

ETHNIC VIOLENCE AND FOOD PRODUCTION IN KARIM LAMIDO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF TARABA STATE, NIGERIA

Haruna, Bamaiyi

Department of Political Science, Taraba State University Jalingo, Taraba State

Abstract

Ethnic violence has long been a significant issue in various parts of Nigeria, and the Karim Lamido Local Government Area (LGA) of Taraba State has not been immune to such challenges. This study explores the impacts of ethnic violence on food production in the region, where agricultural activities are the primary livelihood for the majority of the population. In recent years, conflicts between different ethnic groups have escalated, leading to disruptions in agricultural practices, loss of farmland, and a decline in food security. By analyzing the qualitative data gathered from farmers, local leaders, and government reports, the study highlights the relationship between ethnic conflicts and agricultural productivity. It focuses on the consequences for both smallholder farmers and larger agricultural enterprises in the area. The findings indicate that ethnic violence has significantly disrupted farming activities, particularly in the form of reduced access to farmlands, destruction of crops, and insecurity that prevents farmers from tending to their fields. Additionally, the displacement of farming communities has led to a reduction in the available workforce for food production, contributing to a sharp decline in local food availability. The study concluded that ethnic strife in Karim Lamido had significantly affected food production and agricultural livelihoods. The study recommended that Government should facilitate dialogue and reconciliation processes among conflicting ethnic groups to address grievances, build trust, and promote peaceful coexistence through engaging local community leaders, religious institutions, and traditional authorities as mediators to resolve conflicts peacefully and prevent escalation.

Introduction

Conflict is detrimental to progress, regardless of its prevalence. Conflict represents the gravest nightmare in any civilisation, resulting in unimaginable loss of life and property. The occurrence of conflict results in setbacks for any culture. The ethnic violence in Karim Lamido Local Government has profoundly impacted food production. Agriculturalists encounter jeopardy to their livelihoods stemming from displacement, devastation of agricultural infrastructure, and diminished access to resources. Karim Lamido possesses a greater proportion of food production in Taraba State. The highest quantities of rice, guinea corn, millet and maize are produced. They produce, on average, groundnuts, sesame, beans, etc.; nonetheless, these concerns impede agricultural efforts, resulting in diminished food output. Both ethnic groups are assigning blame to one another for the turmoil occurring in the agricultural villages. Amidst the ongoing blame game, numerous retaliatory attacks have persisted, resulting in significant losses and damage to property on both sides. The battle in Karim Lamido, together with the prevailing insecurity in the state over recent months, has contributed to the escalating food costs. The pervasive instability in Northern Nigeria is negatively impacting local farmers. The repercussions of the issue are already being experienced by both consumers and traders who rely on supplies from the North for their operations. Anticipatedly, the prices of food commodities, particularly maize and rice, have surged significantly, corroborating the warnings issued by the Food and Agricultural

Organisation of the United Nations in September 2013 regarding the impending extreme food insecurity in the Sahel States of Northern Nigeria. The announcement states that impoverished families have depleted their food reserves and are contending with elevated food prices while anticipating the forthcoming harvest. It indicates that more than 1.4 million children in the region are at danger of severe malnutrition in 2013.

The region has of late witnessed a drop in food production due to a significant proportion of population being farmers, many of whom were murdered in the fighting. Consequently, substantial areas of farmland have been abandoned, and several food crops have been damaged due to the ongoing strife. This constitutes a significant setback, affecting not only the local government area but also the nation, particularly regions that rely largely on the food produced in this area.

The Wurkuns and Karimjo ethnic groups in Karim Lamido Local Government, Taraba State, coexisted harmoniously for decades until the ascension of the new monarch, Yakubu Kirim. Currently, sentiments are polarised about the choice made by Governor Darius Dickson Ishaku, the former Governor of Taraba State, to install the king. Subsequently, the town transformed into a theatre of violence and bloodshed when the Karimjo gang protested the state governor's appointment of Mr. Kirim as the new monarch.

The demonstrators believe that Governor Darius Ishaku should not have nominated an ethnic Wurkun as the monarch. The appointment seemed unjust to the Karimjos, particularly after the governor recently established a chieftdom for the Wurkuns in the adjacent Bambur. The tension from the protests in the main town and surrounding villages rapidly escalated into chaos as members of both ethnic groups clashed violently. This raised a significant controversy of whether the installation of the king was a blessing or a curse. The most concerning scenario is that several individuals from both ethnic groups have sold their grain reserves, which were intended for familial sustenance or future cultivation, to finance donations or contributions for the acquisition of rifles and ammunition. The area was left in hunger as most homes sold their food reserves, while others were reduced to ashes, resulting in a lack of food and seeds for the planting season, leaving extensive acreage uncultivated. In summary, every form of conflict, whether religious, ethnic, or otherwise, yields no benefits but rather causes harm and setbacks to the society concerned. This study examines the ethnic violence and food production in the Karim Lamido Local Government Area of Taraba State, Nigeria, from 2015 to 2023.

Research Methodology

This chapter discusses the research design, area of the study, population of the study, sampling techniques and sampling size, method of data collection and method of data analysis.

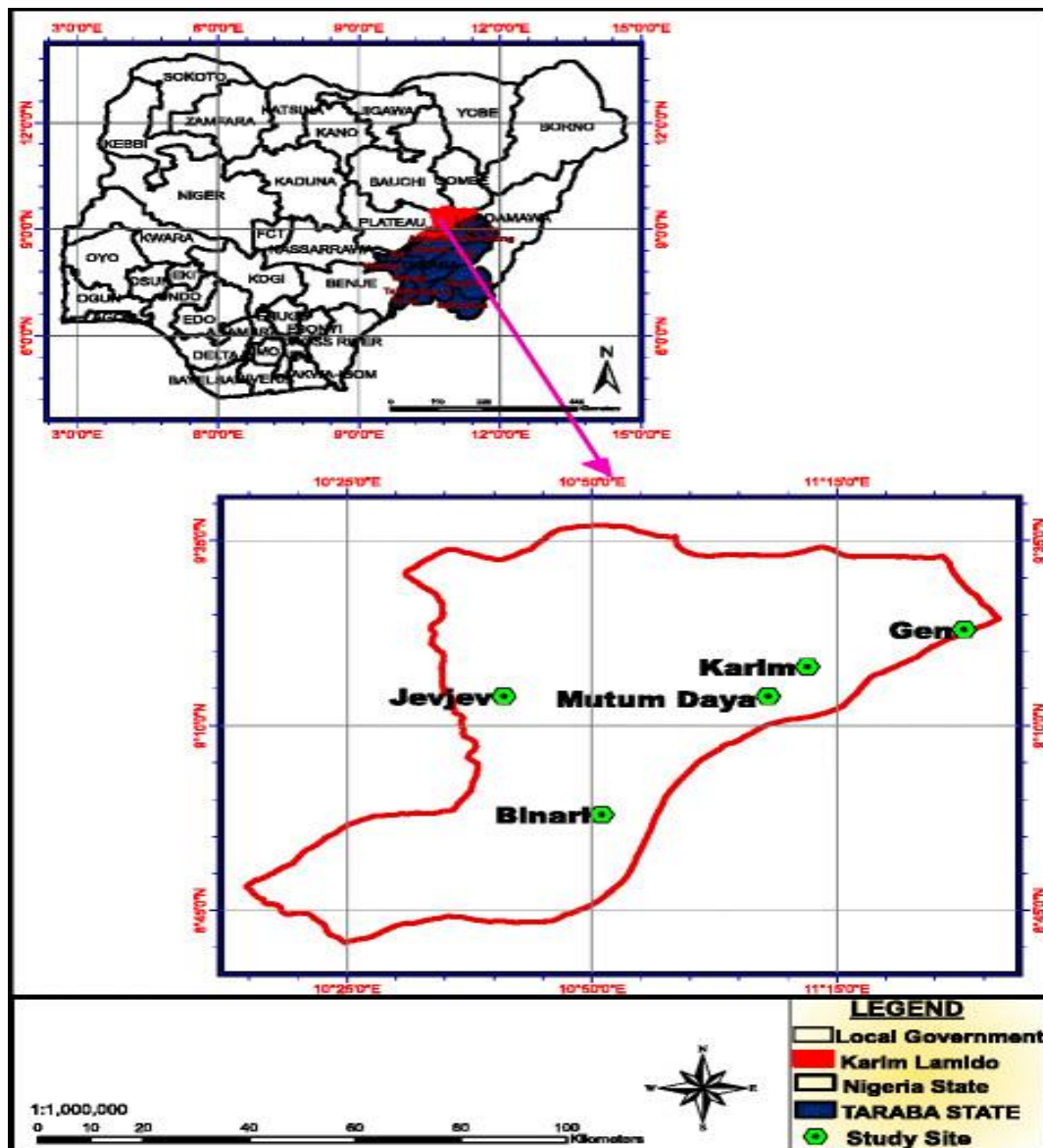
Research Design

The research design encompasses the methods for the data collection, measurement and analysis of data generated. The research design chosen for this study is survey method. The survey research method is most appropriate because the researcher has no control of the variables as well as the outcome

Area of the Study

The research is conducted in the Karim Lamido Local Government Area of Taraba State, situated in North-eastern Nigeria, between latitudes 8°33'-10°21'N and longitudes 10°21'-11°24'E (Fig. 1). The area encompasses 6,450.72 km² and has a population of 193,924, as per the 2006 census, with sub-Saharan vegetation. It is bordered to the south by the River Benue and intersected by numerous tributaries of that river. It comprises two separate seasons: the rainy season, lasting from May to October, and the dry season, spanning from November to April. Karim Lamido comprises several ethnic groups, including Bandawa Jenjo, Wurkum, Karinjo Bambuka, Munga, Dadiya, and Hausa Fulani. It comprises around 11 political wards, including Jen Ardido, Jen Kaigama, Muri A, Muri B, Karim A, and Karim B. (Yusuf et al., 2023). The majority of Karim Lamido LGA consists of vast Fadama marshes inside the Muri lowlands, which are sparsely populated and largely uncultivated. The River Benue floodplain is a tract of land inhabited by settlements in the former Muri Division, commonly known as the Muri plains. The land region predominantly consists of soil that is a composite of clay and loam, allowing it to hold rainwater significantly longer than other soil types on the Benue floodplain, however it develops cracks during the dry season. The Benue basin and its wetlands are significant as they offer cultivable ground for agriculture. Much of the Karim Lamido district is characterised by highly fertile terrain. The Karim Lamido LGA, similar to other regions in northern Nigeria, experiences a wet and dry climate; the rainy season typically spans from April to October, with an average annual rainfall of 1058mm. The months with the highest precipitation are August and September. The arid season extends from November to March, with December and January being the driest months, during which relative humidity decreases to approximately 15%. The mean annual temperature is approximately 28°C, with maximum temperatures fluctuating between 30°C and 39.4°C, and minimum temperatures ranging from 15°C to 23°C (Yusuf et al., 2023).

The flora of Karim Lamido LGA predominantly exhibits a Sudan Savanna vegetation pattern, characterised by minimal tree cover, with grasses and flowers interspersed among the trees. The land region features a mix of pyrophytic tree species and grassland along the borders of Bandawa district with Munga Jen, Karim, while short trees are sporadically dispersed near the Benue River (Abdullazeez, 2016). The region's soil is primarily composed of lixisols, characterised by a clay-rich lower horizon, low cation exchange capacity, and low base saturation. The water table is lower in the dry season and there is an accessible water supply during the rainy season. While the soil is conducive to agricultural endeavours, it is unsuitable for structure development due to soil movement or the contraction of lixisols during the dry season, resulting in fissures in buildings (Yusuf et al., 2023).



Population of the Study

The population of this study comprised of various citizens of Taraba State specifically the inhabitants of Karim Lamido which include students, farmers, public servants, politicians and businessmen/women within the Local Government Area were randomly selected as sample for this study. The population distribution of Karim Lamido according to National Population Projection 2022 stood at 305,100. As for number of respondents, it would be determined from the population using Taro Yamane 1967 population sampling.

Sampling Techniques and Sampling Size

Purposive random sampling was used to select a total of (400) respondents out of the total population of (305,100) in the study area. This is based on the researcher's application for the Taro Yamane (1967) method in determining the sample of the study. It is mathematically expressed as; $n=N/(1+N(e)^2)$. Where;

n =signifies the population size.

K=constant value

N= signifies the population under study

e= signifies the margin of error

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Therefore, } n &= \frac{305,100}{(1+305,100(0.05)^2)} \\ n &= \frac{305,100}{(1+305,100(0.0025))} \\ n &= \frac{305,100}{763.75} \\ n &= 399.67 \end{aligned}$$

An approximately (400) respondents served as the sample of this study.

Method of Data Collection

Data was collected by questionnaires, interviews, and observations, specifically geared to obtain information pertinent to the study's aims. The questionnaire was segmented into two sections: Section A encompass the respondents' biodata, while Section B address enquiries on ethnic conflicts in Karim Lamido and their impact on food production in Karim Lamido LGA. Interviews were administered utilising the questionnaire as a checklist for individuals unable to respond independently. The interview addressed topics outlined in the questionnaire for those who were illiterate, as well as additional pertinent areas related to the study, including their perceptions of the conflict situation.

Method of Data Analysis

The data from this study was analysed utilising statistical methods, including statistical tables, frequency, mean, and standard deviation. These statistical tools were employed as they were appropriate methods for deconstructing and analysing the generated data. Quantitative and qualitative descriptive analysis was employed to condense the extensive data produced in the study, enabling the application of suitable analytical tools to further investigate the relationships among the variables. The study included the calculation of observed and anticipated frequencies, the computation of the statistic, and the determination of degrees of freedom.

Violent Conflict in Taraba State

Ethnic, religious, or politically induced conflict adversely affects agricultural output and overall food security. Based on this, the accounts of many disputes in Taraba State were provided, providing a clearer knowledge of the conflicts, their causes, and potential methods for reducing their occurrences through study such as this. Conflicts in Taraba State are mostly driven by ethnic, ethno-religious, or political factors. Political disagreements in Taraba State sometimes escalate into religious disputes due to the state's ethno-religious identity political framework.

Yuguda and Goni (2013) identify accusations of neglect, oppression, domination, exploitation, victimisation, discrimination, marginalisation, nepotism, and intolerance as significant contributors to ethno-religious disputes in Nigeria. This occurs because to the varied interests

of different groups and individuals, resulting in some groups achieving their objectives while others do not. These conflicts arise when marginalised groups and people want to augment their power and money or to alter prevailing values, norms, beliefs, or ideologies (Yuguda and Goni, 2013). The aforementioned points indicate a contentious interaction of ethno-religious and political variables, resulting in increased ethnic chauvinism, militancy, and religious movements within the state. The net effect of this is the intensification of diverse ethno-religious conflicts currently observed throughout Nigeria, including Taraba State, aimed at rectifying any perceived marginalisation, oppression, or domination.

Nonetheless, regarding ethno-religious conflicts in Taraba State, studies identify particular causes aligned with the characteristics of the disputes. The Jukun-Tiv confrontations of 1990/92 and 2001/2002 were instigated by various circumstances, including political intrigue and dominance, land ownership disputes, and marginalisation. Additionally, mass migration, disregard for established traditional authority, and the indigene/settler dichotomy were identified as underlying variables (Agbu et al., 2019). The Chamba and Kuteb battles in Takum LGA from 1997 and 2008 were instigated by several factors, including political manipulation and disputes over the traditional ruler's throne (Hassan and Akombo, 2012; Agbu and Ibrahim, 2018). The clashes between the Mambila and Fulani in 2002 and 2017 were instigated by disputes over control of the Mambilla Plateau, traditional authority in the region, and land-related issues (Edward and Abel, 2012). The disputes between Fulani herders and other ethnic groups (farmers) in Taraba State pertain to land for grazing and agriculture, cattle rustling, and criminal activities (Amnesty International, 2018).

In addition to the aforementioned crises in Taraba State, instances of violence have occurred between Fulani herders and local farmers in Takum, Ussa, Wukari, Lau, Sardauna, Gassol, Ibi, Bali, Ardo-Kola, Gashaka, and Karim-Lamido LGAs, as well as other regions of the State, stemming from cattle-induced crop destruction, the killing of herders, and assaults on farmers, resulting in retaliatory attacks on various occasions.

Rukwe et al. (2019) observe that conflicts between farmers and herders emerged from heightened rivalry for arable land, driven by the growing populations of both groups. Additional causes of the confrontations encompass: the encroachment of farmers on grazing lands, the incursion of cattle into agricultural fields, assaults on female farmers by herders, and the obstruction of livestock pathways and water sources. Additional factors encompass the incineration of rangelands, livestock theft, alterations in climatic conditions resulting in drought and desertification, among others. The struggle between herders and local farmers is currently intertwined with religious, tribal, and cultural disputes in Taraba State. This is due to the fact that the majority of farmers belong to similar ethnic groupings and predominantly identify as Christians, whereas most herders are Fulani and primarily practise Islam. Conflicts between these groups are readily interpreted as ethnic or religious disputes due to their strong affiliations along these dimensions (Rukwe et al., 2019).

From 1992 until 2015, a succession of hostilities transpired throughout Taraba State. In 1992, a religious battle erupted between Muslims and Christians in Jalingo and surrounding areas,

resulting in the deaths of hundreds, the incineration of mosques and churches, and the destruction of homes, shops, and markets. The altercation originated from a misunderstanding between Christian and Muslim pupils at Government Science Secondary School, Jalingo (Muhammad, 2017). In 1992, Ibi town had a conflagration resulting from an ethnic conflict between the Jukun-Wanu and Hausa/Fulani Muslims (Akoga, 2012). In 2012, two decades after the 1992 incident, Ibi experienced another conflagration during a religious conflict between Christians and Muslims. The immediate cause this time was a forced breach of a roadblock established in front of a Church (CRC-N) for security purposes (Ajibu, 2020; Igidi, 2012). The problem intermittently resurfaced between 2012 and 2014, serving as a distant influence in the Wukari religious clashes from 2013 to 2015 (Zhema and Agbu, 2015).

The conflicts in Wukari between Christians and Muslims were influenced by various remote and immediate causes, including political factors, the assault on the Police Area Command and commercial banks in 2010, arbitrary roadblocks on prayer days, the Ibi crisis of 2012, the unlawful detention of certain Jukun youths by the DSS in December 2012, and the football pitch incident of February 2013 (Zhema and Agbu, 2015). Between 2013 and 2015, Wukari endured severe ethno-religious violence in six instances, including several assaults on other Jukun farming communities in Wukari and Ibi LGAs by armed Fulani herders. For a historical account of the battles in Taraba State.

This study concurs with Muhammad (2017) that the determinants of ethno-religious conflicts and insecurity in Taraba State can be categorised into the following variables: ethnicity/ethnic identity, religious intolerance, apprehension of political/religious hegemony, governmental policy/local government establishment and boundary delineation, ignorance, poverty/unemployment, and detrimental media publications, among others. Despite several commendable initiatives at the local level aimed at resolving the enduring inter-ethnic and inter-religious violence, these initiatives have not yet converged into a framework for the ongoing management and alleviation of persistent conflicts regarding land, resources, indigene/settler relations, political representation, participation, and local rights that result in violence.

Ethnic Violence and food production in Karim Lamido

Ethnic violence, refers to conflicts and violent acts that occur between different ethnic groups due to social, political, economic, or historical tensions. It often stems from issues like discrimination, competition over resources, political marginalization, or deep-seated historical grievances. Examples of Ethnic Violence, Wurkum VS Karimjo (July 2023) that erupted as a results of Installation of Kirim second Class Chief of Wurkum in Karim Lamido Taraba State. Nigeria. Rwandan Genocide (1994). Conflict between Hutus and Tutsis led to mass killings. Balkan Wars (1990s). Ethnic tensions in the former Yugoslavia resulted in brutal conflicts. Indian Partition (1947). Hindu-Muslim violence erupted during the separation of India and Pakistan.

Karim Lamido Local Government Area (LGA) in Taraba State, Nigeria, experienced significant ethnic conflicts, notably between the Wurkun and Karimjo communities. These conflicts have had profound impacts on the region's food production.

Pre-Conflict Food Production: Prior to the escalation of conflicts, Karim Lamido LGA was recognized for its agricultural potential, particularly in rice cultivation. The fertile floodplains of the Benue River provided an ideal environment for farming. A study focusing on the Madaka region within Karim Lamido highlighted that irrigation practices had enhanced rice production, contributing positively to the local economy. Farmers utilized water from the Benue River for irrigation, leading to increased yields and supporting the community's livelihood.

Impact of Ethnic Conflicts on Food Production: The onset of ethnic clashes disrupted agricultural activities significantly. Communal violence led to displacement, loss of lives, and destruction of property. For instance, in July 2021, a clash between farmers and herdsmen in the Jen community resulted in the displacement of 792 individuals, 20 casualties, and damage to shelters. Such incidents forced farmers to abandon their lands, leading to reduced agricultural output (An indepth interview with a community leader in Jen, 2022)

Karim Lamido recent violence conflicts.

In July 2023, renewed violence between the Wurkun and Karimjo communities led to further devastation. Many villages were burned down, namely Ungwan Galadima village, Tudu village, Waka village, Ungwan Sarki Kudu village, Murbai Yidi village, Yashi Pena village and Laka Kwangchi village all occupants were Wurkums, and Karimjo side Didango Gyaita village, Yolbemutawo Village, and Lewathah village, three individuals were killed in both side and approximately 3,000 people were displaced. The destruction of homes and farmlands, coupled with the displacement of farmers, severely hampered food production. The imposition of a 24-hour curfew to curb the violence further restricted farming activities, exacerbating food insecurity in the region.

Post-Conflict Challenges and Current Status: The prolonged conflicts have left lasting scars on the agricultural landscape of Karim Lamido LGA. Displaced farmers face challenges in returning to their lands due to ongoing security concerns and the destruction of infrastructure. The disruption of local economies has led to food scarcity and increased prices, affecting not only the immediate communities but also neighboring regions that relied on Karim Lamido for agricultural produce.

Efforts to rehabilitate the area require a multifaceted approach, including peacebuilding initiatives, reconstruction of infrastructure, and support for displaced farmers to resume agricultural activities. Addressing the root causes of the ethnic conflicts is crucial to restoring and enhancing food production in Karim Lamido LGA.

The Consequences of Violent conflicts in food production in Karim Lamido Local Government Area

Analysis of Food Production and Market Forces During and After the Crisis. The Wurkum vs. Karimjo chieftaincy crisis in Karim Lamido LGA, Taraba State, following the installation of

Alh. Kirim as Third Class Chief in July 2023, has had a profound impact on food production and market forces in the region. The testimonies of Charles Yakubu, Akimbo Raymond both in Karim Maude, Old muri village,, Alh inuwa Muhammad, Alh Aminu Maigari, Bomanda village, Mallam Isa Saleh Jidda. Binnari village, Yunusa Jibir, Maimuri Muhammad. Nasarawo village,, Haruna waja, Bobbo nassarawo, Didango village, Ibrahim Abubakar, Sule Tabaco Jukun village, Inuwa Alh musa, Hamza jukun, all count their loses as a results of violence conflict. Food Production Before and After the Crisis before the Crisis (Pre-July 2023): Charles Yakubu harvested 200 bags of rice annually. Akimbo Raymond harvested 70 bags of rice annually. Farmers in several communities had unstable food production and income. During and After the Crisis (Post-July 2023): Charles Yakubu's harvest dropped from 200 bags to 30 bags due to insecurity and farm destruction. Akimbo Raymond's harvest was destroyed, leaving him with only 10 bags, which is insufficient for his family. 300 farmers from various communities reported significant declines in food production. Reasons for the Decline in Production was destruction of farmlands due to violent clashes, displacement of farmers, preventing them from cultivating their land. Fear of attacks, discouraging farmers from returning to their fields. Loss of farm inputs and labor, reducing productivity.

Impact on Market Forces

Market forces depend on the balance of supply, demand, and transportation, all of which have been disrupted by the crisis. Supply Side (Production Challenges): Farm output decreased, leading to food scarcity. Farmers struggle to transport goods due to insecurity and damaged roads.

Demand Side (Consumer Behavior): Food prices have increased due to low supply. Buyers are reluctant to enter markets due to fear of violence. Reduced purchasing power as many households have lost income.

Key Market Challenges:

High Food Prices: Even though prices are rising, farmers are unable to benefit because there are fewer buyers.

Transportation Difficulties: Farmers struggle to move their produce to markets due to insecurity and poor infrastructure (interview with a community member at Jen, 2022).

Economic Hardship: With low production and limited sales, farmers cannot meet their financial needs.

Overall Economic and Social Impact Increased food insecurity due to low agricultural output. Economic downturn in local markets, affecting both producers and consumers. Rise in poverty levels among farming communities. Continued fear and instability, discouraging investment in agriculture (A focus group meeting with Karinjo Youths, Sept. 2022)

Findings

How ethnic conflict in Karim Lamido Local Government impacted food production

The ethnic strife in the Karim Lamido Local Government Area of Taraba State, Nigeria, has profoundly affected food production via multiple direct and indirect methods. This finding aligns with the study of Ajibu (2020), who asserted that ethnic conflicts frequently result in the

relocation of farmers from their farms, either owing to direct assaults or the apprehension of violence. Displaced farmers vacated their fields or were unable to cultivate their land, leading to diminished planting and harvesting activity. Conflict engenders an environment of insecurity, rendering it perilous for farmers to access their fields and participate in agricultural endeavours. Agriculturalists refrained from accessing their fields owing to apprehensions regarding assaults, theft, or intimidation, which adversely impacts agricultural production and oversight. Conflict impedes standard agricultural operations, including planting, weeding, and harvesting. Agricultural producers encountered difficulties in obtaining supplies such as seeds, fertilisers, and insecticides, along with vital services including irrigation and mechanisation. The findings also identified the work of Garba and Dankano (2017), which supports the assertion that ethnic conflicts lead to the loss or damage of agricultural infrastructure, including irrigation systems, storage facilities, and farm equipment. This damage diminishes the efficacy and productivity of agricultural operations. Farmers incur losses of their primary source of income and livelihood owing to conflict-induced disruptions in agricultural production. The reduction in income hampers their capacity to invest in agricultural inputs and technologies, hence adversely affecting food production. Conflict impedes market networks and supply chains, hindering farmers' ability to sell their produce or access agricultural markets. This disruption diminishes farmers' motivation to cultivate excess crops for sale and adversely affects their income creation. Decreased agricultural output and market disruptions exacerbate food insecurity for both farming households and the wider community. Food shortages resulting from conflict can intensify malnutrition and health issues among at-risk communities. In certain instances, war may exacerbate environmental degradation by actions such as land appropriation, deforestation, and the overexploitation of natural resources. This deterioration further compromises agricultural output and sustainability. Ethnic strife impacts not just immediate food production but also has enduring consequences for food security and agricultural growth in the Karim Lamido Local Government Area. Ongoing conflict can establish cycles of poverty, food insecurity, and reliance on external assistance, so hindering initiatives aimed at sustainable development and resilience enhancement.

Conclusion

The study determined that ethnic strife in the Karim Lamido Local Government Area of Taraba State, Nigeria, had significantly affected food production and agricultural livelihoods in the region. The region is recognised for its varied ethnic composition, encompassing the Fulani, Wurkum, Munga, Karimjo, Loh, Jenjo, Gomo, and additional ethnic groups. Tensions and wars frequently emerge from competing for territory, resources, political authority, and historical grudges. Ethnic disputes in the Karim Lamido Local Government Area often result in the eviction of farmers from their land. Displaced farmers may seek refuge in safer locations or internally displaced persons (IDP) camps, resulting in their land remaining uncultivated. This leads to diminished agricultural output and food scarcity. The conflict in Karim Lamido Local Government Area engenders an environment of dread and insecurity for farmers, rendering it perilous for them to reach their agricultural lands. Agriculturalists refrain from accessing their

fields due to apprehensions over violence, theft of crops or cattle, and concerns for personal safety. This apprehension obstructs agricultural operations including sowing, weeding, and harvesting.

The study indicated that ethnic conflicts in Karim Lamido Local Government Area may result in damage or destruction of agricultural infrastructure, including irrigation systems, storage facilities, and farm equipment. This infrastructure is essential for effective agricultural practices and the conservation of collected produce. Its annihilation further diminishes agricultural output. Ethnic conflicts impede market networks and supply chains, hindering farmers' ability to sell their produce or obtain agricultural inputs. Market disruptions diminish farmers' revenues and motivation for production, exacerbating economic difficulties and food poverty. Disruptions in food production and market access due to conflict result in the loss of farmers' primary revenue sources and livelihoods in Karim Lamido Local Government Area. This loss intensifies poverty and heightens reliance on humanitarian help and external support for sustenance and livelihood assistance. Decreased agricultural output and market disturbances during ethnic conflicts exacerbate food insecurity among farming households and the wider community. Food shortages result in malnutrition, health complications, and increased susceptibility among youngsters and at-risk populations.

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