



Addressing Herdsmen Banditry on farmland in Nigeria: The Role of Firearm Control Laws and Pathways for Progress

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Introduction

The persistent herdsmen banditry in Nigeria poses serious risks to food security since it has seriously hampered agricultural operations all around the country. The intensity of these conflicts has increased due to the widespread availability of firearms. These conflicts, which are primarily the result of competition for land and resources, have escalated into violent confrontations that directly affect livestock farming, crop production, and the livelihoods of rural communities. The objectives of the study is as follows: to examine the role of firearm control laws in addressing herdsmen banditry, to identify the socio-economic and environmental factors contributing to the food insecurity and to propose sustainable pathways for progress.

Materials and methods/Methodology.

Although there are legal frameworks in place to control the possession of weapons, progress has been hampered by implementation flaws, a lack of coordination among security agencies, and a lack of funding for enforcement. Nigeria's agricultural sector and food security have suffered greatly as a result of this worrying cycle of violence. In light of this, it is imperative to investigate how gun restriction legislation can reduce herdsmen banditry. A descriptive study design was used. Environmental Scarcity Theory and the Human Security Framework were both used as theoretical frameworks. Secondary sources were from a review of newspapers coverage on the subject matter.

Results and discussion

The results showed food insecurity has resulted from banditry's substantial disruption of agricultural activity in the afflicted areas. Livestock theft is common, and farmers are frequently uprooted from their properties. An estimated 6.1 million illicit guns are in civilian hands in Nigeria, and gun violence is a contributing factor in daily fatalities—2,700 deaths have been reported in the past ten years. For self-defense, some legislators, past governors, and experts contend that citizens should be armed. Private firearm ownership is permitted in more than 150 nations, subject to stringent licensing regulations. Compared to Nigeria, nations with controlled firearms regulations typically have fewer security risks. Additionally, while Nigeria enforces more stringent regulations, other African countries, such as Botswana and South Africa, allow limited gun ownership. Despite Nigeria's stringent gun control legislation, enforcement is still difficult. Banditry is still fueled by the spread of illegal weapons, and the problem is made worse by lax border controls and corruption.

Conclusions

To stop the flow of illegal weapons, border security and the enforcement of gun control legislation must be strengthened. Promoting cooperation between local populations and law enforcement can improve security, lower banditry, and Banditry can be lessened by addressing underlying problems like inequality, unemployment, and poverty.

Keywords: Food security, banditry, herdsmen, weapons, Nigeria.