

The Effect of Banditry Activities on the Livelihood of Rural Communities in Shiroro Local Government Area of Niger State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study was carried out to assess the effect of banditry activities on the livelihood of rural communities in Shiroro Local Government Area of Niger State, Nigeria. The objectives were to identify factors responsible for the upsurge of banditry activities, determine the effect of banditry on economic activities, ascertain type of crimes committed by the bandits and to identify methods that can be employed to curtail banditry. The purposive sampling was used to select the study area and simple random sampling technique was used to select eight wards out of fifteen wards in the local government, a total of 400 questionnaires were randomly administered. However, 373 questionnaires were retrieved. Findings revealed that crimes committed by bandits in the study area range from cattle rustling, kidnapping, rape, murder and looting of farm produce. The economic effect of banditry in the area led to impracticability of farming, trading and businesses activities, loss of livestock and limited natural resources. Factors responsible for the upsurge in banditry in the study area include; insecurity, abundance of weapons, vulnerability of areas, rural poverty, corruption, greed, political interference, land dispute. Finally on ways to minimize challenges of banditry respondents suggested reporting of suspicious persons, intelligence gathering, tackle corruption, poverty reduction and increase security level. The study recommended that constant and effective deployment of adequate number of security personnel to the affected communities to checkmate the illegal activities of the rural bandits, government should set up effective modalities to retrieve/recover the unlawfully possessed fire arms from wrong hands and government to encourage dialogue and reconciliation among the different ethnic groups in the respective communities affected by the problem of rural banditry, Discrimination and marginalization should be addressed with ultimate sense of responsibilities and accountability.

Background to the Study

In recent times, there has been a dramatic increase in the spate of conflict between herdsmen and farming communities, alongside the impending problems of rural banditry and cattle rustling. This increase in conflict results from increasing sedentarisation along grazing routes, increase sedentarisation could be seen as pastoralist communities' response to the numerous challenges they are facing. Sedentarisation has been one means of adapting to changing conditions over time (Adekunle,2014).

The tendency to blame nomadic herders for the problems they bring as an occupational group is reinforced by perspectives like the 'cattle complex' and the 'tragedy of the commons' in the academic research on pastoralism. Iyorchia, (2014), The cattle complex concerns environmental damage that harms pastoral societies. The environmental damage is attributed to inefficient traditional methods of raising livestock, and herders' penchant to keep large number of animals beyond their economic and reproductive functions. (Iro, 2015). Rural banditry has become a major concern for public policy in contemporary Nigeria. It refers to the practice of stealing cattle and animals from herders. Although driven by different needs and factors, it is increasingly an economically-based form of criminality perpetuated by informal networks (Kwaja, 2013). Rural banditry thrives as a means of 'primitive' accumulation of cowherds in the context of subsistence and commercial pastoralist. The most disturbing effect of this banditry is the unsealing of pastoralist transhumant activities. Furthermore, rural banditry is accompanied by rape, kidnapping, organized attacks on villages and communities, and looting.

Rural banditry intersects with several other important themes in the Nigerian political economy. Which are; the problems of human and national security; altered balance in state-society relations; the impact of climate change on agricultural practices and different occupational groups; the emerging challenge of food security and the modernization of agriculture; and the question of intergroup relations and social harmony in Nigeria's diverse and plural context, even more important is the impact of cattle rustling on livestock production. Livestock production is not only a significant aspect of agriculture in Nigeria's quest to diversify its economy, but also remains crucial to the overall wellbeing of pastoralist communities, particularly the nomadic Fulani herders. Also in recent period, rural banditry and violent conflict between pastoralists and farmers in Nigeria have been on the rise. This social conflict has traditionally consisted of dispute over natural resources and is often presented as a conflict between pastoralists and farmers over land that has recently developed into rural banditry with heavy human and economic cost, ranging from the sexual assault of women and girls, attacks on villages and cattle rustling, among others (Jibrin, 2015).

Rural banditry appears to be tied to the incessant conflict between Fulani herdsmen and farmers. The conflict may be connected to the wider context of identity, politics and intergroup relations, including the relationships between pastoralist groups on the one

hand and the Nigeria state system on the other. Transhumant pastoralists are perceived as violent and deliberately armed to deal with unsuspecting crop farmers and the farmers allege intentional crop damage by animals. The herders, on the other hand, perceive themselves to be victims of political marginalization, lacking a voice within the Nigeria state system. The exclusion of nomadic Fulani herders from the policy process and their lack of voice are so acute that the Miyeti Allah Cattle Breeders Association (MACBA), an urban-based Fulani pressure group, stands as the only known civic group that engages in policy advocacy on their behalf. ¹

The effect of banditry has left many scars on the people of the community with complicating and porous security architecture that has forced many residents to flee their homes and migrate to neighboring villages for safety, food shortages, destruction of lives, farm produce and properties with internally displaced camps (IDP) being flooded with refugees dying of starvation and disease on a daily basis. The study finds it necessary for the Government to create an enabling environment that would ensure safety of its people and their properties with constant and effective deployment of adequate number of security personnel to the affected communities to checkmate the illegal activities of the rural bandits.

Objectives

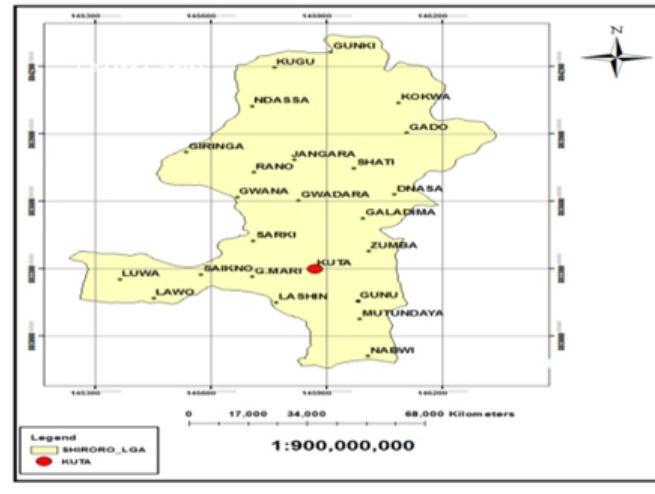
The following objectives were: To

- i. Identify factors responsible for the upsurge of banditry activities in Shiroro Local Government
- ii. Ascertain type of crimes committed by the bandits
- iii. Examine the effect of banditry on economic activities in the community
- iv. Identify methods that can be employed to curtail banditry.

Study Area

Shiroro is a Local Government Area in Niger State, Nigeria. Its headquarters is at Kuta, located within latitude 9° 53' 2.39" N and longitude 6° 49' 4.19". It has an area of 5,015 square kilometers (1,936 sq mil) and a population of 235,404 according to the 2006 census. The area is made up of relatively low and undulating land surface with some hills such as Bodo hill, Kuta Bare- Kuta hill and Reggae hill among others. The major river in the study area is 12. River Kaduna on which Shiroro dam was built. The annual rainfall of the area varies between 1100mm and 1600mm. The area is found in guinea savanna. (<http://naijasky.com/shiroro/72/shiroro-local-government/9720/>)

Figure 1: The study area (Shiroro Local Government Area, Niger State)



Source: Department of Geography (Remote Sensing Unit) FUT Minna

Methodology

The purposive sampling technique was used in selecting the study area based on the number of wards present in the local government and also how frequently banditry activities occur in the area. The research design used a descriptive survey with the application of questionnaire as an instrument for the collection of data as the area has experienced challenges as a result of banditries. There are a total of fifteen wards in the local government with a population of 235,404 (census, 2006). Eight wards were selected at random these are Gurmana, Madaka, Kokoki, Magani, Alawa, Kurebe, Maganda and Magami. A total of 400 questionnaires were randomly administered. However, 373 questionnaires were retrieved at the Internally Displaced People (IDP) in Kuta. Interview was also carried out to illicit the information from the respondents. The result obtained was analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Findings

Table 1: Factors Responsible for the Upsurge in Banditry in the Study Area

Ward	upsurge in banditry													
	Insecurity		abundance of weapons		vulnerability of areas		rural poverty		Corruption		political interference		land dispute	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Gurmana	17	28.8	5	8.5	7	11.9	11	18.6	8	13.6	6	10.2	5	8.5
Madaka	4	8.0	3	6.0	7	14.0	10	20.0	13	26.0	9	18.0	4	8.0
Kokoki	3	8.6	4	11.4	5	14.3	7	20.0	8	22.9	4	11.4	4	11.4
Magani	7	13.7	4	7.8	6	11.8	11	21.6	6	11.8	13	25.4	4	7.8
Alawa	8	15.4	7	13.5	9	17.3	9	17.3	2	3.8	13	25.0	4	7.7
Kurebe	5	10.6	4	8.5	2	4.3	12	25.5	10	21.3	9	19.1	5	10.6
Maganda	6	12.2	10	20.4	6	12.2	12	24.5	8	16.3	6	12.3	1	2.0
Magami	3	10.0	9	30.0	5	16.7	2	6.7	4	13.3	5	16.6	2	6.7

Source: Field Work 2020

Table 1 provided information on factors responsible for the upsurge of banditry in the area, and in Gurmana 28.1% believed that insecurity was the major cause, 8.5% blamed the abundance of sophisticated weapons, 11.9% were for vulnerability of the area, 18.6% stated that rural poverty, 13.6% faulted corruption, 6.8% hit political interference and 8.5% agreed land dispute. In Madaka 8.0% believed that insecurity is the major cause, 6.0% abundance of sophisticated weapons, 14.0% vulnerability of the area, 20.0% rural poverty, 26.0% corruption, 6.0% political interference and 8.0% land dispute. In Kokoki 8.6% insecurity, 11.4% abundance of sophisticated weapons, 14.3% vulnerability of the area, 14.3% rural poverty, 20.0% corruption, and political interference and 11.4% land dispute. In Magani 13.7% insecurity was the major cause, 7.8% abundance of sophisticated weapons, 11.8% vulnerability of the area, 21.6% rural poverty, 11.8% corruption, 7.8% political interference and land dispute. In Alawa 15.4% believed that insecurity is the major cause, 13.5% abundance of sophisticated weapons, 17.3% vulnerability of the area, 17.3% rural poverty, 3.8% corruption, 11.5% political interference and 7.7% land dispute. In Kurebe 10.6% believed that insecurity is the major cause, 8.5% abundance of sophisticated weapons, 4.3% vulnerability of the area, 25.5% rural poverty, 21.3% corruption, 8.5% political interference and 10.6% land dispute. In Maganda 12.2% believed that insecurity is the major cause, 20.4% abundance of sophisticated weapons, 12.2% vulnerability of the area, 24.5% rural poverty, 16.3% corruption, 8.2% political interference and 2.0% land dispute.

In Magami 10.0% believed that insecurity was the major cause to upsurge in banditry, 30.0% abundance of sophisticated weapons, 16.7% of the respondents believed vulnerability of the area to attacks contributes to the upsurge in banditry attacks, 6.7% rural poverty, 13.3% corruption, 13.3% political interference and 6.7% of the respondents revealed that land dispute contributes to the upsurge in attacks. This finding is related to the findings of Muhammad (2017) on the upsurge of banditry and cattle rustling showed

that vulnerability of the area, proliferation of lethal weapons like short guns, rifles, machine guns and other assault rifles in the hands of potential rustlers was responsible for the frequent attacks in the area.

Table 2: Crimes Committed by Bandits in the Study Area

Ward	Crimes committed									
	cattle rustling		Kidnapping		Rape		Murder		looting of farm produce	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Gurmana	20	33.9	21	35.6	9	15.2	3	5.1	6	10.2
Madaka	18	36.0	12	24.0	5	10.0	12	24.0	3	6.0
Kokoki	12	34.3	8	22.9	6	17.1	7	20.0	2	5.7
Magani	12	23.5	19	37.3	10	19.6	6	11.8	4	7.8
Alawa	20	38.5	11	21.2	4	7.7	12	23.1	5	9.6
Kurebe	10	21.3	21	44.7	7	14.9	4	8.5	5	10.6
Maganda	17	34.7	10	20.4	8	16.3	7	14.3	7	14.3
Magami	10	33.3	10	33.3	4	13.3	3	10.0	3	10.0

Source: Field Work 2020

Table 2 revealed information on various crimes committed by the bandits during attacks. In Gurmana, 33.9% of the respondents explained that the bandits indulged in cattle rustling, 35.6% explained that they kidnapped respondents, 15.2% of the respondents reported that they engaged in raping, 5.1% reported cases of murder and 10.2% of the respondents lamented on looting of their farm produce. In Madaka 36.0% of the respondents explained that the bandits indulged in cattle rustling, 24.0% explained that they kidnapped respondents, 10.0% of respondents reported that they engaged in raping, 24.0% reported case of murder and 6.0% of the respondents lamented on looting of their farm produce. In Kokoki 34.3% reported cases of the respondents explained that the bandits indulged in cattle rustling, 22.9% reported cases of kidnapping, 17.1% of the respondents reported that they engaged in raping, 20.0% reported cases of murder and 5.7% of the respondents lamented on looting of their farm produce. Magani 23.5% of the respondents explained that the bandits indulged in cattle rustling, 37.3% kidnapped, 19.6% of the respondents reported that they engage in raping, 11.8% reported case of murder and 7.8% looting of farm produce. In Alawa 38.5% of the respondents explained that the bandits indulge in cattle rustling, 21.2 explained that they kidnapped respondents, 7.7% e raping, 23.1% reported case of murder and 9.6% of the respondents lamented on looting of their farm produce. In Kurebe 21.3% of the respondents explained that the bandits indulged in cattle rustling, 44.7% explained that they kidnapped respondents, 14.9% of the respondents reported that they engage in raping, 8.5% reported case of murder and 10.6% of the respondents lamented on looting of their farm produce. In Maganda 34.7% of the respondents explained that the bandits indulged in cattle rustling, 20.4% explained that they kidnapped respondents, 14.3% reported case of murder and 14.3% of the respondents lamented on looting of their farm produce and in

Magami 33.3% of the respondents explained that the bandits rustle their cattle's, 33.3% explained that they kidnapped respondents, 13.3% of the respondents reported that they engage in raping, 10.0% were for murder and 10.0% of the respondents lamented on looting of their farm produce.

Table 3: Effect of Banditry on Community

Ward	Effect of banditry on community											
	prevents farming activities		prevent livestock rearing		hinders hunting		communal conflict		loss of livelihood/income		lower standard of living	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Gurmana	22	37.3	10	16.9	6	10.2	5	8.5	11	18.6	5	8.5
Madaka	15	30.0	7	14.0	5	10.0	4	8.0	15	30.0	4	8.0
Kokoki	9	25.7	7	20.0	3	8.6	3	8.6	11	31.4	2	5.7
Magani	14	27.5	5	9.8	5	9.8	7	13.7	13	25.5	7	13.7
Alawa	21	40.4	6	11.5	6	11.5	3	5.8	11	21.2	5	9.6
Kurebe	17	36.2	4	8.5	2	4.5	5	10.6	16	34.0	3	6.4
Maganda	12	24.5	5	10.2	5	10.2	6	12.2	17	34.7	4	8.2
Magami	10	33.3	2	6.7	5	16.7	3	10.0	7	23.3	3	10.0

Source: Field Work 2020

Table 3 showed detail on effect of banditry on the community. In Gurmana, 37.3% revealed that banditry prevents farming, 16.9% prevents lives stock rearing, 10.2% hinders hunting, 8.5% communal conflict, 18.6% loss of income and 8.5% lower the standard of living. In Madaka 30.0% prevented farming activities, 14.0% prevented lives stock rearing, 10.0% hindering hunting, 8.0% communal conflict, 30.0% loss of income and 8.0% lower the standard of living. In Kokoki 25.7% prevented farming activities, 20.0% prevented lives stock rearing, 8.6% hindering hunting and brought about communal conflict, 31.4% loss of income and 5.7% lower the standard of living. In Magani 27.5% prevented farming activities, 9.8% prevented lives stock rearing and hindering hunting, 13.7% communal conflict, 25.5% loss of income and 13.7% lower the standard of living. In Alawa 40.4% prevented farming activities, 11.5% prevented lives stock rearing and hindering hunting, 5.8% communal conflict, 21.2% loss of income and 9.6% lower the standard of living. In Kurebe 36.2% of the respondents revealed that the effect prevented farming activities, 8.5% prevented lives stock rearing, 4.5% hindering hunting, 10.6% communal conflict, 34.0% loss of income and 6.4% explained that it lowers the standard of living of the people. In Maganda 24.5% prevented farming activities, 10.2% prevented lives stock rearing and hindering hunting, 12.2% communal conflict, 34.7% loss of income and 8.2% lower the standard of living of the people. In Magami 33.3% prevented farming activities, 6.7% prevented lives stock rearing, 16.7% hindering hunting, 10.0% communal conflict, 23.3% loss of income and 10.0% lower the standard of living of the people. This finding is in line with the findings of Bashir, (2017) which states that the activities of cattle rustling and banditry has had major impact on the

community. It has resulted to conflict related deaths, immigration, internally displaced persons (IDP), intolerance between communities, high number of police patrol and military personnel, human rights abuse, sexual assault and rape have also increased, arrest and detention of the common people without probable cause or warrant.

Table 4: Economic Effect of Banditry

Ward	Economic Effect							
	farming become impracticable		trading and businesses not feasible		loss of livestock		limited natural resources	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Gurmana	23	38.9	17	28.8	13	22.0	6	10.2
Madaka	30	60.0	12	24.0	5	10.0	3	6.0
Kokoki	17	48.6	10	28.6	6	17.1	2	5.7
Magani	16	31.4	20	39.2	11	21.6	4	7.8
Alawa	23	44.2	11	21.1	12	23.1	6	11.5
Kurebe	14	29.8	21	44.7	7	14.9	5	10.6
Maganda	21	42.9	13	26.5	8	16.3	7	14.3
Magami	10	33.3	13	43.3	4	13.3	3	10.0

Source: Field Work 2020

Table 4 provided information on the economic effect of banditry on the affected community. In Gurmana 38.9% of the respondents explained that farming activities came impracticable, 28.8% asserted that trading and businesses not feasible, 22.0% loss of livestock and 10.2% the attacks resulted to limited natural resource in the area. In Madaka 60.0% of the respondents explained that farming activities came impracticable, 24.0% asserted that trading and businesses not feasible, 10.0% loss of livestock and 6.0% said that the attacks resulted to limited natural resource in the area. In Kokoki 48.6% of the respondents explained that farming activities became impracticable, 28.6% agreed that trading and businesses not feasible, 17.1% loss of livestock and 5.7% stated that the attacks resulted to limited natural resource in the area. In Magani 31.4% of the respondents explained that farming activities came impracticable, 39.2% asserted that trading and businesses not feasible, 21.6% loss of livestock and 7.8% agreed that the attacks resulted to limited natural resource in the area. In Alawa 44.2% of the respondents explained that farming activities came impracticable, 21.1% agreed that trading and businesses not feasible, 23.1% loss of livestock and 11.5% stated that the attacks resulted to limited natural resource in the area. In Kurebe 29.8% of the respondents explained that farming activities came impracticable, 44.7% asserted that trading and businesses not feasible, 14.9% loss of livestock and 10.6% agreed that the attacks resulted to limited natural resource in the area. In Maganda 29.8% of the respondents explained that farming activities came impracticable, 44.7% agreed that trading and businesses not feasible, 14.9% loss of livestock and 10.6% asserted that the attacks resulted to limited natural resource in the area. In Magami 33.3% of the respondents explained that farming

activities came impracticable, 43.3% agreed that trading and businesses not feasible, 13.3% loss of livestock and 10.0% asserted that the attacks resulted to limited natural resource in the area. This finding is supported by the findings of (Shehu, Suleiman, Victor, and Binta, 2017) who observed that the populace have suffered devastating effects of the activities especially in the targeted communities and the state at large and these include killing of hundreds of innocent people, high rate of economic lost, food and other livestock either destroyed or stolen from the affected areas, houses and places of worships are been the target of these hoodlums which led to the crippled investment opportunity, movement of goods and other agricultural product is no longer possible considering the fact people and even the security agencies are been attacked on the daily basis while farmlands are equally destroyed even before harvest and the hope for agricultural is almost dashed out.

Table 5: Efforts set up by the Community to Curb Banditry

Ward	Efforts							
	community peace meeting		vigilante /volunteer		cooperation with other communities		reporting criminal activities	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Gurmana	7	11.9	12	20.3	19	32.2	21	35.6
Madaka	6	12.0	4	8.0	26	52.0	14	28.0
Kokoki	9	25.7	6	17.1	8	22.8	12	34.8
Magani	4	7.8	7	13.7	13	25.5	27	52.9
Alawa	11	21.1	8	15.4	12	23.1	21	40.4
Kurebe	12	25.5	5	10.6	12	25.5	18	38.3
Maganda	11	22.4	8	16.3	15	30.6	15	30.6
Magami	7	23.3	3	10.0	11	36.7	9	30.0

Source: Field Work 2020

On efforts being setup by the community to curb banditry in the area, information obtained revealed that in Gurmana 11.9% of the respondents explained that community peace meeting should be initiated 20.3% stated that vigilante/volunteer should be formed 32.2% agreed that cooperation with other communities and 35.6% of the respondents believed that reporting criminal activities would go a long way to tackle the menace. In Madaka 12.0% of the respondents explained that community peace meeting, 8.0% vigilante/volunteer, 52.0% cooperation with other communities and 28.0% reporting criminal activities. In Kokoki 25.7% of the respondents explained that community peace meeting, 17.1% vigilante/volunteer, 22.8% cooperation with other communities and 34.8% reporting criminal activities. In Magani 7.8% of the respondents explained that community peace meeting, 13.7% vigilante /volunteer, 25.5% cooperation with other communities and 52.9% reporting criminal activities. In Alawa 21.1% of the respondents explained that community peace meeting, 15.4% vigilante/volunteer, 23.1% cooperation with other communities and 40.4% reporting criminal activities would help tackle the menace. In Kurebe 25.5% of the respondents

explained that community peace meeting, 10.6% vigilante /volunteer, 25.5% cooperation with other communities and 38.3% reporting criminal activities. In Maganda 22.4% of the respondents explained that community peace meeting, 16.3% vigilante/volunteer, 30.6% cooperation with other communities and 30.6% reporting criminal activities. In Magami 23.3% of the respondents explained that community peace meeting, 10.0% vigilante /volunteer, 36.7% cooperation with other communities and 30.0% of the respondents believed that reporting criminal activities would go a long way to tackle the menace.

Table 6: People Involved in Banditry and Sources of Their Weapons

Location	People involved in banditry								Sources			
	local nomads		foreign nomad		rural bandits		illegal arm dealer		rural bandits/armed robbers		foreign nomads	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Gurmana	24	40.7	15	25.4	20	33.9	26	44.1	24	40.7	9	15.2
Madaka	30	60.0	15	30.0	5	10.0	11	22.0	34	68.0	5	10.0
Kokoki	20	57.1	3	8.6	12	34.3	12	34.3	17	48.6	6	17.1
Magani	19	37.3	9	17.6	23	45.1	16	31.3	24	47.1	11	21.6
Alawa	14	26.9	12	23.1	26	50.0	11	21.1	29	55.8	12	23.1
Kurebe	14	29.8	7	14.9	26	55.3	15	31.9	25	53.2	7	14.9
Maganda	27	55.1	8	16.3	14	28.6	21	42.8	20	40.8	8	16.3
Magami	13	43.3	6	20.0	11	36.6	10	33.3	16	53.3	4	13.3

Source: Field Work 2020

Details on people involved in banditry and their major sources of weapons were depicted on table 6. In Gurmana, 40.7% explained that local nomads were involved in the banditry attacks, 25.4% foreign nomads while 33.9% rural bandits. In Madaka 60.0% explained that local nomads were involved in the banditry attacks, 30.0% foreign nomads while 10.0% of the respondents revealed rural bandits were behind the continual attacks. In Kokoki 57.1% of the respondents explained that local nomads were involved in the banditry attacks, 8.6% revealed that foreign nomads behind that attacks and 34.3% rural bandits behind that attacks. In Magani 37.3% local nomads, 17.6% revealed foreign nomads behind that attacks while 45.1% rural bandits. Alawa 26.9% local nomads, 23.1% revealed that foreign nomads behind that attacks while 50.0% rural bandits. Kurebe 29.8% of the respondents explained that local nomads were involved in the banditry attacks, 14.9% foreign nomads while 55.3% revealed that rural bandits behind that attacks. Maganda, 55.1% local nomads, 16.3% foreign nomads while 28.6% rural bandits. Magami 43.3% of the respondents explained that local nomads were involved in the banditry attacks, 20.0% foreign nomads while 36.6% of the respondents revealed that rural bandits were the behind the continual attacks.

On information regarding where these bandits sourced their weapons, in Gurmana 44.1% of the respondents revealed that the bandits sourced their weapons from illegal arm dealers, 40.7% revealed that the source is from rural bandits and 15.2% revealed that the source is from foreign nomads. In Madaka 22.0% from illegal arm dealers, 68.0% revealed that the source is from rural bandits and 10.0% revealed that the source is from foreign nomads. In Kokoki, 34.3% illegal arm dealers, 48.6% revealed that the source is from rural bandits and 17.1% revealed that the source is from foreign nomads. In Magani 31.3% of respondents revealed that the source is from illegal arm dealers, 47.1% rural bandits and 21.6% foreign nomads. In Alawa 21.1% revealed that the bandits sourced their weapons from illegal arm dealers, 55.8% revealed that the source is from rural bandits and 23.1% revealed that the source is from foreign nomads. In Kurebe 31.9% illegal arm dealers, 53.2% from rural bandits and 14.9% revealed that the source is from foreign nomads. In Maganda 42.8% revealed that the source is from of the respondents revealed that the bandits source their weapons from illegal arm dealers, 40.8% revealed that the source is from rural bandits and 16.3% revealed that the source is from foreign nomads. In Magami 33.3% of the respondents revealed that the bandits source their weapons from illegal arm dealers, 53.3% revealed that the source is from rural bandits and 13.3% revealed that the source is from foreign nomads.

Table 7: Assistance from Government and Non-Governmental Organizations and Type of Assistance

Ward	Type of assistance							
	Food items		Medical supply		Clothing		Sleeping materials	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Gurmana	20	42.6	24	51.1	7	14.9	6	12.8
Madaka	20	50.0	11	27.5	5	12.5	4	10.0
Kokoki	13	44.8	11	37.9	2	6.9	3	10.3
Magani	18	46.2	10	25.6	9	23.1	2	5.1
Alawa	11	25.0	14	31.8	12	27.2	7	15.9
Kurebe	17	53.1	5	15.6	2	6.3	8	25.0
Maganda	20	48.8	10	24.4	3	7.3	8	19.5
Magami	9	42.9	6	28.6	4	19.0	1	4.8

Source: Field Work 2020

Findings on the type of assistance rendered to the respondents as a relief to them on the loss of properties by government and Non-governmental organizations during bandit attacks. In Gurmana 42.6% of the victims received food items, 51.1% received medical supply, 14.9% received clothing material and 12.8% received sleeping materials. In Madaka 50.0% of the victims received food items, 27.5% received medical supply, 12.5% received clothing material and 10.0% received sleeping materials. In Kokoki 44.8% of the victims received food items, 37.9% received medical supply, 6.9% received clothing material and 10.3% received sleeping materials. In Magani 46.2% of the victims received

food items, 25.6% received medical supply, 23.1% received clothing material and 5.1% received sleeping materials. In Alawa 25.0% of the victims received food items, 31.8% received medical supply, 27.2% received clothing material and 15.9% received sleeping materials. In Kurebe 53.1% of the victims received food items, 15.6% received medical supply, 6.3% received clothing material and 25.0% received sleeping materials. In Maganda 48.8% of the victims received food items, 24.4% received medical supply, 7.3% received clothing material and 19.5% received sleeping materials. In Magami 42.9% of the victims received food items, 28.6% received medical supply, 19.0% received clothing material and 4.8% received sleeping materials.

Table 8: Ways to Minimize Banditry and Improve Livelihood of the Community

Ward	ways to minimize challenges of banditry									
	Report suspicious persons		Intelligence gathering		Tackle corruption		Poverty reduction		Increase security level	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Gurmana	7	11.9	12	20.3	3	5.1	21	35.6	16	27.1
Madaka	6	12.0	4	8.0	4	8.0	10	20.0	26	52.0
Kokoki	9	25.7	6	17.1	8	22.8	2	5.7	10	28.6
Magani	4	7.8	7	13.7	10	19.6	3	5.9	27	52.9
Alawa	2	3.8	8	15.4	10	19.2	11	21.1	21	40.4
Kurebe	12	25.5	5	10.6	12	25.5	6	12.8	12	25.5
Maganda	11	22.4	7	14.3	8	16.3	8	16.3	15	30.6
Magami	5	16.7	3	10.0	2	6.7	9	30.0	11	36.7

Source: Field Work 2020

Table 8 revealed responses of the respondents on ways to minimize banditry attack in the area. In Gurmana 11.9% reporting suspicious persons, 20.3% suggested intelligence gathering, 5.1% opined on tackling corruption, 35.6% supported poverty reduction and 27.1% increase in level of security. In Madaka 12.0% reporting suspicious persons, 8.0% intelligence gathering, 20.0% poverty reduction and majority of the respondents 52.0% increase in the level of security. In Kokoki 25.7% reporting suspicious persons, 17.1% suggested intelligence gathering, 22.8% tackling corruption, 5.7% poverty reduction and 28.6% increase in the level of security. In Magani 7.8% reporting suspicious persons, 13.7% intelligence gathering, 19.6% tackling corruption would help to minimize banditry attacks in the area, 5.9% supported poverty reduction and 52.9% agreed on increase in the level of security. In Alawa 3.8% of the respondents were in support of reporting suspicious persons, 15.4% suggested intelligence gathering, 19.2% believed that tackling corruption would help to minimize banditry attacks in the area, 21.1% supported poverty reduction and 40.4% agreed on increase in the level of security. In Kurebe 25.5% of the respondents were in support of reporting suspicious persons, 10.6% suggested intelligence gathering, 25.5% tackling corruption, 12.8% supported poverty reduction and 25.5% of the respondents believed on increase in level of security. In Maganda 22.4%

reporting suspicious persons, 14.3% supported intelligence gathering, 16.3% supported tackling corruption and poverty reduction while 30.6% agreed on increase in the level of security. In Magami 16.7% 11.9% reporting suspicious persons, 10.0% suggested intelligence gathering, 6.7% tackling corruption, 30.0% supported poverty reduction and 36.7% of the respondents believed that increase in the level of security would help to curb the attacks. This finding relates to the findings of Muhammed 2017 who observed some precautionary measures adopted by the community to curtail or minimize banditry and cattle rustling which include utilizing the local vigilante groups to protect the vulnerable areas and prevented theft of livestock, self defense and encourage local communities to organize local patrols to prevent incursion of cattle rustlers in to their areas.

Conclusion

The major causes of banditry in Shiroro Local Government Area of Niger State are multi-faceted and they include: abundance of fire arms among the Fulani herdsmen, greed, insecurity, political interference and poverty. The crimes committed by these bandits in the study area range from cattle rustling, kidnapping, rapping, murder and looting of farm produce. The outstanding socio-economic impacts of banditry are: disruption of economic activities, fall in rural businesses due to fear of indiscriminate attacks while on transit to and fro rural markets. Farming which is the main stay of the rural economy has been greatly affected due to fear of attacks and lack of safety while in the farmland. In some instances, bandits do attack farmers while cultivating their farmland injuring or even killing them and usually carted away their tools which they are using to plough their farmland and escaped to the nearby forest.

These lack of safety and security challenges have prompted the mass migration of respondents and rural dwellers away from the affected districts to nearby villages. Some affected persons ran to safety in the IDP camp in Central Primary School Kuta.

Recommendation

1. Development and adoption of community policing and strategic synergy between grassroots vigilantes and security operatives who have better understanding of the terrain
2. Shot on site policy against persons or groups in possession of illegal fire arm
3. There should be framework avails opportunities for this to be integrated irrespective of socio-educational status. The opportunities include different of vocational/livelihood trainings for income generating activities, functional literacy programmes for young person's missing education, life building skills and health education services that will strengthen their resistance to participate in social vices and address their reproductive health needs.
4. Discrimination and marginalization should be addressed with ultimate sense of responsibilities and accountability.
5. The prevailing approach to provision and distribution of infrastructure facilities and social amenities need to be seriously reassessed, appropriate strategies of community participation and people oriented programming that will encourage

- creativity, maintenance and sustenance of facilities should be evolved, and a sense of ownership developed.
6. There should be constant and effective deployment of adequate number of security personnel to the affected communities to checkmate the illegal activities of the rural bandits.
 7. Introduction of national centre for control of small arms and light weapon for the disarmament and recovery of unlawfully possessed fire arms from wrong hands. These unlawfully possessed fire arms certainly precipitated the increasing attacks on rural communities in the affected districts and the rustling of their livestock by the cattle rustlers who operate with high degree of impunity because of their fire power which the villagers/rural vigilante cannot dare to confront them.
 8. The Government should create an enabling environment for local jobs creation at the village level for the teeming unemployed youths. Rural poverty has been pervasive in recent years; youths that supposed to be engage in different aspects of rural economy are now left roaming about in the rural community without doing anything, this and many more has contributed in the upsurge in rural banditry as they are striving to make a livelihood out of the criminal loots due to non-availability of opportunity for rural employment.

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