Local farmers usually store foods, especially grains and yam tubers after harvest, expected to be used for a larger part of the year, according to field report. The attack on Unguwar Dankar and Tsauwa villages of Batsari LGA on 14<sup>th</sup> February, 2020, and the attack on Unguwar Gizo in Faskari LGA on the 29<sup>th</sup> May, 2020 in Katsina State; and the killing of farmers and razing down of 60 silos in Sokoto State (New Telegraph, 2023) are typical examples (fig. 4).



**Fig. 4: Acts of Banditry**

Culled from [Maiharaji Altine \(2023\)](#).

The invasion of community, chasing out of farmlands, destruction of farms, killing of farmers were also recorded in Kogi State as some Fulani herdsmen invaded two Local Government Councils of the state. After feeding their cattle in one of the areas with the produce of a farm, they attacked the owner of the farm. The farmer was chased to the village where the Fulani also succeeded in killing 10 other persons and then set their farmlands on fire Ahmed-Gamgum 2018).

**GDP growth deficiency:** The more Nigeria got drowned in the present insecurity palaver, the lesser the growth of its GDP, and the higher the inflation trends. Nigeria's GDP growth rate fell to 1.9% in 2023. This is down from 2.2% in 2022, while the inflation rate which has also been on the rise hit 18.3% in December, up from 16.5% in November, 2023 (NBC, 2023). Presently, the Naira hovers between 1000 naira in September to the dollar threshold, and the Nigerian currency has since lost more than 400 naira since the resumption of the present government in Nigeria. This prompted widespread anger and criticism among the citizenries about the government ability to correctly diagnose the ailment of Nigerian economy and proffer appropriate solutions (Shehu, Olayinka 2023).

**Inflation:** Bandits are now turning to a very big calamity in recent times to the rural farmers who are mostly the food production webs of the country. It is impossible to carry out farming activities in an insecure environment, and crisis laden society tends to affect food security by creating avenue for food shortage. This is feasible through frequent and incessant attacks and fatalities on farmers which increased the physical assault and lack of conscious to concentrate on farming activities (Oke and Olawale, 2019). Hence, the shortage in the supply of basic food commodities to the

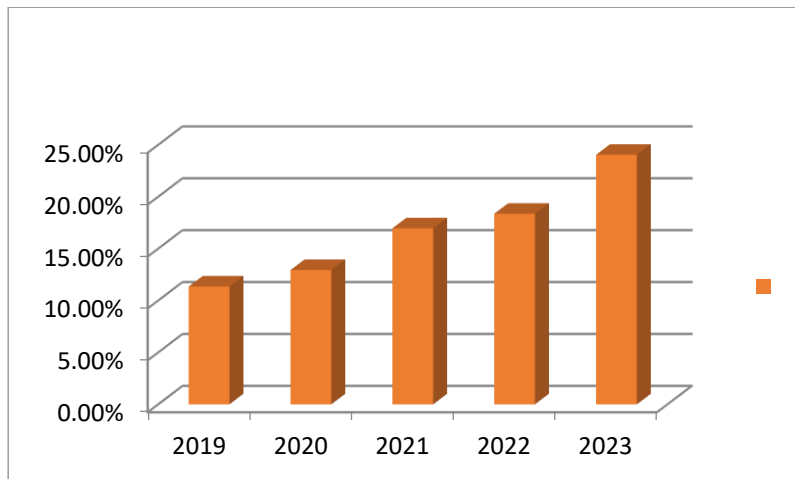
market against the demand of the people in dire needs of these necessities of life. Thus, and thereby aggravate the plights and pains of the defenseless farmers, in view of the supply pull inflation that results, causing gross rise in the prices of food items and other basic necessities (fig.5), according to field report. Consequently, the inflationary trends on basic commodities emerged. Food inflation rate in December, 2023 was 33.93% on a year-on-year basis amounting to 10.18% increase compared to what obtained in 2022 (December) which was 23.75%. So, in recent years, food prices have been on the rise across Nigeria. Average inflation rate on food items according to the CBN (2023) also between the year 2019 and 2023 were recorded as 11.35% in 2019, 12.94% in 2020, 16.96% in 2021, 18.36% in 2022, and 24.04% in 2023 which represents about 7.02% increase as recorded for 2022, fig 6.

**Conclusion:** Insecurity is a catastrophe that entangled the peace of Nigeria against its social, political, and economic development for upward of two decades now, upon which no substantial solution has been proffered to get the country functioning in the dream directions of the founding fathers. From the civil war in the early days to armed robbery, insurgency, banditry and kidnapping which is the latest development, Nigeria's social disturbances had aggravated to the point of putting life out of its existence. Fatality scores had reached a senseless and debased catastrophe too gory to narrate, but scary, and simply timid, to the extent of disruption in food production and upsurge of food insecurity. Being impossible to carry out farming activities in an insecure environment therefore, a crisis laden society is susceptible to food security disorder by creating avenue for food shortage as bandits are becoming a very big calamity to the rural farmers who are mostly the food production webs of the society, through frequent and incessant attacks and fatalities. The imminent contention of supply pull inflation is also scary, going by the records of 25.12% in the year 2023, and on foods as 33.93% on a year-on-year basis.

**Recommendations:** The following recommendations are proffered to settle the scores of insecurity bedeviling Nigeria over the years: There should be avenue for the acquisition of basic education for all from childhood, and should be made compulsory, backed with appropriate legislation and finances. This



**Fig. 5: Some Basic Food Necessities Culled from Sami Olatunji (2022).**



**Fig. 6: Average Inflation Rate on Food Items in Nigeria between 2019 and 2023**

would make the majorities to know their right and where individuals actually belong. The spirit of patriotism should be instituted into the thinking of every individual from childhood, to believe and observe Nigeria first in individuals’ undertaken. This would be made feasible with good governance where rights of individuals are not denied. Equal distribution of resources among the 6 geopolitical zones of the country is very essential. This would make possible the reduction in the present level of poverty and improper determinations, as governance would be closer to the grassroots, which is very crucial for every individual to have a sense of belongings. Effective national reconciliation drive should be put in place to address all the earlier lapses of federalism in the country, while

the development commission set up to reconstruct and realign the North-east in view of the insurgencies thereupon should be replicated in all the 6 geopolitical zones of the country to reconstruct all damaged trances. The establishment of concerted occupational ecosystem monitoring and conflict resolution committees now becomes imperative in Nigeria. These should be put in place at all levels of coexistence, and should encompass the farmers, herdsmen, representatives of the various governments (local, state and federal), traditional rulers, community leaders, labour leaders, and youth leaders; and should be replicated at the communities, local and state government levels. There should be specific independent national laws to deal with the acts of insurgency, banditry and kidnapping in a way that would address our cultural values and heritage, apart from the conventional acts, so that our present distorted orientation is corrected for development and posterity. Payments of ransom to kidnappers and bandits should be completely eliminated in the country with stringent laws against the payers and the payees; while the relevant government authorities and agencies concerned with the situation at hand play their uttermost rolls effectively to safeguard the lives and properties of the citizenries. This would put paid to the sullied and senseless acts of insecurity in the country. The political terrain of Nigeria is too rough and unfriendly. It had been reported that political sabotage are recorded within political parties, especially from the electoral losers. Politics should therefore be played with norm intelligence and patriotism, especially after the elections, and working together after elections should be embraced, dropping all oppositional antagonism for the betterment of the country. The present executive and presidential system of government adopted in Nigeria is too expensive and inaccurate to our cultural heritage. As such, a reversal into the parliamentary system of government is hereby recommended, while the country is restructured in line with one of the recommendations of the 2014 constitutional conference. This would also make governance to be closer to the common man.

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