

BANDITRY AND FOOD SECURITY IN OMALA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF KOGI STATE: AN EMPIRICAL ASSESSMENT

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ABSTRACT

Banditry has become one of Nigeria's major security threats, disrupting rural livelihoods, food production, and community stability. This study examined the effect of armed attacks on food production and the influence of population displacement on household food security in Omala Local Government Area of Kogi State. The study was anchored on the Frustration and Aggression Theory and employed a quantitative research design. Data were collected through structured questionnaires administered to 372 respondents drawn from four communities: Agojeju Odo, Bagana, Abejukolo, and Opada. Descriptive statistics and chi-square tests were used for data analysis. The findings revealed that persistent armed attacks have led to the destruction of farmlands, loss of crops, and significant decline in agricultural output. Population displacement further worsened food insecurity as many households lost access to farmland and stable sources of income. The study recommends that government should strengthen community-based security initiatives and provide livelihood support for displaced farmers to enhance agricultural productivity and restore food security in Omala Local Government Area.

Keywords: banditry, food security, rural livelihoods, agricultural productivity, displacement, Omala, Kogi State

INTRODUCTION

Banditry and food insecurity have become major developmental challenges in Nigeria, threatening the livelihood of millions of rural dwellers. Banditry involves violent criminal activities such as armed attacks, kidnapping, and forced displacement, often targeted at farming communities. These violent acts disrupt agricultural activities, destroy farmlands, and weaken food production systems. Food security, as defined by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO, 2021), exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs for a healthy life. Unfortunately, the increasing wave of violent crimes across rural areas in Nigeria has made this goal difficult to achieve.

Across Sub-Saharan Africa, insecurity has been identified as one of the strongest factors undermining agricultural productivity and food stability. Armed conflicts and displacement resulting from violence have reduced farmers' access to land and labour, leading to widespread hunger and poverty. In Nigeria, states in the northern region such as Zamfara, Kaduna, Niger, Benue, and Plateau have suffered heavily from violent attacks and bandit incursions. These incidents have caused mass displacement, loss of human lives, and destruction of crops and livestock, which together contribute to declining food availability and rising food prices (Olayoku, 2022; International Crisis Group, 2023). The consequences are particularly severe in agrarian communities that depend largely on subsistence farming as their main source of livelihood.

Kogi State, especially its eastern region, has in recent years witnessed growing insecurity that mirrors the situation in other northern states. Omala Local Government Area, once known for stable agricultural production, has become a hotspot for violent attacks. Villages such as Agojeju-Odo, Bagana, and Abejukolo have experienced repeated armed invasions, killings, and the burning of farmlands. In April 2024, suspected herdsmen attacked Agojeju-Odo, killing several residents, razing houses, and destroying large portions of farmland. Reports varied on the number of casualties, with Reuters (2024) citing twenty-one deaths, while local sources recorded more than thirty (Daily Trust, 2024; Independent, 2024). These attacks led to massive displacement of people and abandonment of farmlands, thereby worsening food insecurity. In response, Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo sought military assistance and established Forward Operating Bases in Bagana and Abejukolo to restore peace and ensure that farmers could safely return to their fields (Kogi State Government, 2024). Despite these interventions, food scarcity persists in many communities as displaced farmers struggle to rebuild their livelihoods.

The growing rate of insecurity in Omala Local Government Area raises serious concerns about how specific dimensions of banditry—armed attacks and population displacement—affect food security. The main problem this study addresses is that recurrent armed attacks and displacement have disrupted food production and household access to food, thereby threatening the survival of farming families and the local economy. While several studies have investigated general insecurity in Nigeria, very few have empirically examined how these two dimensions of banditry influence food production and household food security in Omala. This gap forms the motivation for the present research.

The study, therefore, aims to examine the effect of banditry on food security in Omala Local Government Area of Kogi State. Specifically, it seeks to assess how armed attacks affect food production and how population displacement influences household food security. From these objectives, the study raises two research questions: What is the effect of armed attacks on food production in Omala Local Government Area? How does population displacement affect household food security in Omala Local Government Area? To guide the analysis, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H₀₁: Armed attacks have no significant effect on food production in Omala Local Government Area.

H₀₂: Population displacement has no significant effect on household food security in Omala Local Government Area.

By addressing these questions, the study intends to provide empirical evidence on the link between insecurity and food systems, particularly in conflict-prone agricultural areas. The findings are expected to assist policymakers, security agencies, and development partners in formulating strategies that not only address insecurity but also promote sustainable agricultural recovery and rural food security in Omala and similar communities across Nigeria.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Concept of Banditry

Banditry has increasingly become a dominant security challenge across many developing nations, particularly in Africa. The term is commonly used to describe organized violent crimes carried out by armed groups against individuals, communities, or state institutions. Such criminal activities typically include armed robbery, kidnapping for ransom, cattle rustling, destruction of property, and wanton killings (Okoli & Ugwu, 2019). Unlike ordinary street crime, banditry is often systematic, coordinated, and sustained over time, making it more devastating to social order and economic development. It thrives in areas where state authority is weak, where poverty and unemployment are pervasive, and where grievances such as ethnic, political, or religious are easily mobilized for violence (Akinyetun, 2022).

At its core, banditry is a manifestation of the failure of governance and the inability of the state to monopolize the use of force. Scholars argue that when legitimate institutions fail to deliver basic services such as security, justice, and welfare, criminal groups emerge to exploit the vacuum (Ibrahim, 2021). Banditry is not only an economic crime but also a social and political phenomenon, as it reflects deeper structural inequalities within society. For instance, competition over natural resources such as land and water between farmers and pastoralists in Nigeria has created fertile ground for violent clashes, which gradually evolved into full scale banditry (Blench, 2021).

Banditry in Nigeria has evolved into a complex form of organized criminality characterized by multiple dimensions that affect rural livelihoods and national security. For the purpose of this study, banditry is operationalized through four measurable dimensions — kidnapping for ransom, cattle rustling, armed invasion of communities, and destruction of farmlands — each of which reflects a unique manifestation of the phenomenon.

Kidnapping for ransom has become one of the most pervasive dimensions of banditry. It involves the abduction of farmers, traders, and travelers, usually for financial gain. This act instills fear, restricts movement, and prevents rural dwellers from accessing farmlands, thereby reducing agricultural output and productivity (Akinyetun, 2022).

Cattle rustling represents another critical dimension. It entails the violent theft of livestock, which undermines pastoral livelihoods, reduces protein availability, and sparks deadly conflicts between farmers and herders. Over time, this practice has evolved from opportunistic theft into large-scale, organized crime networks that trade stolen cattle across regional borders (Blench, 2021).

The armed invasion of communities by organized groups constitutes a third operational form of banditry. Such invasions often involve looting, arson, and killings that result in the displacement of entire populations. The destruction of homes, schools, and markets not only disrupts social order but also cripples local economies and food systems (Ibrahim, 2021).

A fourth and related dimension is the destruction of farmlands and agricultural infrastructure, which directly threatens food security. Bandits often burn crops, destroy irrigation facilities, and seize harvests to exert control or express grievances. This not only reduces food supply but also discourages future cultivation (Okoli & Ugwu, 2019).

The persistence of these forms of banditry is driven by a combination of poverty, unemployment, weak security institutions, and poor governance. Nigeria's high rate of multidimensional poverty, estimated at 133 million citizens (NBS, 2022), has created fertile ground for recruitment into armed groups, particularly among idle youths seeking

survival. Weak policing and corruption within the security sector have also allowed bandits to operate freely in ungoverned rural spaces (Alemika, 2021).

In response to these challenges, military interventions such as *Operation Puff Adder*, *Operation Sharan Daji*, and *Operation Hadarin Daji* have been launched to suppress armed groups (International Crisis Group, 2020). In Kogi State, the establishment of a forward operational base in Omala Local Government Area in 2024 following deadly attacks on communities represents a major attempt to protect lives and farmlands. Although this intervention has restored temporary stability, experts argue that sustainable peace requires integrating security operations with socio-economic reforms, youth employment, and rural development initiatives (Ewi et al., 2021).

Food Security

Food security is a multidimensional concept that goes beyond the mere availability of food to encompass issues of access, utilization, and stability. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO, 2021) defines food security as the condition in which all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. This definition underscores the fact that food security is not simply about producing enough food but also ensuring that such food is accessible, affordable, and usable in ways that contribute to human well-being.

According to FAO (2022), food security rests on four critical pillars: availability, access, utilization, and stability. Availability refers to the presence of adequate food in a given area, whether through domestic production, imports, or food aid. Access relates to the economic and physical capacity of households and individuals to obtain food. Utilization refers to how food is consumed and absorbed by the body, influenced by nutrition, health, and food safety. Stability emphasizes the importance of continuous access to food over time, without the risk of sudden shortages due to conflicts, disasters, or economic shocks. When any of these four dimensions is compromised, food insecurity arises.

Globally, food security has become a pressing concern due to population growth, climate change, and conflicts. The Global Report on Food Crises (2023) revealed that more than 258 million people in 58 countries faced acute food insecurity, with conflicts and violence identified as leading drivers. In sub-Saharan Africa, protracted conflicts have disrupted farming activities, displaced communities, and destroyed livelihoods, making the region one of the most food-insecure in the world (World Food Programme, 2023). This situation aligns with Sen's (1981) entitlement theory, which argues that food insecurity is not only a result of insufficient production but also of people's inability to command food through economic and social means.

In Nigeria, food security is central to development planning but remains under severe threat from multiple factors. The country relies heavily on agriculture, which employs about 35% of the labor force (NBS, 2022). However, insecurity—especially from Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast, banditry in the Northwest and North-Central, and farmer–herder conflicts across the Middle Belt—has significantly disrupted food production. Farmers are often forced to abandon their farmlands due to fear of attacks, leading to sharp declines in food output (International Crisis Group, 2020). For instance, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI, 2022) reported that Nigeria lost billions in agricultural value due to conflict-related displacement of farmers and the destruction of farmlands.

The situation in rural communities such as those in Kogi State illustrates the link between insecurity and food insecurity. In areas like Omala, where banditry and suspected Fulani herder attacks have displaced farming households, large

expanses of farmland remain uncultivated. This has reduced crop yields, increased reliance on food imports from safer regions, and driven up local food prices (Premium Times, 2024). Consequently, households that previously depended on subsistence farming for their nutrition are now trapped in cycles of hunger and poverty.

Beyond insecurity, other structural challenges also undermine food security in Nigeria. Climate change has reduced rainfall patterns and increased desertification, particularly in the north, where agricultural productivity is already low (FAO, 2022). Poor infrastructure, such as inadequate roads and storage facilities, further restricts farmers' access to markets, causing post-harvest losses that FAO (2021) estimates at nearly 40% of annual production. Moreover, inflation and subsidy removals have eroded purchasing power, making it increasingly difficult for low-income households to afford food, even where it is available.

Insecurity

Insecurity refers to a condition in which individuals and communities lack adequate protection for their lives, property, and livelihoods. It denotes the absence of peace, safety, and stability within a society, often arising from violent conflicts, terrorism, insurgency, or organized crimes such as banditry and kidnapping (Akinyetun, 2022). The concept of insecurity goes beyond physical violence; it also encompasses the fear of attack and the psychological trauma associated with living under constant threats. This persistent sense of vulnerability undermines not only social order but also economic development and human welfare (Ibrahim, 2021).

In the Nigerian context, insecurity has taken multiple dimensions, ranging from the Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast, farmer–herder conflicts across the Middle Belt, and militancy in the Niger Delta, to widespread banditry and kidnapping in the Northwest and North-Central regions (International Crisis Group, 2020). These forms of insecurity have displaced millions, destroyed livelihoods, and strained the capacity of the Nigerian state to provide basic governance. For instance, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, 2021) estimated that over 3 million Nigerians were internally displaced as a result of violent conflicts and bandit attacks.

Scholars argue that insecurity is both a cause and consequence of weak governance. Poorly equipped security agencies, corruption, porous borders, and poverty have provided fertile ground for the growth of violent groups (Alemika, 2021). In rural areas, insecurity has a particularly devastating effect on agriculture, as fear of attacks often forces farmers to abandon their farmlands. This has a direct impact on food security and community resilience, showing how intertwined insecurity is with broader developmental challenges (FAO, 2022).

In summary, insecurity represents one of the gravest threats to Nigeria's stability. It not only endangers lives but also disrupts economic activities, displaces populations, and erodes public trust in government. Addressing insecurity requires a comprehensive approach that combines security interventions with governance reforms, poverty reduction, and community-based peacebuilding strategies (Akinyetun, 2022).

Agricultural Productivity

Agricultural productivity refers to the efficiency with which land, labor, capital, and other resources are used in producing food and agricultural goods. It is typically measured by the output per unit of input, such as crop yield per hectare or livestock yield per animal (Eze, 2020). Agricultural productivity is a key indicator of the health of a nation's food system,

as it determines the ability of agriculture to meet growing food demands, ensure food security, and support economic development.

The importance of agricultural productivity lies in its role in reducing poverty and hunger. According to the World Bank (2020), improvements in agricultural productivity are among the most effective ways to lift rural households out of poverty, since agriculture is the main source of livelihood for a majority of people in developing countries. Higher productivity translates to greater food availability, lower food prices, and increased household incomes, thereby enhancing both food and nutritional security (FAO, 2021).

In Nigeria, agriculture contributes about 24% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employs over 35% of the labor force (NBS, 2022). Yet, productivity remains low due to several structural challenges, including reliance on rain-fed farming, limited access to modern technology, poor infrastructure, and weak extension services (IFPRI, 2022). Insecurity, particularly banditry and farmer–herder conflicts, has further undermined productivity by displacing farmers, restricting access to farmlands, and destroying crops and livestock (Premium Times, 2024).

Climate change also poses a significant threat to agricultural productivity. Erratic rainfall patterns, flooding, and desertification in northern Nigeria have reduced arable land and increased the vulnerability of farming systems (Blench, 2021). Without climate-smart interventions and investments in irrigation, productivity will remain stagnant or decline further.

Theoretical Framework

The broad theoretical framework for this study is the Human Needs Theory, which is anchored on the principle that unmet basic needs are a fundamental driver of conflict and violence (Burton, 1990). The theory posits that all human beings require the satisfaction of non-negotiable needs such as food, security, identity, recognition, and participation. When these needs are denied or threatened, individuals or groups resort to violent actions as a means of redress.

More specifically, Human Needs Theory underscores the significance of resource competition and security in sustaining peace and stability within communities. According to Burton (1990), when groups are deprived of access to essential needs such as land, water, or livelihood opportunities, the outcome is often recurring conflict. In the Nigerian context, especially in agrarian communities such as Omala, the inability of farmers and herders to peacefully coexist due to struggles over grazing lands, farmlands, and water resources has created fertile ground for banditry. The escalation of these conflicts into large-scale violence results in displacement, destruction of farms, loss of lives, and eventual food insecurity.

The originality of Human Needs Theory lies in its capacity to explain why conventional approaches such as military force, policing, or legal sanctions often fail to resolve banditry and related conflicts. While such measures may temporarily suppress violence, they do not address the underlying grievances fueling aggression. The persistence of banditry in Omala and similar communities reflects a deeper structural problem — the denial of livelihood security and protection for both farmers and herders.

The relevance of Human Needs Theory to this study lies in its explanation of how unresolved basic needs can perpetuate conflict and undermine food security. By situating the analysis within this framework, the study highlights

how policies aimed at equitable resource distribution, community-based conflict resolution, and strengthened rural security can mitigate banditry and ensure sustainable food production in Omala Local Government Area of Kogi State.

Empirical Review

Alemika (2021) in his study “Governance, Corruption, and Insecurity in Nigeria” adopted a qualitative research design using secondary data to explore how poor governance and corruption perpetuate insecurity. The study found that weak law enforcement and diversion of security funds enable bandits to thrive. Alemika recommended greater transparency in security spending, judicial reforms, and local governance empowerment as sustainable anti-banditry measures.

International Crisis Group (2020) conducted a study titled “Violence in Nigeria’s North West: Rolling Back the Mayhem.” This research utilized a qualitative descriptive approach relying on field observations, interviews, and media monitoring. Findings showed that widespread cattle rustling and mass abductions in Zamfara, Kaduna, and Katsina States had significantly undermined regional food supply chains. The report recommended coordinated military and civilian operations, border monitoring, and regional agricultural recovery programs to stabilize the food economy.

Okoli and Ugwu (2019) in their study titled “Banditry and the Crisis of Rural Development in North-Western Nigeria” used a content analysis method to assess how organized bandit activities affect rural livelihoods. Data were sourced from security reports, newspapers, and government publications. Findings indicated that kidnapping and armed invasion were the leading causes of rural displacement and reduced farming output. The authors recommended decentralization of security control, rural job creation, and improved intelligence sharing among agencies.

Ibrahim (2015) examined “Insecurity and Food Production in Northern Nigeria.” Using a mixed-method design, data were collected through structured questionnaires and key informant interviews with farmers and local officials in Kaduna and Katsina States. The findings showed that rural bandit attacks forced farmers to abandon farmlands, leading to declining crop yields and loss of income. The study recommended community policing, government compensation schemes, and the rehabilitation of displaced farmers to revive agricultural production.

Okoli and Atelhe (2014) conducted a study titled “Nomadic Violence and the Crisis of Modernization in Nigeria: A Sociological Analysis.” The study employed a qualitative approach using documentary analysis to examine the link between pastoralist banditry and rural insecurity. Findings revealed that frequent clashes between herders and farmers, often driven by cattle rustling and competition over land, disrupted agricultural productivity in northern Nigeria. The authors recommended stronger land-use policies, conflict resolution mechanisms, and security sector reform to minimize resource-based violence.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher used the survey research method for this study. The data collected from the survey were statistically analysed using tables and chi-square tests to draw meaningful conclusions. The data were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data were collected from pre-selected research participants through the administration of structured questionnaires, while the secondary data came from the review of relevant academic documents such as textbooks, online journals, government reports, periodicals, and other published and unpublished works related to the study.

The population of this study comprised residents of Omala Local Government Area of Kogi State, particularly communities most affected by banditry. These include Agojeju-Odo, Bagana, Abejukolo, and Opada. The population is estimated at 128,000 persons based on the National Population Commission (NPC, 2006 projection for 2024). The distribution of the population across

Table 1
Population of the Study

SN	Community	Estimated Population
1	Agojeju-Odo	32,000
2	Bagana	30,000
3	Abejukolo	36,000
4	Opada	30,000

Total Estimated Population: 128,000

Source: NPC (2006), Author's Projection 2024

To determine the sample size for the study, the researcher employed the Yamane (1967) formula for finite population sample size determination:

$$N = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

n = Sample size

N = Population size (128,000)

e = Margin of error (0.05 at 95% confidence level)

Substituting into the formula:

$$n = \frac{128,000}{1 + 128,000(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{128,000}{1 + 320}$$

$$n = \frac{128,000}{321}$$

$$n \approx 398.75$$

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Thus, the study sampled a total of 399 respondents proportionately distributed across the four selected communities based on their population sizes to ensure fair representation. Using Bowley's proportional allocation formula, the

sample was distributed as follows: Agojeju-Odo (100 respondents), Bagana (94 respondents), Abejukolo (112 respondents), and Opada (93 respondents). A total of 399 questionnaires were administered, out of which 372 were successfully retrieved, representing a 93.2% response rate.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed in line with the study objectives. The instrument contained close-ended items arranged on a five-point Likert scale ranging from Agree (A) *Strongly Agree (SA)* Neutral (N) Disagree (D) *Strongly Disagree (SD)*.

Table 2

Proportional Allocation and Questionnaire Retrieval by Community

Community	Population	Sample Size (Bowley's Formula)	Questionnaires Administered	Questionnaires Retrieved	Retrieval Rate (%)
Agojeju-Odo	32,000	100	100	94	94.0
Bagana	30,000	94	94	86	91.5
Abejukolo	36,000	112	112	105	93.8
Opada	30,000	93	93	87	93.5
Total	128,000	399	399	372	93.2

Source: Field Survey (2024)

Table 2

Effect of Armed Attacks on Food Production in Omala Local Government Area (n = 372)

S/N	Questionnaire Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total (%)
1	Armed attacks have led to a significant reduction in crop yield and harvest output in Omala Local Government Area.	198 (53.2%)	112 (30.1%)	24 (6.5%)	26 (7.0%)	12 (3.2%)	372 (100%)
2	Frequent armed invasions discourage farmers from cultivating their farmlands regularly.	185 (49.7%)	118 (31.7%)	22 (5.9%)	30 (8.1%)	17 (4.6%)	372 (100%)

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Table 3

Effect of Population Displacement on Household Food Security in Omala Local Government Area (n = 372)

S/N	Questionnaire Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total (%)
3	Population displacement caused by banditry has forced households to depend on food aid and donations for survival.	201 (54.0%)	104 (27.9%)	20 (5.4%)	31 (8.3%)	16 (4.3%)	372 (100%)
4	Displacement of farming families has reduced household income and access to nutritious food.	210 (56.5%)	98 (26.3%)	25 (6.7%)	27 (7.3%)	12 (3.2%)	372 (100%)

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Findings

The study investigated the effects of banditry on food production and household food security in Omala Local Government Area of Kogi State. Data were obtained from 372 validly completed questionnaires distributed across four selected communities—Agojeju-Odo, Bagana, Abejukolo, and Opada. The analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics to summarize respondents' opinions on the major dimensions of banditry identified in the study, namely armed attacks and population displacement.

Effect of Armed Attacks on Food Production

Findings revealed that armed attacks have significantly disrupted agricultural activities in Omala Local Government Area. As shown in Table 2, a combined 83.3% of respondents (53.2% Strongly Agreed and 30.1% Agreed) indicated that frequent armed invasions have caused a substantial decline in crop yield and harvest output. Similarly, 81.4% (49.7% Strongly Agreed and 31.7% Agreed) affirmed that recurrent bandit incursions discourage farmers from cultivating their farmlands regularly. These results suggest that persistent insecurity has led to farmland abandonment, reduced cultivation seasons, and a notable decline in agricultural productivity across the affected communities.

This finding corroborates earlier works by Akinyetun (2022) and Ibrahim (2021), who observed that violent insecurity in agrarian areas forces farmers to abandon cultivation, thereby threatening food supply and rural economic stability.

Effect of Population Displacement on Household Food Security

The study also established that population displacement caused by banditry has severely undermined household food security in Omala Local Government Area. Table 3 shows that 81.9% of respondents (54.0% Strongly Agreed and 27.9% Agreed) reported that displaced households now rely heavily on food aid and humanitarian donations for survival. Likewise, 82.8% (56.5% Strongly Agreed and 26.3% Agreed) noted that forced displacement has reduced household income and access to nutritious food.

This implies that displacement not only disrupts local food production but also diminishes the purchasing power of affected families, leading to hunger, malnutrition, and dependency on relief materials. The finding aligns with Ewi et al. (2021) and International Crisis Group (2020), who emphasized that displacement due to insecurity often results in prolonged food shortages and socioeconomic hardship in conflict-affected regions.

Discussion of Findings

The study examined how banditry, through armed attacks and population displacement, affects food production and household food security in Omala Local Government Area.

Findings on the first objective revealed that frequent armed attacks have severely disrupted farming activities, forcing farmers to abandon their lands and reducing crop yield. This supports Akinyetun (2022) and Okoli & Ugwu (2019), who noted that persistent violence discourages agricultural production and endangers rural livelihoods.

Regarding the second objective, the study found that population displacement has worsened food insecurity as many households lost access to farmlands and income sources. This aligns with Ewi et al. (2021) and International Crisis Group (2020), who observed that displacement from conflict leads to hunger and poverty among affected communities.

Overall, the findings confirm that banditry directly undermines food availability and stability in Omala. Although military intervention has reduced attacks, sustainable food security requires long-term peacebuilding, youth empowerment, and support for displaced farmers.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concludes that armed attacks and population displacement resulting from banditry have severely affected food production and household food security in Omala Local Government Area. Farmlands have been abandoned, crop yields have declined, and many farming families now face hunger and loss of livelihood.

Based on these findings, the study recommends that:

- i. Government should strengthen rural security through community policing and rapid response units to protect farmers and farmlands from bandit attacks.
- ii. Agricultural rehabilitation programs should be implemented to support displaced farmers with inputs such as seedlings, fertilizers, and soft loans to restore food production and ensure household food security.

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