



A Survey of the Impact of Rural Insecurity-Driven Displacement on Agricultural Practices and Food Security in Plateau State, Nigeria

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Abstract:

Rural displacement has been alarming in recent year. The number of people displaced from their ancestral land is on the rise due to the insecurity-driven and exacerbated abandonment of agricultural lands and the disruption of the food supply which affects farmers' livelihoods. Many displaced people attribute their displacement to farmer-herder clashes and reprisal attacks. This investigated investigates the impact of rural insecurity-driven displacement on agricultural practices and food security in the Plateau State. The study employed a mixed research approach, conducting multistage sampling of 116 participants from the IDP camps of Bokokos and Mangu and applying a snowball sampling method the Bassa LGA. The study utilized a structured questionnaire, key informant interviews (KIIs), and focus group discussions (FGDs) to gather information. The findings indicate that farmer-herder clashes resulting in insecurity are the primary cause of displacement, with a large population displaced due to the presumed Jihad war. Abandoned farmlands lead to disruptions in food supplies, making farmers' livelihoods intolerable. We explored the use of ArcGIS on land-use cover before and after displacement, which revealed significant differences in land abandonment after conflict. Thus, fostering resilience in conflict-affected regions is necessary to promote sustainable agriculture and enhance food security.

Keywords: Agricultura practice, conflict, displacement, farmer, food, herd-farmer, insecurity-driven, Plateau State, security

1. Introduction

Nigeria signed the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with a clarion call to all United Nations members to eradicate hunger, achieve food security, and improve health before 2030, which is one of the goals (Sustainable Development Goal Report, 2018). As a nation, Nigeria encourages sustainable agriculture, which will improve people's nutrition and well-being. Before this, the 2012 UNDP Human Development Index ranked Nigeria 153rd out of 187 nations, and the 2015 Global Hunger Index ranked Nigeria 91st out of 104 nations overall (Nigerian Bureau of Statistics Report, 2015). Agriculture is the backbone of the nation's economy, employs roughly two-thirds of its labour force and contribute 40% of GDP. Severe food insecurity affects at least 7.1 million people, necessitating immediate life-saving intervention and livelihood preservation.

Consequently, approximately 44,000 individuals are at risk of famine, indicating a significant hunger level in Nigeria (IOM,2023). Recent occurrences, particularly the recurrent conflicts between herders and farmers in the primarily agrarian Middle Belt region, resulting in the loss of lives and destruction of farmlands, pose a significant impediment to efforts to increasing food output (FAO, 2018). In some areas of the country, clashes between nomadic herders and rural farmers have displaced farming populations and communities. This is particularly prevalent in areas where vast tracts of farmland have encroached upon the traditional grazing routes of pastoralists, leading to heightened tension and violent confrontations between communities. The displacement of approximately 15,000 individuals from their

rural homes has occurred. According to Eme, Onyishi, Uche, and Uche (2014), there have been conflicts between farmers and herders in the North Central region of Nigeria, specifically in Benue, Taraba, Nasarawa, and Plateau states, as well as in the North West region, specifically in Zamfara and Kaduna states. These clashes have resulted in significant losses of human life and property, and fatalities have had a detrimental impact on agricultural operations and related industries.

The aforementioned circumstance above has led to a significant decrease in agricultural yields, which has amplified concerns regarding food scarcity. This conflict has led to the displacement of households engaged in farming activities. The assaults have compelled inhabitants of the impacted communities in the region to seek shelter in the Internal Displaced People (IDPs) camps, thereby causing them to abandon their agricultural pursuits for the sake of their safety, resulting in the neglect of the farming season and the risk of food security (Tran, 2019). According to Agbota (2017) and Duru (2018), many farmers have deserted their farms because of concerns about potential attacks by herders or insurgents. Moreover, the predominantly agrarian societies of the Plateau State have witnessed several conflicts, either the Hausa-Fulani religious crisis or farmers-herders clashes, for over 20 years. Forcible displacement has forced villagers to abandon their inherited farmlands for safety. According to recent studies, only half of the household's labourer on their land, and hectares of land are insufficient to grow the amount of food required for families throughout the year (Lara-Valencia et al., 2022; Shemyakina, Olayiwola, 2020; Siltan, 2019; Carte et al., 2019).

The United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement define internally displaced persons (IDPs) as "individuals compelled or forced to flee or abandon their homes or usual places of residence." Importantly, these individuals have yet to cross an internationally recognized state border. Globally, internal displacement has increased, primarily due to armed conflict and various forms of violence, such as farmer-herder clashes, community-based crises, and ethnic or religious unrest (Duru, 2021). An estimated 205 million individuals risk food insecurity and subsequent migration. Particularly affected is Africa, where 86 million people have experienced displacement (IOM, 2022) in affected. Although the Plateau State is not exceptional in rural displacement, in recent months, areas such as Mangu, Bokkos, and Bassa Local Government Areas (LGAs) have witnessed a flux of displaced persons to IDP camps within the headquarters of each LGAs and the state capital, Jos, as a result of attacks. This has displaced people from farming activities for food security. Researchers have conducted several studies on rural displacement, agricultural practices, and food security, with the primary goal of proposing a long-term solution to address the remote causes of displacement (Olayiwola, 2020; Alam et al., 2020; Carte et al., 2020; Eme et al., 2021; George & Adelajs, 2021 & IOM, 2023). There is rarely is an in-depth study of displaced people's farm activities in Plateau State. This study investigates the effects of insecurity-driven rural displacement on agricultural practices and food security in the Plateau state by tracking displaced rural communities, estimating the number of people displaced, observing land use imagery, and assessing the potential for farming both before and after displacement in the region of the study.

Understanding the dynamics of rural insecurity and its consequences for agricultural and food security allows stakeholders to develop informed solutions to aid affected populations and build resilience in the face of adversity. This study stresses the essential need for coordinated local, national, and international efforts to address the complex interplay of violence, displacement, and food insecurity in Plateau State and other parts of Nigeria.

2. Review of Relevant Literature

2.1 Overview of Food Security

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) estimated that undernourishment affected 870 million individuals in 2012 (FAO, 2012). Most of this population, which amounts to 852 million, resides in developing nations. We identify over 70 million individuals as internally displaced persons (IDPs) (Noack, 2020). The sub-Saharan African region has experienced a severe food crisis, particularly in conflict, environmental calamities such as droughts and floods, and economic disruptions (Noack, 2020).

The primary factors contributing to food insecurity are conflicts and environmental alterations, such as natural calamities, frequently resulting in internal displacement (IDMC, 2019). Conflicts, displacement, and food insecurity reflect the adverse effects of environmental changes on low-income countries with limited statehood, such as Sudan (Liese, 2018 IOM, 2023). In addition, it is essential to note that in circumstances where environmental conditions are declining, and conflicts are prevalent, the mere presence of economic growth may not suffice to address the issue of hunger and attain food security.

Across the nine African countries studied significant food insecurity in urban and peri-urban areas is comparable to that in rural areas. In fact, in some instances, it is slightly higher. These findings suggested that food insecurity is more than a rural issue in most countries examined. However, the severity of food insecurity is more significant in rural areas compared to urban areas, except in North America and Europe (FAO, 2023). Globally, food insecurity has a more significant impact on women and those residing in rural areas. In 2022, 33.3% of individuals residing in rural areas had moderate or severe food insecurity, while the rates were 28.8 % in peri-urban areas and 26.0% in urban areas. The global disparity in food insecurity between genders, which has increased throughout the epidemic, decreased from 3.8% in 2021 to 2.4% in 2022 (FAO et al., WFP & WHO,2023).

2.2 Displacement

According to Osman and Abebe (2023), conflict-related displacement is one of the main factors contributing to food insecurity. Conflicts lead to widespread internal migration, economic downturns, and job losses. Through these mechanisms, disruption and eroding social protection funds result in food insecurity. However, in more tranquil harsh environments, food security has deteriorated. This is because a slowing economy depletes fiscal and foreign exchange resources, impacting food access and availability through fewer imports and reduced fiscal space to shield low-income households from rising domestic food prices (Eme et al., 2014). One of the contributing factors to displacement and consequent food insecurity is the implementation of government-backed development.

Despite the potentially equally severe outcomes, individuals displaced by development projects often receive less attention than those displaced by conflicts (Alam et al., 2020). The persistent displacement of a large population has resulted in significant environmental degradation across various nations and regions. According to the IOM (2023), the cessation of displacement will necessitate simultaneous efforts to stop the deterioration of the environment. The phenomenon of internal displacement has been recognized as a significant contributor to the extensive deforestation observed in the vicinity of numerous large camps in various regions of the country. Owing to civil wars, the country has received significant humanitarian aid. However, the lack of an energy source for many internally displaced persons (IDPs) has limited their livelihood strategies. These strategies include collecting wood for household energy needs and fueling brick kilns, which have become a significant cause of deforestation in settlements (Suliman, 2018).

2.3 Theories

Several theories can be undermined for this study; resources access theory (RAT) and conflict theory were selected to understand insecurity in rural displacement. Jeffrey Pfeffer and Gerald R. Salancik's (1970) resource access theory (RAT) emphasizes the importance of resources in human society, as access and control define power and success. Conflicts have been a recurring issue in human history, often resulting from competition for scarce resources. Conflicts often arise from contested access to natural resources, with land as an overwhelming source of conflict among various user groups and individuals. This theory helps us understand Plateau's prevalent herders and farmers crisis, where Fulani herders's inability to have unhindered access to grazing areas and reserves is a significant factor in conflicts. The theory views access to resources as the leading cause of conflict and violence, with herdsman demanding unhindered access to grazing routes and farmers resorting to violence to challenge their excesses. The theory provides a better understanding of the challenges faced by these groups in ensuring access to resources and preventing conflicts (Ikezue & Ezeah, 2017).

Second, Guzi, Adserà, Pytliková, and Boix introduced the conflict theory in 1990 (Adserà et al., 2016), emphasizing that conflict is the primary cause of internal displacement in impacted regions. This statement highlights the correlation between political and social tensions, violence, and the subsequent forced displacement of people. It also underscores these issues' profound impact on individuals, communities, and society. Within food insecurity and rural livelihoods, the conflict theory highlights the significance of the displacement of agricultural land and resources, which intensifies the problems of food insecurity and poverty. This statement emphasizes the importance of addressing the fundamental reasons behind conflict and displacement, including political and socioeconomic injustice and marginalization, to safeguard rural communities' livelihoods and foster stability and security. The significance of the conflict theory becomes apparent when analyzing the displacement of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the Plateau throughout the era of war spanning from 1990 to 2020. Adserà et al. (2016) assert that a perceived lack of safety and security typically motivates the decision to leave one's location. Protests, strikes, homicides, political instability, and ethnic conflicts collectively contribute to a state of insecurity, which in turn affects the pace of movement. Conflict theory is highly applicable on the Plateau, as the prevailing state of insecurity has led to the forced relocation of more than two million individuals.

3. Methodology

3.1 Study Area

Plateau State is situated in the North Central Region of Nigeria, positioned between latitudes 8° 37' N and 10° 30' N and longitudes 7° 40' E and 8° 37' E (see Figure 1). The state is adjacent to Bauchi State to the north, Taraba State to the east, Nassarawa State to the south, and Kaduna State to the west. The state has a land area spanning 26,901 square kilometers (Timothy, 2006). The Plateau State is situated in the elevated regions of Central Nigeria. The Plateau's climatic conditions, which closely resemble temperate regions, combined with the ample availability of water and pasture, attracted many herders to settle in the region. The area is characterized by two distinct seasons: wet and dry. The wet season in this region commences around April and lasts up to October, while the dry season spans a period of about five months (November to March). The rainfall regime is that of the single maximum, with peak occurrence in August. Annual totals range between 1100 and 1400mm depending on the location, and the regime is controlled by the movement of the inter-tropical discontinuity [ITD] (Peter et al., 2021). The absence of diseases detrimental to livestock has a high concentration of the Fulani people residing on the Plateau. This study focused on three LGAs, Bassa, Bokkos, and Mangu, which were chosen based on their extensive agricultural land, favorable climate, and welcoming atmosphere. However, these Local Government Areas (LGAs) have encountered conflicts between herders and farmers and are currently hosting Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps (See Figure 1).

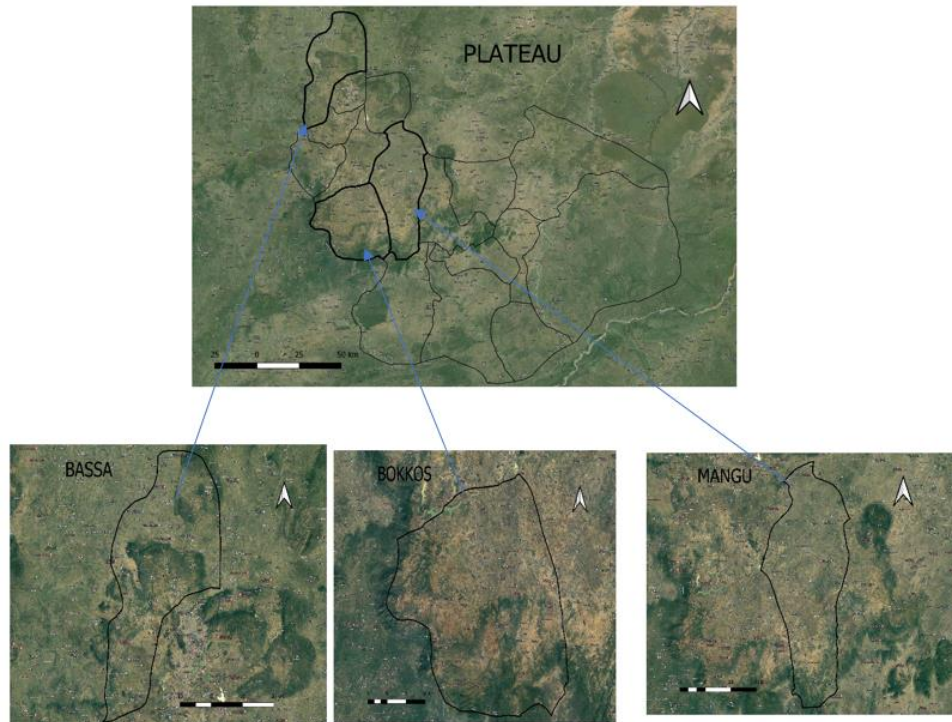


Figure 1: Plateau State with Bassa, Bokkos, and Mangu LGAs.

3.2 Research Methods

The survey adopted a mixed research approach of involving qualitative and quantitative methods to address the effects of rural-driven displacement on agricultural practice and food security. As an interpretive study, it aimed to produce an in-depth understanding and capture the participants' personal experiences. This thorough methodology enables a detailed understanding of the dynamics of rural relocation and its multifarious effects on various levels. A multistage purposeful, random, and snowball sampling was used on displaced people to reach a sample size of 116 participants. Purposive was used to select the 3 LGAs of Bassa, Bokkos, and Mangu, known for farmer-herder clashes. IDP camps were used to administer the structured questionnaire randomly. Although Bassa had no existing IDP at the time of this research, a snowball method was used to administer the questionnaire. Because a quantitative approach was used as a primary means to acquire data, 125 questionnaires were administered, and only 116 were successfully retrieved.

One FGD was conducted in each of the LGAs, with Bassa having 8 participants, Bokkos having 12 participants, and Mangu having 9 participants. They all consist of youth, women, men, and representatives of traditional heads. Key informant interviews (KIIs) were used for the study to develop facts based on displaced people's experiences. As part of building the information collected, a qualitative approach utilized journal papers, books, records, reports, government policy documents, projects or theses, or newspaper articles considered for secondary information. A combination of these methodologies yielded the KAP indicators. We gathered the data, transcribed, coded, and subsequently processed, integrated, and analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis to establish the results of the findings. GIS technology is essential for spatial analysis, allowing for the collection of coordinates from various sources, such as satellite tracking movements, aerial surveys, and field surveys. GIS software, specifically ArcGIS, was used to create a geographic database for analysis. The data preprocessing procedure includes geo-referencing, study area delineation, geodatabase creation, and data digitization into map format. The spatial coordinates of points of land cover are collected to illustrate the necessary characteristics, ensuring effective coordination in the study of abandoned and displaced areas, as demonstrated in Figure 2.

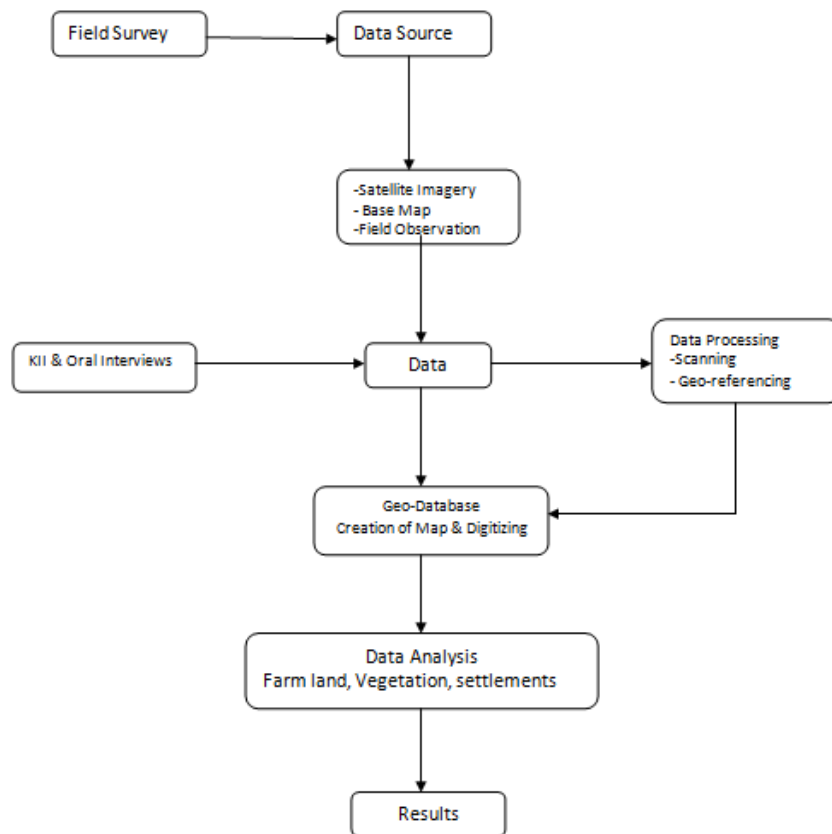


Figure 2: GIS method of data analysis utilized

3.3 Results and Discussion

Table 1 presents a summary of the socio-demographic details of respondents the displaced respondents. The data indicate the proportion of participants in each Local Government Area (LGA), with Bokokos having the highest percentage at 34.5%, Bassa at 33.6%, and Mangu at 31.9%. The highest percentage was male (69%), with an average age between 38 and 47 (35.3%) years, whereas 18 and 27 years were the lowest (9.5%). Most were married (63.8%) and had a secondary certificate (45.7%) in their background education. The majority of these individuals were farmers (74.1%), engaged in agricultural practices (68.1%), and experienced displacement due to attacks by herders (70.7%).

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics

Description	Frequency	Percentage %
Location		
Bassa	39	33.6
Bokkos	40	34.5
Mangu	37	31.9
Gender		
Male	80	69.0
Female	37	31.0
Age		
18-27	11	9.5
28-37	37	31.9
38-47	41	35.3
48-57	23	19.8
58>	4	3.4
Marital Status		
Single	11	9.5
Married	74	63.8
Widow/widower	21	18.1
Divorce	10	8.6
Education Occupation		
Primary	24	20.7
Secondary	53	45.7
Tertiary	29	25
No education	10	8.6
Occupation		
Civil Servant	5	4.3
Business/trading	8	6.9
Students	14	12.1
Farmers	86	74.1
Self-employed	3	2.6
Agricultural Engagement		
Yes	79	68.1
No	37	31.9
Displaced		
Yes	75	64.7
No	41	35.3
Reasons for Displaced		
Terrorist Attack	19	16.4
Land Dispute	15	12.9
Herders' Attack (Fulani)	82	70.7

Table 2 below accounts for the historical background of the security level in the study region. Most displaced persons affirmed that there was no history of insecurity (76.7%), a few stated that they had no idea (12.9%), and only approximately 10.3% stated that they had heard of the history of insecurity in their domain. At the same time, many displaced persons (81%) refuted the existence of inherited insecurity; only a few learned about specific inherited conflicts from their central parents. However, the situation of insecurity is still present (34.5%) in some locations of Mangu LGA and Bokkos, whereas places in Bassa experience occasional attacks (28.4%), with issues of unpredictable attacks (22.4%) in other places within the region of study. Only a few areas experience calmness from attacks. The causes of these attacks were land encroachment (24.1%), ancestral war (6.9%), Jihad (37.2%), political motives

(18.9%), and economic motives (12.9%). Most displaced people are believed that Jihad (37.2%) is the Usman Danfodiyo of the 18th century.

Table 2: Historical Background of Insecurity

Description	Frequency	Percentage %
History of Insecurity		
Yes	12	10.3
No	89	76.7
No idea	15	12.9
Inherited Insecurity Issues		
Yes	21	18.1
No	94	81.0
No idea	3	0.9
When Insecurity Started		
Not quite long	56	48.3
Recently	36	31.0
Very long time	9	7.8
No idea	15	12.9
Present Situation of Insecurity		
Occasionally	33	28.4
Still on	40	34.5
Calm	17	14.7
Unpredictable	26	22.4
Causes of insecurity		
Land encroachment	28	24.1
Ancestral war	8	6.9
Jihad	43	37.2
Political Motive	22	18.9
Economical motive	15	12.9

The attack resulted in the displacement of 31–40 households (41.4%), as well as households with 61 or more members (12.1%) of the total population. There were also households ranging from 6 to 20 (18.1%) and 41 to 60 households (28.4%). Fewer than 5000 displaced people comprise the highest population in each IDP camp, accounting for 36.2% of the total population. Less than 1000 displaced individuals in other camps make up 34.5% of the total population, followed by those above 1000, who make up 24.1%. Finally, over 5000 displaced people account for 5.2% of the total population. This indicates that the maximum number of displaced individuals in each village is less than 5000. There was a consensus among the displaced individuals who had spouses and children that being displaced from the land they had inherited has a significant negative impact on their ability to make a living (55.2%), with the least number of individuals having no notion of what the impacts of displacement are (2.6%).

Table 3: Rural Driven-Displacement

Description	Frequency	Percentage
Household Displaced		
106- 200 households	21	18.1
201-400 Households	48	41.4
401-600 Households	33	28.4
601 & Above	14	12.1
Population Displaced		
Less than1000	40	34.5
Above 1000	28	24.1
Less than 5000	42	36.2
Above 5000	6	5.2
Effect of Displacement		
Sparsely	18	15.5
Adversely	31	26.7
Greatly adversely	64	55.2
No idea	3	2.6

Table 4 illustrates the effects of rural displacement on agricultural practices. It reveals that displaced individuals have abandoned farming (61.2%), neglected irrigated farming (21.6%), and fear gathering their farm output (10.3%). Similar to the previous example, 6.9% of people who raised animals stopped doing so, which led to the highest percentage of people who stopped farming on arable land (61.2%). When it comes to food security, rural displacement causes disruptions in the food supply (52.6%), the high cost of products (29.3%), and the loss of other crops or produce (12.1%). The market stability of crops and the nutrients in consumed food are other factors that contribute to food security. This includes a lack of agricultural goods (27.6%), the loss of lives and property (25%), the loss of livelihood (35.3%), the loss of produce in storage (5.2%), and living in poverty (6.9%). Conversely, these attacks and retaliations resulted in the loss of sustenance, and the majority of the farmers were forced to relocate.

Table 4: Effects on Agricultural Practice, Food Security and Farmers' Livelihood

Effects on Agricultural Practice	Frequency	Percentage
Neglect of Irrigation Farming	25	21.6
Fear of harvesting	12	10.3
Abandon Animal Rearing	8	6.9
Abandon farming (land tillage)	71	61.2
Effects on Food Security		
Disruption of food supply	61	52.6
High cost of produce	34	29.3
Loss of other crops/produce	14	12.1
Other (specify)	7	6.0
Effects of Farmers' Livelihood		
Scarcity of Agricultural products	32	27.6
Loss of lives and properties	29	25.0
Loss of source of livelihood	41	35.3
Loss of produce in storage	6	5.2
Living in Poverty	8	6.9

Table 5 presents the agricultural activities before and after being displaced from inherited land; the majority of the farmers had 3-5 hectares of land size (45.7%), followed by 1-2 hectares of land (30.2%) and 5+ hectares of land (18.1%). In comparison, only a few people have less than one hectare of land (6%). This shows that farmers cultivate large pieces of land for their agricultural activities, with about 3-5 hectares, before being displaced. After the displacement, the number of hectares of land cultivated depopulated with less than 1 hectare of land (75.9%), followed by 1-2 hectares of land (20.7%) and 3-5 hectares (3.4%). The quantity of crops harvested before and after being displaced also shows significant change; 11-30 bags of crops were the highest harvested by an average farmer before the attack (38.8%), followed by 31-50 bags of crops and 51- 100 bags of crops while only a few harvested less than ten bags of crop (1.7%).

Consequently, after the displacement, the quantity of harvest depreciated to the extent that most farmers harvested less than ten bags of crops (58.8%), then 11-30 bags of crops (35.3%) and 31-50 bags of crops. This revealed that the farmers experienced poor harvests due to displacement; they could not access their inherited farmlands because they feared losing their lives. Therefore, they depend on land available in the displaced communities or hired land based on availability and capacities. Supply in any form can be affected by rural displacement; here we observed the responses from participants before relocation: high food supply to the market, farmers' trades were high, and nutritional quality was moderate, only the inability to eat three times a day was low whereas, after displacement, those item 1,2 and 4 were low while the inability was high.

Table 5: Comparison of Before and After Agricultural Practices

Agricultural Activities Description	Before		After	
	Frequenc y	Percentage %	Frequency	Percentage %
Size of Farmland				
Less than Hectare 1	21	18.1	88	75.9
1-2 Hectares	35	30.2	24	20.7
3-5 hectares	53	45.7	4	3.4
5 & Above Hectares	7	6	0	0
Quantity of Crop Harvested				
Less than ten bags (maize)	2	1.7	68	58.8
11-30 bags	45	38.8	41	35.3
31-50 bags	39	33.6	8	6.9
51-100 bags	30	25.9	0	0
Farmer's livelihood				
Food supply to the market	High		Low	
Farmer trades	High		Low	
inability to eat three times a day	Low		High	
Nutritional Quality	Moderate		Low	

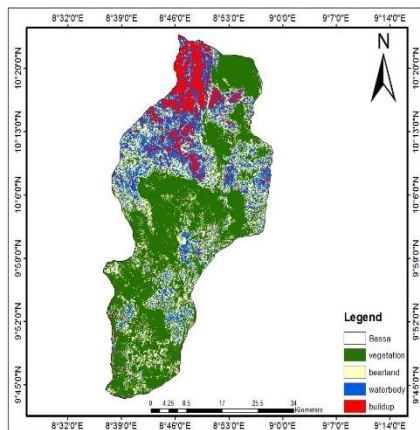


Figure 2 B Land Use Cover of Bassa 2015

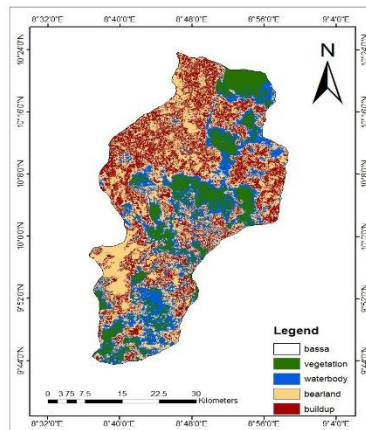


Figure 3 Land Use Cover of Bassa 2019

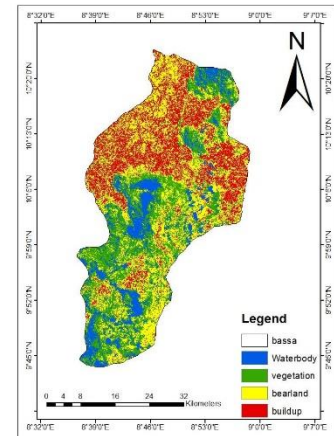


Figure 4: Land Use Cover of Bassa 2023

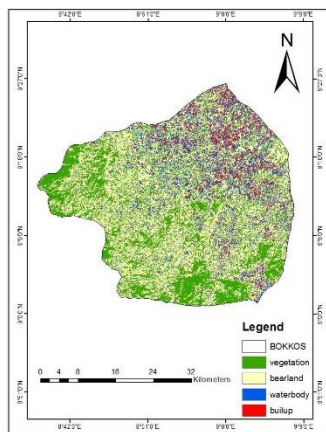


Figure 5: Land Use Cover of Bokkos 2015

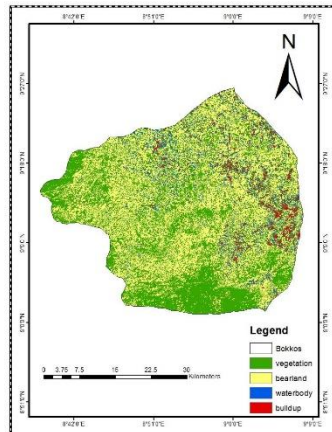


Figure 6: Land Use Cover of Bokkos 2019

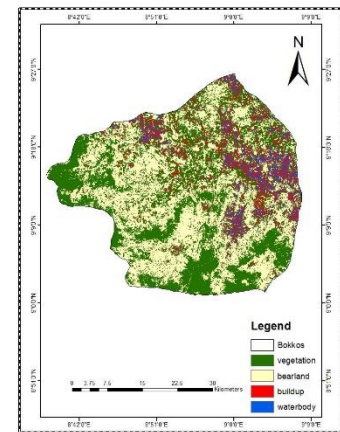


Figure 7: Land Use Cover of Bokkos 2023

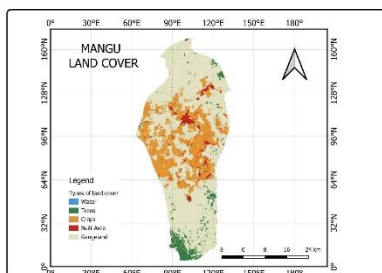


Figure 8: Land Use Cover of Mangu 2017

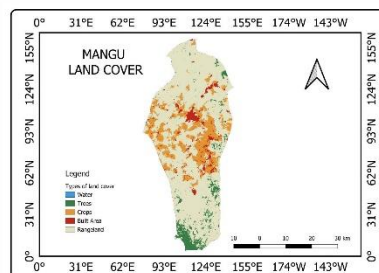


Figure 9: Land Use Cover of Mangu 2019

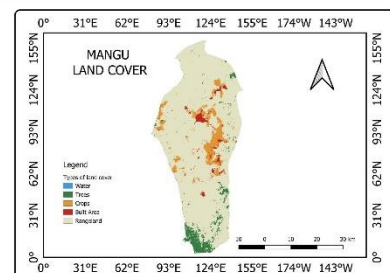


Figure 10: Land Use Cover of Mangu 2023

Figure 11: Land Use Cover of the Study Area from 2015-2023

Figure 11 illustrates the land usage patterns in Bassa, Bokkos, and Mangu from 2015 to 2023, using ArcGIS maps to observe the pattern of cultivation and land utilization from the era of stability and instability. The inherent nature of instability posed a significant obstacle to utilizing GPS technology to pinpoint and locate abandoned land by nearby farmers. According to Figure 2, the analysis of land usage in Bassa revealed high vegetation cover and agricultural activities in 2015, which signifies no conflict within that period. In 2019, more rocky crops, not much vegetation cover, and agricultural activities that signify conflict between farmers and herders experienced decreased agricultural activities. By 2023, there was not much farmer-herder conflict; vegetation and agricultural activities were experienced with noticeable expansion and utilization of land for farming activities. Between 2015 and 2019, the land use in Bokkos indicated a significant utilization of agricultural activities compared to 2023, when farmers

could not cultivate their land due to attacks. Mangu follows the same suit; between 2015 and 2019, significant agricultural cultivation occurred.

Consequently, only small areas of land were cultivated, and agricultural activities took place in 2023 due to consistent and persistent attacks. The land use maps of Bassa, Bokkos, and Mangu revealed the effects of the farmer-herder conflict on farming activities; because farmers were displaced, they could not use the ancestral land to farm, and fear of being attacked at farm resulted in the abandonment of land. This adverse effect caused a shortage of crops, a high cost of grain, and low purchasing in Bassa, Bokkos, and Mangu LGAs.

The study discovered that the reason people from the rural areas were displaced was because the herders, who are regarded as Fulani Militias, attacked their villages. According to one of the key informants' interviews (KII), the Fulani militias typically attacked communities at night when no one expected. There is no history surrounding insecurity aside, Usman Dan Fodio, a lord from the Fulani ethnic group, led the 19th-century Islamic conquest and conversion that Plateau State is currently facing. The southern forest belt and the hills of Plateau State in Nigeria eventually stopped his quest, but in recent times, the Fulanis still wanted to capture land for grazing. They claimed that historical grievances and land disputes are the underlying reasons for the conflicts and the frequent rejection and marginalization within society, employing violence to express their rights and ensure their survival. Osman and Abebe (2023) agreed that conflict is one of the reasons for displacement, as is the case in Somalia. Key informants (KII) stated that Bassa experienced insecurity in 2011, then Bokkos experienced insecurity in 2015, and currently, Mangu and Bokkos are experiencing severe insecurity. Since then, they have been facing conflicts between farmers and herders, which they believe are politically motivated.

Consequently, insecurity continues, as people are apprehensive about venturing outside their agricultural land or returning to their native village or property. While many displaced people attribute their situation to Jihad (religious war), there are also groups of people that support land invasion, political motivations, commercial interests, and ancestral war. According to Artu, an interviewee, "The insecurity scenario in Mangu began when a Fulani individual let his livestock graze on a piece of land that was due to be harvested by someone else. In an attempt to cease his actions, the Fulani engaged in a physical altercation that subsequently resulted in the crisis in our place. Lives and Properties were destroyed". Across various regions and societies, we have observed a recurring theme of narratives that explore the tensions and disputes between pastoralists and agriculturalists from diverse viewpoints. They believe that these incidents have resulted in retaliatory assaults in various areas.

The rural displacement in the study area was high; 201 and 400 households were displaced, according to the information gathered. The Fulani militias set ablaze all the remaining houses in communities. On average, less than 5000 people are displaced from one village to another. Some of the villages attacked were Bassa (Orri-Dam, Kparia, Ta-Agbe, Maiyaga, Dumdu, Kpasho, La-Akai, Chinke, Jebbu-Miango, Dan Manhu, Rikwe-Nchoh, Ansa, Hwra, Zahwra, Taana) Bokkos (Chirang, Tahore, Tamiso, Tuje, Dares, Maiyanga, Butura, Kampani, Kamar Pelli, Ruwi, Kwantu, Sangyang, Mutfet, Yalwa-n-n-, Ndun, Mawuri, Mileseven, Nbong) and Mangu (Kwahaslalek, Kinat, Mairana, Farin Kasa, Sabon Gari, Dungmunan, Kubat, Tim Naanle, Fungzai, Chisu, Fungzai, Gaude, Ntam, Changal, Lakasi, Washna, Pushit). However, based on information gathered from various KIIs, the total displaced population was 14968, 13,310, and 18,751 for Bass, Bokkos, and Mangu, respectively. However, the transitional committee Chairman of Mangu LGA reported to the media about 80,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in 11 camps within the LGA and emphasized the need for increased collaboration among stakeholders to ensure the safety of communities and this agreed with Amnesty International (2018) and Egbuta, (2018) that Farmers-Herders confrontations claimed lives, forcing people to flee their homes, among those displaced were landowners who were compelled to become tenants in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps which hurts the people psychologically and mentally. According to one of the interviewees, "Aside from what we have lost that we cannot easily regain, the cost of rebuilding our

village is our honest cry; from where are we going to start?" many of the displaced people have undergone a different traumatic experience that would change their mindset to agricultural practices.

The study discovered that the impact of rural displacement on agricultural practices was, first, the abandonment of land; farmers gave up farming because there were no lands to farm in the displaced location, which concurred with Peter and Tade (2023) and Suliman (2018) that displaced farmers cannot secure land rights in their new location. Securing a hectare of land in their new surroundings is complex, and the type of crops they could plant is limited. Another thing mentioned was the size of the land in the displaced location; because the relocated place is not their ancestral land, it is difficult to acquire large pieces of land for farming. The rural displacement has disrupted the food supply; many markets do not have enough farm produce to sell; certain crops are not available at a time, or the prices have gone beyond the range of affordability, Hollenman et al., (2017); Olga, (2022); Pstby et al., (2021); George & Adelaja, (2021) and Osman & Abebe (2023) concurred that rural displacement exacerbated food security by diminishing the supply of and ability to obtain food through disturbances in food production and markets. This displacement has harmed farmers' livelihoods because they cultivated crops to generate income to meet their daily needs. However, due to insecurity, their lives have become increasingly challenging, despite the scarcity of produce, the loss of lives, and their storage has been burnt, which is a style of operation to destroy any farm produce, whether it is on the farms or stored in their households. Based on the FGD attraction, the communities affected conveyed profound anguish and unease, recounting harrowing tales of violence and loss. One of the participants of FGD in Bokkos (Peter) described the invasion of the Fulani Militia into their village, compelling them to relocate, and he highlighted the significant economic harm resulting from the displacement of farmers and destruction of crops, exacerbating the issue of food insecurity in the environment.

We found a significant disparity between the two when we compared agricultural practices using farmland and harvest before and after displacement. Farmers used to plant their crops on approximately three to five hectares of farmland, but after displacement, the amount of farmland they used to plant their crops decreased to less than one hectare. The same was true for the quantity of harvest: before, farmers would harvest between thirty and fifty bags, but after displacement, farmers harvest less than ten bags. One of the KII stated that life in the IDP camps was unbearable, complex, and dependent. He said, "We leave our lives based on donors or NGOs that bring clothing, food, water, and hygiene, and because our population is high, and dependence on donors can satisfy our needs, donors' contributions are not just enough." Rural insecurity in Bassa, Bokkos, and Mangu LGAs requires an increased presence of security and the implementation of targeted programs to help displaced farmers. Provision of resources, modern farming techniques, and microfinance to rebuild the lives of displaced people to a standard of living are requirements for immediate attention. There is a need to expand livelihood opportunities beyond agriculture to reduce dependency and mitigate disruptions.

Moreover, establishing robust early warning systems to handle conflicts and crises is significant in resolving environmental impediment issues. However, a collective and collaborative effort is required to increase agricultural resilience, encourage harmonious coexistence, and increase livelihood possibilities. This will support regional growth and stability by combining traditional wisdom with modern technology to fight against farmer-herder clashes and rural displacement.

4. Conclusion

The study examines land usage patterns in Bassa, Bokkos, and Mangu from 2015 to 2023, focusing on agricultural land neglect during instability. Insecurity has been prevalent since 2011, with historical grievances and land disputes being the main reasons for conflicts and displacement. Displaced people attributed their situation to Jihad, land invasion, political motivations, commercial interests, and ancestral war. On average, less than 5000 people are displaced in these regions from one village to another. Disruptions in food supply and livelihoods have led to produce shortages, loss of lives, and destruction of farm produce. The study revealed a significant disparity in agricultural practices between before and

after displacement, highlighting the need for increased security, targeted programs, resources, modern farming techniques, and microfinance to rebuild lives and mitigate disruptions.

5. Implementation Policy

Interventions for the study are to make efforts to help internally displaced persons (IDPs) move back to their inherited lands and communities. Recognizing that IDPs at the individual, household, neighborhood, and camp levels need to support economic growth, promote independence, and protect their rights will go a long way toward easing tension and avoiding psychological effects on them. The study's results will aid in planning interventions for farmer-herder conflict in the region. Neglecting IDPs in camp and health management can lead to neglect, increased crisis responses, and weakening positive resilience actions. Most importantly, the conflict between farmer and herder needs to be addressed internationally through dialogue with stakeholders within and outside the region and by implementing the blueprint of the outcome with stringent policy implementations and stiffer penalties for defaulters from both sides and their allies. Rebuilding houses destroyed in those communities, villages, and cottages with the assistance of international communities will be a stepwise decision to bring harmony among different races. The intervention of the government in securing food security through engaging a modern technological farming system before peace is restored and IDPs return to their hereditary home.

6. Limitation of the Study

The study harnessed structured questionnaires, interviews, and FGDs to acquire the information needed in Plateau State, prone to crises/conflicts. Subsequent studies should include ethnographic studies and historical perspectives to build substantial data. The study did not consider all aspects of farmers' livelihood, such as women and children.

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