Abstract
The conflict between farmers and herders have constituted serious concerns and impediments to development in Nigeria. Development entails food security, of which dairy needs are integral. The global campaign for good agricultural practices (GAP) essentially focuses on the preservation of humans, animals and the general ecosystem, as the world continues to confront the depletion of the ozone layers. In Nigeria, the development concerns of farmers-herders’ conflicts are not only pertinent but also daunting as the protracted conflicts increase the burden of food insecurity, human insecurity, ethnic/tribal tensions and underdevelopment outcomes. While the challenges posed by the farmers-herders’ conflicts are serious, existentially threatening and hydra-headed, their impacts on development of the country are massive and require urgent attention research and policy terms. This is because development can only be sustainable in an atmosphere of peace and tranquillity. But in situations where conflicts and insecurity are near intractable, development may be mere desideratum. It is against this background that Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs was used to examine the context, burden and tractability of farmers-herders’ conflicts in Nigeria with a view to unpacking the interface of (in)security and development relative to food security in Nigeria.

Keywords: Farmers-herders’ conflicts, development, food in/security, Nigeria

Contexts of Farming and Security in Nigeria: Towards an Introduction
The article in within the context of agriculture/farming practices, herding and conflicts. It is against the narrative and realisation that agriculture (since
farming and herding are agricultural specialisations) is a veritable sub-sector within the Nigerian economic space (Akanle, 2015a). Agriculture served as the country’s mainstay before the political independence of 1960 and was still a top foreign exchange earner until the surge in the 1970s (Akanle, 2015b; Lawal and Atteh, 2006; Loto, 2011; Oyesola and Obabire, 2011). This is not unconnected to the fact that the largest quota to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the country was achieved via farming activities during the 60’s and 70’s in Nigeria (Lawal and Atteh, 2006; Ogen, 2007; Loto, 2011). Furthermore, it is also believed that a focus on agriculture is critical to the achievement of sustainable development of any nation (Meijerink and Roza, 2007; Vaarst, 2010; Barbu and Capusneanu, 2012). Hence, aside from the fact that Nigeria features prominently as one of the world’s leading producers and exporters of cash crops such as cocoa, palm kernel, cotton, groundnut, rubber, hides and skin (Agbolagba et al., 2010), agricultural sector of the country is strategic for interrogating some of the tangled challenges of poverty inequality and insecurity replete in the country. This is due to the fact that upwards of 60% of the country’s total population of almost 180 million are directly or indirectly involved in farming (Afolayan and Ajibade, 2012).

However, the violent attacks spearheaded by ‘suspected herdsmen’ on several farming spaces is one of the daunting security challenges facing contemporary Nigeria in recent time (Tonah, 2006; Bello, 2013; Njoku, 2018; Akanle, 2019). Specifically, the issue of violent clashes and instability along the corridors of farmers and herdsmen relations across geographical boundaries in Nigeria has attracted both local and foreign attention, including the Nigerian Government, International and National or indigenous development organizations. This is because, the available reports show that between 2010 and 2015, Nigeria has not only lost a staggering sum of $14.7 billion worth of properties and investments, but she has lost about 6,500 citizens of hers to an untimely death while 62,000 others were displaced from their homes in 850 different clashes in the Middle Belt region of the country (Onani, 2016). Therefore, it is a truism that if these calamitous events are not nipped in the bud, Nigeria may be far from achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 2, which aims at ending hunger, achieving food security and improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture by 2030. The clashes, instead of abating, have been on the increase exponentially to the dismay of helpless Nigerians (Imo, 2017; Gadzama, 2018).

Owing to the massive and destructive nature of the clashes among herdsmen and farmers and their prominence in many geographical locations in the country, the former has been categorized as the fourth deadliest destructive group in the world (Global Terrorism Index, 2017; Akanle, Olorunlana and Shittu, 2017) with dangerous and inimical consequences for peace, security and sustainable development. Hence, the ceaseless clashes between the aforementioned duo, in addition to the Boko Haram insurgency, and the militancy in the Niger Delta region, had resulted to Nigeria sliding to her poor ranking to the 148th position among the most peaceful countries of the world.
(Institute for Economics & Peace, 2018). This surmises that Nigeria had been ranked as the 148th socially and environmentally tranquil country in the world. In addition, a country who is presumed to be the ‘Giant of Africa’ in November 2016 was said to have comfortably occupy the 3rd position among the most terrorized nation in the world the Global Terrorism Index (GTI) (Onani, 2016; Akanle, Olunlana and Shittu, 2017), despite all resources at her disposal (Kalejaiye, Sokofun and Adewusi, 2015; Akanle, 2019). This was in consideration of the activities of various armed groups that engaged in violent attacks on the citizens, especially innocent and defenceless citizens in different parts of the country.

With specific allusion to the endless brawl between herdsmen and farmers in Nigeria, the ugly face-off between the duo has been captured by scholars, hence been described as the ‘emerging threat to national security and unity’ (Imo, 2017: 3). Besides, the violent clashes in various geographical locations in Nigeria such as Benue state, the food basket of the nation, and other states in the north-central, north-east and north-west, had been viewed as ‘hydra-headed in nature’ which poses unimaginable security challenge in the country (Onani, 2017: 8). Also, while natural disasters such as flood and drought can also affect such an economy, which is beyond human control; avoidable ones like herdsmen attack on farmers’ livelihoods have badly affected the peasant economy in Benue and other ‘feeder states’ of the nation. Against this backdrop, this paper interrogates the import of agriculture and its intersection with development and how the ensuing conflicts between the nomadic herds-keepers and sedentary farming demographic may impact on food security Nigeria. While practical examples are used to explicate the trajectory of the issues engaged, the paper is theoretical, historical and contextual in its analysis. As embedded in the sections below, the paper is intended to give insights into the context of the lingering feuds between farmers and pastorals and as well examine how these feuds can be quelled so as to ensure food sustainability in the country.

**Farming space in Nigeria**

In human history, agriculture is one major occupation that has characterized every known culture and civilizations. From fishing to horticulture, to animal husbandry and to land cultivation, man has always engaged in this very aspect of life in order to provide a means of feeding members of the society. This is done in order to have a strong and agile human population who will be productive and strong enough to actively and efficiently participate in other aspects of life, and to also ensure continuity of the existence of man. The importance of this aspect of human life is so enormous that various sayings in different cultures across the world have a way of depicting its value. For instance, Yoruba people often say, ‘tí oúnjẹ́ bá ti kúrò nínú ọ́ṣẹ́, ọ́ṣẹ́ bù ọ́ṣẹ́ (loosely translated as: once hunger is not a part of poverty, poverty is defeated’). This is a pointer to the strategic import of food production both to
individuals, who are the immediate consumers, and the macro economy of the nation (measured in terms of GDP and standards of living of the people).

According to Katie (2010), one of the most important events in the history of human evolution is the emergence of agriculture and the eventual transition from foraging to farming. Early human beings were characterized as hunters and gatherers, as man once survived on the hunting of small animals either with their hands or through the use of handmade hunting tools like spears, arrows, among others, and also gathering of available food crops around them. It is interesting to know that there is evidence of one form of agricultural practice or the other across the globe despite variations in in whether and cultural preferences. In Nigeria, while the Northern part of the country is characterized by the production of arable crops like beans, cowpeas, millet, sorghum and other cereals, the southwestern part is predominant in the production of cash crops such as cocoa and kola. Commenting on this, Nneka (2017) noted that Nigeria has huge agricultural potentials, with about 98.3 million hectares of potential arable lands, whereby about 72.2 million Ha (72.4%) are cultivable and 27.1 million ha (27.6%) of these lands are not cultivable. She further explains that this 98.3 million ha potential arable lands make up 23% arable lands arable lands across West Africa. These numerous arable farmlands serve various purposes for farmers -both livestock and arable farmers, who engage in different types of agricultural practices.

In addition, Katie (2010) further asserted that the predominant activity in most of the zones in Nigeria is agriculture. From Southern part of Nigeria to the Northern part of the country, each region has its dominant agricultural practice/s. From cultivation of land to animal husbandry, to fishery, to livestock farming, Adebayo and Olagunju (2015) asserted that 70-80% of Nigeria population engages in subsistence agricultural activities, in which case most of them are found in the rural areas. farmers and at the beginning of Nigeria independence, agriculture contributes about 63.49% to Nigeria Gross Domestic Product in 1960 and the revenue generated from it serves as the major funds used for implementing the first national development plan from 1962-1968 (CBN, 1980). However, as reported by NISER (2015), the discovery of oil in commercial quantities in 1968 and the eventual oil boom, which the country experienced in the 70s, led to the leap service paid to agriculture in Nigeria. In the past, Nigeria earned its foreign mostly from the exportation of cash crops such as cocoa, rubber, groundnut and other produces, but the country later became a major importer of many agro-products such as rice, wheat, fish etc. Adesina (2012) observed that over 1.3 trillion naira was spent alone on imports of wheat, rice, sugar and fish. Moreover, contributions of the agricultural sector in Nigeria do not only stop at revenue generation most especially during the earlier years of Nigeria’s independence, it also contributed immensely in other lights. From creation of employment for about 60% of the population (Adebayo and Olagunju, 2015), to the contribution of about 37% to Nigeria’s Gross Domestic Product between 2003-2007 (Ojeka, Effiong and Eko 2016), and its effectiveness in reducing poverty (World Bank,
In recent times, the farmers-herders’ crisis in Nigeria has also been attributed to climate change which has made it difficult for herdsmen to get pastures for their cattle. This has made them to move from one region to another in search of pastures. However, in the process of this, there cattle often encroach farmlands of farmers in other regions. This has posed a lot of challenges to the agricultural sector and has also generated a lot of issues. In essence, a lot of lives have been lost due to several crises between pastoralist/herdsmen and farmers in various parts of Nigeria. The loss has not only been in form of human lives, which is painful, but also in form of huge loss of farm produce which has posed lot of threats to food security in Nigeria. Although, States like Benue and Taraba have witnessed a lot in this regard however, pastoralists and farmers’ conflicts are not limited to these states. Ephraim (2014) observed that significant loss of lives and properties have occurred in many parts of Nigeria including Katsina, Plateau, Taraba, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Adamawa, Gombe, Yobe, Kebbi, Zamfara and Sokoto States in the North; Oyo State in the Southwest; Abia State in the Southeast; and Delta and Edo in the South south. The losses, especially of farm produces, estimated in millions are due to pastoralist/herdsmen and farmers’ crisis. While there are several dimensions to understanding the genesis, patterns and dynamics of this lingering crisis, the following section gives an insight into unpacking the causes of the crisis.

**Causes of farmers-herders’ crisis**

Oli, Ibekwe, Christopher and Nwakwo (2018), noted that the major cause of the continuous conflicts between herdsmen and farmers in Nigeria lies in the quest for protection and preservation of secured economic sources of livelihood. Just as herdsmen continue to move from one place to another in search of pasture for their cattle, so also farmers continue to make effort to secure their farmlands which is their major source of livelihood. The struggle between herdsmen and farmers in order to maximize the available farmlands for grazing and farming continues to be more intense and fiercer in recent time (Fasona and Omojola, 2005). Several factors have been identified as causes of the farmers-herders crisis, one of which is climate change. Ephraim (2014) noted that herdsmen are always in search for an ideal condition for raising their herds and also provides them with needed pasture and water. This prompts them to often move from one region to another in search of these resources which is becoming more scarce due to the effects of climate change on the environment.

Kaitie (2010) also noted that the quantity and quality of feed stuffs such as pasture, forage, grain and the severity and distribution of livestock diseases and parasite can also be caused by climate change. Ephraim (2014) further noted that one of the factors that attract herdsmen to states like Benue is the abundance of these resources which are becoming scarcer in their region; there
is an abundance of rainfall, abundance of grasses which covers the vegetation of the state and tree shrubs that are eatable to livestock, and there is also a network of rivers such Benue, Katsina-Ala and their tributaries, which provide available water all year round. All of these attract more herders to this state and other states in the country that have similar features. However, in the course of herding, some of the herdsmen often encroach into farmers’ farmlands and sometimes destroy their crops in abundance, which often leads to crisis and loss of lives are properties (farm produce) are usually recorded most times.

Herdsmen and farmers’ conflicts in a state like Benue has also been linked to the quest for farmland for grazing by herdsmen and farmland for farming by farmers in the state who numbered around 70% of the population of people in Benue (Ephraim, 2014). Adebayo and Olaniyi (2008) noted that in the course of grazing, herdsmen often intentionally damaged or allow their cattle graze on farmlands which often leads to loss of crops planted on the farmlands. In a study conducted by Adeoye (2017), it was discovered that ‘intentional grazing of cattle on crops farmers’ encroachment on grazing reserves, water holes and cattle paths and indiscriminate bush burning by herdsmen are major causes of farmers-herders’ conflict in places like Yobe, Borno, and Kano states.

Also, another study conducted in Oyo state revealed that 34.2% of farmers and 6.7% of pastoralist agreed that crop damage is one of the major factors that triggers farmers-herders’ conflicts (Adelakun, Adurogbangba and Akinbile, 2015). Furthermore, Oli, Ibekwe, Christopher and Nwakwo (2018), noted that the continuous change in the climatic condition is another major cause of farmers-herders’ conflicts in Nigeria. Owing to the scarcity of pastures in the traditional abode of herdsmen in Nigeria due to desert encroachment of this area, herdsmen often move down South where pastures are believed to be available in abundance and this made them often encroach into farmlands for purpose of grazing (Olaniyan et al., 2015). Okoli & Atelhe (2014) noted that in Nassarawa state, the situation of climate change has to a large extent aggravated the situation of farmers-herders’ conflicts in the state. In essence, the reality of climate change, most especially at the Northern part of the country has made the South ward movement of herdsmen and their cattle inevitable. In any case, this free movement of both herdsmen and their cattle to the South often led to crisis between farmers whose farmlands have been grazed upon and destroyed by cattle.

In addition, continuous farmers-herdsmen crisis cannot be totally excluded from the scarcity of fresh water. As a result of climate change, the amount of rainfall being experienced in some part of Nigeria has reduced; thereby making it difficult for farmers to water their plants, while it has also become a herculean task for herdsmen who are also in need of water for their cattle. In essence, Jacobs (1980) noted that ‘noted that freshwater scarcity and insufficient rainfall are causes of social and economic ruins which have left the pastoralists at the mercy of sedentary farmers’ communities’”. In which case, herdsmen cattle often contaminate the available stream, and this often degenerates into conflicts between farmers and herdsmen. It has been observed
that besmirching of available streams by cattle have led to clashes in Yakur community in Cross River State, Nigeria (Ofem and Inyang, 2014). Furthermore, there is a widespread belief that Fulani people who form the majority of herdsmen in Nigeria are by traditionally prone to take revenge as they rarely forget or forgive whoever offends them, a position that has been seen as prejudicial against Fulani.

However, Burton (2016) noted that most of the recent attacks perpetrated by Fulani have been as a result of long-standing disagreements with various communities involved. This sometimes prompts them to attack farming communities that have at one time or the other caused them some griefs or mishaps. As averred by Mayah et al. (2016), the attack by the herdsmen on the Agatu people of Benue state by was a reprisal attack against the killing of prominent Fulani son in April 2013 by Agatu people who also allegedly stole his cow. This and several attacks on some farming communities in Nigeria, most especially in Benue State, have been tagged as reprisal attacks. Burton (2016) noted that preexisting communal conflicts have sustained the violence as herdsmen turned militants in the face of urbanization, desertification and perceived indifference of the Nigerian government to their plight. Of important note is the fact that the continuous farmers-herdsmen crises in Nigeria continue to have profound effects on quantity of farm produce and revenue being generated by farmers. It has also led to loss of jobs and difficulty in providing for the families among some farmers. At the long run, if this crisis is not checked, it will eventually affect Gross Domestic Product of the country. More importantly, if not unchecked, it will continue to lead to loss of lives and properties in Nigeria.

Trajectories and the burden of insecurity in Nigeria: A development perspective

The incessant feuds between herders and farmers in Nigeria presage uncertainties of food security, safety of lives and property and sustainable development in the country and beyond. The effect of this situation is multidimensional. At the national level, the sovereignty and national cohesion of the state is threatened; at the level of individual, mass poverty, hunger, squalor, and miseries are brewed (Akanle, 2019). Thus, needless to state that tackling the menace of insecurity, especially as compounded by the constant clashes between herdsmen and farmers, in Nigeria requires urgency to prevent a complete breakdown of social order. In order to tackle the situation of insecurity sustainably, it is expedient to take a cursory look at the fundamental issues that bred, and perhaps still breed, conflict (Akanle, 2019), especially between famers and herdsmen in the country.

There are views that the circumstances that led to the birth of Nigeria as a nation, both during the amalgamation of 1914 and the political independence of 1960 were fraught with embers of insecurity (Ewetan and Urhie, 2014). Such circumstances included, among other things, plural and conflicting political interests, diverse and rival ethnic groups, superlative colonial
interests, and absence of common front for confronting the apparent challenges of the nation. This apparently presages ominous future for the country – the future of violence now presently birthed. The situation after 1960 was not better off as the heirs of colonial heritage could not easily suppress and subvert the already sown seed of aggression and insecurity in the country – insecurity continued to trail all aspects of social life (socialisation processes and community life); economic space (adaptation through production of goods and services); political space (as in political culture and governance); and natural endowment (as in deforestation, defoliation, depletion of the ozone layers and other forms of pollution) (Akanle, Adesina and Ademuson, 2017; Ewetan and Urhie, 2014). The impacts of post-colonial global capitalism and superlative international diplomatic tussles between Nigeria and the world powers have also been attributed by security scholars as another security burden on the nation, thus making it more difficult to tackle the unsafe situation head-on.

Again, it must be emphasised that the dimensions of insecurity in Nigeria are becoming more complex and less tractable. For instance, Ewetan and Urhie (2014) posited that even though there had been skirmishes and different forms of security challenges in Nigeria since the period of amalgamation, the periods around the political independence of 1960 marked an epochal turning point in the history of Nigerian security. This is because the country became polarised along ethnic lines. Consequently, ethnicity has not ceased to be a factor for negotiating crisis and/or peace in the country. Similarly, with increasing demographic strength without a corresponding increase in security apparatuses, lives and property of people in the country become more prone to hazards and dangers. The demographic surge is not only suggesting increasing economic challenges but also a multiplier effect on the existing animosity in the country. More than ever before in the history of the country, Nigeria has attracted global attention regarding the safety of lives and property of its people. How long this situation will persist, no one is certain but there appears to be no end in sight given the sociopolitical blame game and agitations ongoing in the country. More so, so long that the national framework of policy on security would inadvertently fail to reflect contextual realities of social, economic, political and religious issues, among other preponderant contradictions that define the national landscape of the country, it is impossible to expect that things will improve soon.

In the ranking of humans needs in the Abraham Maslow’s popular theory of needs, the most fundamental and basest of the needs of man are his physiological needs – these are made up all those things (food, oxygen, water, rooftop for shelter and clothing) that keep human beings alive on daily basis, without which death is unnegotiable (Jerome, 2013). Other need that are included in the Maslow’s pyramid are needs for safety, love, self-esteem and lastly self-actualisation. The position of Maslow is very helpful in its seminal analysis and application. It shows that one who is deprived of his or her primary survival means is inadvertently predisposed to insecurity. This also goes a long way to explain why the continuous deterioration of food security,
often caused by communal crises, pastoralist aggression, as well as migration deficits in the rural areas, may not only lead to draught but also exacerbated threat of national insecurity in Nigeria. As noted by Okolo and Obidigbo (2015), survival is threatened as long as food security is threatened. Little wonder that Goal 2 of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is to ‘end hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture’ (Osborn, Cutter and Ullah, 2015). If we agree that threatening of food security is tantamount to threatening the survival of the people in Nigeria, then it would be right to assume that those who constitute a bane to sustainable agricultural practices, either covertly or overtly are potentially threatening the collective survival of the country as a nation. This position can be further strengthened in the light of the stance of Otaha (2013). According to him, conflict and violence in Nigeria make it difficult to achieve sustainable food production in Nigeria.

From Maslow’s analysis, it can be seen that the increasing dimensions and the biting effects of insecurity in Nigeria can be tied to perceptions and realities of threats to life (Awojobi, 2014). If we look back in retrospect, it can be seen that not even the transition into modern democracy has been able to allay the fears of uncertainty, suspicion and acrimony that have stayed with the country prior the political independence of 1960 (Ewetan and Urhie, 2014). Even though the initial security challenges (of unhappy marriage) did not degenerate into dangerous dimensions at they currently are, the trend of events in Nigeria nowadays suggest that the future may not be more friendly if the needful is not done. As explained by Okolo and Obidigbo (2015), to say that agriculture is no longer the mainstay of Nigeria is an understatement: people are not dying of hunger because agriculture is threatened, farmers are put to flight from their farms by terrorists, and food insecurity is pronounced in the country.

Again, it is important to state that while the impacts of security crises in Nigeria are all-permeating, the immediate recipients its negative outcome are usually the unsuspecting masses. Thus, the question of insecurity in Nigeria is relative to issue of accessibility – access to quality education, functional social amenity, reliable health system, political power, adjudicatory power, gender advantage, and natural resources, among others. It is within this context of power relation, regarding accessibility of the people, that poverty and socio-economic deprivation that often engender social unrests can be conceptualised. For instance, in January 2017, the United Nation made an appeal that a sum of 1.05 billion dollars be raised to support the crises-ridden people of northeast Nigeria (Harrison, 2017). Explaining further, Katsina (2014), depicted the situation of social and economic life in Nigeria as being despicable: hunger, unemployment slum-living, political violence, religious acrimonies, ethnic vendettas and gender violence continue to spiral upward, especially as the population continues to increase in spite of the unsafe situations (Akanle and Adejare, 2016; Okolo and Obidigbo, 2015).

More recently and more pertinently, the rancour between the nomadic and farmers has not only exacerbated the burden of insecurity in the country but
has also complicated the processes involved in peace negotiation. For instance, complication arises when we consider the need to first tackle the challenge of abuse of animal – which arises when animals are used to foment trouble or used as weapon of violence (Mogbo et al., 2013) – before addressing food security, which, of course, concerns sustainable herding and farming practices. It cannot be overstated that food security is one of the global challenges with acute scenarios in developing countries, including Nigeria. In most cases, farmers of staple food crops and herders entre into violent clashes for several reasons. Among others, the following reasons have been advanced by the International Crisis Group (2017):

i. Scarcity: Scarcity here is expressed in terms of desertification and drought. As the arid and sometimes semi-arid northern Nigerian begins to experience shortage of rainfall, especially between the months of June and September, herders begin to move southward in search of productive grazing land space for the survival of their flocks and sustain their own livelihood. The geographical migration often engenders clashes between the nomadic herders and more sedentary crops farmers who feel insecure as cattle invade their farms. In most cases, this feeling of insecurity result into violent killings, destruction of property and farm produces.

ii. Changing practices between farmers and pastoralists: It has been opined that unlike the past, the increasing involvement of uncivilized young people who are either inexperienced in communal interrelationship or dispute management due to the withdrawal of the old one, increases the chances of violence between herders and farmers.

iii. Cattle rustling and rural banditry: Herders are tensely pressed to move towards south as the incidence of the emergence of bandit groups and theft of cattle increases. This, in part, can be seen in the case of the activities of the indigenes-settlers’ crises in the north-central and the insurgences in the north-central that trouble both the northern hemisphere and the entire country in recent times.

iv. Conflict escalation: This occurs when crises of conflicts produce multiplier or ripple effects as a result of different factors like increasing rate of poverty, hostility, proliferation of small arms, resistance, invasion, and various forms of losses, among others. There is growing conscious awareness of pastoralists that they are becoming unwanted by farmers who see them as a threat. Thus, the suspicion between the two groups makes for strained relationship and possibility of insecurity as each group seeks to protect its means of livelihood.

As posited above, the situation of insecurity in Nigeria, especially as exacerbated by incessant clashes between the pastoralists and farmers, increases the toll and burden of survival challenges in the country. This is because without substantial improvement on the current security situation in the country, the menaces of hunger, poverty and serial killings, among other ill,
might continue to persist. What should then be done? The answer to this question is not far-flung: security of lives and property must be prioritised in Nigeria: over time, lip service and huge chunks of money have gone down the drain due to insensitivity, greed, avarice, ethnocentrism, and ill-will on the part of leaders. Pecuniary politics and grave corrupt practices that have made it difficult to focus attention on how to develop sustainable policy alternatives that inclusive participation would be rescinded and dealt away with. Next to this, the worst hit group (the vulnerable) deserve critical attention so that more lives can be salvaged in the current heat of the security crisis. Current efforts at encouraging enhance farming and participation of youths in food production must be sustained and built upon. Whether it is livestock farming or crop farming, Nigerians need to wake up to the reality of impending hunger if farming is continually abandoned, especially by way of out-migration from rural area. Lastly, the spectre of protracted herders and farmers’ clashes in Nigeria must be treated with the urgency it requires.

**Conclusion**

This article situated and analysed Nigeria’s security quagmire in relation to how food production in the country is threatened by unsafe environment for farming and the impending threat of severe hunger and anomie. It has been shown that, while agriculture remains a key player in the social and economic contexts of Nigeria, the challenge of insecurity makes it difficult to attain sustainable food production hence projecting the future of the country as bleak. The continued friction between the herders and farmers in the country makes the situation more tangled than it was in the recent past in the country. The section on security explains that security is an important phenomenon that dictates the quality and quantity of food that may be available at any point in time in Nigeria, and any other country for that matter. The unfortunate competition for land, security saboteurs acquire sophisticated weapons in contrast to simple tools for farming and tending animal with which they scare and kill unsuspecting farmers. The outcome of this act, among others, is not only inimical but also threatens the supply of food and the security of Nigeria as a whole. This becomes worrisome as the crisis is more prominent in states that are acknowledged to be the food basket of the nation such as Benue and Plateau among others. Having acknowledged the adverse implication of this crisis situation on Nigeria’s social order, suggestion has been made that concerned authorities prioritise security in the agricultural sector of the country.

**References**


