

Threats to Rural Livelihoods in Nigeria: Implications for Social Order and Crisis Management

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Abstract

Rural livelihood arrangement in Nigeria is under severe threat and crisis. This is confirmed through this study that relied on the content analysis of 282 newspaper editions. For the sake of reliability, an evidence-based data spread sheet was obtained from 18 states, 486 communities using 24 reporters. The study was anchored on the DFID sustainable rural livelihood model. The objectives include: identifying the threat indicators and their sources; ascertaining the threat outcomes as well as the vulnerable groups and relating outcomes to threat factors; examining the extent of recovery implication during threats and associating threats with social order and security. The objectives were tested using descriptive statistics. Hypotheses were tested, using correlation technique, on the association between: 1) the presence of threat indicators and outcomes, 2) the presence of threat indicators and vulnerability of certain groups. The following findings were made: there is a relationship between the presence of threat factors and outcomes as well as the vulnerability of groups. Flooding of compounds and farms, herdsmen attacks, government impunity, gang violence constitute major threats to rural livelihood. The outcomes are insecurity, food crisis, loss of lives and property, hunger, loss of shelter, forced migration, diseases and suicide. Rural assets have been constrained; early recovery and resilience are poor. It is recommended that: Nigerians should take expert advice on seasonal stressors and government should stop arbitrary splitting of communities. Rural livelihood security programmes should target the women and farmers. Nomadic culture of cattle rearing should give way to ranches, Resilience and early recovery attitude should be encouraged among Nigerians.

Keywords

Rural Livelihood, Threat Factors, Threat Outcomes, Social Order, Crisis

1. Introduction

1.1. Background to Rural Livelihood Threats

Rural livelihood is about the means, strategies and activities for securing basic necessities in terms of food, water, shelter, medicine as well as the network of social combinations that enhance the lives of the rural dwellers. Livelihoods appear as substitute name for what goes on outside formal employment and the bureaucracies; in short, what people do in the informal economy. Chambers and Conway (1992) reported that: “A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living.” Ellis (1999) defines livelihood as “the activities, the assets and the access that jointly determine the living gained by an individual or household while livelihood diversification is the process by which households construct a diverse port-folio of activities and social support capabilities for survival and in order to improve their standard of living”. Akinwale (2011) affirms that “livelihood is a process by which people make a living through specific capabilities to include information sharing, social relationship management and identity maintenance”.

For some years in Nigeria, writers have reported of rural livelihoods threats, constraints or displacement. Ellis (2003) forewarned on threats to rural livelihood thus:

“Poor households in low income countries construct their livelihood in a risky environment. For the rural, the risks are mainly related to climate shocks, personal shock of chronic illness, accidents and deaths. They build their livelihood in a context of pervasive uncertainty”.

This study finds out the emergent trends in the threats to rural livelihood, highlights the tensions, crisis ambiguities and challenges associated with such threats. It addresses how age-long poor people’s survival strategies have come under displacement and erosion, as well as how women, the ancient champions of rural livelihood are being constrained by threats and crisis. The overall implications of these on social disorder and insecurity in Nigeria were explained in the study.

1.2. Problem Statement

The severe threats that are confronting rural livelihood in Nigeria appear integral to social order, human security leading to crisis. With social disorder, nothing is spared-man, the environment, assets, food-supply and community life. The more pitiable situation is that women whose diverse portfolio livelihood activities used to sustain families and communities are being forced to withdraw from farms, places of trade and meetings due to crises.

The study therefore examines the effects of these threats mainly severe flooding, Fulani herdsmen violence, communal clashes, government impunity and arbitrary acquisitions, gang violence on the social order and as constraints to rural livelihood activities. The study finds out the vulnerable groups and outcomes in the threat scenario. In view of these, the following objectives and related questions were examined:

- 1) What are the sources of threat to rural livelihood in Nigeria?
- 2) What are the threat indicators to rural livelihood in Nigeria?
- 3) Who are the most vulnerable groups to the threats to rural livelihood in Nigeria?
- 4) What are the outcomes due to threats to rural livelihood in Nigeria?
- 5) Are threat factors associated with noticeable outcomes?
- 6) Are threat factors associated with the emergence of most vulnerable groups?
- 7) What is the extent of recovery and resilience during threat episodes?
- 8) How are social order, human security and crisis management implicated during these threat episodes?

1.3. Hypotheses

Ho 1. There is no strong association between the presence of threat indicators and threat outcomes in Nigeria.

Ho 2. There is no strong association between threat indicators and vulnerability of certain groups in Nigeria.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Rural Assets Which Are Prone to Threats

The idea of rural assets is used interchangeably with rural resources and rural capital. Assets are supposed to assist in productive livelihood endeavours. They are incorporated in the people's strategies for mitigating poverty. Certain categories of assets have repeatedly occurred in the literature of poverty and development studies as well as in World Bank reports. They are physical asset, financial asset, human asset, social asset and natural asset (Moser & Dani, 2008; Ellis, 2003; Narayan, 2000; Cord, 2002; DFID 2015 and Department of Agriculture, Environment and Development Economics, Ohio State University, 2015). The descriptive plan from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Development Economics, Ohio State University (2015) appears sufficient to explain events in Nigeria. It is as follows:

Human Capital: Skills, knowledge, capacity for good health, to enable people pursue different livelihood strategies and achieve outcome.

Natural Capital: Natural resource stock such as trees, land, clean air, coastal resources which people rely upon for income and sense of well being.

Financial Capital: Savings and credit which come in form of cash, bank deposits, livestock and jewelry.

Social Capital: Formal and informal relationships which people employ to

access information, achieve influence and power, claims and obligations from others.

Physical Capital: Public capital such as transport systems, water supply and sanitation, clean energy, good communication; Private physical capital such as shelter, bicycles, sewing machines, household goods and utensils.

The asset status or capital capacity of a group can come under threats, dislocations or pressure Human assets such as health may experience dislocation due to loss of persons, death or severe illness. In the same vein, educational facilities may be devastated. Environmental and natural assets may experience devastation, extreme conditions, seasonal fluctuations. Social capital needed for the coordination of other assets may not be forthcoming during episodes of violence and seasonal stress. Physical assets such as land may be constrained due to inaccessibility or poor quality. Savings and credit (financial assets) may be constrained due to local, state, national or even global policy shift.

2.2. The Essence of Resilience and Early Recovery during Threats and Dislocations

Resilience is about building the ability of the communities to absorb and recover from shocks that are due to environmental and socio-economic uncertainties and seasonal stresses. The [OECD \(2014\)](#) suggests the strengthening of three capacities:

Absorptive capacity; prepare for, mitigate or prevent negative impacts by using predetermined coping mechanisms like early harvest. Adaptive capacity; adjusting, modifying or changing its characteristics and actions to moderate future damage and take up opportunities such as diversification of livelihoods. Transformative capacity; creating fundamentally new system so that the shock will no longer have impact.

Early recovery is a post crises activity that catalyses sustainable re-development opportunities. For IASC Working Group (cited in [UNDP, 2008](#)) early recovery encompasses the restoration of basic services, livelihoods, shelter, governance, security and rule of law, environment and social dimensions, including the reintegration of displaced populations. [UNDP \(2008\)](#) adds that early recovery runs along humanitarian activities; both human and development actors work together. At the local level, communities participate in decision making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of local programmes and that conditions are created for livelihoods to be rebuilt and damage to the social fabric repaired. Further, activities would revolve around reinforcing local administration, improve community security and restore cohesion; stabilize livelihoods and work out an integration of cross-cutting issues like risk reduction, conflict prevention, gender and environmental protection. The extent to which Nigeria and her agencies are into resilience and was revealed in this study.

2.3. Social Order Implications of Threats

Social order is about how and why societies cohere. It addresses the demise of

community, disruption of social responsibility, loss of social control and general instability. To functionalist sociologists social order is achieved by integration of values and norms while for Marxists it is through coercion and economic compulsion by the dominant group (Scott & Marshall, 2005). The other side of order is disorder, crisis, anomie and insecurity. Wrong (1994), while addressing “what unites and divides society” argues that order is matter of degree, co-exists with, influences and is influenced by individual deviance, group conflict, social change and cultural innovation and that the problem of order could not ignore human nature and the processes by which it is formed through contacts. Wrong (1994), marks anarchy, anomie, crime waves, insurrections, revolutions, civil wars, riots, mob violence and unconventional behaviour as instances of breakdown and collapse of order. In a more expatiated release, the UN Trust Fund for Human Security (1994) gives a table (see Table 1) of security types and their accompanying threats thus:

Human security relates to social order in its concern for stability as well as levels in key human development dimensions including freedom from want and fear (Gasper, 2005). In Nigeria fear, panic, flights, forced migration, hunger, displacements, loss of lives are common in media reports (Amaize, 2012; Amaize & Omafume, 2012; Bakare, 2015). There is also the eroding physical environment and dilapidation of infrastructure, seasonal stresses with rainy season exacting heavy toll on poor communities; crime and conflict, and rivalries among groups. (Okunmadewa, Aina, Ayoola, Mammon, Nwaeze, Odebiyi, Shehu, & Zacha, 2002). It is noted by Dube and Phiri (2013) that effects of climate change on poor communities in sub-sahara African are becoming prominent and vulnerability is being compounded by high poverty levels.

2.4. Democracy and Livelihood in Nigeria

Democracy consists of five key elements: 1) universal adult suffrage, 2) recurring, free, competitive and fair elections, 3) more than one serious political party, 4) alternative sources of information, 5) some degree of political liberty beyond the electoral arena (Diamond & Morlino, 2004). It has been observed that some depth of democracy is needed to explain poor livelihood outcomes in local

Table 1. The UN trust fund human security types.

Type of security	Examples of main threat
Economic	Persistent poverty, unemployment.
Food	Human famine
Health	Deadly infectious diseases, unsafe food, lack of access to health facility
Environmental	Environmental degradation and resource
Personal	Physical violence, crime, terror acts
Community	Inter ethnic and identity based tension
Politics	Political repression and human rights abuses.

communities. [Diamond \(2005\)](#) supplies this in the role he assigned to civil liberties and to responsible and accountable governance. According to him civil liberties are in terms of their reduction of fear and torture, their engagement in informed networks, social movements, community based organizations to express the diversity of interests and mobilize for policy alternatives and social change while responsibility and accountability are in terms of government officials carrying out their responsibility honestly and transparently; private individuals and enterprises having formal protection to conduct legitimate commerce; existence of counter- corruption commissions; citizens having effective legal rights to obtain information on functions and decisions of government.

In a similar view [Deihinger, Narayan and Sen \(2009\)](#) agree that responsible government leads to improved governance and greater wellbeing of households as well as signs of improved law and order and less violence against women, hence communities with vibrant democracy tend to have better employment prospects and higher rate of movers than communities where democracy functions less well. In the same direction [Dani and Moser \(2008\)](#) Opine that: “when given weak administrative outreach, poor people are often more vulnerable to insecurities arising out of state fragility, including crime, violence and absence of rule of law” Evidence of government failure, neglect and arbitrariness as they affect livelihood outcomes are buttressed in this study.

3. Theoretical Framework

The DFID sustainable rural livelihood model is the basis for this study. There are many presentations on DFID but this study uses that of [Morce and McNamara \(2013\)](#), while equally relying on explanations provided by [Harvard Humanitarian Academy \(2013\)](#). The model is an integrated approach on how certain factors interact during livelihood endeavours. It includes environmental sustainability as relevant to poverty. It also views the poor as a decision maker and not just a victim and as one with a set of priorities and resources ([Harvard Humanitarian Academy, 2013](#)). Factors in the model operate in a sequential relationship and with a feedback mechanism. They are: vulnerability context; livelihood assets; institutional and policy context (structures and processes); interventions that enhance livelihood strategies, livelihood outcome. The model is diagrammatical provided in [Figure 1](#) below.

It is observed that assessment of various capital or assets gets support at individual, household and group levels ([Figure 1](#)). Such assessment takes place with their vulnerability context which constitutes certain happenings which the victims may not stop at the time they are taking place; the effects they may not cope with if unassisted. Interventions are put in place to assist the sustainability of livelihood strategies of the people. The interventions target the structures and policy processes, even the cultural ways of doing things.

4. Methodology

Content analysis, a systematic method of analyzing media message, was used in

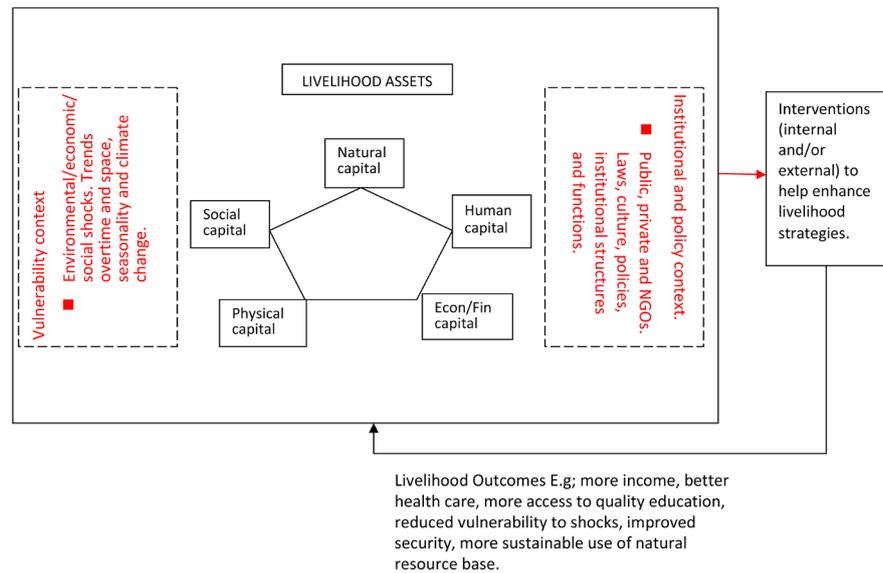


Figure 1. The DFID sustainable rural livelihood framework.

gathering data for this study. The study covered the period 2010 to 2015 and was restricted to newspaper reports. The following newspapers were purposely chosen: *Vanguard*, *The Nation*, *Guardian*, *The Punch*, *Sun*, *This Day* and *The Leader*. They were selected on the basis of public perception of their availability and credibility. They all displayed consistency in the reporting of environmental threats of 2012 and 2013 as well as government arbitrary conduct. *The Leader* is a weekly Faith based newspaper with wide circulation, highly patronized and reliable. Over the years it has been consistent in reporting of violence and herdsmen raids. A total of 282 newspapers were content analyzed. The unit of analysis is news stories while content categories of livelihood threats are mainly: flooding, herdsmen raids, government arbitrariness and gang violence. Most vulnerable groups, and outcome indicators were selected and their occurrence rates determined. The coverage was reports about 18 states of Nigeria. That means 50% of the states were sampled. Cluster sampling into six zones was done, with 3 states selected from each cluster area. This gave good geographical spread.

One limitation of this study is that it was based on data that was available in the newspapers. The news reporters and features writers may not have covered all threats and issues nor could they have observed all vulnerable groups. Reliability of the study was through pilot survey of livelihood threats conducted for the period under study using a sample of 35 newspaper editions. In addition a phi correlation cross tabulation technique for the determination of inter-judge reliability was employed and a P-value of 0.78 was realized. (Grant, Button, & Snook, 2017). An evidence-based spreadsheet on threat to livelihood was derived (Appendix). This exercise guided the researchers in classifying livelihood threats and their outcomes as well as in categorizing the vulnerable groups. All these served the basis for the expanded data gathering that involved 282 newspapers. The terms used in study report were to a large extent generated from the

field. Discussion of findings balanced the findings with reviewed literature and news reporters reviews and articles in the spreadsheet.

5. Results

Table 2 reveals that seven newspapers were sampled and that 282 editions were on the whole covered.

Total number of states covered in the media report = 18. **Table 3** reveals that government arbitrary conduct as a threat factor occurred in 83.3% of the states; Flooding in 77.8%; Herdsmen raids in 72.2% while gang violence occurred in 27.8% of the states. The occurrences (incidents) of each threat factor are: government arbitrary conduct appeared 96 times, giving an incident rate of 347.8; flooding appeared 82 times, an incident rate of 297.1; violence and gang activities appeared 50 times, an incident rate of 181.1; herdsmen raids occurred 48 times, an incident rate of 173.9 (see **Figure 2**).

Table 4 reveals the following threat outcome occurrences and rates by their categories: insecurity, violence and kidnapping, 72 occurrences, giving an occurrence rate of 182.2; loss of lives and property, 50, occurrence rate of 126.5, hunger and cut off from food supply, 58, an occurrence rate of 146.8; displacement

Table 2. Newspapers sampled.

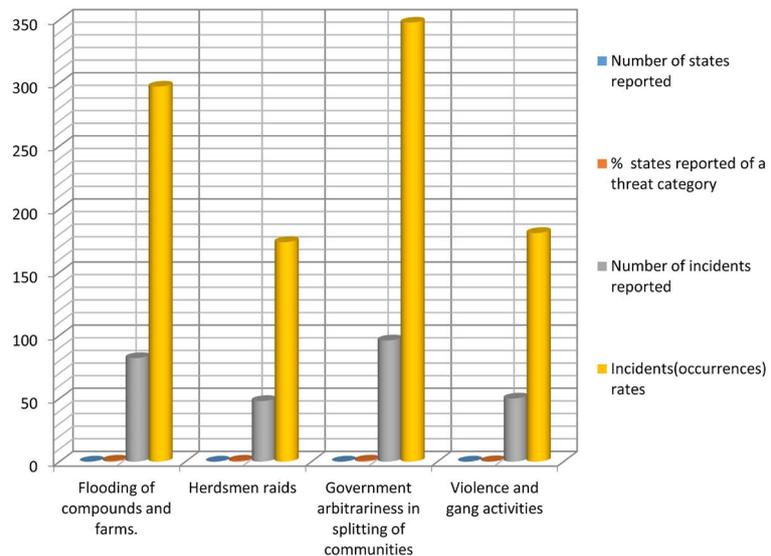
Newspaper	Number of editions
Vanguard	43
Guardian	43
The Nation	43
Sun	43
This Day	43
Punch	43
The Leader	24
	282

Table 3. Livelihood threat indicators.

Flooding/submerging of compounds and farms.	Herdsmen raids	Government arbitrariness in splitting of communities	Violence and gang activities	Total	Flooding/submerging of compounds and farms.
Number of states reported	14/18	13/18	15/18	5/18	
% states reported of a threat category	77.8%	72.2%	83.3%	27.8%	
Number of incidents reported	82	48	96	50	276
Incidents (occurrences) rates	297.1	173.9	347.8	181.1	

Table 4. Livelihood threat indicator outcome.

	Insecurity, violence and kidnapping	Loss of lives/property	Hunger/cut off from food supply	Displacement and loss of shelter	Fear and panic	Flight/forced migration	Diseases	Suicide	Being trapped	Total
Occurrences in the report	72	50	58	54	70	40	23	8	20	395
% Occurrence	18.2	12.7	14.7	13.7	17.7	10.1	5.8	2.0	5.1	100%
Occurrence rate	182.2	126.5	146.8	136.7	177.2	101.2	58.2	20.2	50.6	

**Figure 2.** Livelihood threats indicators graphical presentation.

and loss of shelter, 54, an occurrence rate of 136.7; fear and panic, 70, an occurrence rate of 117.2; flight and forced migration, 40, an occurrence rate of 101.2; diseases, 23, an occurrence rate of 58.2; suicide, 8, an occurrence rate of 20.2; being trapped, 20, giving an occurrence rate of 50.6 (see **Figure 3**).

Table 5 reveals that farmers, as a vulnerable group, was reported 75 times, vulnerability rate 238.1; women, 58 times, vulnerability rate 184.1; children, 60 times, vulnerability 190.4; youth/community leaders, 45 times, vulnerability 142.8; fishermen, 18, vulnerability 57.1; aged/disabled persons, 20, vulnerability 63.4; widows, 15, vulnerability 47.6; students, 24 times, vulnerability 76.1(see **Figure 4**).

Table 6 reveals the levels of intervention, resilience and post crisis recovery efforts. Intervention by NEMA, SEMA and LEMA (National Emergency Management Agency, State Emergency Management Agency, Local Emergency Management Agency respectively) was well reported. Intervention by civil defense and related agencies was fairly reported. Agencies restoring basic services were poorly reported. There was no report of any deliberate restoration of social connections after the shocks, non on agencies coming back to engage communities for evaluation and non on the availability of civil liberty groups (see **Table 6** and **Figure 5**).

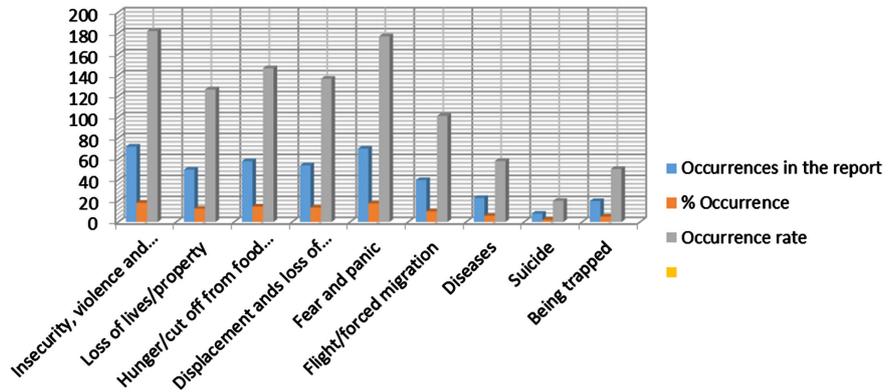


Figure 3. Livelihood threat indicators outcome graphical presentation.

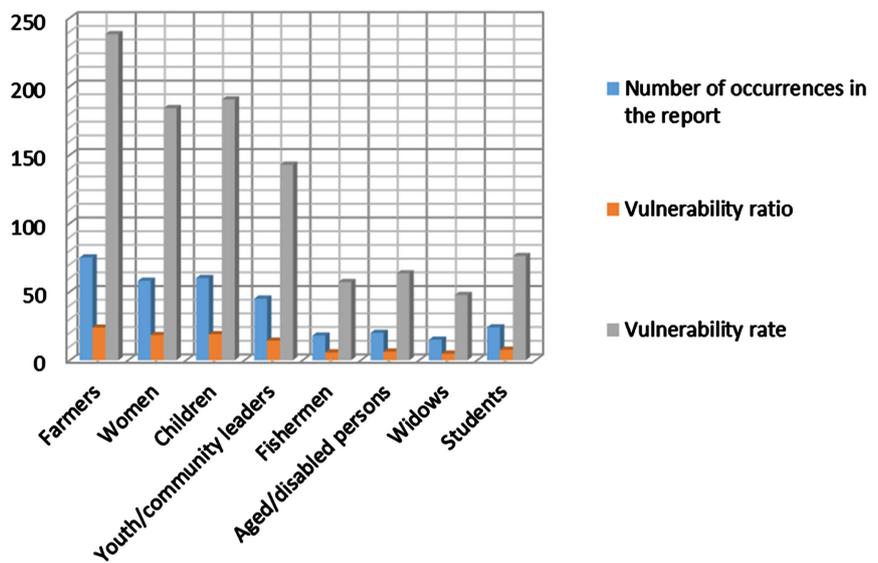


Figure 4. Most vulnerable groups in livelihood threats - graphical presentation.

Table 5. Most vulnerable groups in livelihood threats.

Group Type	Number of occurrences in the report	Vulnerability ratio	Vulnerability rate
Farmers	75	23.8	238.1
Women	58	18.4	184.1
Children	60	19.0	190.4
Youth/community leaders	45	14.3	142.8
Fishermen	18	5.7	57.1
Aged/disabled persons	20	6.3	63.4
Widows	15	4.8	47.6
Students	24	7.6	76.1
Total	315	100	

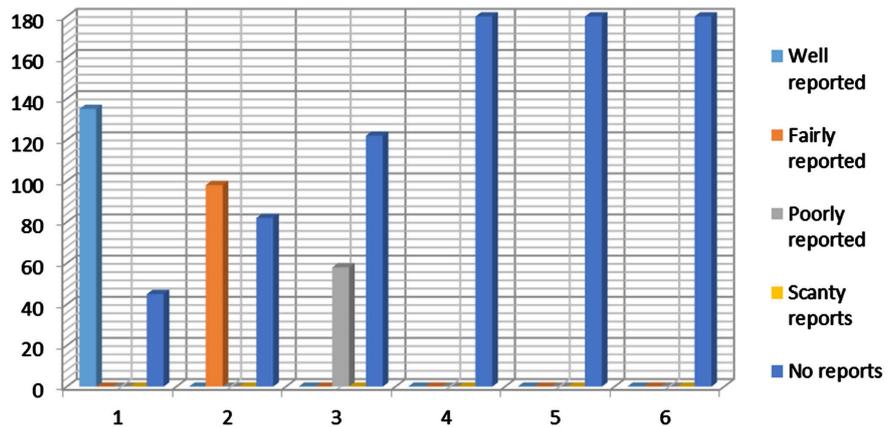


Figure 5. Reports about interventions, resilience and post crisis recovery efforts.

Table 6. Reports about interventions, resilience and post crisis recovery efforts.

Nature of report	Levels of report					Total
	Well reported	Fairly reported	Poorly reported	Scanty reports	No reports	
Intervention by NEMA, SEMA, LEMA	135 reports (75%)	0	0	0	45	180
Intervention by civil defence and related agencies	-	98 reports (54%)	-	-	-	180
Agencies restoring basic services	-	-	58 reports (32%)	-	-	180
Deliberate restoration of social connections after shocks	-	-	-	-	180	180
Agencies coming back to engage communities for evaluation	-	-	-	-	180	180
Availability of civil liberty groups	-	-	-	-	180	180

6. Tests of Hypotheses

6.1. The Association between the Presence of Threat Indicators and Threat Outcomes

Threat indicator rates:

- 1) Flooding of compounds and homes (297.1)
- 2) Herdsmen raids (173.9)
- 3) Government arbitrariness and splitting of communities (347.8)
- 4) Gang activities (181.1)

Outcome indicator rates:

- 5) Insecurity, violence and kidnapping (182.2)
- 6) Loss of lives and property (126.5)
- 7) Hunger and cut off of food supply (146.8)

8) Displacement and loss of shelter (136.7)

Results based on spearman rho correlation reveals an r-value 0.8; A t-test value of 22.31; $df\ n - 2 = 280$; table value ($\rho = 0.05$, 1.64 on t-table of distribution) The Null hypothesis is rejected, an indication that the presence of certain threat variables were responsible for the emerged outcomes (see **Appendix**).

6.2. The Association between the Presence of Threat Indicators and the Vulnerability Outcomes

Threat indicator rates:

- 1) Flooding of compounds and homes (297.1)
- 2) Herdsmen raids (173.9)
- 3) Government arbitrariness and splitting of communities (347.8)
- 4) Gang activities (181.1)

Vulnerability groups:

5) Farmers (238.1); F. Women (184.1); G. Children (190.4); H. Youth and community leaders (142.8).

Results based on Spearman rank order correlation reveals an r-value 0.6; A t-test value 15.68, $df\ n-2, 280$; $\rho = 0.05$, 1.64 on t-table of values. The Null hypothesis is rejected; an indication that the presence of threat variables affected the categories of vulnerable groups in the report. The correlation coefficient of 0.6 also shows a high positive association between threat indicators and vulnerability of certain groups.

7. Discussion of Findings

Major threats to livelihood in the period surveyed are flooding of compounds and farms, herdsmen attacks, government arbitrary conducts, violence and gang activities. Flooding, more especially has repeatedly occurred as the worst threat factor followed by government arbitrariness and impunity, then herdsmen and gang activities. Flooding started in 2010 and came to a peak in September, through October and November 2012. Reports by **Udo, Ojinaka, Baywood and Gift (2015)** show that in the 2012 disaster, about fourteen states that border the Niger-Benue river were severely affected, the worst being Korgi, Edo, Anambra and Delta states. The flood submerged houses severed transportation routes while an estimate of 1.3 million people were displaced, 431 lives were lost and about 1525 square kilometers of farm land were destroyed. In the worst stages of 2012, it was described by the media as “the rage of nature” (**Ajani, 2012**). The danger in the herdsmen threat has been captured thus:

It is indeed one of the curious tragedies of modern Nigeria that we have come to accept the category “nomadic” as a permanent description of a vital segment of our populace. We have gone ahead to create schools, map out grazing trails and sundry other things to enshrine this unfortunate doctrine. A consequence has been the ever frequent bloody clashes between nomads and settled landowners and farmers in nearly every part of the country, and now the involvement of nomads in aspects of our emerging national crime culture, kidnapping for ran-

som (Ishaka, 2015).

It is also reported that “farmland were destroyed, while women, young girls and children are raped... herdsmen stage highway robbery attacks” (Itua, 2013). A popular politician, one time Secretary to Federal Government, Olu Falae, was kidnapped by herdsmen and his farm destroyed by cattle (Sowale, 2015). Clearly, communities are being sacked and women are withdrawing.

Threat types in Nigeria are in tandem with the human security threat types presented by UN Trust Fund for Human Security (2009) which covered environmental degradation and resource depletion; lack of access to facilities, violence, crime and terror acts; identity based tensions, human rights abuses.

This study revealed the extent to which government impunity has become a serious threat factor to the rural poor. This threat type has been manifesting in the creation of new communities, splitting of old communities, imposition of heads, all without consultation with the people and a disregard for cultural contiguity. Achonwa (2015) reflect that:

“Indiscriminate creation of autonomous communities has destroyed the collective sentiments that characterize our rural communities. Communities that once shared a common identity would be quick to go to war against each other in a bid to protect their new identity. We have witnessed today communal clashes, court litigation, assassination, and arson, all in a bid to enjoy autonomy by a community”.

Jimoh (2013) while examining “rising deaths from communal clashes in Nigeria” reported that artificial and arbitrary boundaries are responsible for boundary disputes, neglect, and intolerance, among others in Nigeria. Definitely the assets or capital of individuals and groups do come under pressure, dislocations or constrains due to threats.

The outcomes due to livelihood threats in the period covered by this study were insecurity, violence and kidnapping, loss of lives and properties, hunger and food losses, displacement and loss of shelter, a climate of fear and panic; forced migration, diseases, suicidal issues and people being trapped during environmental disaster. Others, especially when government impunity is put into consideration, are identity-based tensions, intolerance, communal clashes, assassinations and flight. Achonwa (2015) shares in this reasoning, that, communities are quick to go to war to protect own identities.

The vulnerable groups more affected were farmers, children, women, youths, aged and disabled persons, students, fishermen and widows. The situation has grave implications on women because of their notable roles in rural livelihood activities and their ubiquity in community activities. The many threats, especially violence, gang operations and herdsmen menace are forcing women-the bastion of rural livelihood, to quit the farms, distant market and meeting places.

The presence of threat factors are associated with the many negative outcomes mentioned. By the same association, they are causative to the vulnerability of groups noticed. All these are supported by the t-test for correlation coefficient run during this study. This is supported by reports from Narayan and Petesch

(2002) that “Nigeria has been facing poor state functioning, eroding physical, seasonal stresses, crime and conflict”.

With the erosion of rural livelihoods through violence, youth gang, government and institutional failure or neglect; ambushing and robbing of farmers and petty traders, a climate of fear has enveloped the rural dwellers.

The chief casualties from the mix of threats factors, the negative outcomes and vulnerabilities are the rural assets and wealth in terms of skills, knowledge and health; inaccessible natural resources; reduced savings and credit; dying formal and informal social relationships; a dislocating transport system, shortage of water supply, lack communication, shelter and household property.

Interventions from environmental and security related agencies were made to stop disaster and their further progression. However, post crises activity and assistance to communities to build capabilities to recover from shocks were missing. In view of the fact that resilience and early recovery after crisis is poor in Nigeria aggravated chaos in the communities continues.

Civil liberty groups are missing in rural livelihood threat mitigation efforts, hence government impunity goes unchallenged; dereliction of duty by intervention agencies is not exposed.

8. Conclusion and Recommendations

Threats to livelihoods in Nigeria are expected to become devastating and frequent in the years ahead, due to climate change related problems, growing populations, unguarded settlements, growing culture of violence and hate as well as attacks on migrant quarters and reprisals. Women, the bastion of rural livelihood sustenance, are withdrawing from livelihood activities. Herders are using intimidation and inventing new tricks to maneuver indigenous groups. Unfortunately, threats-mapping is absent. Equally, institutional failures and governmental arbitrariness that prevent diversification and reinforce vulnerability are not being curtailed. Vulnerability in the livelihood threats is even dynamic Women and farmers that suffer during submerging of farmland and cattle-herdsmen violence, while children and the elderly were affected most during flooding of compounds. During communal clashes, youths were affected. Vulnerability is spread out during institutional failure and government arbitrariness. The associated disorder and human insecurity reduces the availability of physical, human, social, natural and financial assets; hence, these researchers recommend as follows:

- 1) Nigerians should learn to yield to expert advice. It is known that the areas that have been coming under flood have always been noted as risk hazard zones by experts in geo-informatics and meteorologists. People should be discouraged from settling in places that are susceptible to extreme events.

- 2) The governments should quit their failure fault lines and arbitrary conducts (such as splitting of villages and autonomous communities) that generate collision, flight and tension in the communities.

- 3) Enabling environment, especially human security, should be created by

government to enable people return to age long diversified livelihoods. Rural livelihood diversification should target the women, because they are proven masters in this and are the first to become vulnerable.

4) Government agencies and leaders should create resilience and early recovery attitude in rural Nigerians. Flooding and erosion along coastal areas and river banks are inevitable. All it takes is to train and organize people for resilience and send change agents to work out details of early recovery.

5) The romancing of nomadic culture by Nigerian authorities should stop. Wandering for the sake of feeding cattle should be seen as a primitive activity. Let Nigerian authorities create cattle ranches, enforce the arrangement and even establish a value chain for the cattle business from recycling of cattle dung to serve as manure, to milking of cattle, bone crushing factories, wool harvesting, beef storage and processing plants.

6) Leaders should rise above charity to the vulnerable. Emergency management agencies should be strengthened to function, connect and partner with local victims and evaluate programmes with them.

7) Civil society groups should be encouraged in the rural areas in view of their reputation in checking government impunity, arbitrary conducts and excesses.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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Appendix: Spreadsheet on Threats to Livelihood in Nigeria 2010-2015

Nature of threat	Places witnessed	Impacts of threat	Period reported	Human security/social order	Sources of information	Most vulnerable/stressed
Flood and seasonal stresses due to excessive rains, overflowing of rivers and over-spilling of dams	Anambra State: Some specific communities-Nmiata, Odekpe, Ossomala, Osuche, Atani, Amii, Umuzu, Akali-Ogidi, Akali-Ozizor, Amiyi, Mputu, Obeagwe, Ochuche, Ogbakuba, Ogwu-Aniocha, Agwuikpele, Obita, Okpoko, Umunankwo.	Submerging of farmlands, school compounds, police stations, churches and markets. Pulling of fences, hunger and displacement of persons	September-October 2012	People trapped or cut off, panic and flight	Ujamade (2012)	Farmers, women, children and students
	Bayelsa State: Specific communities- All except Nembe and Brass	Destruction of fishing and farmlands, submerging of communities, diseases due to defecation in water	October 2012	People trapped or cut off, panic and flight.	Oyadongha (2012)	Fishermen, Distillers. Palmwine tappers.
	Benue State: Specific communities-Otukpo, Agatu, Apa, Kucha, Otebe	Submerging of business places, huts and farmland displacement	October 2012		Duru (2012)	Students, women and children.
	Cross River State: Specific communities-Obubra, Abi, Union Island, Biase.	Submerging of family houses and compounds, churches and markets; drowning of persons.	October 2012	Inter community movement and interaction affected.	Ujamade (2012)	Little children, fishermen, mothers,
	Edo State: Specific communities-Yuluwa, Ofukpo, Agbabu, Iguzi-Ofukpe, Udaba, Umudoboh, Anegette, Unowa, Inyem	Destruction of buildings, household properties, food crops, entire farms, area councils, human death, killings of domestic animals.	2012		Ebegbulem (2012)	Children, farmers, aged ones.
	Niger State: Specific communities- communities on downstream Jebba, Kainji and Shiroro; plus Chanchanga, Bosso, Munya, Borgu, Wushishi, Mokwa, Bida, Edari and Lapai.	Human death and animals, destruction of properties and farm produce, destruction of cars, crops especially cereals.	October 2012	Loss of lives, panic, displacement of persons, inaccessible homes, threat to food security	Mosadomi (2012)	Farmers, women.

Continued

Kwara State: Specific communities-Kpata Gbaradogi, Gunji-Sacci, Gbafun, Gakpan, Vuma, Esungi, Mawogi.	Submerging of farmlands, destruction of rice and maize farms, forced migration. Destruction of houses, animals, boats and nets	October 2012	Displacement of persons, panic and migration, threat to food security.	Akinyemi (2012)	Farmers and Fishermen
Delta State: Specific communities: Oko-Anala, Oko-Ogbele, Oko-Amakon, Ogheye Gbekebor, Ogodobiri, Abigbrodo, Abari, Asabease, Uzere, Patani.	Loss of lives and property, incidence of deadly diseases, submerging of schools, residential houses and commercial shops and farms; contamination of water; Displacement of persons.	October 2012	Panic, hunger,	Amaize (2012) Amaize and Omafuaime (2012)	Farmers and children
Kogi State: Specific communities-Ibagi	Loss of lives	October 2012	Death in camps, suicide and rumors of suicide, frustrations in the communities, displacements, fear of epidemic, emergence of killer reptiles.	Obahopo (2012) Ibirogba (2012)	Children and women.
Rivers State: specific communities-Joinkrama, Ikodo, Igwechi, Ongo, Enito, Okobe	Destruction of farms, forced harvests, displacements, postponement of burials, submerging of houses	October-November 2012	Fleeing for safety	Onoyume (2012)	Farmers and disabled persons
Imo State: Specific communities-Egbema, Oguta, Uzoubi Orlu.	Loss of houses, contamination of clean water, submerging of farms and devastation of crops/livestock	October-November 2012	Panic, bitter confrontations on sharing of relief and rescue projects.	Okpalaek (2012)	
Ogun State: Specific communities-Warewa	Submerging of houses and schools and roads, loss of cattle, destruction of shops.	October 2012	Homelessness, threat to income.	Falola, Adetayo, Utebo and Nwogu (2010)	
Jigawa State: Specific communities (not mentioned) but 18 LGAs affected.	Destruction of farmlands, houses, public buildings.	September 2012	Homelessness, fleeing to other communities	Atta (2012)	Widows, Orphaned children.
Oyo State: Specific communities-Onipepeye, Odo-ona elewe, Odo ona Apata, Nihort, Ijokodo, Sango, Apete, Ajibode, Orogun, Agbowo	Loss of Lives and properties, mass displacement of persons	October 2012	Fear, death, severed communities	Ajayi (2012)	

Continued

Herdsmen Activity	Jigawa, Nasarawa, Benue, Ondo, Imo, Ebonyi, Kaduna(southern), Cross River, FCT, Delta, Plateau, Edo and many un-named states	Encroachment into farms, destruction of food crops and cereal fields, trespass on peoples homesteads	2015	Food insecurity, killings, threat to life, violence and feuds, kidnapping, violation of rights of indigenous people, blocking of highways by animals, terrorism, raping.	Bakare (2015) Sowale (2015) Itua (2013) Alabelewe (2014)	Farmers, women, youths, community leaders.
Government neglect Government arbitrariness	Owerri-Portharcourt road. Most states of Nigeria	Cut off of Ohaji, Umuapu food basket areas of Imo State, damage to vehicles Creation of artificial boundaries, violent communal clashes, impositions, assassinations, flight, violent splitting of communities, destruction of collective sentiments	2013-2015 2005-2015	Pains and anguish, provocation of the Youths Physical attacks, assassinations and intolerance	The Leader Newspaper September (2015) Jimoh (2013) Achonwa (2015)	All citizens
Communal Violence and Gang activities	Benue State: Mbayanghe and Mbashine communities, Ologba and Egba communities. Nasarawa State Assakio, Agyaragu	Destruction of economic trees and palm produce, destruction of fish ponds. Destruction of lives and property, forfeiture of farmlands.	July 2012 June, November 2012	Shelter and food threatened. Attacks and counter attacks by rival groups, killings, deadly clashes of rival groups, seizure of farmlands.	Okoh (2012) Ejenbi (2015) Daniel (2013)	Youths and community leaders.
	Southern Kaduna	Destruction of lives and property, Farms	Frequent occurrence	Armed invasion, terrorism, killings	Alabelewe (2014)	Women, community leaders.
	Imo State: Mainly Mgbuishi Ohaji community	Abandonment of farms and homes	2014	Fear, physical attacks, riots	The Leader Newspaper August 2014	Women, Farmers.
Communal Violence and Gang Activities	Most States in Nigeria	Socio-economic, physical and emotional imbalances among the people. Class struggle of all sorts.	2012-2015	Upsurge of killings, clashes, acquisition of arms, rape.	Jimoh (2013)	Youths.

Source: Data compiled and transformed by Onyekwere and Nworgu 2015.