



# HARVEST OF DEATH

THREE YEARS OF BLOODY CLASHES  
BETWEEN FARMERS AND HERDERS  
IN NIGERIA

AMNESTY  
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**Cover Photos (L-R):**

Bullet casing found in Bang, Bolki, Gon and Nzumosu Villages of Adamawa State after attacks by Fulani gunmen on 2 May 2018 that resulted in the dead of 33 people. © Amnesty International Nigeria

Harvested yam burnt in Tse-Ajaver village in Taraba State when Fulani gunmen attacked the village on 29 April 2018.  
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Njiya-Goron youths in Tabungo Village display their spears, which is the major weapons of the Bachama and Bata ethnic groups of Adamawa State. © Amnesty International Nigeria

Dead and injured cows belonging to Fulani when armed Mambilla men attacked Fulani communities in Taraba State from 17 to 20 June 2017  
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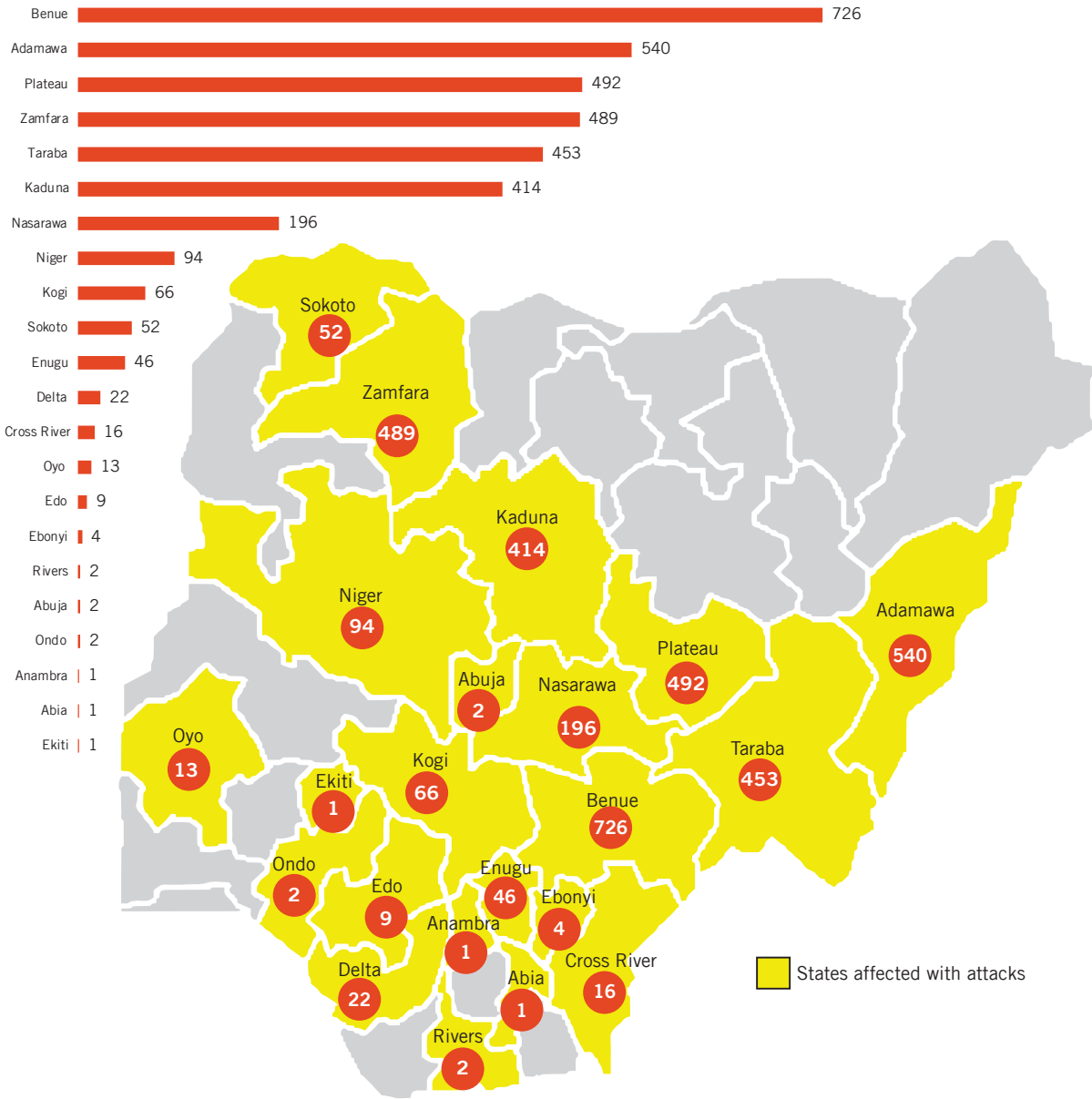


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# GLOSSARY

<b>WORD</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
<b>FULANI</b>	Members of the Fula ethnic group found mainly in the northern parts of Nigeria but also dispersed across the country. Most of the Fula people in Nigeria are nomadic pastoralists but many are also sedentary or semi-sedentary farmers.
<b>FARMERS</b>	For this report, farmers refer to members of a community in Nigeria whose major occupation is farming.
<b>HERDERS</b>	In this report, herders refer to people in Nigeria whose major source of livelihood and occupation is rearing and selling cattle, mostly adopting nomadic or semi-sedentary lifestyles
<b>GRAZING</b>	A system of feeding livestock by moving the cattle from one place to another in search of pasture
<b>VILLAGERS</b>	In this report, refer to members of a village community, both farmers and herders.
<b>LGA</b>	This is the third tier of government in Nigeria known as Local Government Area. The first two tiers are the Federal and State governments



Total number of people killed from January 2016- October 2018. ©Amnesty International Nigeria

# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

***“I want the government to live up to its responsibilities. If anyone commits a crime, they should be arrested and dealt with. But when people see, think and feel they can get away with crime, it does not only embolden them to do more but encourages others as well. I want peace,”<sup>1</sup>***

a Fulani local official in Adamawa State said in an interview with Amnesty International.

This report documents the violent clashes between members of farmer communities and members of herder communities in parts of Nigeria, particularly in the northern parts of the country, over access to resources: water, land and pasture. It also documents the failure of the Nigerian government in fulfilling its constitutional responsibility of protection of lives and property by refusing to investigate, arrest and prosecute perpetrators of attacks. The report shows how government’s inaction fuels impunity, resulting in attacks and reprisal attacks, with at least 3,641 people killed between January 2016 and October 2018, 57 percent of them in 2018 alone.

Amnesty International visited 56 communities in Adamawa, Benue, Kaduna, Taraba, and Zamfara states affected by the clashes and conducted 262 interviews, including remotely with members of communities in Nasarawa and Plateau states. In all these communities, members of farmer communities said they had lived in peace with members of herder communities, who are Fulani.<sup>2</sup> The Fulani herders also said the same thing about living in peace with the farmers. In some communities, farmers said problems started over the destruction of their crops due to the animals of the herders grazing on their farmlands, while in other communities, they could not explain the reasons for the attacks. In some cases, farmers received prior information or heard rumours that they would be attacked, but in other cases, the attacks were unexpected. The Fulani herders blamed farmers for trying to chase them out of their communities by rustling their cattle and attacking them.

In Taraba and Benue states, Amnesty International saw several villages deserted and burnt down, with farmers absent from their farms, following attacks by armed suspected Fulani men. Amnesty International arrived at one of the villages, Tse-Ajaver in Wukari local government area, two days after it was attacked on 28 April 2018 by armed suspected Fulani men. The ash and yam seedlings seen indicated that the village had been recently burnt down.

1 Interview with Amnesty International in Yola, Adamawa state, 7 May 2018

2 One of the largest ethnic groups found in the Sahel and West Africa and speaking the Fula language. See also. Fula people: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fula\\_people](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fula_people)

In Numan and Demsa local government areas of Adamawa State [home to mainly the Bachama and Bwatiye ethnic groups], Amnesty International observed that Fulani villages there were also deserted, with most of the houses destroyed.

Amnesty International discovered that majority of the attacks by both sides were retaliatory, which then affected nearby communities because of the ethnic connection with the targeted communities.

In communities on the Mambilla Plateau in Taraba State, however, the problem between farmers and Fulani herders, most of whom are ranchers, was mainly about land ownership rather than cattle grazing on farmlands. Due to the ranching practiced by the herders on the Mambilla Plateau it is rare to see cattle grazing from one place to another.

Amnesty International found evidence showing that security forces received information about impending attacks and in some cases, came in contact with attackers but did nothing to stop or prevent the attacks. Amnesty International documented at least seven cases where security forces were aware of attacks but did nothing.

Many attacks lasted for hours, in some cases days, even in communities where security forces were not far away. The response of security forces in some of the instances in Adamawa, Kaduna, Taraba, Benue, Plateau, and Zamfara states were so slow and poor that villagers accused them of complicity in the attacks. In some cases, especially in Adamawa and Taraba states, security forces knew attacks were about to happen and saw the attackers but refused to act.

In spite of these attacks and the killing, which have gone on for years, there has been reluctance on the part of the government to investigate and prosecute perpetrators and this has only encouraged more attacks and killing.

Amnesty International found cases of human rights violations carried out by security forces in Adamawa, Benue and Taraba states. In Kwesati Village of Taraba State, Amnesty International documented three cases where soldiers were accused of breaking into residents' homes in the early hours of the morning and beating people up, on suspicion of owning guns. In Opalo Village of Adamawa and Naka Community of Benue states, Amnesty International documented two cases of soldiers attacking and burning down communities over the alleged murder and disappearance of their colleagues. In Numan and Demsa LGAs of Adamawa State, Amnesty International documented a case of soldiers bombing five communities while responding to clashes between members of farmer communities and members of herder communities.

Amnesty International wrote letters requesting for information from the Chief of Army Staff, Inspector General of Police, President of the Nigerian Senate, Minister of Justice and the governors of Enugu, Benue, Taraba, Adamawa, Plateau and Kaduna states. Only Enugu State government responded to our request at the time of writing this report. Benue State indicated interest to respond but the response was received after the writing of this report and could not be incorporated.

Amnesty International is deeply concerned that the government of Nigeria has failed to comply with its obligation to exercise due diligence, failing both to address the underlying causes of the violence between herders and villagers described in this report and to stop violence when it did occur, resulting in the death of hundreds of people, the destruction of thousands of homes and extensive harm to people's livelihoods. The Nigerian Constitution is clear on where the responsibility lies when it comes to the protection of lives and livelihoods, the government. Chapter 14. (2) (b) states that the security and welfare of Nigerians shall be the primary purpose of government, and this means all organs of government, be it executive, legislative or judiciary.

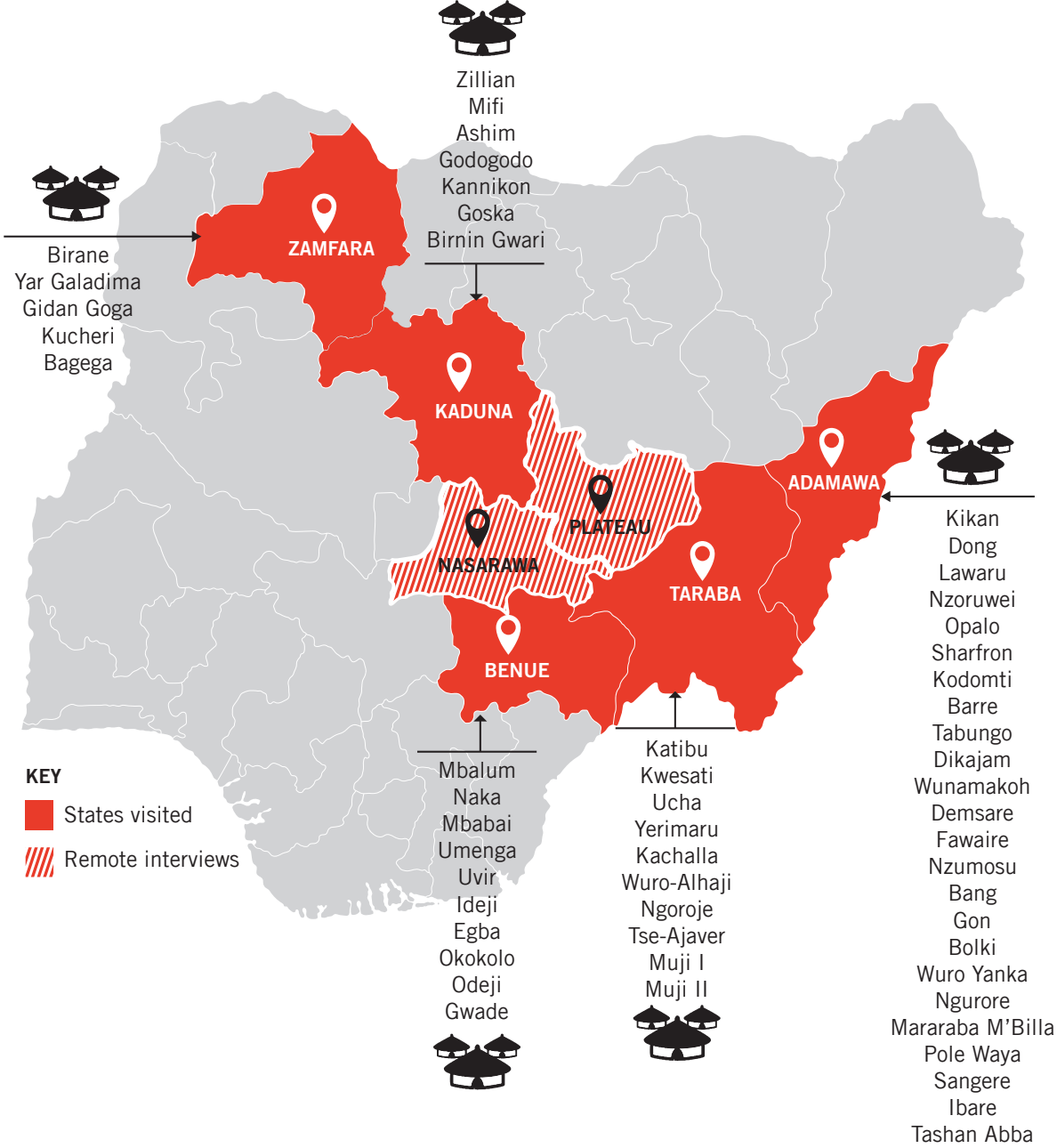
Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognizes that "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person".

The government must investigate all allegations of wilful negligence, complicity and other failures of security forces to protect civilians.

In addressing the underlying causes of the crisis, government must ensure that both farmer and herder

communities enjoy their human rights, including rights to land, water and pasture, which are at the heart of the crisis.

Government must also ensure that all people displaced as a result of the crisis are provided with timely and adequate relief, including protection, shelter, food and healthcare while those who have suffered losses should be provided with adequate compensation.



Communities visited and remote interviews conducted. ©Amnesty International Nigeria



## 2. METHODOLOGY

Amnesty International has been monitoring and documenting the violent clashes between members of farmer communities and members of herder communities in Nigeria since January 2016. Between August 2017 and September 2018, teams of Amnesty International researchers conducted 10 field trips to 56 villages in five of the most affected states – Adamawa, Benue, Kaduna, Taraba, and Zamfara. The organization conducted 262 interviews with victims, eyewitnesses, community leaders, medical practitioners, religious leaders, and government and security officials, including some remotely in Plateau and Nasarawa states. Twenty one of the people interviewed were female victims and eyewitnesses in affected communities. Names of people in the report have been changed to protect their identities. This report is also based on the analysis of 230 documents, including medical reports, reports by security forces, and other official documents. In addition, researchers analysed 566 audio-visual materials received from contacts on the ground, satellite images and ammunition casing found in the field. Amnesty International also monitored and analysed media reports and official press releases.

Before conducting each interview, written consent, including for pictures and videos, was obtained and interviewees were informed of their right not to be interviewed if they did not want to be. Majority of the interviews in the communities were done independently and face-to-face at locations chosen as suitable by the interviewees, while some were conducted as group discussions.

During the media monitoring, there were reports of sexual violence by suspected Fulani herders. During Amnesty International’s field trips, researchers asked about sexual violence, but did not encounter or specifically seek out such cases. Researchers asked interviewees only what they saw or knew, not what they were told. The interviews included personal questions and follow-up questions about what happened to individual victims. None of the 21 women<sup>3</sup> interviewed mentioned being sexually assaulted in the course of being interviewed about the violence they experienced.

Amnesty International shared its findings with government authorities and specifically requested information from the Minister of Justice, Chief of Army Staff, Inspector General of the Nigeria Police Force, President of the Nigerian Senate and relevant authorities in Adamawa, Benue, Enugu, Kaduna, Plateau, and Taraba states. At the time of writing, only the Enugu State government had responded to Amnesty’s request for information.

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3 Many communities got prior information or rumours of attacks, so they were able to send women, children and the elderly out of the villages. During spontaneous attacks, the men tried to defend the communities while the women, children and elderly looked for ways to escape. Also, in some communities in Kaduna and Adamawa states, Amnesty International found out that gunmen sometimes spared women and children because they (gunmen) said they were after men. In communities in Taraba State, especially in Ussa, Takum and Wukari LGAs several communities were still empty when Amnesty International visited in April 2018. In some of the communities, researchers saw men on their farms and they said they only came to the villages to farm but not to spend the night for fear of attacks. Men said their families were living in towns in the LGAs and state capital.

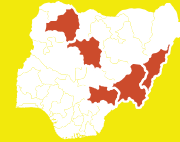
## Research conducted



**10** Field trips  
to towns and  
villages



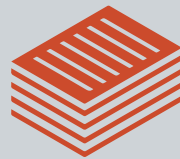
**56** Villages  
visited



**5** States  
visited



**262** Interviews  
conducted



**230** Documents  
analysed



**566** Audio-visual  
materials  
analysed



Monitoring and documenting violent clashes between farmers and herders January 2016, to October 2018. ©Amnesty International Nigeria

### 3. CONTEXT: YEARS OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE GIVE WAY TO VIOLENCE

***“We still ask ourselves what happened. What have we done? We had no history of violence [with the Fulani], we never had any clashes with them. The 19 February attack was the first. My house is like a home for the Fulanis, they come to play or watch movies with me and my family. So I still don’t know why it happened,”***<sup>4</sup>

**a 65-year-old farmer in Kanikon Village, Jemaa local government area in Kaduna State told Amnesty International**

In all the affected areas visited by Amnesty International, people in farming communities talked about the harmonious relationship that existed between them and Fulani herders and the peaceful coexistence they had enjoyed in the past. They explained how beneficial living together had been and how families from both sides visited and interacted with each other.

“We were all living in peace, there was a cordial relationship. They always came here and if not for their [facial] marks and looks you would not know they were Fulani, because they watched films with us and ate with us,”<sup>5</sup> a 65-year-old farmer told Amnesty his recollection of the situation prior to the attack of 19 February 2017, that resulted in the death of eight villagers and a policeman in Kanikon Village of Kaduna State.

The Fulani herders corroborated what the farmers said. Although there had been occasional conflicts in the past, they were managed and amicably resolved either by the people themselves or by the village heads.

“There were problems in the past that had to do with cattle grazing on farmlands but these were settled amicably. But now there is no peace, no cooperation,”<sup>6</sup> a local official in Adamawa of the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria, the socio-cultural body representing Fulani herders in the country, told Amnesty.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Amnesty International in Kanikon, Kaduna State, 25 August 2017

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Amnesty International in Kanikon, Kaduna State, 25 August 2017

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Amnesty International in Yola, Adamawa State, May 2018

This was confirmed by a cattle owner in Mambilla, Taraba State, who said: “We used to live in peace but our population was not this large. Then, if a cow strayed into your farm, we settled amicably and if we could not settle it ourselves, we went to the village head to find a way of settling the problem.”<sup>7</sup>

### 3.1 RESOURCE SCARCITY AT THE HEART OF CRISIS

A Fulani chief in Adamawa State explained how trouble began between farmers and herder communities in the state: “We have been trying to manage the crisis by creating grazing areas because a number of the grazing routes have been occupied. Farmers farm on the cattle routes. There are international cattle routes that other Fulani [herders] from Mali and other countries frequently use and once they find the routes have been occupied [and used as farmlands], they go ahead and pass along the routes because to them, that is supposed to be their way.”<sup>8</sup>

Amnesty International’s research revealed that one of the major causes of the clashes between herders and farmers is the scarcity of and competition for resources, mainly land, water and pasture.



Rice farm inside the Bare Grazing Corridor in Adamawa State. Researchers saw huge farmlands within the grazing area and there were several herds of cattle visibly grazing and the herders had to constantly struggle to ensure the cattle did not stray into the farmlands. ©Amnesty International Nigeria

Available evidence shows that the cordial relationship that existed between the farmers and herders involved a long established understanding amongst these communities that during farming season, the nomadic herders would leave farmlands and return after harvest season. More specifically, around the

<sup>7</sup> Interview with Amnesty International in Mambilla, Taraba State, 27 April 2018

<sup>8</sup> Interview with Amnesty International interview in Girei, Adamawa State, 25 April 2018

month of May, members of herder communities would leave areas used for farming and only return at the end of the year or the beginning of the next year.

Both farmers and herders said this established traditional system worked. The problem began when the farmers started practicing dry season farming [the specific time could not be ascertained], which meant the grazing area for cattle started to diminish.<sup>9</sup> Also, water bodies that the herders relied upon for their cattle became contentious, because the farmers needed them for irrigation. This was especially noticeable in Adamawa State. In addition, farmers now also rear cows and not just draught oxen, meaning their cattle need grazing areas too, making the competition stiffer.

An official in Adamawa, a Fulani, mentioned above told Amnesty International:

“In the past, the Bachama<sup>10</sup> had no cows. They only fished or farmed. Now, they have learnt how to own cattle because they saw that the land was fertile for grazing and our cows were doing very well. So, I think it is about jealousy because they saw that our cows were feeding well. So, they wanted to prevent us from grazing, saying only their cows could graze there. They claim the place is farmland but that is not true.”  
“They put laws in place that ‘from this time to this time, there should be no grazing’ and we abided by that but when it was time for grazing, they would still attack us and our cattle. We were expected to leave in May every year because of farming season and return in the first week of January. We were fine with that but when it was time for us to graze, from January to May, they still attacked us. This, to us, is not right.”<sup>11</sup>

In the early 1970s, livestock production was distinctly separate from crop production, particularly in northern Nigeria, where the main links between the two were in the area of cattle grazing on crop residues after harvest and some farmers making use of draught oxen. During this time (as recent as the early 1970s), herders did not have established land rights because land was communally owned and in the hands of traditional rulers and family heads. The herder received permission (grazing permits) to graze their cattle in areas not under agricultural use.<sup>12</sup>



 A cattle ranch on the Mambilla Plateau in Taraba State. ©Amnesty International Nigeria

<sup>9</sup> Interview with Amnesty International in Tabungo village, Adamawa State, 24 April 2018

<sup>10</sup> the largest ethnic group in Numan local government area of Adamawa State

<sup>11</sup> Interview with Amnesty International in Yola, Adamawa State, May 2018

<sup>12</sup> World Bank, Appraisal of Livestock Development Project Nigeria, 9 October 1974, available at <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/750071468290167872/pdf/multi-page.pdf>



 Burnt yam in Tse-Ajaver village in Wukari LGA of Taraba State following attack by suspected Fulani gunmen in April 2018. ©Amnesty International Nigeria

But over time, it has become difficult to separate the two means of livelihood [crop production and livestock production] because increasingly, the Fulani herders are taking to farming crops as a means of livelihood, while members of farming communities also now own cattle.

The growing scarcity of resources is further compounded by the increase in Nigeria's population (198 million people in 2018),<sup>13</sup> desertification and influx of people from areas affected by the conflict with Boko Haram in parts of northeast Nigeria [mainly Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states].

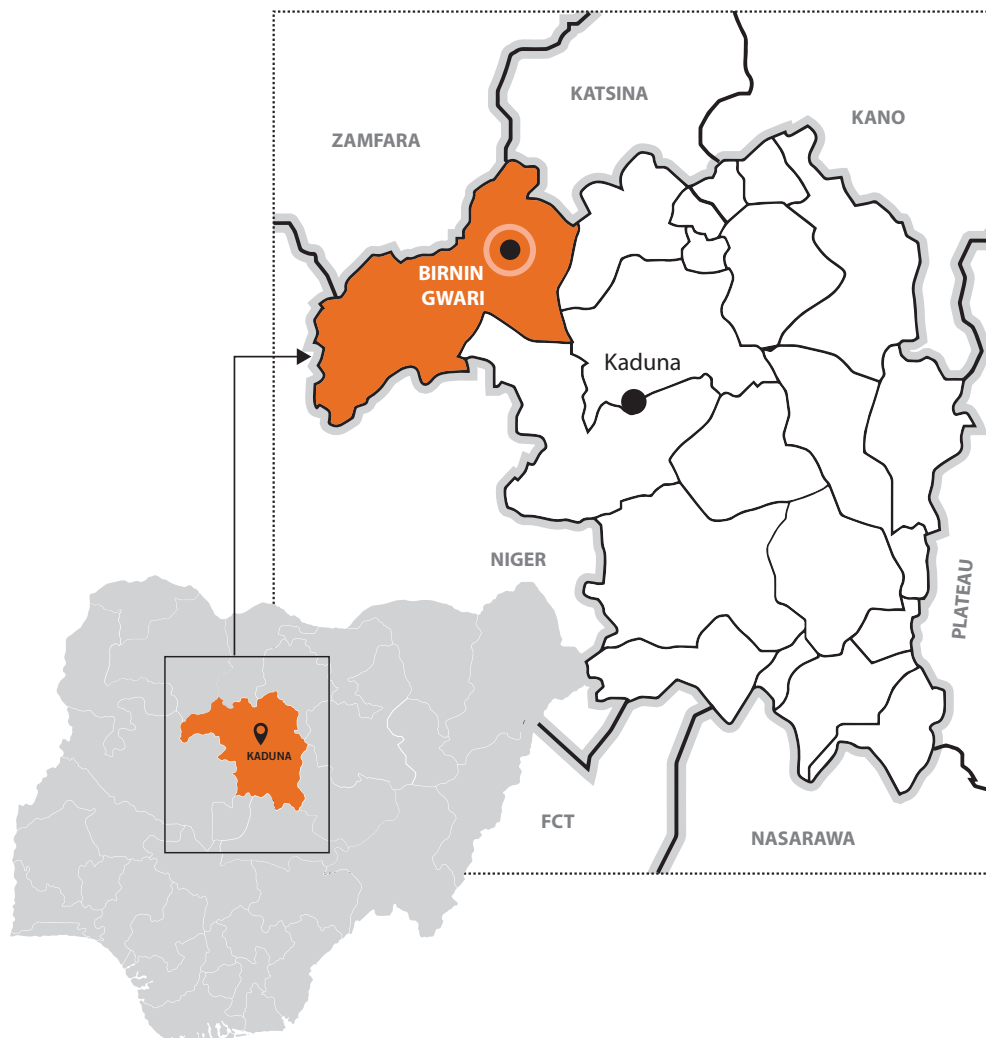
Areas experiencing a growing influx of displaced communities, specifically those mentioned above,


13 National Population Commission Chairman, Nigeria's population hits 198 million people, <http://population.gov.ng/nigerias-population-hit-198m-people-npopc-chairman/>

are predominantly occupied by farming communities, especially with Benue River providing water for dry season farming, including in parts of the northeast. This increase in farming and other large scale developmental activities such as schools, petrol stations, markets and power installations in the country, have resulted in growing encroachment on what used to be grazing routes or reserves,<sup>14 15</sup> meaning access to land for grazing or passage is diminishing at the same time the region is seeing a growing cattle population.<sup>16</sup>

During Amnesty International's visit in Adamawa State, researchers noticed that farmlands, schools, petrol stations and other structures have been erected in several places along the 500-kilometre grazing route that extends from Toungo local government area to Limankara on the border with Cameroon.<sup>17</sup> People using this route were often seen herding cattle around these structures, even sometimes coming onto the expressway.

At the Bare Grazing Corridor, on the way to Shelling local government area of the state (Adamawa), researchers saw huge farmlands within the grazing area and there were several herds of cattle visibly grazing and the herders had to constantly struggle to ensure the cattle did not stray into the farmlands.



 Map of Kaduna State. ©Amnesty International Nigeria

- 14 Daily Trust, Pastoralists: A national dilemma, 12 September 2017, available at <https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/pastoralists-a-national-dilemma.html>
- 15 Daily Trust, Tracing old grazing reserves, routes, in Nasarawa, 1 May 2016, available at <https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/news/feature/tracing-old-grazing-reserves-routes-in-nasarawa/144779.html>
- 16 World Bank, Appraisal of Livestock Development Project Nigeria, 9 October 1974, available at <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/750071468290167872/pdf/multi-page.pdf>
- 17 Amnesty International saw several documents and markings, also known as monuments, showing the area is a grazing route

## 4. COMING FACE-TO-FACE WITH DEATH

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***“When they approached where we were hiding, my daughter sneezed and they heard her voice. So, they dragged us out. While they dragged us, I held on to the child. They told me to let go of ‘him’ but I refused and held her because I thought they wanted to kill her. They told me to ‘leave the boy’ but I shouted that it’s not a boy, ‘it’s a girl’ and I kept shouting that. One of them brought out his gun and aimed at me but the rest told him not to shoot me since I said the child was a girl. A second person used his cutlass on my arm, he cut me again but I held on to the child. They injured me with their cutlass and my little child was also cut on the cheek and head but she did not die,”<sup>18</sup>***

**a 60-year-old woman from Dong Village in Demsa LGA of Adamawa State, speaking to Amnesty International on the ordeal she went through during an attack on her village on 4 December 2017.**

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Amnesty International has documented 312 incidents of attacks and reprisal attacks in 22 states and Abuja between January 2016 and October 2018. As a result of these attacks Amnesty International estimates that at least 3,641 people may have been killed, 406 injured, 5,000 houses burnt down and 182,530 people displaced.

The attacks primarily targeted men, although women and children also fell victim. People’s property and means of livelihood were affected too.

Amnesty International’s research suggests that the attacks were well planned and coordinated and this conclusion is based on our findings from witness testimonies that perpetrators (on both sides) appeared to have taken measures to hide their identities, wearing uniforms and other disguise and at times masks and operating in a coordinated fashion. Witness testimonies showed that many attacks happened at night or very early in the morning while some happened during the day.

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18 Phone Interview with Amnesty International, 10 December 2017



“They (attackers) arrived on motorcycles and there were about 100 motorcycles, each with three passengers, one driving and two shooting. They wore black attire under black coats or jackets. Some wore masks and some had turbans on. Some wore camouflage uniforms but not the type worn by Nigerian soldiers. The camouflage uniforms looked foreign,”<sup>19</sup> a villager from Jarkuka in Zamfara State told Amnesty International.

Attackers arrived farming communities most times on motorcycles, while attackers of herder communities mostly arrived by foot.

On 2 May 2018, Fulani gunmen, who had gathered near Katibu village in Taraba State<sup>20</sup> the previous day (1 May), made the short crossing into Adamawa State where they attacked five villages<sup>21</sup> and killed 33 people<sup>22</sup>. A villager in Katibu and another villager in Bang,<sup>23</sup> interviewed separately, both told Amnesty International that they counted 84 motorcycles, with each carrying three passengers.

A villager from Bang, one of the affected villages, said, “Around 4pm, I was in the bush hiding when I noticed motorcycles coming in large numbers. I counted 84 of them, with each carrying three persons.”<sup>24</sup> Recalling the incidence of attacks on residents of Lawaru, a village in Numan LGA of Adamawa State on 4 December 2017, a 40-year-old villager told Amnesty that the attackers wore black, which tallies with the description the Nigerian Air Force gave following its bombing of some villages on that day.”<sup>25</sup> “Early in the morning on the 4th of December 2017, I was coming out of the house when I heard people screaming ‘They are here’. I ran back to call my kid and told him that we should run. So we came out and saw them wearing black. When we ran behind the house we saw them burning houses. We started to shout and pray as we ran.”<sup>26</sup>

In Kaduna State also, witnesses confirmed that attackers wore masks and mostly black clothes. “I did not recognise any of the Fulani [gunmen]. They all wore uniforms, you couldn’t even recognise them. They wore black trousers and the type of boots soldiers wear with long black jackets. Some wore black while other wore green. They also wore this headgear that covers all your face like a mask. So you couldn’t recognise them,”<sup>27</sup> a middle-aged woman from Zilian Village in Kaduna State said, after the 20 February 2017 attack that resulted in the death of at least five people.

People from both farmer and herder communities gave identical descriptions of those who attacked their communities, except for the weapons used. According to witness testimonies, Fulani gunmen who attacked farmer communities came with cutlasses, bows and arrows and military-grade rifles, including light machine guns. Those from herder communities said that those who attacked them [from farmer communities] came with cutlasses, spears, bows and arrows, and sometimes Dane guns.

The analysis of pictures of bullet shells taken in some of these farmer communities after attacks by Fulani gunmen [in Kaduna, Plateau and Adamawa states] suggests that the attackers had access to military-grade rifles.

Amnesty International believes the methods of attack [carried out largely by men, although their age bracket could not be ascertained], including weapons used, not only show the level of organisation and coordination, but also intent to cause serious harm and destruction.

In all the states Amnesty International visited or monitored, villagers gave horrifying details of the attacks and killing that took place in their communities.

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19 Interview with Amnesty International in Bagega Village of Zamfara State, 11 July 2018

20 Taraba State is in northeast Nigeria and shares borders with Adamawa state

21 The villages attacked were Bang, Nega, Bolki, Nzumosu, and Gon

22 Amnesty International visited the villages four days after the attack and spoke with community leaders, victims and eye witnesses, including victims’ families. The organization also got list of those killed in each village

23 Bang is one of the five attacked villages in Numan LGA of Adamawa state on 2 May 2018

24 Interview with Amnesty International in Bang village of Adamawa state, May 2018

25 Herdsmen shoot at NAF fighter jet in Numan, Punch newspaper, 21 December 2017, available at <https://punchng.com/herdsmen-shoot-at-naf-fighter-jet-in-adamawa/>

26 Interview with Amnesty International interview in Lawaru Village, Adamawa State, April 2018

27 Interview with Amnesty International interview in Zilian Village, Kaduna State, August 2017

## 4.1 ATTACKS ON FULANI COMMUNITIES IN TARABA STATE

Over a period of four days, 17 – 20 June 2017, several Fulani communities in the hinterland and hard to reach areas on the Mambilla Plateau of Sardauna local government area of Taraba State reportedly came under attack by armed men suspected to be from the Mambilla tribe.<sup>28</sup> According to media reports,<sup>29</sup> 732 people were either killed or went missing. It took some days for reports of the attacks to get in the media, after Fulani leaders raised an alarm about what was happening.<sup>30</sup>

From 26 – 28 April 2018, Amnesty International visited Sardauna local government headquarters and interviewed 23 victims and eyewitnesses in Gembu the local government headquarters, Yerimaru, Kachalla-sa and Wuro-Alhaji villages and Nguroje town. Researchers were only able to confirm 141 deaths from lists of names provided by families of victims and community leaders. Researchers could not access some villages in the hinterlands because of the lack of roads for vehicles and insecurity.

A victim of the attacks, a 35-year-old Fulani herder from Kwarakwara, one of the affected villages, narrated how his father, two-year-old son, four-year-old daughter and seven months pregnant wife were all killed during this incident. He told Amnesty that altogether he lost 25 relatives in this attack. According to him, he escaped by hiding in a tree, from where he witnessed how the attackers, including some he recognised, killed his family.

“I was at home during the attack. We were all at home after the evening prayers at around 4pm when we saw the Mambillas surrounding us. We saw them entering houses. In my households they killed 25 people, including my wife and two kids. Some were slaughtered while others were burnt. My father was burnt.



Two brothers of Fulani origin with gunshot wounds when suspected Mambilla gunmen attacked their community on the Mambilla Plateau on 7 March 2018.  
©Amnesty International Nigeria

28 Mambilla is the major tribe in Sardauna LGA of Taraba State, whose major occupation is farming

29 Premium Times, Mambilla Carnage: Nigeria's Fulani community sues FG, Taraba State govt. at ECOWAS court, demands \$200 million, on 21 July 2017, available at <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/237693-mambilla-carnage-nigerias-fulani-community-sues-fg-taraba-govt-ecowas-court-demands-200million.html>

30 Sahara Reporters, Mambilla committed ethnic cleansing in Taraba, says Fulani community, 22 June 2017, available at <http://saharareporters.com/2017/06/22/mambilla-committed-ethnic-cleansing-taraba-says-fulani-community>

“My wife was slaughtered, they opened her stomach and brought out the baby and slaughtered it. My kids were slaughtered also. I was with their dead bodies for three days in the bush before the soldiers came. My father was burnt in front of the mosque where he prayed. They killed him there and burnt him. I ran away and climbed a tree and from the tree I watched what was happening but they did not see me. My wife and kids ran to a river close by but the Mambillas saw her running with the kids and they went there and killed them.”<sup>31</sup>

A 79-year-old grandfather, a Fulani, told Amnesty International that he lost two sons, a younger brother and a 14-year-old grandson when his village, Hurum-Gora, was attacked on 7 March 2018 by armed men suspected to be from the Mambilla tribe.

He said: “My younger brother, son and grandson were shot dead while my other son was killed with a machete. Six people from my village were injured. One was my younger brother while the other five were my children.”<sup>32</sup> Amnesty International researchers saw two of the sons with gunshot wounds.

On 30 January 2018 a Fulani community living in Leme, also a village on the Mambila Plateau in Taraba State, was attacked by people suspected to be from the same Mambila tribe. During this attack, a 79-year-old man was slaughtered by men from the group that attacked the village and one of the victim’s family member told Amnesty International that she recognised the perpetrators but declined to identify them by name for fear of reprisals.<sup>33</sup> A 44-year-old daughter of the deceased said that two months later, on 7 March 2018, the attackers came back to the village and this time around, two of her brothers were killed:

“On 3 March this year (2018) they came back and took 15 of our cows. We had soldiers in the village, so we reported to them and two soldiers followed two of our brothers to go in search of the cows. They saw the attackers already butchering and sharing the meat of the cows. There were about 300 of them, including women.

“The Mambila people decided to attack my brothers, who were with the soldiers. The soldiers pleaded with them to spare our brothers’ lives and they initially agreed but when the youth leader arrived, he ordered that my brothers, 30 and 25 year-olds should be killed. So, their throats were slit and their eyes and private parts removed. The soldiers returned to our village around 4pm and told us what happened. They appealed to us to be patient. The soldiers managed to escape and one of them had a cut in his arm and there was blood on his body.”<sup>34</sup>

Amnesty International research shows that the crisis on the Mambilla Plateau between farmers and herders appears to be related to a long-standing dispute over land ownership. Sources informed our researchers that the disputed land on the Mambilla Plateau originally belonged to the farmer communities but they sold it to the herders, some as far back as in 1982.

“The land in the past belonged to the locals (farmers) but they sold the land to the Fulani, who have the valid documents,” a Fulani official in the state told Amnesty International.

Documents seen by Amnesty International confirm this. Researchers saw and obtained copies of two Certificates of Occupancy dated 26 December 1994 and 20 October 2005 issued by the Sardauna LGA to Fulani herders; two Rights of Occupancy dated 24 December 1998 and 17 January 2000, issued by the same LGA to Fulani herders; an application for Right of Occupancy dated 15 February 1982 being processed by the LGA in favour of a herder; and three separate court judgements dated 11 May 1990, 11 August 1990 and 8 November 2016, all in favour of Fulani herders who had sued members of the Mambila farming community for trespass. Amnesty International also saw grazing permits from the LGA, showing Fulani herders were permitted to graze their cattle.<sup>35</sup>

Members of farmer communities, now faced with a growing population and shortage of land, appear to

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31 Interview with Amnesty International in Gembu, Sardauna LGA of Taraba State, on 28 April 2018

32 Interview with Amnesty International in Nguroje, Saurdauna LGA of Taraba State, 27 April 2018

33 Interview with Amnesty International in Gembu, Sardauna LGA of Taraba State, 28 April 2018

34 Interview with Amnesty International in Gembu, Sardauna LGA of Taraba State, 28 April 2018

35 Amnesty International is in possession of copies of these documents

be resorting to attacking Fulani herder communities, with the knowledge that when the case is taken to court, entitled owners of the land are likely to win, given their proof of ownership of the lands.

## 4.2 ATTACK ON ZILIAN VILLAGE IN KADUNA STATE

A middle-aged woman from Zilian Village in Kaduna State survived a violent attack on 20 February 2017 when armed suspected Fulani men told her they were only after men. She lost her husband in the attack and her six-year-old daughter was badly burnt when their house was set on fire. Amnesty International saw the scar from a bullet wound on the woman’s left leg and the daughter’s badly burnt body and face. She had hurriedly run out of the house for safety, leaving her children behind, after her husband was shot. “I hid in a pit that was our old toilet that we stopped using after it collapsed. I entered inside and sat there. I could hear them (attackers) struggling in the house with my husband. When they succeeded in killing him, they left the house and came out through the back where I was hiding. They saw me there and shot me. When they were about to shoot me a second time, one of them told them to stop and that they should see who was there, so they came closer and examined me. When they saw I was a female, they said they were not going to kill me and that they were here for our men. They asked [me] to come out from the pit and get my children. I refused and told them that I could not come out of the pit because they had shot me. One of them held my hand to drag me up but I refused and sat back.

“When they left, I dragged myself out of the pit and went home. My thoughts were that my children were already burnt to death in the house but I needed to confirm. When I got home, everywhere was on fire. They had set the house ablaze and everything was on fire and still burning. I saw my husband’s corpse on the floor and his leg was on fire, so I moved him from the fire. I dragged myself back to the pit to continue hiding. Another group of attackers came and met me there. I pleaded with them to spare me and said that their colleagues had seen and left me there. So they said okay, but that I should come out and go hide in the river so that another group would not kill me. I told them I was not leaving the pit. They said okay and left me there. One of them came back and stared at me for some time, shook his head and left,”<sup>36</sup> she narrated.

With her husband dead and her home burnt down, it is now very difficult for her to look after her children. She and the children live in a room at her brother-in-law’s house and depend on handouts from sympathisers to survive.

“I want a house, food and also help with the school fees for my children,” she said.

17-year-old boy, who lost his father, stepmother and younger sister in the same Zilian attack, said he was left for dead after the attackers hacked him with a machete in the face and neck and when the bush they were hiding in was set on fire. Amnesty International saw scars on his face, neck and other parts of



 A badly burnt 6-year-old girl with her mother. The girl was burnt when Fulani gunmen set her family house ablaze in an attack on Zilian Village in Kaduna State on 20 February 2017. ©Amnesty International Nigeria

36 Interview with Amnesty Interview in Zilian Village, Kaduna State, August 2017

his body, including burn scars on his back. His other younger sister was badly burnt and had to be taken to the University of Jos Teaching Hospital in Plateau State.

“Early Monday morning, on my way to my room to get ready for school, I saw Fulani [men]; they were already in the field and on their way to the compound. So I ran and hid in the bush. A dog started to bark so they knew someone was there. They approached where I was hiding and when they saw me, they thought about killing me.

“Before they attacked me, they asked me if people had guns in the village and who they were, but I told them I didn’t know. One of them said they should not kill me while two others said they should. The one that had a rifle was the one who said they should not kill me, while the ones who had machetes were the ones that did this to me. They thought I was dead, so they left,”<sup>37</sup> he told Amnesty International.

A 25-year-old man, whose parents and nephew were among 16 people killed when Fulani gunmen previously attacked their village, Zilian, in 2013, said he was lucky to escape the latest attack on 20 February 2017.

“Early in the morning, after the Morning Prayer, I came out to ease myself but before I went back into the house, I saw them [Fulani gunmen] already inside our compound. So I rushed inside the house and asked my brothers and sister to run. I was the only one left in the house and the Fulani set the house on fire while I was still inside.

“They didn’t see me when they came in, because I was hiding behind the door. After they set the house on fire, they stood in front of the house watching while it burnt. The heat from the fire was too much and it was already burning me, so I ran out. They shot at me as I ran past them but I was lucky that I was not hit. I ran from my house to Kaura (the local government headquarters), from where I was taken to the hospital. I was later transferred to the Jos University Teaching Hospital (JUTH),”<sup>38</sup> he told Amnesty International.

### **4.3 GODOGODO ATTACK LEFT 30 VILLAGERS DEAD AND OVER 300 HOUSES BURNT**

On 24 and 25 September and 15 October 2016, Fulani gunmen attacked Godogodo Village in Kaduna State, killing at least 30 people and injuring 16 others, which Amnesty International confirmed when it visited the village on 26 August 2017.<sup>39</sup> In addition, more than 300 houses were burnt. One of the injured was a 16-year-old, who was shot in his right leg during the first day of the attack on, 24 September. He had gone out with other young men to defend the village but they were overpowered and as they ran back to the village, he was hit by a bullet. The leg was later amputated at the knee. He told Amnesty International that it was difficult to accept that his leg would be amputated and he had to leave the hospital because of this.

“I was taken to the General Hospital in Kafanchan. They did not attend to me in time so I was taken to another hospital in Kafanchan. I was in this hospital for almost two weeks before they told me my leg would be amputated. I refused, so from there I was taken to the University of Jos Teaching Hospital in Jos, Plateau state.”<sup>40</sup>

It’s been difficult adjusting after the surgery, the boy explained, as he’s had to quit school and his welding job.

“I had to stop the welding job because it involved a lot of standing and bending down which I can’t do any more,” he explained.

A 53-year-old businessman, who was one of the major store owners in the town, said he and his family hid as they watched how the attackers looted his shops and burnt down his warehouse. According to him, he lost goods worth more than N20 million (\$55,000).

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37 Interview with Amnesty International in Zilian Village, Kaduna State, August 2018

38 Interview with Amnesty International in Zilian Village, Kaduna State, August 2017

39 Amnesty International visited Godogodo on 26 August 2017, went round the village, spoke with eyewitnesses and victims and visited graveyards

40 Interview with Amnesty International in Godogodo Village, Kaduna State, 26 August 2017



 17-year-old victim of Godogodo attack had his leg amputated after he was shot on 24 September 2016. ©Amnesty International Nigeria

He told Amnesty International: “They (Fulani gunmen) used two vehicles to loot one of my shops, burnt down the other one and the warehouse and everything inside them. My property was worth more than N20 million, because I’m also a wholesaler. I was somewhere in the building hiding with my family, but watching them as they operated and took away and destroyed everything I had.”<sup>41</sup>

When Amnesty International visited the town in August 2017, researchers noticed that several buildings looked recently renovated while work was still ongoing on others. Villagers said almost all the houses were burnt down during the 15 October 2016 attack and people had to rebuild or renovate them.

#### **4.4 111 PEOPLE KILLED IN ONE WEEK IN BIRNIN-GWARI, KADUNA STATE**

Several villages in Birnin-Gwari LGA of Kaduna State continue to face security challenges similar to those in Zamfara State. Their situation is even more volatile, due to the proximity of the LGA to Zamfara State. The forests that cut across the two states (Kaduna and Zamfara states), made the residents vulnerable to repeated abductions.

According to a report<sup>42</sup> sent to Amnesty International by the Birnin-Gwari Vanguard for Security and Good Governance<sup>43</sup> on behalf of the people of the local government, the security situation in Birnin-Gwari started to deteriorate after the early morning killing of 24 worshippers in a mosque, on 14 October 2012.<sup>44</sup>

“From January 2018 to 11 May 2018, a total number of 152 people were killed in various attacks by gunmen in Birnin-Gwari local government area. Moreover, some communities were attacked by gunmen [in], Bagoman Daji, Kagi, Goron-Dutse, Layin-Maigwari, Tsohuwar Birnin-Gwari, Kirazo, Kwalakwangi, Dokan-ruwa, and recently Gwaska [villages in the local government area],” states the report sent to Amnesty International, which was also sent to the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

On 28 April 2018, according to the report, 40 miners were killed at Janruwa Village and a week later (5 May), 71 people were killed in Gwaska.

<sup>41</sup> Interview with Amnesty International in Godogodo village, Kaduna State, 26 August 2017

<sup>42</sup> Amnesty International has the report in its File

<sup>43</sup> The BGVSGG is a body that seeks to promote and protect the interests of people of the LGA

<sup>44</sup> The Nation newspaper, Unknown gunmen kill 24, 15 October 2012, available at, <http://thenationonline.net/unknown-gunmen-kill-24/>

The Gwaska attack resulted in a huge outcry<sup>45</sup>. In June, Amnesty International visited various locations in Birnin-Gwari, but could not travel to Gwaska Village due to insecurity. But researchers met some displaced residents in Doka, a 30-minute drive from Gwaska, where they were taking refuge.

A 35-year-old local hunter told Amnesty International that he lost six relatives and five neighbours in the May attack.

“Around 3:30pm, after prayers in the mosque, three motorcycles came and the riders opened fire in the village. They started running back and shooting in the air, I think they wanted us to chase after them, which we suspected was a ploy to drag us out of the village. We decided to gather together many of our youths, before deciding whether to go after them or not. We could still see them far off, where they had stopped seeing that we were not going after them. They were still shooting but we did not budge. About 30 minutes later, more than 100 motorcycles came into the village with four passengers on each. Only the riders did not carry arms. The rest had guns,”<sup>46</sup> he said.

Another villager, who said he lost five relatives during the same May attack on Gwaska, said there was prior information received about the attack, which was reported to the police.

He said: “I was in Gwaska on that day [5 May]. The leader of the [local] vigilante, who was my relative, came to ask if I was aware of information that attackers were coming. Later in the day, three motorcycles came into the village and [fired gun] shots. We had just finished praying in the mosque... Two people in the village recognised their motorcycles that had been taken from them at gun point by Fulani. Some of the attackers wore military uniforms, some kaftans and some wore red caps. We got info from Dansadau<sup>47</sup> that they were coming and a day before the attack, I reported it to the Divisional Crimes Officer (DCO) and he said they would send policemen. I also lost five other relatives, in addition to the leader of the vigilante. Before this attack [5 May], they would sometimes come to rustle our cattle and rob people of their belongings.”<sup>48</sup>

A 21-year-old man was part of the group of men that tried to defend the village against the attackers on 5 May, but without success. They were easily overpowered. He was shot in his right leg and right arm as he fled.

“We had information they were coming, so we grouped ourselves and stayed at the entrance to the village to try to protect our village after three motorcycles had come and the riders had opened fire in the village. We suspected they wanted us to go after them, but we thought that if they saw us gathered, they would be discouraged from attacking us but it did not work. I was shot in right leg and right arm while running from the attackers, as they chased after me on their motorcycles. I managed to hide inside a house. I was taken to the hospital in Doka and then to the General Hospital in Birnin-Gwari. I spent two weeks there.”<sup>49</sup>

## 4.5 4 DECEMBER 2017 ATTACKS ON NUMAN AND DEMSA VILLAGES OF ADAMAWA STATE

At least seven villages (Dong, Lawaru, Shafaron, Kodomti, Nzuruwei, Pulum, and Baya) in Numan and Demsa local government areas of Adamawa state were attacked on 4 December 2017, by suspected Fulani gunmen, leaving at least 51 people dead<sup>50</sup>.

A 40-year-old woman from Lawaru Village, who lost her 25-year-old son in the attack, explained how she was left to die by the attackers.

45 Daily Trust newspaper, Birni Gwari killings: El-Rufai visits Gwaska as death toll hits 71, 8 May 2018, available at, <https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/birnin-gwari-killings-el-rufai-visits-gwaska-as-death-toll-hits-71.html>

ICIR, Birni-Gwari massacre: 84 killed in seven weeks – What do the killers want? 7 May 2018, available at, <https://www.icirnigeria.org/question-85-killed-in-one-month--whats-in-birnin-gwari/>

Tribune newspaper, Birnin-Gwari killings: We buried 58 bodies – Emir, 7 May 2018, available at, <https://www.tribuneonline.ng.com/145050/>

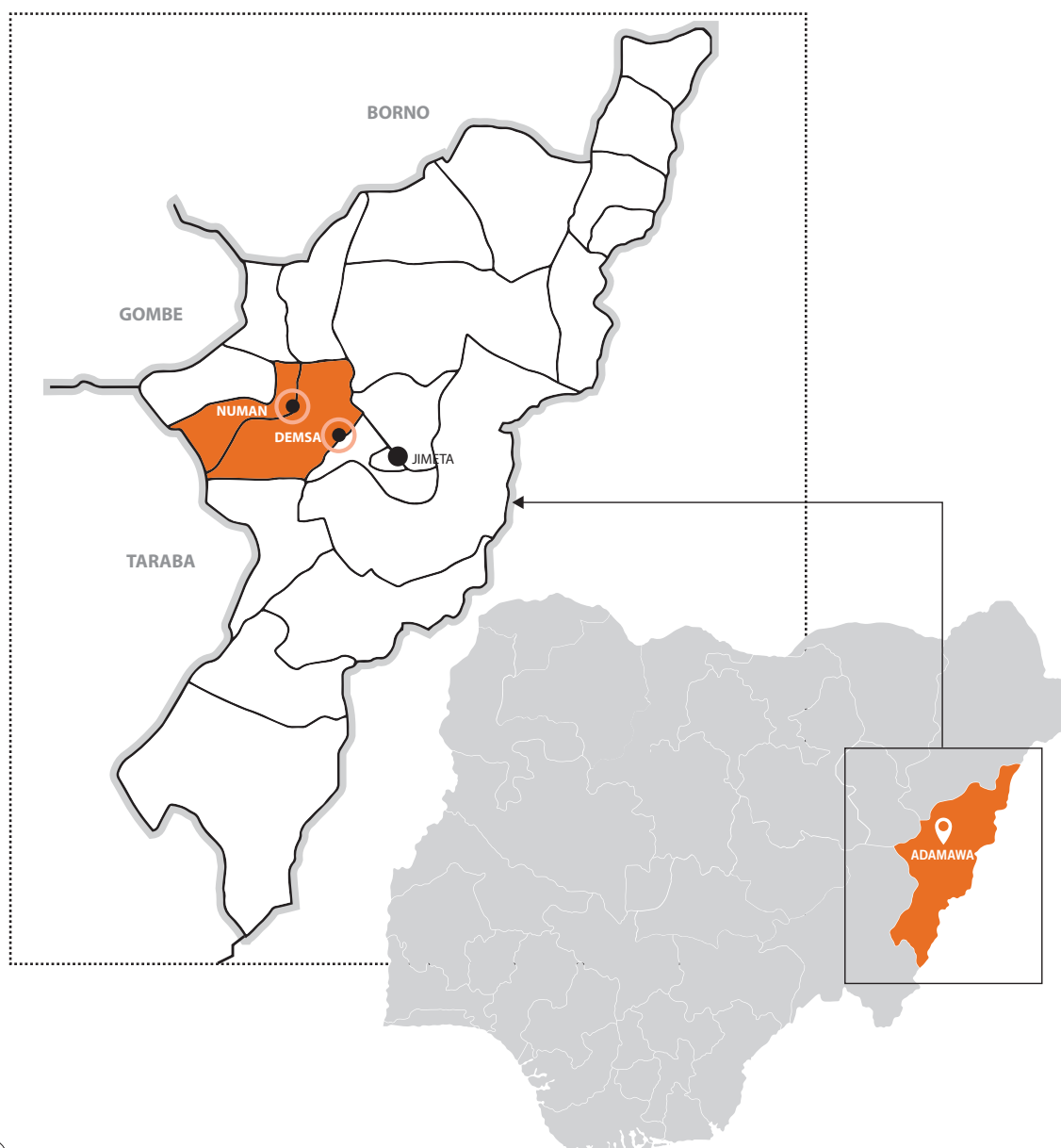
46 Interview with Amnesty International in Birnin-Gwari, Kaduna state, June 2018


47 A town in Maru LGA of Zamfara State

48 Interview with Amnesty International in Birni-Gwari, Kaduna state, June 2018

49 Interview with Amnesty International in Birnin-Gwari, Kaduna State, June 2018

50 Amnesty International, Nigeria: Dozens killed as military launches airstrikes on villages beset by spiralling communal violence, 30 January 2018 <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/01/nigeria-dozens-killed-as-military-launches-air-attacks-on-villages-beset-by-spiralling-communal-violence/>



 Map of Adamawa State. ©Amnesty International Nigeria

“Early in the morning on 4 December 2017, I was coming out of the house when I heard people screaming ‘They are here’. I ran back inside to call my son for us to run. We came out and saw them wearing black. We ran to the back of the house and saw them burning down houses. We started shouting and praying as we ran.

“As I ran on ahead, I heard my son shouting ‘Jesus, Jesus, Jesus!’ When I turned, I saw him being surrounded, attacked and hacked. So, I stopped running and knelt down, praying and crying. While I was crying, I watched as they killed him. One of the attackers came to me, raised his axe and was about to strike me on the head, but I raised my hand to block it and my hand was cut. He raised the axe again and again I used my hand as a shield. You can see that I lost two fingers from my left hand. I fell down and others came and started to cut me. You can see my body. As I rolled on the ground, the little offering box I had hidden between my legs fell and they saw it. So, they left me and went to the box and broke it open. They started to share the money among themselves and forgot about me, as I lay close to my dead son, writhing in pain and waiting for death.”<sup>51</sup> Amnesty International saw the scars on her back that fit her testimony. Two fingers were missing from her left hand, while her thumb had a wound that was yet to completely heal.

51 Interview with Amnesty International in Dong Village, Adamawa State, 20 April 2018



A 35-year-old man from Dong Village, who survived five gunshot wounds, said he lost his younger brother in the attack.

“I was at home lying down at around 6:30am when I heard that the Fulani were here [in Dong], so I ran out to see what was happening. I saw them; they had just finished attacking Lawaru Village and were approaching our village. The young men mobilized themselves and went to protect our village but when we saw their number and the type of weapons they had, I told the rest that we could not fight them with our spears. I told them to run, so we ran back to the village and told our people to start running. The attackers came and were shouting ‘Allahu Akbar’ as they attacked people and destroyed our homes.

“I was running to look for a different place to hide, after ensuring that some of the youth had a place to hide, when I saw the Fulani gunmen. They started shooting at me. They hit me once in my right hand, twice in my right leg, once on my left shoulder, and once on my right thigh, but I still managed to run to the palace and behind it.

“I was there when the fighter jet came and bombed the palace. I was lucky that I did not hide inside the palace but behind it. I lay there, because of the gunshot wounds and it was my Stepdad who came and took me to the hospital. I was at the Federal Medical Centre in Yola for three weeks before I was discharged. I later realised that my younger brother had been killed. He was shot, hacked with machetes and his body burnt.”<sup>52</sup>

#### 4.6 80 FULANI, INCLUDING THREE-DAY-OLD BABY, KILLED IN NUMAN VILLAGE

***“I could not go home when I heard what had happened because all the people killed were related to me. I was scared of what I would find if I went home. I was in Numan when the corpses were brought to the General Hospital. I felt like dying and it was like a dream that I could not wake up from. I felt empty and wished the world would end. It was a dark day for me. The corpses I saw and attended to at the hospital had gunshot wounds, machete and spear wounds. It was not a sight to behold,”<sup>53</sup>***

**a village head told Amnesty about the 20 November 2017 attack on a Fulani village that led to the death of at least 80 people, all related to him.**

On 20 November 2017, at around 3pm, armed men suspected to be of the Bachama tribe<sup>54</sup>, attacked Shelewol, a Fulani village in Numan LGA, when most of the men were away and killed at least 80 people, majority of whom were women and children.

In September 2018, Amnesty International researchers visited some of the victims in Mayo-Belwa LGA, where they were living as displaced persons, and established that contrary to media reports of about 50

<sup>52</sup> Interview with Amnesty International in Dong, Adamawa State, 20 April 2018

<sup>53</sup> Interview with Amnesty International at Mararab M'Billa Village, Mayo-Belwa LGA, 20 September 2018

<sup>54</sup> The major ethnic group in Numan and part of Demsa LGAs in Adamawa State



 An 8-year-old boy with machete wound inflicted on him when armed Bachama men attacked Shelewol, a Fulani community in Numan LGA of Adamawa State on 20 November 2017. ©Amnesty International Nigeria

deaths,<sup>55</sup> the figure was at least 80, including a three-day-old girl, who was yet to be christened.<sup>56</sup>

Amnesty International spoke with the village head, who said 74 of those killed were related to him, while the other six were members of a family that had recently relocated to the village.<sup>57</sup>

An Imam,<sup>58</sup> who said he performed funeral rites for those killed, told Amnesty International that he was present at the General Hospital in Numan when 74 corpses were brought in, from the night of the attack [20 November] to the following day [Tuesday].

“At the hospital, where we washed the corpses, 43 were brought the first time, later 11 were brought and then 20 corpses were brought, bringing the total number of corpses I took part in washing to 74.”<sup>59</sup> A 40-year-old woman, who was at home when the attackers arrived, told Amnesty International that the attackers, dressed in black and wearing masks, while some had painted their faces black, did not spare children.

She said: “I was at home, outside the house sweeping as I got ready to prepare dinner. Suddenly, we saw our cattle coming back home, which we thought was too early. Around 3pm we noticed that the cows were

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55 Daily Trust newspaper, How Numan bloodshed claimed 55 women, children, 26 November 2017, available at, <https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/how-numan-bloodshed-claimed-55-women-children.html>

Daily Nigerian newspaper, Bachama kill 45 Fulani children, women in Adamawa, 21 November 2017, available at, <https://dailynigerian.com/bachama-militia-kill-45-fulani-children-women-in-adamawa-graphic-photos/>

56 The grandfather of the child told Amnesty International that the family was waiting for the seventh day to name the baby

57 Interview with Amnesty International at Maraba M'Billa Village in Mayo-Belwa LGA, Adamawa State, 20 September 2018

58 An Islamic worship leader

59 Interview with Amnesty International at Maraba M'Billa Village, Mayo-Belwa LGA, Adamawa State, 20 September 2018

bleeding and some were falling down and when we looked up further, we saw that Bachama youths were coming with [the cattle] and cutting them with cutlasses as they approached the village.

“Immediately we saw this, we started to run with our children. Some women were not fully covered and had to run like that, half-naked. Some women left their children behind but I was able to take mine. However, I lost them along the way. The Bachama [attackers] were shooting guns, shooting their bows and arrows and using their spears as well. Most of our men had gone for a meeting in Numan, while some had gone to graze. The Bachama people did not spare children.

“The following day, I found two of my children at Bolle, which is about two hours walk from Shelewol. I’m yet to find my other two children, Ahmadu [18] and Umaru [19]. Two of my children are here with me and the third is with my aunt at Gongoshe Village. I am not happy that they are not here and I don’t know what happened to them.

“My two step-mothers were killed. One was killed with her three children and the other was killed with her two children and 14 grandchildren.”<sup>60</sup>

Another woman, a 25-year-old, said she survived because she ran for two hours, leaving two of her children behind.

“The Bachama people arrived behind the wounded cows and as soon as they stepped into the village, they started attacking people. Even children who fell from their mothers’ backs or arms were hacked down. They chased us as we ran. I ran to the bush and did not stop running until after two hours. We knew they were Bachama because they were all speaking the language, which we understand, because we have lived together all our lives. They were also calling each other by names, such as Gungu, Boboto, Pidi, and Friday. There were so many of them; and I think they were more than 100.

“My son, Ahmadu (2), was killed with a machete while Haruna (8-year-old boy), was cut with a machete in the face but survived. I was a month pregnant with my daughter, Amina,”<sup>61</sup> she told Amnesty International.

Amnesty International researchers saw the woman’s son and noticed two scars on his face, one on his jaw and the other across his nose.

A 38-year-old man, who said he was among those who went to evacuate the corpses after the attack, said a soldier shed tears after seeing the corpses of children and the way they had been cut with machetes.

“He kept asking what the children had done wrong to warrant such killing.”

## 4.7 27 FULANI KILLED IN BIDDA, ADAMAWA STATE

Some Fulani villages in Mayo-Belwa local government area of Adamawa State were attacked in the early hours of 14 July 2018 by armed men suspected to be Bile<sup>62</sup>. Amnesty International could not ascertain the exact number of villages attacked. One of the worst affected villages was Bidda, where 27 residents of Fulani origin were killed.

One of the residents, Joda, a 60-year-old man, told Amnesty International that he received a phone call from a friend, who also lives in Bidda, at about 9pm on 13 July, a day before the attack. The friend called Joda to warn that someone from Bile tribe had informed him of an impending attack on Bidda by Bile people and had advised him to leave the village with his family.

Joda said: “When I heard this, I woke some people up and informed them and we agreed to report to security agents or government officials. I took my motorcycle around 1am [14 July] and along with the village head rode to Mayo-Belwa, to report to the chairman of the local government. We arrived around 4am and waited until daybreak before calling the chairman at around 6am. He told me he was in Yola<sup>63</sup>

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60 Interview with Amnesty International at Tashan Uda Village, Mayo-Belwa LGA, Adamawa State, 21 September 2018

61 Interview with Amnesty International at Tashan Uda Village, Mayo-Belwa LGA, Adamawa State, 21 September 2018

62 A tribe in Adamawa State

63 Capital of Adamawa State

and would quickly come back. I called the district head [of Mayo-Belwa] and he arrived at about 8am. We then went to see the divisional police officer (DPO) of Mayo-Belwa and reported to him and he said he would verify the information.”<sup>64</sup>

While Joda and his fellow villagers who had gone with him were still at the police station, he got a call from his younger brother back in their village [Bidda], who told him that armed men from Bile had arrived and were killing people and burning down houses.

“I rushed back inside the police station and reported to the DPO. They got [onto] a military vehicle and the DPO told me to stay back at the station for my safety, so I didn’t go with them. They left at about 9am, but arrived Bidda around 3pm, because, as I later found out, they took a long route, because they were not familiar with the road,” he explained.

Muhammadu, a 50-year-old resident of Bidda, who was present during the attack told Amnesty International that the attackers were carrying AK-47s, bows and arrows, machetes and spears and spoke Bachama, Bali, Bile, Waka and and Gengle [ethnic tribes largely found in Numan, Mayo-Belwa, Demsa, and Fufore local government areas of Adamawa State].

“Some wore red outfits, while others wore different colours. Those in red spoke Bali. Others spoke Bile, Waka, Gingle, Bachama. We grew up with all these people, so when they speak, even when we don’t understand, we can tell what tribes there are from. They were asking each other about specific people in our village. I heard one of them asking if anyone had seen me or if I had been killed. They also asked about the village head, who was among the 27 people killed that day. They came with AK-47s and I know this because I see them with the police and soldiers,”<sup>65</sup> he said.

Muhammadu said he fled after two hours while the attack was still on and returned at around 5pm [the same day] to find more than 200 houses burnt down.<sup>66</sup>

#### **4.8 27 VILLAGERS KILLED IN A SCHOOL GUARDED BY SOLDIERS IN PLATEAU STATE**

From 8 to 18 October 2017, suspected Fulani gunmen launched attacks on six villages in Bassa LGA of Plateau State [Nkiedowro, Hukke, Kpachudu, Nzhweruvo, Taagbe, and Rotsu], killing a total of 50 people<sup>67</sup>. The state government decided to impose a curfew in the LGA on 13 October<sup>68</sup>. However, three days later, on 16 October at about 6pm, gunmen still managed to kill 27 villagers in Nkiedowro Village inside a classroom in a school used as a base for Operation Safe Haven.<sup>69</sup>

On the day of the attack, between 5pm and 6pm, the villagers heard gunshots, as armed suspected Fulani men came into the village and some of them ran to a primary school where soldiers were stationed and hid in a classroom. Shortly after, the attackers arrived at the school and entered the classroom where they shot at the people.

“They blocked all the escape routes [from the school], then they started shooting, killing almost all the people in the classroom. I was one of the few people that survived. I was shot three times in both my left and right arms. When they shot me I just lay on the floor, pretending to be dead. After shooting everyone, they started checking to see if anyone had survived. They stepped on me but I pretended to be dead, then they left. I dragged myself out of the classroom to check if the soldiers were around so they could help take us to the hospital. I didn’t see any soldiers around. I checked around and even went to the bush to see if they were lying there but I didn’t see anyone. I then went to an uncompleted building and that was

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64 Interview with Amnesty International at Tashan Uda village, Mayo-Belwa LGA, 21 September 2018

65 Interview with Amnesty International at Tashan Uda village, Mayo-Belwa LGA, 21 September 2018

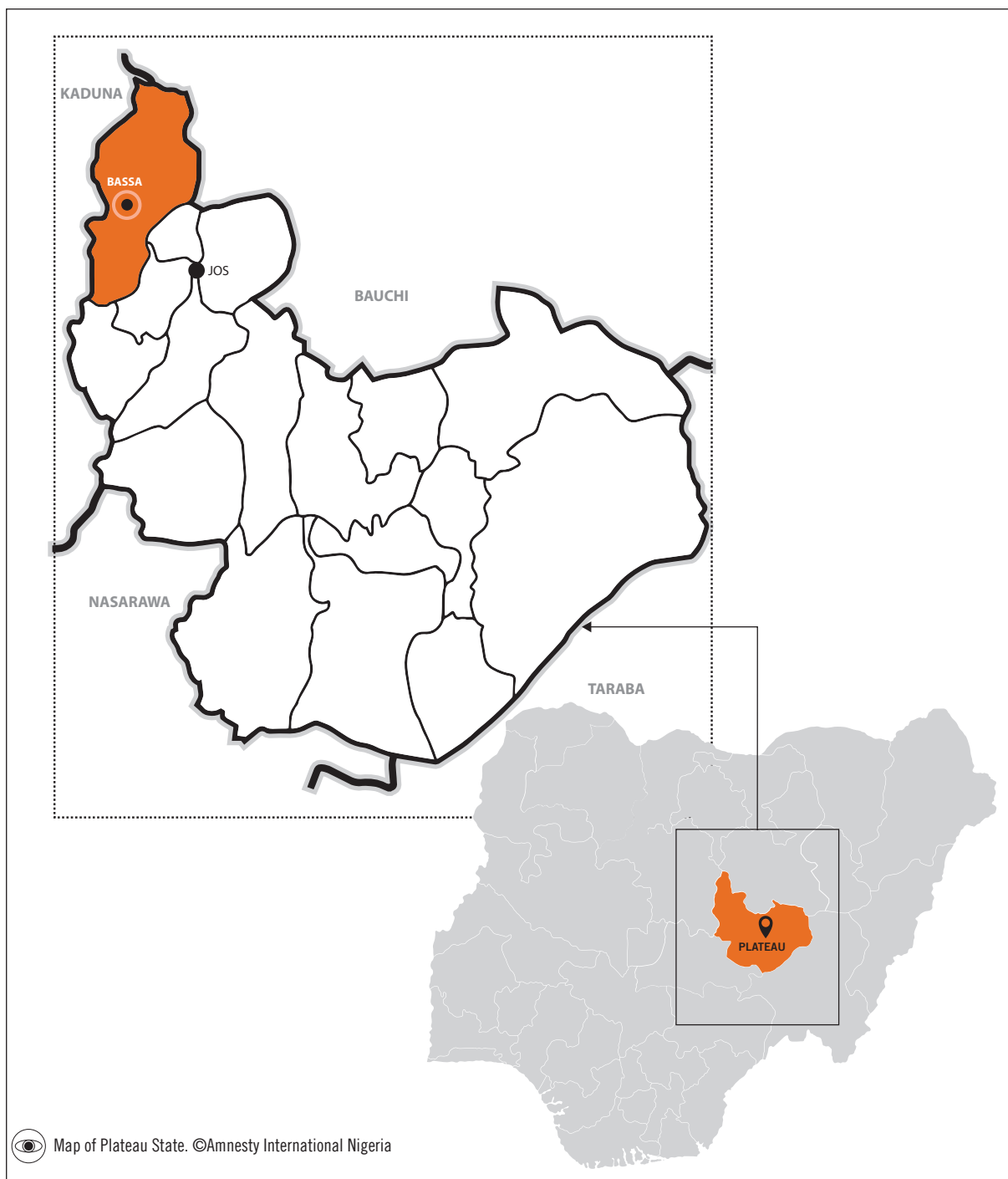
66 Premium Times, Many feared killed as gunmen attack Adamawa communities, 14 July 2018 (accessed on 30 November 2018) <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/276281-many-feared-killed-as-gunmen-attack-adamawa-communities.html>

67 Amnesty International has contacts, who notified it as attacks happened. The organization also monitored the media for more information and confirmation Punch newspaper, Despite curfew, suspected Fulani herdsmen kill 27 in Fresh Plateau attack, 17 October 2017 (accessed on 30 November 2018) <https://punchng.com/fulani-herdsmen-defy-curfew-kill-27-in-plateau-attack/>

Daily Trust newspaper, 35 killed in fresh Plateau attacks, 17 October 2017 (accessed on 30 November 30, 2018) <https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/35-feared-killed-in-fresh-plateau-attacks.html>

68 Punch newspaper, Despite curfew, suspected Fulani herdsmen kill 27 in Fresh Plateau attack, 17 October 2017 (accessed on 30 November 2018) <https://punchng.com/fulani-herdsmen-defy-curfew-kill-27-in-plateau-attack/>

69 The military taskforce set up to address the security challenges in Plateau State and headed by a very senior army officer of the rank of Major General



where I found some villagers hiding,”<sup>70</sup> one of the survivors told Amnesty International.

A 31-year-old resident of Nkiedowro village who, escaped from the classroom, said he managed to jump out of the window just as the gunmen entered the classroom.

“As I was opening the window, the Fulani gunmen had already opened the door to the classroom and they were looking at us. That was when I jumped out of the window and I landed on my back, which made me pass out. One of the Fulani tapped me and when I regained consciousness, he told me to try to run away. So I stood up and ran to look for a place to hide,”<sup>71</sup> he explained.

A 20-year-old boy said he was serving punishment imposed on him by soldiers and had been forced to

70 Phone Interview with Amnesty International, May 2018

71 Phone Interview with Amnesty International, May 2018

lie on the ground within the school compound, when the attacks happened, because he had refused to enter the classroom with other villagers, as instructed by the soldier.<sup>72</sup> From where he lay on the ground, he was able to see the armed suspected Fulani men entering into the school.

“The Fulani gunmen came into the school and saw me lying on the ground from afar, so they started shooting at me, but I was already rolling on the ground trying to escape. I was able to escape without any bullets hitting me and hid in an uncompleted building. From the building, I could see the school. The gunmen opened the classroom where my mother and other villagers were hiding. They (Fulani) divided themselves, some went to stand by the door while others went to the window and they started to shoot at the people in the classroom. My mother was killed.”<sup>73</sup>

#### **4.9 TWO PRIESTS AMONG 16 VILLAGERS KILLED IN BENUE COMMUNITY**

On 24 April 2018, residents in Mbalom Village in Gwer East LGA woke up at about 6am to the sound of gunshots, when armed suspected Fulani men attacked the village, leaving at least 16 people dead, including two priests. While some were preparing to head to the village Catholic Church for early morning mass, some were already at the church.

A 25-year-old student of the state College of Education told Amnesty International that he had just come home for the holiday when the attack happened. He said:

“My house was close to the church and I was on my way, on a motorcycle, to the church, close to the railway side, when I saw six of the attackers, all young men. Some of them wore bandanas on their heads. Some had on military clothes. They spoke the Hausa language. When they saw me they started shooting at me, but I was able to run into the bush to hide. After about one hour of hiding in the bush, I came out and discovered they had killed many people. They had entered people’s houses and taken away money, clothes and phones. They had even entered into my room and taken my phone and the money I kept as school fees, N47, 000 (\$129). They burnt about five motor-bikes and had also burnt our shop. We sell provisions, alcohol.”<sup>74</sup>

An official of the church told Amnesty International that while service was on, the attackers appeared from the bush and started shooting at people, targeting only men.

“The attackers came at around 6am. There were about 20 people in the morning church service. The attackers, all Fulani, appeared from the bush and started shooting. They targeted only the men. I was also at the morning church service. Everyone started to run away, but the Fulani gunmen kept on pursuing us. They were pursuing only the men.

“They were speaking Hausa. They were not masked. The blood of the Reverend Father is still there. Father Joseph was coming out of his house when he was shot in front of his house. Some boys tried to take him to safety but he died minutes later. Father Felix was killed near the market square as he was trying to escape with other worshipers,”<sup>75</sup> he told Amnesty International.

Eye witnesses told Amnesty International that the police arrived at the village around 12pm, two hours after the attackers had left the village.

#### **4.10 AT LEAST 80 PEOPLE KILLED IN BENUE STATE**

In Guma and Logo local government areas of Benue State, villagers woke up to begin 2018 under attack by suspected Fulani gunmen, who arrived in the early hours of 1 January. The attack, which went on for

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72 Security agents, especially soldiers, are known to employ different types of punishments against civilians they feel have offended them, and lying on the ground is one of such. Amnesty International has documented several cases where soldiers employed different tactics that amounted to torture as punishment

Amnesty International, Nigeria: You have signed your death warrant: Torture and other ill-treatment in the special anti-robbery squad (SARS), 2016

Amnesty international, Welcome to hell fire: Torture and other ill-treatment in Nigeria, 2014

73 Phone interview with Amnesty international, May 2018

74 Interview with Amnesty International in Mbalom Village, Gwer East LGA, Benue State, 5 July 2018

75 Interview with Amnesty International at Mbalom Village, Gwer East LGA, Benue state, 5 July 2018

11 days, resulted in at least 80 deaths, although the state government was only able to bury 73 bodies.<sup>76</sup>

An eye witness from Takorodi, one of the affected villages, told Amnesty International a day after the mass burial by the Benue State government in Makurdi, the state capital,<sup>77</sup> on 11 January 2018: “Up to 120 people [were] dead, some are farmers in the bush, but we have not recovered them. It was through the effort of the Benue State government and security agents that 73 bodies were recovered and buried yesterday. More corpses are still out there, while some have been buried already in the villages, because they decayed and there was no way to move them. The attacks were launched more than eight times within the period of 1 January and yesterday (11 January).”

Another witness, also from Takorodi Village in Logo LGA, told Amnesty that his village was attacked twice, on 5 and 8 January, leaving 30 people dead. According to him, the villagers buried 15 of the bodies in the village on 8 January 2018, soon after the attackers left.<sup>78</sup>



 A female victim of Fulani gunmen attacks on villages in Guma and Logo LGAs of Benue from 1 - 9 January 2018. ©Amnesty International Nigeria

<sup>76</sup> Premium Times, Benue killings: Signpost blaming ‘Fulani herdsmen’ for 73 deaths causes stir, 12 March 2018 (accessed on 1 December 1, 2018) <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/north-central/261507-benue-killings-signpost-blaming-fulani-herdsmen-73-deaths-causes-stir.html>

<sup>77</sup> Sahara Reporters, Benue state buries 73 killed by Fulani herdsmen, 11 January 2018 (accessed on 1 December 2018) <http://saharareporters.com/2018/01/11/benue-state-buries-73-killed-fulani-herdsmen-0>

<sup>78</sup> Phone Interview with Amnesty International on 12 January 2018

A school principal, who said he lost eight relatives during the same attack in Guma, explained that he had to send students home when news of the attack in other villages filtered in.

“On 1 January 2018, the Fulani invaded the first village in Guma called Tokora, where they killed some people, and burnt down houses and some foodstuff. On the second day, they proceeded to Tsekenyi Village and did the same thing. Before we realised, it had escalated to Yogbo settlement in Guma local government area. We got the news of the attack at around 10am. So, I dispatched the students to their homes and I ran to Makurdi.”

#### 4.11 26 PEOPLE KILLED IN A VILLAGE IN ZAMFARA IN BROAD DAYLIGHT

Amnesty International’s research indicates that Zamfara State is one of the worst affected states in Nigeria, by the attacks and counter-attacks by armed members of herder and farmer communities. All but one local government<sup>79</sup> have witnessed one or more cases of kidnapping or attacks on villages in the past. Between 7 and 12 July 2018, when Amnesty International visited the state, researchers observed that people were living on edge and in constant fear of attack. Amnesty International researchers were unable to visit certain villages because of credible risk of encountering violent attacks.<sup>80</sup>

Days before Amnesty International researchers visited the state, on or around 4 June 2018, gunmen on motorcycles attacked Jarkuka Village in Anka local government area of Zamfara State at around 1pm, killing 26 people.<sup>81</sup>

“The attacks were carried out by armed Fulani men. Some of them had earrings with braids. Some were Fulani from the state and they were different from those with earrings and braids. They did not say anything to us. They also avoided calling each other by names, only using the word ‘Sajo’ for everybody. They arrived on motorcycles and there were about 100 motorcycles, each with three passengers, one driving and two shooting. They wore black attire under black coats or jackets. Some wore masks and some had turbans on. Some wore camouflage uniforms but not the type worn by Nigerian soldiers. The camouflages looked foreign.

“We thought they had left so we went to retrieve the corpses, not knowing that they were in the bush hiding. While we were trying to retrieve the corpses, they came out and opened fire, so we had to run. The village head called soldiers, but they were not close. They were in another village. They only came to our village the next day at around 9am and followed us to retrieve the corpses. We buried them in two mass graves,”<sup>82</sup> a 35-year-old former resident of Jarkuka Village told Amnesty International when researchers met him in Bagega Village,<sup>83</sup> where he and other residents of Jarkuka fled to and are living as displaced persons.

A week after this attack, around 11 June, four people were killed on their farms allegedly for disobeying an order given by the gunmen that no one should go to farm.<sup>84</sup> Following this, another person, a male, was killed in his farm on 14 June, a day before Eid-el Fitr.<sup>85</sup>

Another villager, a 20-year-old, said: “They said people should stop farming. So, if they saw people in the farm, they killed them for disobeying their order. One of the victims, who they thought had died, came back to the village to tell us what happened to him and what they had said about disobeying their order. The last person [among the four killed after the initial 26] was killed on Thursday, a day before Eid-el Fitr and that was why we ran from the village. They had sent a message that they would attack the village on Eid-el Fitr.”<sup>86</sup>

79 According to sources in Zamfara State, only Gummi LGA has not had any incident of attack or kidnapping and no reason is known why this is so

80 Amnesty International press release, Nigeria: Thousands live in fear as Zamfara armed bandits ramp up attacks, 31 July 2018, available at, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/07/nigeria-thousands-living-in-fear-as-zamfara-armed-bandits-ramp-up-attacks/>

81 Interview with Amnesty International in Bagega, Anka LGA, 11 July 2018

82 Interview with Amnesty International in Bagega, Anka LGA, 11 July 2018

83 Bagega is in Anka LGA of Zamfara State

84 Interview with Amnesty International in Bagega, Anka LGA, Zamfara State, 11 July 2018. Rumours or hearsays are the commonest ways of getting information by villagers that their communities will be attacked. Usually, from Amnesty International’s findings, there is no formal notification that a village will be attacked but Amnesty International’s research revealed that most times, these rumours are valid because the attacks eventually do happen

85 Eid-el Fitr marks the end of Ramadan, a month of fasting and prayer for Muslims

86 Interview with Amnesty International in Bagega, Anka LGA, 11 July 2018



## 4.12 22 PEOPLE KILLED IN ZAMFARA VILLAGE FOR GOING TO RETRIEVE CORPSES OF FIVE FARMERS KILLED EARLIER

Gidan Goga district<sup>87</sup> and its surrounding villages in Maradun local government area is one of the areas found susceptible to repeated violent attacks in Zamfara state because of its proximity to a forest and its difficult terrain for vehicular movement. With several villages situated on the edge of the forest, where the attackers are believed to be hiding, and a river that further separates the district, it is often difficult for help to reach villagers when they are under attack.


Residents of villages in the area told Amnesty International that there are seven policemen stationed in Gidan Goga but they are not able to prevent attacks or go after attackers because of the terrain and the lack of logistics.<sup>88</sup>

On 24 May, five farmers were killed by gunmen on their farm in Malikawa Village under Gidan Goga district.<sup>89</sup> At about noon on the same day, a group of men from Gidan Goga went to retrieve the corpses but when they arrived Malikawa, the attackers, who appeared to be waiting for them, opened fire and killed 22 and wounded three.<sup>90</sup>

One of the injured men, a 50-year-old who was among those who went to retrieve the corpses of the five farmers killed earlier, told Amnesty that they did not know the gunmen were still around when they decided to go. He said:

“We got to the farm where five people were killed that morning, to retrieve their corpses. We thought the gunmen had left, but they were hiding in the bush. Suddenly, we heard gunshots from different angles



 A local official in Birane Village in Zamfara, where gunmen killed 41 people on 15 February 2018. ©Amnesty International Nigeria

87 Gidan Goga is both a district and a village in Zamfara state

88 Interview with Amnesty International at Gidan Goga Village in Zamfara State, 10 July 2018

89 Today.ng, Gunmen 'kill 30' in fresh Zamfara attack, 27 May 2018, available at, <https://www.today.ng/news/nigeria/gunmen-kill-30-fresh-zamfara-attack-117490>

90 Amnesty International visited Gidan Goga district in Zamfara state on 10 July 2018 and spoke with residents, including victims and local officials Sahara Reporters, Breaking: Five days after sacking seven villages, 'heavily armed bandits' raid Zamfara again, 17 July 2018, available at, <http://saharareporters.com/2018/07/17/breaking-five-days-after-sacking-seven-villages-'heavily-armed-bandits'-raid-zamfara>

and we started running. I was hit by a bullet in the leg. The next thing I knew was that I woke up in the hospital. I didn't even know how long I had been there."<sup>91</sup>

Amnesty International saw the man with the gunshot wound, which seemed to be infected, as the atmosphere was filled with a foul smell from the wound. He could not speak for long because of the pain. A local official told Amnesty International researchers that the policemen did not help villagers. "On the day of the attack, the policemen were here but did not follow the people that went to retrieve the earlier corpses. They also did not go there when news came that about what was happening," he said.

He explained further how difficult it was living in Gidan Goga.

"We cannot go to farm far from our village. Two weeks ago [around 27 June], I got a call from one of the bandits, saying they were the owners of the forest. He asked me to tell the village head to tell all villagers close to the forest to vacate the villages and come here to Gidan Goga. He said the only way they would allow the villagers to continue to stay there was if they paid them N5m [\$14,000]. [Around the same time in June] they came to Gidan Goga on their motorcycles and killed one person and abducted another. I called the Divisional Police Officer [DPO] and the LGA chairman and told them. They promised to send soldiers, but we are yet to see any. Before Ramadan [in May], the gunmen called from the same number they had called me from two weeks earlier and said that if we didn't pay them N500, 000 [\$1,400], they would come and kidnap me or the village head.

"Four months ago [around March 2018], they came here and abducted three people – two men and a woman. The families paid N3m [\$8,221]. One person from here was killed the day the abduction took place. They also took people's properties, like women's suitcases and anything valuable they could lay hands on."<sup>92</sup> Amnesty International could not independently verify this claim.

Three days after Amnesty International visited Gidan Goga district, gunmen attacked seven villages<sup>93</sup> in the district on 13 July 2018. In one of the villages, Rini, the gunmen abducted five villagers, two men and two women, with one of the women carrying a little baby on her back.<sup>94</sup>

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91 Interview with Amnesty International in Gidan Goga district, Zamfara State, 10 July 2018

92 Interview with Amnesty International in Gidan Goga in Zamfara stae, 10 July 2018

93 The villages attacked are Ajekwari, Asarara, Tunga Miya, Tunga Kuwa, Rini, Taheta, and Gidan Bala

94 Amnesty International received a call from officials from Gidan Goga district around 9pm on July 14 2018 saying villagers from the seven villages attacked were relocating to the district out of fear following the attacks the previous day, 13 July. Amnesty International then called the Zamfara State Commissioner of Police, who said he was hearing about the attack for the first time, and also sent him the details of the information received. Amnesty International called the Divisional Police Officer of Maradun LGA, which is in charge of the affected areas, and he said the police had a team of mobile policemen stationed at the district but that he had not been informed about the attack. Amnesty International also sent him the details of the information it received from Gidan Goga

## 5. WEAPONS ANALYSIS



👁️ Bullet casing found in Bang, Bolki, Gon and Nzumosu Villages of Adamawa State after attacks by Fulani gunmen on 2 May 2018. ©Amnesty International Nigeria



👁️ Bullet holes on a roof in Nzumosu Village in Adamawa State following attack by Fulani gunmen on 2 May 2018. ©Amnesty International Nigeria



👁️ A 3738mm teargas (CS) cartridge found in Bolki village. This teargas is usually fired from a specialty police tear-gas launcher. ©Amnesty International Nigeria

“Majority of the attackers had AK-47s, while some had G3s, machetes, locally made guns, rocket launchers,”<sup>95</sup> a 35-year-old official from Bolki Village, which was attacked by suspected Fulani gunmen on 2 May 2018, with nine people killed,<sup>96</sup> told Amnesty International.

Findings by Amnesty International show that Fulani gunmen have access to military-grade weapons. In all communities, members of farmer communities kept mentioning seeing different types of rifles, including machine guns, Mark 4 and AK-type rifles.

Amnesty International saw and took photographs of different sizes of ammunition casing in Adamawa and Kaduna states, while sources sent photographs from Plateau State, after the 24 June attacks that left at

95 Interview with Amnesty International at Bolki Village, Numan LGA of Adamawa State, 6 May 2018

96 Amnesty International visited the village, spoke with officials, residents and victims' families

least 200 villagers dead in eight villages of Barkin Ladi LGA.<sup>97</sup>

Amnesty International weapons and military expert analyzed the casing and came up with the results listed in the table below. Amnesty International also found in Bolki Village, after the attack, a 37/38mm teargas (CS) cartridge that is usually fired from a specialty police tear-gas launcher.

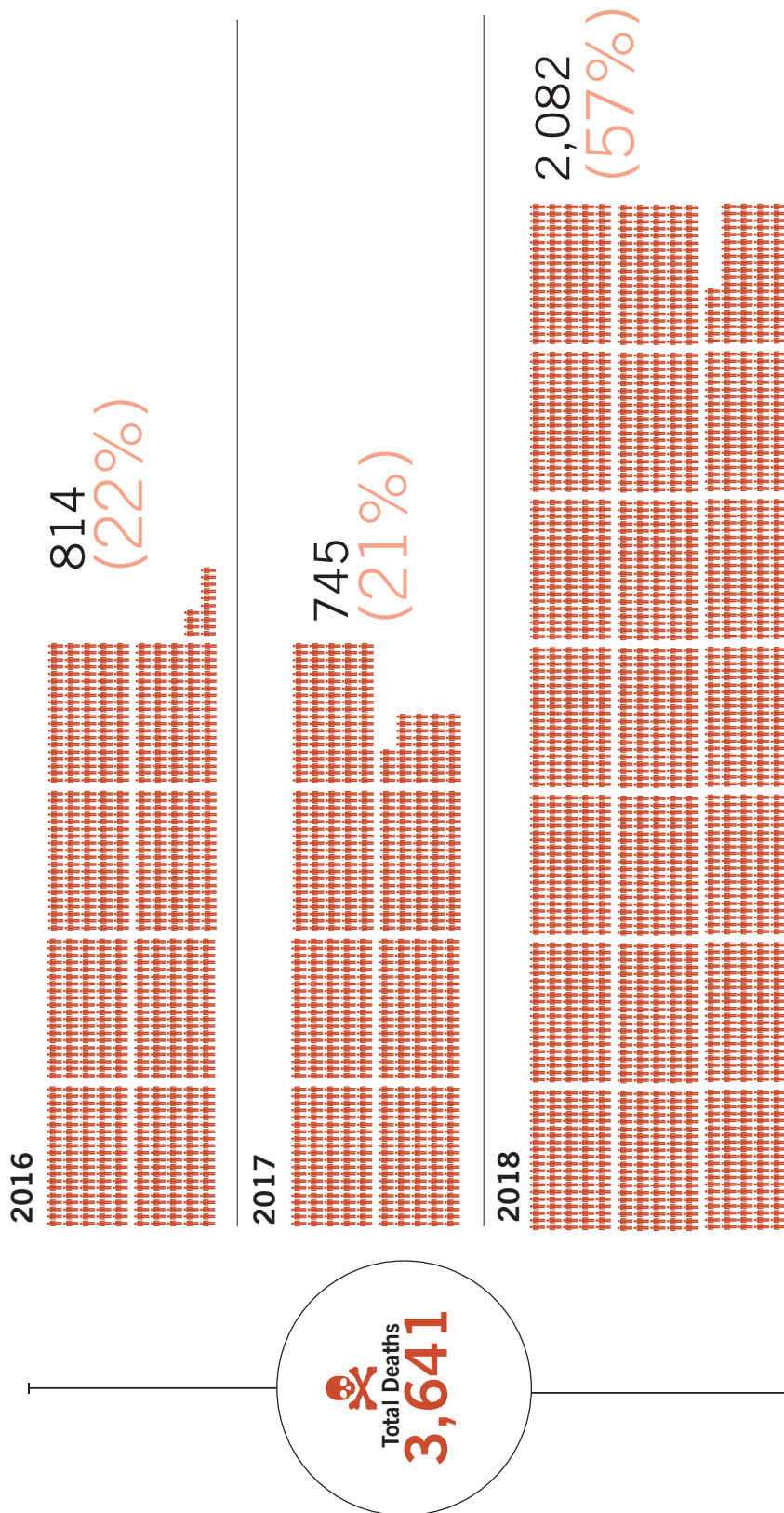
According to the analysis, the Fulani gunmen were likely armed with machine guns like the PKM, or G3 and AK-type rifles. Four different examples of the standard round for AK-type rifles, all Chinese, were also manufactured between 2008 and 2013.

## 5.1 MAKERS AND MANUFACTURING DATES OF AMMUNITION CASING FOUND IN THE FIELD

Shell number	Manufacturer	Year	Size	Weapon using the ammo	Village found
811-83	Chinese, People's Liberation Army Factory 811	1983	7.62x39mm	AK	Kanikon in Kaduna State, Barkin Ladi in Plateau State and Gon in Adamawa State
811-12	Chinese, People's Liberation Army Factory 811	1983	7.62x51mm	G3/FN FAL round	Gon in Adamawa State
10-99	Bulgarian, Arsenal JSo	1999	7.62x39mm	AK	Kanikon in Kaduna State, Barkin Ladi in Plateau State and Gon in Adamawa State
BPZ	Russian, Barnaul	less than 20 years ago	7.62x39mm	AK	Kanikon in Kaduna State, Barkin Ladi in Plateau State and Gon in Adamawa State
811-08	Chinese, People's Liberation Army Factory 811	2008	7.62x39mm	AK	Barkin Ladi in Plateau State
811-09	Chinese, People's Liberation Army Factory 811	2009	7.62x39mm	AK	Kanikon in Kaduna State, Barkin Ladi in Plateau State and Gon in Adamawa State
10-98	Bulgarian, Arsenal JSo	1998	7.62x39mm	AK	Kanikon in Kaduna State, Barkin Ladi in Plateau State and Gon in Adamawa State
811-13	Chinese, People's Liberation Army Factory 811	2013	7.62x39mm	AK	Kanikon in Kaduna State, Barkin Ladi in Plateau State and Gon in Adamawa State
RG	Royal Ordnance Factory, Radway Green, British	1956	7mm		Nzumosu and Gon in Adamawa State
AF	Small Arms Ammunition Factory No. 1 Footscray, Australia	1987	7.62mm		Gon and Nzumosu in Adamawa State
FN	Fabrique Nationale d'Armes de Guerre – Belgium	Unknown			Barkin Ladi in Plateau State
31	Chinese, People's Liberation Army Factory 31	1970	7.62x39mm	AK	Kanikon in Kaduna State, Barkin Ladi in Plateau State and Gon in Adamawa State

<sup>97</sup> Amnesty International received list of those killed in eight villages – Nghar, Ghana Ropp, Ruku, Gindi Akwati, Barkin Ladi, Kaikaiyi, Shonong, and Nyer – under Barkin Ladi LGA showing that more than 200 people were killed in the attacks

61	Chinese, People's Liberation Army Factory 61	1970	7.62x39mm	AK	Kanikon in Kaduna State, Barkin Ladi in Plateau State and Gon in Adamawa State
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Total death toll between January 2016 and October 2018.

## 6. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

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***“I want the government to live up to its responsibilities. If anyone commits a crime, they should be arrested and dealt with. But when people see, think and feel they can get away with crime, it does not only embolden them to do more but encourages others as well. I want peace,”<sup>98</sup>***

**a Fulani local official in Adamawa in an interview with Amnesty International**

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In April, President Muhammadu Buhari, while speaking with the Archbishop of Canterbury in London, attributed the “farmers-herders” clashes to an influx of arms and gunmen from Libya, following its former leader’s demise:

“The problem is even older than us. It has always been there, but now made worse by the influx of armed gunmen from the Sahel region into different parts of the West African sub-region. These gunmen were trained and armed by Muammar Gaddafi of Libya. When he was killed, the gunmen escaped with their arms. We encountered some of them fighting with Boko Haram. Herdsmen that we used to know carried only sticks and maybe a cutlass to clear the way, but these ones now carry sophisticated weapons. The problem is not religious, but sociological and economic. But we are working on solutions”<sup>99</sup>

While several studies indicate the direct impact of the crisis in Libya on the overall security crisis in the Sahel region, Amnesty International has not come across any evidence, apart from the sophisticated weapons used by attackers, that supports the President’s claim of an influx or direct involvement of foreign armed forces in the attacks and reprisals against farmer and herder communities in parts of Nigeria, especially in parts of the northeast and northcentral regions. But Amnesty International’s research confirms the socio-economic drivers behind the clashes, as acknowledged by the President, and, equally importantly, several areas of failures in government response, including in addressing impunity, inadequate relief and rehabilitation support as well as serious failures in security forces response to attacks on residents.

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98 Interview with Amnesty International in Yola, Adamawa State, 7 May 2018

99 Premium Times, Buhari speaks on 2019 bid; farmers, herders clashes, 11 April 2018, available at, <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/264695-buhari-speaks-on-2019-bid-farmers-herders-clashes.html>

## **Addressing socio-economic drivers of the clashes**

In February 2018, the federal government announced the setting up of a committee, headed by the Vice President tasked with visiting all communities affected by the crisis, so that the government would have a better understanding of how “to ameliorate the suffering of the people in those areas and to resettle them.”<sup>100</sup>

Prior to this, there was an announcement at the end of January on the setting up of another committee by the National Economic Council (NEC), also chaired by the Vice President. The NEC is headed by the Vice President, Yemi Osinbajo, and has as its members the 36 state governors and the governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria.<sup>101</sup> This committee further set up a sub-committee headed by the governor of Ebonyi State<sup>102</sup>, David Umahi, to look at the root causes of the clashes between farmers and herders.<sup>103</sup>

The main plan by government in relation to permanently addressing the farmers-herders clash, including the socio-economic drivers of the crisis, is the “National Livestock Transformation Plan” (NLTP), announced by the National Economic Council on 19 June 2018.<sup>104</sup> The NLTP is a broad and long term plan that seeks to solve the herders-farmers crisis as well as develop the livestock sector over a 10-year period.

The plan, a summary of which was seen by Amnesty International, rests on six pillars: economic investment, conflict resolution, law and order, humanitarian relief, information, education and strategic communication and crosscutting issues. The 10-year plan is expected to cost at least N179 billion (\$496 million), with both the federal and state governments funding the first three years of its budget at a cost of N70 billion (\$194 million).<sup>105</sup>

**“The Economic Investment Pillar** will support and strengthen the development of market-driven ranches in 7 pilot states for improved livestock productivity through breed (genetic) improvement and pasture production, in addition to efficient land and water productivity.

The ranch is also designed as an integrated business which makes provision for (a) the development of commercial crop production to support livestock through the supply of quality fodder and other feed materials, (b) the formation of producers into clusters to create viable ranch herd sizes, and (c) creation of cooperatives to facilitate improved access to inputs, infrastructure, finance, markets, and support services.

**The Conflict Resolution Pillar** will support rebuilding social capital at the community level to promote mutual trust, confidence and consolidating the peace process. This focuses on capacity building of community leaders in peace building, conflict resolution and management, supporting the process of disarmament and rehabilitation of militias, disbanding and rehabilitating vigilante groups, supporting the institutionalisation and functionality of dialogue and conflict resolution mechanisms, and promote social cohesion.

**The Law and Order Pillar** supports the strengthening of legal frameworks for improving livestock production – peace and harmony. It will support community-based production protection system, support the strengthening of justice system (formal and informal), livestock movement control and governance among others.

**The Humanitarian Relief Pillar** focuses on rebuilding and reconstruction of common facilities – worship places, markets and individual homes that have been destroyed. It will also support the rehabilitation,

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100 Premium Times, Farmers/Herders clashes: Buhari sets up committee to visit attacked communities, , 15 February 2018, available at, <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/more-news/258788-farmers-herders-clashes-buhari-sets-committee-visit-attacked-communities.html>

101 The National Economic Council was created by the 1999 Constitution and is headed by the Vice President of the country. Its mandate is essentially to advise the President concerning the economic affairs of the country.

102 Ebonyi is one of the five states in southeast Nigeria

103 Osinbajo, governors meet over herders, farmers crisis, Premium Times, 1 February 2018 (accessed on 28 October 2018), <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/257352-osinbajo-governors-meet-herders-farmers-crisis.html>

104 Premium Times, Nigerian government outlines plans to permanently solve farmers-herders crisis, 19 June 2018 (accessed on 2 December 2018) <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/272948-nigerian-govt-outlines-plan-to-permanently-solve-farmers-herders-crisis.html>

105 Amnesty International has in its file a copy of the plan downloaded from the website of Premium Times newspaper, which was present during the presentation

reconstruction, resettlement and compensation of the displaced persons affected by the farmer-herder conflict in the seven-targeted pilot states. In addition, it will provide input and land for crop farmers for those that had been displaced. Benue and Nasarawa are in advanced stages in this.

**The Information, Education and Strategic Communication Pillar** provides information, education and strategic communication on the development of grazing reserves in the frontline states, and mitigate the consequences of herders and farmers conflicts such as un-wanton loss of lives, destruction of properties including schools and facilities.

**The Crosscutting Issues Pillar** identifies various crosscutting issues necessary to realise the objectives of this programme. These include Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E) and research contribute to building the evidence base in programme implementation; as well as Gender Mainstreaming.”

According to the NLTP, government expects that in year one of implementation, among other things, 50 per cent of displaced farmers will be enabled to farm in safe and secure locations, and 50 per cent of destroyed facilities, including people’s homes, will be rebuilt. The Plan, however, does not say when implementation is expected to begin.

Ten states have been marked to pilot the implementation – Adamawa, Benue, Ebonyi, Edo, Kaduna, Nasarawa, Oyo, Plateau, Taraba and Zamfara. Amnesty International could not verify if any of the projects had started or if any of the amounts in the plan had been released.

Amnesty International wrote to the Minister of Justice requesting information about details of the National Livestock Transformation Plan, including actions and steps taken by government to implement the plan. At the time of writing this report, Amnesty International had not gotten a response from the minister.

When Amnesty International visited five of the states during its field missions, the only physical sign of any plan was a borehole provided in a fenced area close to the Gongoshi Grazing Reserve in Mayo-Belwa local government area of Adamawa State. A signpost read: Provision of irrigation facilities pasture plot in Adamawa State.

Amnesty International is also aware of some measures taken by some state governments to address the farmers-herders crisis. Abia,<sup>106</sup> Benue,<sup>107</sup> Ekiti,<sup>108</sup> and Taraba states all passed anti-open grazing bills as a way of preventing the reoccurring clashes. While the law has taken effect in Benue, Ekiti and Taraba states, it is yet to in Abia State as the state governor has not signed the Control of Nomadic Cattle Rearing and Prohibition of Grazing Routes/Reserve Bill 2016.<sup>109</sup>

In Taraba State, despite the Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law’s coming into force in January 2018<sup>110</sup>, little appears to have been done to curb clashes between members of farmers and herders communities in the state.<sup>111</sup> A similar situation exists in its neighbouring state, Benue, where attacks have continued,<sup>112</sup> in spite of the commencement of the Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law on 1 November 2017.<sup>113</sup>

In its response to Amnesty International, the Enugu State government said that following the 25 April 2016 attack in Nimbo Village in Uzo-Uwani LGA of the state that resulted in the death of at least 12 villagers,<sup>114</sup> it inaugurated the Enugu State Security and Peace Committee on 6 September 2016, headed by a retired army general, to forestall future attacks. According to the government’s response, the

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106 The bill is known as the Control of Nomadic Cattle Rearing and Prohibition of Grazing Routes/Reserve Bill 2016 and was passed into law in June 2018

107 The law is known as Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law 2017 came into effect on 1 November 2017

108 The law in Ekiti State is known as the Prohibition of Cattle and Other Ruminants Grazing in Ekiti, 2016

109 ThisDay, Abia house passes anti-grazing bill to curb herdsman menace, 7 June 2018 (accessed on 2 December 2018) <https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2018/06/07/abia-house-passes-anti-grazing-bill-to-curb-herdsman-menace-2/>

110 Daily Nigeria, It’s official: Taraba anti-open grazing law takes effect today, 24 January 2018 (accessed on 2 December 2018) <https://dailynigeria.com/taraba-anti-open-grazing-law-takes-effect-today/>

111 Amnesty International has documented 207 deaths in Taraba State in 2018 (139 occurred after the Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law [came into effect on 24 January](#)) through field trips, phone interviews and media reports. There were 61 and 185 deaths in 2016 and 2017 respectively in the state.

112 In 2018 alone, Amnesty International documented 337 deaths, compared to 299 and 90 in 2016 and 2017 respectively

113 Premium Times, As anti-open grazing law takes off in Benue, governor, residents raise fear of violence, 30 October 2017 (accessed on 2 December 2018) <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/north-central/247753-anti-open-grazing-law-takes-off-benue-governor-residents-raise-fears-violence.html>

114 Enugu State government’s response to Amnesty International’s Freedom of Information request, 12 November 2018



Committee is mandated to:<sup>115</sup>

Ensure that grazing and rearing of cattle at night is banned in the state;  
Enforce the ban on possession of firearms or any form of ammunition by herders in the state;  
Implement a ban on movement of cattle from one location to another at night by herders in the state;  
Ensure that compensation is paid by herders whose cattle destroy farm crops and also for communities to pay for cattle killed by villagers;  
Ensure that violators of the regulation face the full wrath of the law  
Take appropriate security measures, which, in the opinion of the Committee, will bring about lasting peace and harmony among various communities and herders in the state

## 6.1 IMPUNITY GAP

Beyond issuing statements condemning attacks after they happen, not enough is being done by the federal and state governments to rein in attackers and bring those reasonably suspected of involvement in crimes to justice. Despite calls<sup>116</sup> to address the widespread cycle of impunity, only a few measures have been taken to bring perpetrators to account.

Several victims told Amnesty International that they recognised some of their attackers.<sup>117</sup> Communities have also sent reports to authorities and in some cases provided information about attacks.<sup>118</sup> But in many cases, no arrests were made.

Some local and state officials have also confirmed this failure to Amnesty international. For instance, the Attorney-General of Taraba State, attributes the difficulty of prosecuting perpetrators to the failure of security forces to make arrests.

He said: “The Governor [Taraba State governor] is the chief security officer of the state, but he does not have control over the security forces. He gives orders, but they say they have orders from above. There are security forces at flashpoints, but attacks still happen and you wonder if the security forces are here to protect villagers or aid attackers. Without arrest, there cannot be prosecution.”<sup>119</sup>

A local Fulani official also confirmed the failure to address the impunity gap to Amnesty International and expressed his view that the lack of arrests after the Shelewol attack on November 20 2017<sup>120</sup> angered the Fulani and this led to the 4 December 2017 retaliatory attacks on at least seven Numan and Demsa villages in the state.

“No arrest was made, none that I am aware of. If arrests were made, there would have been no reprisals” he told Amnesty International.<sup>121</sup>

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115 Enugu State government’s response to Amnesty International’s Freedom of Information request, 12 November 2018

116 Nigerian government encouraging killers – Amnesty International, Premium Times, 28 June 2018 (accessed on 28 October 2018), <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/274157-nigerian-government-encouraging-killers-amnesty-international.html>

117 In Godogodo Village in Kaduna State, a 16-year-old boy told Amnesty International he recognised one of the Fulani gunmen that shot him and that the shooter was his friend. In Mambilla in Taraba State, victims told Amnesty International that they recognised members of the farmer communities that attacked them and they gave the names to security agents, which led to the arrest of some of them by the police. However, the state government advised the police to release them and the Attorney-General of the state confirmed to Amnesty International that he signed the letter advising the police to release them.

118 In a letter sent to Amnesty International on 11 May 2018, the Birnin Gwari Vanguard for Security and Good Governance complained about what it called “Government inaction” regarding the killings going on in Birnin Gwari LGA. In the letter, the group said the police were informed three weeks before an early morning attack on villagers on 14 October 2012, which left 23 residents of Dogon Dawa Village dead. Similarly, the group said three days before gunmen attacked nine residents of Maganda and 11 soldiers in Doka villages, all in the LGA, it sent a message to one of the aides to the Kaduna State governor informing him of the threats received by villagers and the sighting of strange people carrying guns in villages within the LGA. Amnesty International also received a copy of a letter sent by the Njjiya-Goron in Girei LGA of Adamawa State to the Commissioner of Police and copied to the Director of State Security Services and Commander of 23 Brigade, all in Adamawa State. The letter called for investigation into security threats in the communities that make up the Njjiya-Goron tribe, arrest of three suspects named in the letter and the deployment of policemen until the end of the 2016 farming season.

119 Interview with Amnesty International in Jalingo, Taraba State, 4 May 2018

120 See page 22: 80 Fulani, including three-day old child, killed in Numan village

121 The official blamed security forces for not doing enough to end the crisis

## ENUGU STATE PROSECUTES FIVE

Following an attack by suspected Fulani gunmen on Nimbo community in Uzo-Uwani local government area of Enugu State on 25 April 2016, the state government set up a judicial commission of enquiry to investigate the attack on 12 May 2016.<sup>122</sup> But to date there is no publicly known information about its findings.

According to the state Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, M.E. Eze, the commission has submitted its report to the state government, but it cannot be made public “until the issuance of white paper accepting or rejecting same (report).”<sup>123</sup>

The state government, however, informed Amnesty International that five persons are being prosecuted in connection with the attack while others were still at large. The five persons undergoing prosecution are accused of murder and were arrested in Kogi State, a neighbouring state.

According to the charge sheet seen by Amnesty International, the five suspects were charged for the murder of 12 villagers on 25 April 2016.

Enugu State is the only state where Amnesty International received any response to its request for information regarding steps taken by relevant authorities to address the farmers-herders crisis at the time of writing this report.

While Enugu State appears to be an example of action being taken, this action is unsatisfactory and demonstrates the delay and limited effort to hold perpetrators to account. The fact that the report of the judicial commission of enquiry is yet to be published after two years; the fact that only five people are so far being prosecuted and the fact that two years on there has been no conviction all support the impunity fuelling the crisis.

## 6.2 LACK OF ADEQUATE RELIEF, REHABILITATION AND HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION

Another failure of the government has been in the area of compensation and resettlement of displaced people. In addition to the loss of lives, the federal government reckons that the farmers-herders clashes cost the country N5 trillion annually (\$14 billion).<sup>124</sup>

As mentioned previously, one of the pillars of the livestock plan is Humanitarian Relief, which “focuses on rebuilding and reconstruction of common facilities – worship places, markets and individual homes that have been destroyed. It will also support the rehabilitation, reconstruction, resettlement and compensation of the displaced persons affected by the farmer-herder conflict in the seven targeted pilot states.<sup>125</sup> In addition, it will provide input and land for crop farmers for those that had been displaced. Benue and Nasarawa are in advanced stages in this.”<sup>126</sup>

In May 2018, the federal government released the sum of N10 billion (\$28 million) for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of villages affected by the crisis.<sup>127</sup> It is not clear how the funds will be disbursed and which communities will benefit.

During Amnesty International’s field trips, villagers recounted how they lost everything, from their houses to foodstuffs, either carted away by attackers or burnt. When asked what they would like to see the government do, many said that more than justice they wanted compensation.

122 Enugu State government’s response to Amnesty International’s Freedom of Information request, 12 November 2018

123 Enugu State government’s response to Amnesty International’s Freedom of Information request, 12 November 2018

124 Nigeria’s National Livestock Implementation Plan 2018

125 Amnesty International could not ascertain those states

126 Nigeria’s National Livestock Implementation Plan 2018

127 FG approves N10 billion for communities affected by herdsman crisis, Vanguard, May 16 2018 (accessed on 28 October 2018, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2018/05/990573/>)

A 63-year-old man from Missisi Village in Jema'a LGA of Kaduna State told Amnesty International 10 months after his village was attacked (October 2016) that he needed food before peace.

***“If at all the government would come and see what is happening and (to) help us, they should first give us food, then look for how they can rebuild our houses. After that they can take action on how we can live in peace.”***<sup>128</sup>

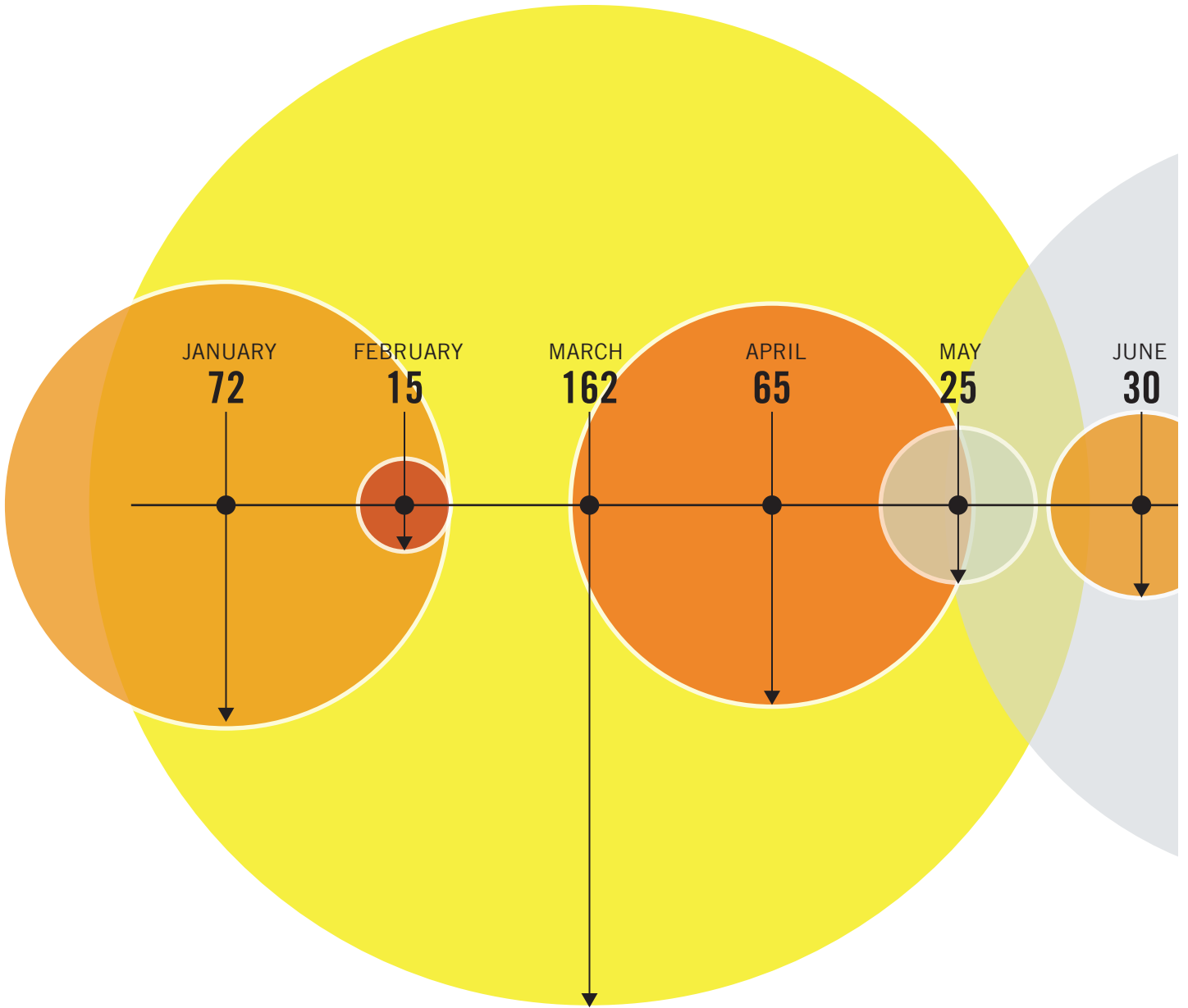
A 65-year-old Fulani community leader in Dong, Demsa LGA Adamawa State said that almost one month after he and his people fled Dong on 1 December 2017 in fear for their lives following the Shelewol attack (mentioned previously), they still struggle to feed.

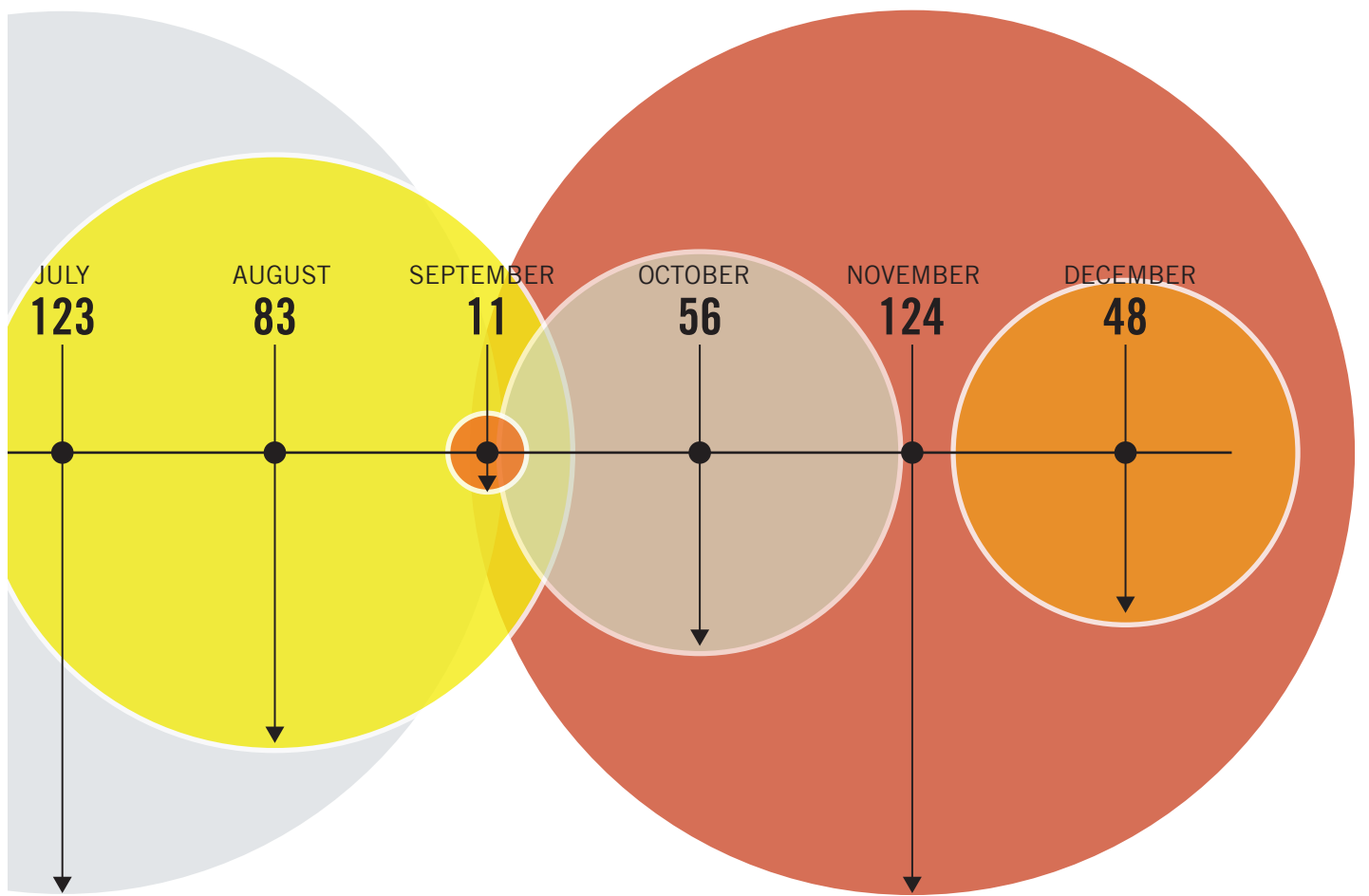
“Living here [Ngurore in Adamawa State to where they fled] has been difficult, very difficult. We go days without food and depend on well-wishers for handouts. We wrote a letter to our Senator, but there's been no response. We need you to plead with government to help us. Food, zinc and shelter are what we need urgently.”<sup>129</sup>

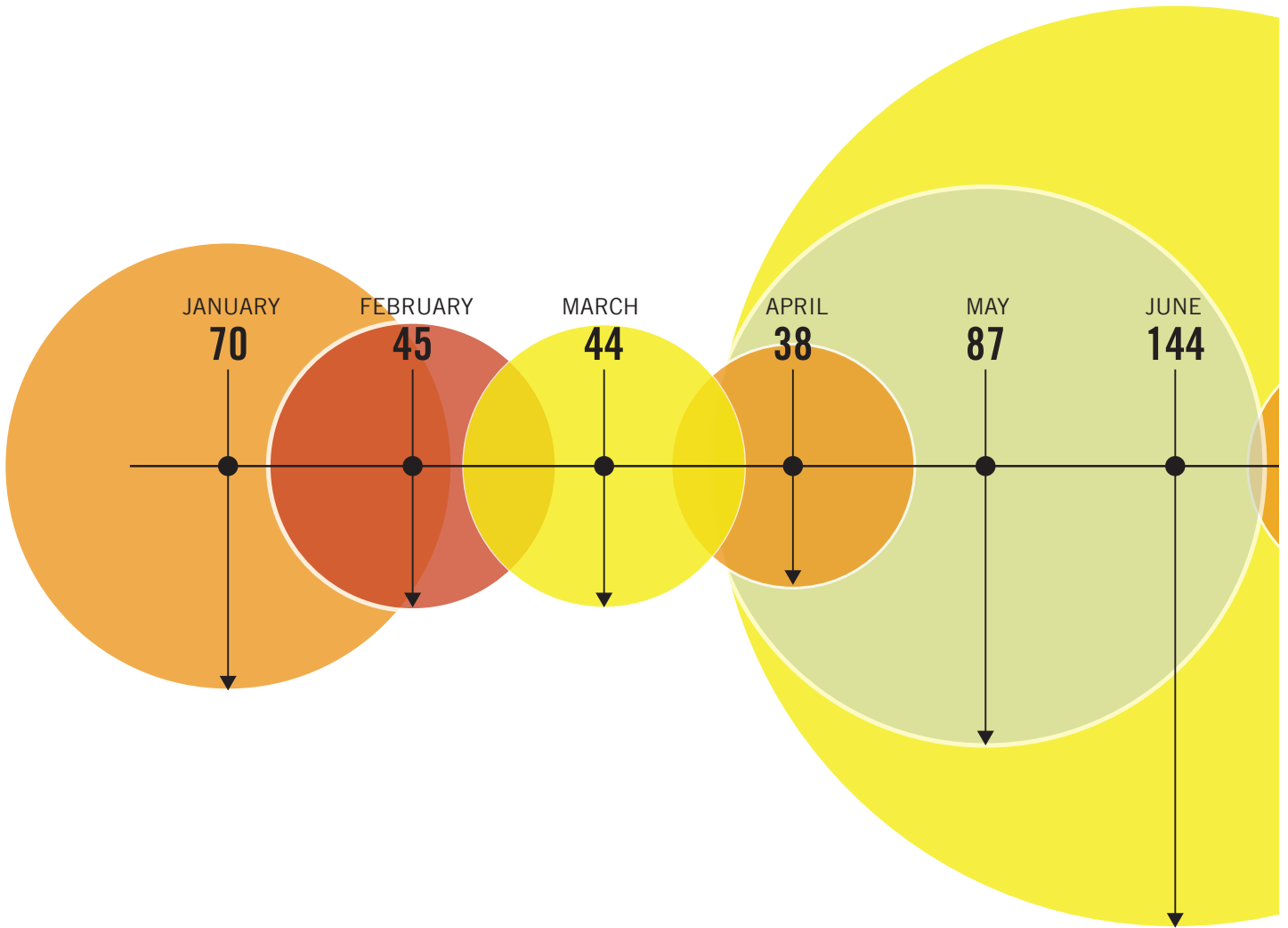
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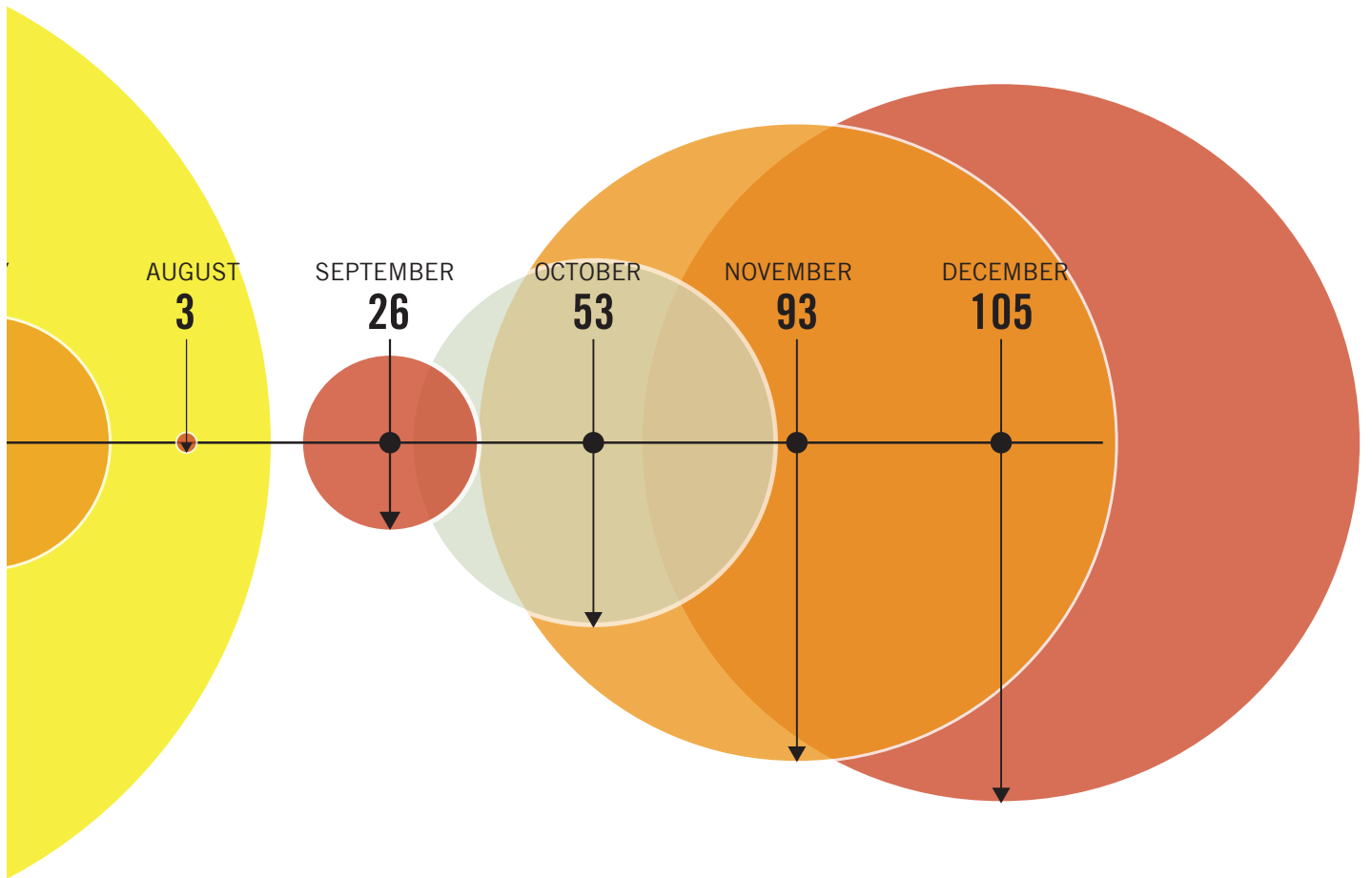
128 Amnesty International interview, August 2017

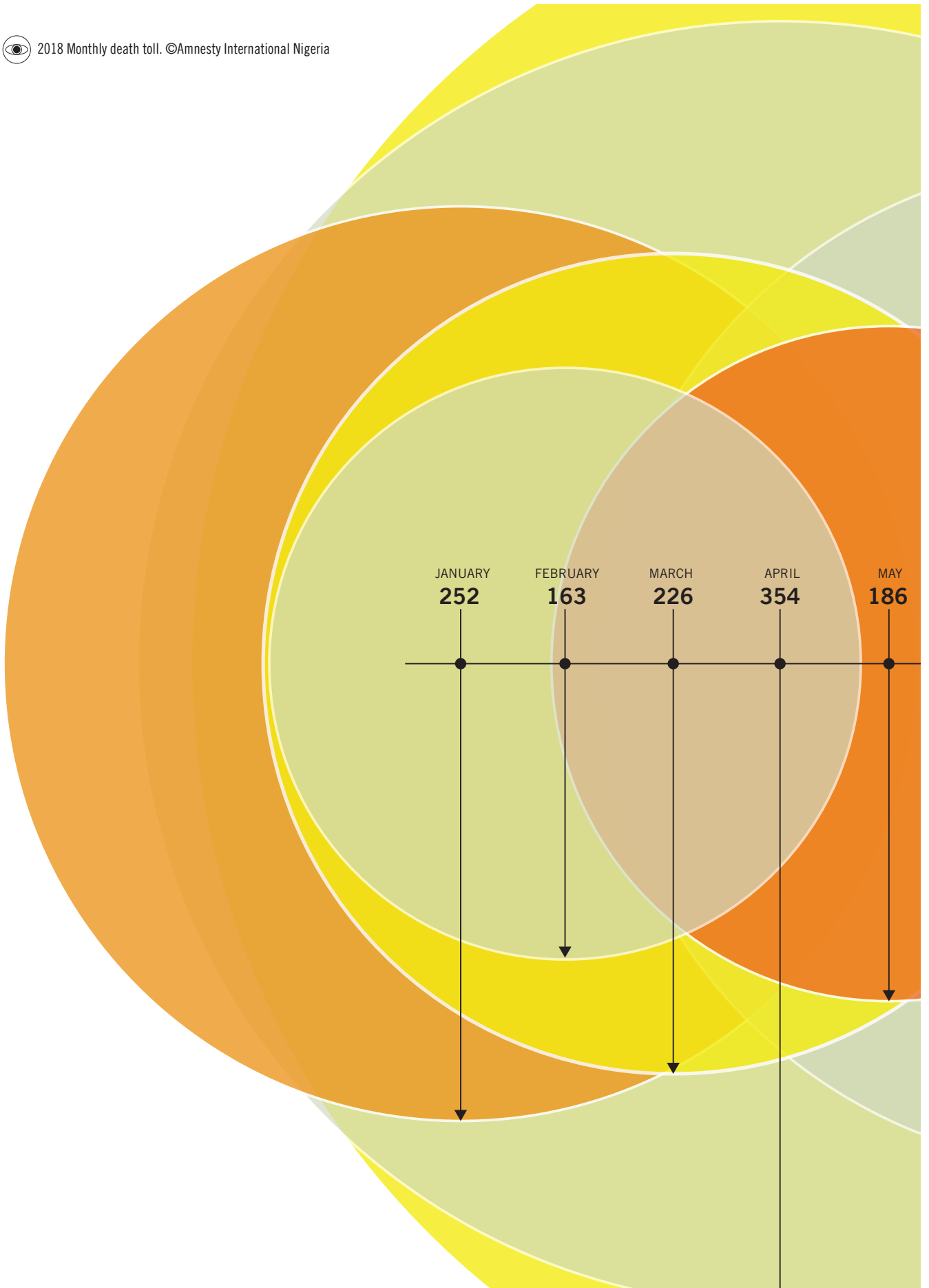
129 Amnesty International interview, September 2018



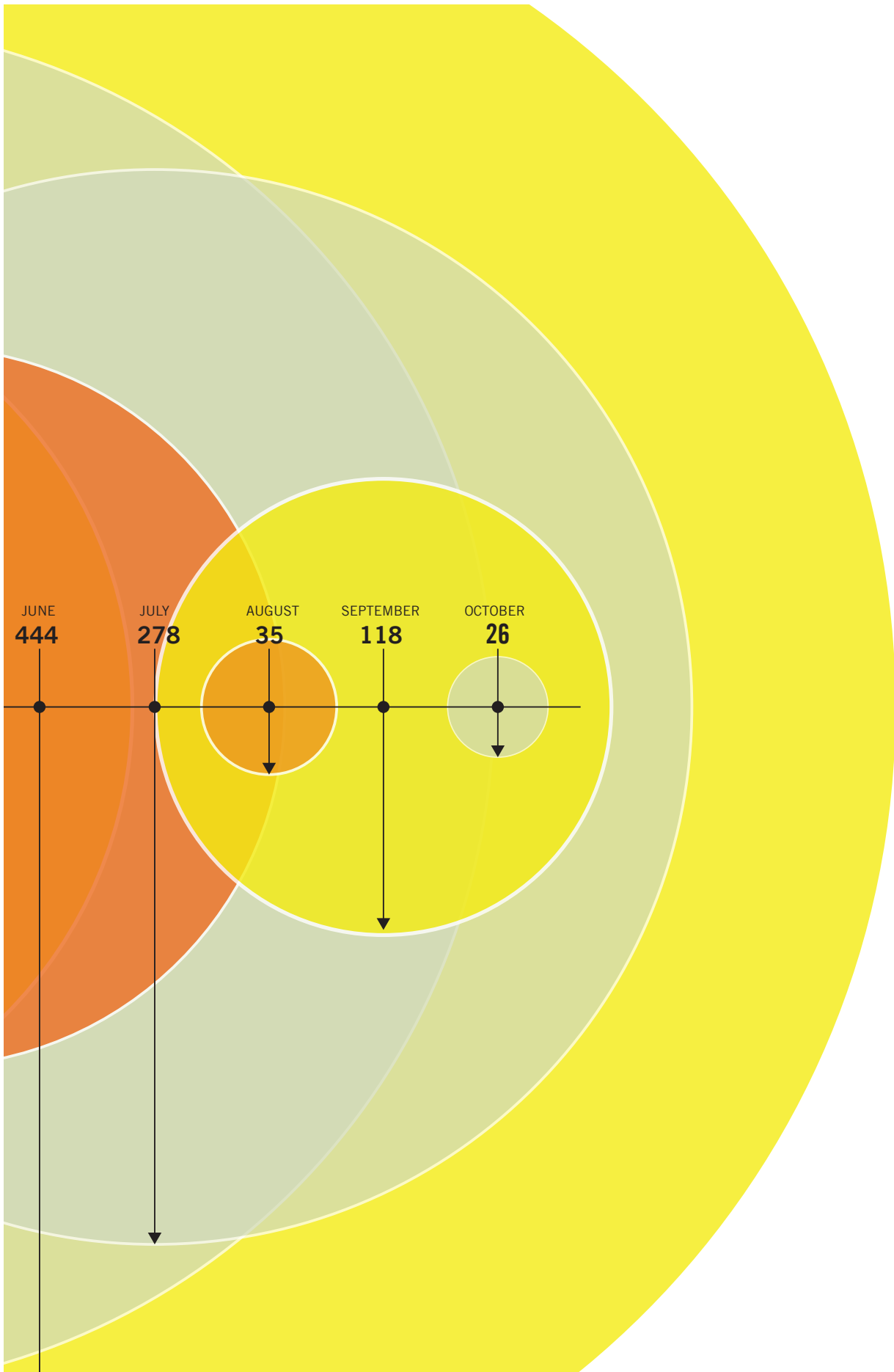












# 7. SECURITY FORCES FAILED VILLAGERS

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*“...soldiers asked me to follow the villagers into the classroom but I told them I wasn’t going in there. They said if I didn’t go in they would shoot me, so I told them to go ahead, but that I wasn’t going into the classroom. So, they ordered me to go and lie down on the ground in the school compound as punishment, which I did. While lying down, I turned and saw one of the soldiers beckoning with his hand on the Fulani asking them to enter the school,”<sup>130</sup>*

an eyewitness told Amnesty International about the 16 October 2017 attack on a school guarded by soldiers in Plateau State, which resulted in the death of 27 residents of Nkiedowro village seeking refuge there.

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Amnesty International’s research reveals a disturbing pattern of failure on the part of security forces to protect people from vicious and mostly deadly attacks by armed groups. Eye witnesses, victims, local officials and others independently interviewed have recounted several incidents where police and soldiers have either ignored credible warnings of impending attacks and/or abandoned people during or just before deadly attacks by heavily armed groups, suspected to be members of herder or farmer communities. The cases documented by Amnesty International demonstrate at least, wilful negligence; at worst, complicity. Despite continued public outcry, the government has not taken any meaningful measures to investigate these incidents and the role of security forces.

## 7.1 HOW SECURITY FAILURES LED TO the LOSS OF 66 LIVES IN GIREI IN ADAMAWA STATE

On 24 January 2016, 65 villagers, including 54 men and 11 women, and a police officer were killed when suspected Fulani gunmen attacked Koh, Ndikajam, Tabongo, Balawo, Dyemsare, and Noine villages in Girei local government area of Adamawa State. According to eye witnesses who spoke to Amnesty

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130 Phone interview with Amnesty International on 15 May 2018

International,<sup>131</sup> the attacks, which started at about 6am in Koh Village, lasted at least five hours. Witnesses said a pick-up truck with eight policemen led by the Divisional Police Officer [DPO], first arrived at Koh around 10am, followed 30 minutes later by two trucks with 17 soldiers. But the police and soldiers withdrew after about one hour, when the DPO was killed and a soldier shot in the leg while engaging in cross-fire with the suspected Fulani gunmen. By the time the security forces returned to Koh, at about 2pm, the attack had ended. Amnesty International wrote to the Chief of Army Staff and the Inspector General of Police regarding this attack but no response had been received at the time of writing this report.

Amnesty International's research further reveals that this and subsequent attacks could have been prevented if law enforcement agents had acted on the information they were given.

Tensions started between the Fulani herders and Njiya-Goron<sup>132</sup> farming communities, in November 2015 when a violent clash between farmers and herders resulted in the death of a 12-year-old Fulani boy.<sup>133</sup>

Leaders from both communities told Amnesty International that the police refused to make any arrests and as a result, they had to take the suspects to the local police themselves.

"The police could not arrest anyone, and even some that we assisted them in arresting were released,"<sup>134</sup> a village leader informed Amnesty International.

A month later, in December, a farmer from Koh Village was attacked on his farm with an arrow and later died.<sup>135</sup> The Fulani leaders in the area took suspects to local police, but they were subsequently released.<sup>136</sup> This angered many in Koh and early in January 2016, a group of young men suspected to be from Koh attacked cattle belonging to the Fulani community near Koh, including slaughtering a cow belonging to a local and influential Fulani politician.<sup>137</sup>

According to a letter sent to the DPO of Girei local government area and seen by Amnesty International, the elders called on the DPO to arrest the young men that slaughtered the cow.

"You will recall that when the Koh Elders Forum met you, after failing to send your men for the arrest yesterday 11 January 2016, to find out why it happened so, you apologised and promised to go to Koh and arrest the suspects today 12 January 2016. We therefore wish to remind you to honour your promise to arrest suspects to serve as deterrent to others," the letter, dated 12 January 2016 and signed by five village leaders, reads.<sup>138</sup>

But according to community leader the DPO did not respond or send his men to carry out the arrests.<sup>139</sup> According to a document submitted on 28 August 2016 by Njiya-Goron community leaders to the administrative panel of enquiry set up by the Adamawa State government, following the 24 January 2016 attack, also seen by Amnesty International, between 12 and 24 January 2016, when rumours went around that suspected Fulani herders were planning to attack Koh and other Njiya-Goron villages, the village leaders informed security authorities about impending attacks on their communities.

According to the document: On 20 January, community leaders from Koh appealed to the Girei DPO to ensure security in their communities: on 21 January, they informed the Army Brigade Commander based in Yola, Adamawa State. On the same day, 21 January, they met the Commissioner of Police at about 8pm at his residence also to inform him of the impending attack but he referred them back to the DPO.<sup>140</sup>

On 22 January, the Army Brigade Commander in Yola, Adamawa State, sent some soldiers to patrol the

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131 Between 23 and 24 April 2018, Amnesty International visited the villages and interviewed 16 people

132 One of the tribes found in Girei LGA of Adamawa State comprising of Goron, Koh, Dagiyo, Tsukwang, Tabongo, Ndikajam, Kangling, Noine, Demsare, Fawaire, Wodifara, and Gwakrah villages in Girei LGA of Adamawa State

133 Interviews with Amnesty International in Girei and Yola in Adamawa State, 25 April and 6 May 2018

134 Interview with Amnesty International in Girei, Adamawa State, 25 April 2018

135 Interview with Amnesty International in Girei, Adamawa State, 25 April 2018

136 Interview with Amnesty International in Girei, Adamawa State, 25 April 2018

137 Interview with Amnesty International in Girei, Adamawa State, 22 April 2018

138 Amnesty International has in its file a copy of the letter

139 Interview with Amnesty International in Girei, Adamawa State, 22 April 2018

140 Submission of memorandum by the Njiya Goron Community to the Administrative panel of enquiry into communal clashes between farmers and Fulani herders in Girei and Demsa LGAs of Adamawa State, page 5, paragraphs 6 – 9

Njiya Goron communities. On 23 January, the Njiya Goron community leaders visited the district head<sup>141</sup> of Girei at his palace to plead with him to intervene and call the Fulani herders to order. On the same day, many residents of Koh Village left their homes at night to spend the night in the bush, because they thought the attackers would come that night.<sup>142</sup>

In the morning of 24 January, when no attack happened the previous night, they returned home very early in the morning. Not long afterwards, at about 6am, armed Fulani men arrived in Koh and the other villages.

Two days after the attack, on 26 January, the police interim investigation report indicted a named Fulani herder man and mentioned “about two hundred” unnamed who committed an “unprovoked” attack on Koh. The report, seen by Amnesty International, read, *inter alia*:

“... on 23/1/2016 (sic) at about 0600hrs one... (name withheld) of Tarawo Village Song LGA conspired with about two hundred Fulani herdsmen from various parts of Adamawa State and Niger Republic to launch an attack on Koh, Dikajam, Tabango and Demsare villages of Girei Local Government Area of Adamawa State. The assailants who were well armed with rifles, Dane guns, cutlasses, bows and arrows burnt down about two hundred houses in the four villages, wounded four persons, killed CSP Okorafor Okezie and twelve other males and four females. During the onslaught, the assailants also made away with a large number of cows to unknown destination.”<sup>143</sup>

## **7.2 POLICEMEN WITHDRAWN THREE DAYS BEFORE ATTACK ON DONG AND OTHER VILLAGES IN ADAMAWA STATE**

On 4 December 2017, between 6am and 12pm, at least seven villages, including Dong, in Numan and Demsa local government areas of Adamawa State, were attacked by suspected Fulani gunmen. Responding to these attacks, the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) deployed an Alpha jet and an EC 135 attack helicopter to the area.<sup>144</sup> At least 86 villagers died and about 3,000 houses were destroyed in the attack and air raid.

According to residents, 50 mobile policemen were deployed to Dong district, which has three other villages under it, two weeks before the attack when villagers heard rumours that there would be attacks. But the policemen left Dong and surrounding villages three days before the attack.<sup>145</sup>

“We had Mopols [mobile police] stationed at the Government Secondary School, 50 of them, but they withdrew three days before the attack [Friday, 1 December]. They told us they were called back and that they were going to have a meeting. They all left that Friday and the attackers came on Monday, three days after they left. I knew there were 50 Mopols, because we were the ones feeding them. When they left, I told the Hama Bachama [paramount ruler of the Bachama tribe] that they had left and I didn’t know why. I also informed him that the Fulani were planning to attack us. I knew about this because people from Numan called to inform us. They told us that the Fulani were training to attack Bachama land. I got this information on 22 November,”<sup>146</sup> a local official informed Amnesty International.

## **7.3 SOLDIERS WITHDREW SHORTLY BEFORE 33 VILLAGERS WERE KILLED IN ADAMAWA STATE**

*“He (army commander) said okay, they would check it out and so they drove off in the direction of Lau. About one hour later, the soldiers came back but they did not stop. They just drove past the village. Not*

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141 The district head is a traditional administrator appointed by a state government to oversee villages and communities within the district

142 Submission of memorandum by the Njiya Goron Community to the Administrative panel of enquiry into communal clashes between farmers and Fulani herders in Girei and Demsa LGAs of Adamawa State, page 5, paragraphs 6 – 9

143 The investigation report, dated 26 January 2016, with reference number REF. NO.CR:3000/ADS/X.T.10/124, was written by the Assistant Commissioner of Police, Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department and sent to the Commissioner of Police in the state capital, Yola.

144 Nigeria: Analysis of the Air Force raid in Adamawa state, Amnesty International, 30 January 2018, available at <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/01/nigeria-dozens-killed-as-military-launches-air-attacks-on-villages-beset-by-spiralling-communal-violence/>

145 Interview with Amnesty International in Dong Village, Adamawa State, April 2018

146 Interview with Amnesty international in Dong district, Adamawa State, 20 April 2018

more than 30 minutes later, the attackers arrived. Only four houses were not burnt down: there were about 500 houses in the whole of Bang,"<sup>147</sup> a resident of Bang Village told Amnesty International.

Approximately 11pm on 1 May 2018, Fulani gunmen numbering about 250 gathered in Babagasa<sup>148</sup> in Lau LGA of Taraba State. The following day [2 May] at about 4pm, they crossed into Adamawa State where they killed 33 villagers and burnt down over 500 houses in five villages – Nega, Bang, Bolki, Gon, and Nzumosu, all in Numan<sup>149</sup> LGA of Adamawa State – despite security forces in the two states having prior information that this attack would happen.

Residents of Katibu<sup>150</sup> Village told Amnesty International's delegation, which visited Lau LGA a day after the attack [3 May], that they also alerted policemen stationed at the nearby school, Katibu Primary School. According to one of the men who reported to the police, the police went that night [1 May] in their vehicle and saw the gunmen before returning to their post.<sup>151</sup>

Security forces in Taraba State were alerted at around 11pm on 1 May, 16 hours before the attackers left and crossed into Adamawa state, where they attacked the five villages.

"I heard on Tuesday night, around 11pm, on 1st May, from villagers that Fulani gunmen were gathering at Babagasa in Lau local government area. So, when I got the call, I started making calls to security agents until the early hours of Wednesday, 2 May. I called the Special Adviser to the Governor on Security, Officer-in-Charge of Mobile Police, Divisional Police Officer of Lau LGA, Deputy Commissioner of Police in charge of Operations, Joint Task Force headed by a Lieutenant,"<sup>152</sup> a local government official informed Amnesty International.

Following this, seven pickup trucks carrying security forces (four for soldiers, two for mobile police officers and one for Special Anti-Robbery Squad) were dispatched to Babagasa on 2 May. At about 11am, according to residents of Katibu Village, two additional trucks with soldiers and one with mobile policemen were seen arriving at Katibu and heading to Babagasa as reinforcement, bringing to 10 the number of pickup trucks that brought security forces to Babagasa.

Despite the heavy presence of security forces, the gunmen were able to leave Babagasa and Lau LGA by 3pm and head for Adamawa State.

Security forces in Adamawa State were also alerted about the impending attack.

"Three days before this attack, rumours were rife that it would happen. I contacted people on the other side, Lau [LGA in Taraba State] and spoke to the chairman and I was able to confirm that the attackers were gathering at Babagasa,"<sup>153</sup> a local government official in Numan<sup>154</sup> LGA told Amnesty International.

Residents of Bang, Nzumosu and Gon villages confirmed to Amnesty International that soldiers came to their villages, but only patrolled the area briefly and then left.

Amnesty International was also able to confirm, including through officials who attended the meeting, that on the morning of 2 May, 2018, the day of the attack, a security meeting was called at about 7am at the LGA Headquarters. Representatives of the army, State Security Service [SSS], Civil Defence, Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Bureau, hunters and the police were all in attendance of the meeting, where they discussed the impending attack.<sup>155</sup>

Some of those who attended the meeting told Amnesty International that a decision was taken for the military and police force to move in to the areas under threat of attack.

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147 Interview with Amnesty International in Bang Village, Adamawa State, 6 May 2018

148 Babagasa is a herders community in Lau LGA of Taraba State and shares a boundary with Katibu Village, a farmers community, also in Lau LGA

149 Numan is one of the biggest LGAs in Adamawa State and shares a boundary with Lau LGA of Taraba State

150 Katibu is a farmer community and shares borders with Babagasa, a herders community. They are both in Lau LGA of Taraba State

151 Interview with Amnesty International in Katibu, Lau LGA, Taraba State, 3 May 2018

152 Interview with Amnesty International in Jalingo, Taraba state, 4 May 2018

153 Interview with Amnesty International in Numan, Adamawa state, 6 May 2018

154 Numan is one of the biggest LGAs in Adamawa state

155 Interview with Amnesty International in Numan, Taraba state, 6 May 2018

A local official told Amnesty International: “At about 2pm on Wednesday, soldiers came [to Bang] in two Hilux [vehicles]. I spoke to the captain that led them to the villages and when he asked if we were the ones who had called about impending attacks, I said yes, we had called the paramount ruler about the information we had. I told him about the call I received from Katibu in Taraba State, which was corroborated by two people who came from there to our village.

“He said okay, they would check it out and off they drove in the direction of Lau. About one hour later, the soldiers came back, but they did not stop. They just drove past the village. Not more than 30 minutes later, the attackers arrived. Only four houses were not burnt down. There were about 500 houses in the whole of Bang.”

Another government official, who also attended the security meeting on the morning of 2 May said: “I was surprised to learn that the soldiers left the villages after patrolling. I’m aware that chairman of the local government called the Major that attended the security meeting, but his number was switched off. Villagers kept calling and complaining about the withdrawal.”<sup>156</sup>

“We then got a call around 4pm that Bang Village was on fire and immediately the Commissioner of Police was called, but he said the police would have to investigate and confirm the information. Then he was told that Bang was on fire as the call was going on, so he dropped the call, I think to get in touch with his men. Shortly after, he called back and said he had spoken with the Area Commander, who said he needed fuel, so we provided him with fuel.

“The Brigade Commander was then called and [was] informed about the withdrawal of soldiers, but he said he had gotten information from the officer that went with soldiers earlier and that he [the officer] had said they withdrew because the attackers had sophisticated weapons. He said that two aircraft had been dispatched to the locations,” the official said.

Amnesty International visited the affected villages on 6 May 2018 and collected consistent testimonies from several survivors and witnesses about how soldiers came to the area, but left shortly before the attackers arrived.

## **7.4 IN TARABA STATE, SOLDIERS TOLD VILLAGERS ATTACKERS WERE AFTER BACHAMA, NOT THEM**

*“After some time, three soldiers led by an officer walked to where the Fulani gunmen were gathered and spent not more than 30 minutes with them. After the discussion and as the soldiers were coming back to their vehicles, there were ecstatic shouts and noise from the Fulani. When the soldiers came back, they told the villagers not to worry, that the Fulani did not come for them. They said they (Fulani) were going to Bachama<sup>157</sup> land,”* a resident said, as he recounted what happened before his village was attacked and burnt down on 6 January 2018.

Between 6 and 15 January 2018, seven villages were attacked, at least 68 residents killed and more than 400 houses burnt down, when gunmen attacked Lau local government area of Taraba state.<sup>158</sup>

Before this deadly attack, residents of Katibu Village saw gunmen, mounted on approximately 50 motorcycles, each carrying three passengers, passing through their village from 11pm on Thursday, 4 January to 12am on Friday, 5 January. In the beginning many did not know what was happening but it turned out that the gunmen were heading to Bang, a village in Adamawa State.

“By 5am on Friday, 5 January, we received calls from Bang that the village was on fire. One hour later, we heard gunshots around Mako.<sup>159</sup> We then heard the cries and shouting of women and children and when we came out of our houses, we saw smoke and fire from the direction of Mako and Lavoro<sup>160</sup> villages.

“Women and children, as well as some men, were running from that direction to our village in Katibu. Our villagers tried to hide some of them in their houses while our youths who had motorcycles took them out

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<sup>156</sup> Amnesty International interview, April 2018

<sup>157</sup> Bachama is one the largest ethnic groups in Adamawa State found predominantly in Numan LGA of the state

<sup>158</sup> Interview with Amnesty International in Katibu Village, Lau LGA, Taraba State, 3 May 2018

<sup>159</sup> A village in Lau LGA of Taraba State

<sup>160</sup> Also a village in Lau LGA of Taraba State

of the village. Still, we did not know what was happening

“We started making phone calls to Bang and it was then we realised what was happening. The Fulani we had seen passing through on motorcycles had gone to attack Bang but the youths there were waiting for them, which I think they did not expect. The Bachama youths decided to take them on and chased them all the way from Adamawa to our villages here.”<sup>161</sup>

Katibu villagers sent women and children out of the village, along with the Fulani women and elderly men that they rescued.

Later on in the day, at about 3pm, Katibu villagers said they saw Fulani men arriving on motorcycles and assembling at the house of a Fulani village head in Didango.<sup>162</sup>

“From that time until late in the night, they were still arriving,” a villager said.

By daybreak, on Saturday 6 January, there were armed suspected Fulani men all over Didango. Soldiers who were on a patrol from Lavoro to Abara arrived in Katibu around 8am.<sup>163</sup>

“Not long after, they passed towards Abare. Like 20 minutes later, they came back to Katibu and said they were here to protect us. They parked their vehicles and went on foot to Didango to meet the armed Fulani men. This was at around 10am. When the soldiers were returning from Didango, less than 30 minutes later, we heard some ecstatic shouts of ‘Allahu Akbar’ coming from the armed Fulani men. The soldiers then came and told us that the Fulani men told them that they did not come for us, that they were going to Bachama land. They also said the Fulani said we should not be scared”<sup>164</sup>, a resident of Katibu Village who witnessed this event explained.

Five other villagers, including two of Fulani origin, confirmed this to Amnesty International.

“Around 2pm, I got a call from a Fulani man, Buba Musa, whose farm was close to mine. When he needed a piece of farmland, he came to ask and a man gave him a piece of land from his own. That was how we became close. He called me that afternoon that they had just finished praying and were heading to Bachama land and that we should not run,”<sup>165</sup> another villager told Amnesty International.

According to eyewitnesses, at about 3pm that day the gunmen surrounded the village and started shooting people and burning down houses. The soldiers who had assured the people of protection did not return. The attack lasted until Tuesday, 9 January. The following day, 10 January, the state government organised a mass burial for victims and there were security forces present to provide security for the dignitaries. However, immediately after the burial and the government officials had left the security forces also left, leaving the attackers to return and continue the attacks.<sup>166</sup>

A resident of Katibu Village who attended the burial told Amnesty International: “On Wednesday, there was a mass burial organised by the government and there were security agents everywhere in the village. Immediately after the burial, the security agents left. I saw that my house had not been burnt down, so I thought I should charter a truck the next day to move my things. On Thursday morning [11 January], at around 9am when I arrived the village with the truck, I saw my house on fire. I saw that Jegam 2 Village was also on fire. Lavoro Village was attacked and burnt down the following Monday, 15 January.”<sup>167</sup>

## 7.5 POLICE COLLECTED MONEY FROM VILLAGERS BUT DID NOT ARREST ATTACKERS

Some residents of villages from Nasarawa<sup>168</sup> and Kokona LGAs and Agwada, Udege, and Loko Development Area Councils, all within Nasarawa State, on 10 March 2017 wrote a petition to the Chief of Army Staff

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161 Interviews with Amnesty International in Jalingo and Katibu in Taraba State, 2 and 3 May 2018

162 Didango is a Fulani village in Lau LGA of Taraba State and is very close to Katibu

163 Interviews with Amnesty International in Jalingo and Katibu in Taraba State, 2 and 3 May 2018

164 Interviews with Amnesty International in Jalingo and Katibu in Taraba State, 2 and 3 May 2018

165 Interview with Amnesty International in Katibu Village, Taraba State, 3 May 2018

166 Interviews with Amnesty International in Jalingo and Katibu in Taraba State, 2 and 3 May 2018

167 Interview with Amnesty International in Jalingo, Taraba State, 1 May 2018

168 Nasarawa is a state in North Central Nigeria that also has a local government area and town with the same name.

seeking help against what they described as incessant attacks by Fulani gunmen on their communities.<sup>169</sup> The army wrote a letter to the Inspector General of Police (IGP), attaching the petition, asking the IGP to “look into the petition with a view to taking necessary action to remedy the situation”.<sup>170</sup>

The IGP forwarded the letter to the Deputy Inspector General of Police in charge of Force Criminal Intelligence and Investigation Department for investigation.<sup>171</sup>

The villagers told Amnesty International that the policemen sent from the Nigeria Police Force Headquarters asked them to pay N150,000 (\$411), for logistics, which they paid in cash, because the policemen did not want to leave any trace of the funds to them. But only three policemen were sent to Nasarawa LGA. The policemen then went to the police station in Agwada town<sup>172</sup> between the 25 and 27 May 2017, where they asked people from the affected villages to come and write statements.<sup>173</sup> According to a resident of one of the villages, the policemen refused to go to the villages,<sup>174</sup> complaining of bad road and that the Fulani gunmen had better weapons than them.

In addition to the letter from the army to the police, Amnesty International also saw statements given by the villagers to the police which contained reports serious incidents, ranging from murder and kidnapping to destruction of farmlands.<sup>175</sup>

One was the case of a 23-year-old woman who was kidnapped on 12 March 2017 from her house by people she said were armed Fulani men. She was released four days later after her father paid N3, 000, 000 (\$8,000) to the kidnappers. According to the police document, she reported the case to the police on 25 March 2017.<sup>176</sup>

Another case involved a 15-year-old boy, who was returning from the farm with his father and sibling at about 5:30pm one day in December 2016. While he rode home on his motorbike, his brother and father were stopped on their way by armed Fulani men, who killed his father. A police document showed that the Loko police were informed the following day, but no arrest was made.<sup>177</sup>

## 7.6 VILLAGERS SEEKING PROTECTION FROM GUNMEN ABANDONED BY SOLDIERS

At approximately 6pm on 16 October 2017, residents of Nkiedowro Village in Bassa LGA in Plateau State ran to the Local Education Authority Primary School in the village for refuge, when suspected Fulani gunmen attacked the village. The villagers ran to the school, because it was serving as a military base.<sup>178</sup>

Eyewitnesses told Amnesty International that when they got to the school, soldiers collected their phones and told them to go into a classroom.

A survivor told Amnesty International: “The soldiers on duty collected our phones before we entered the class. They collected all our phones and we didn’t know why and we did not ask them. You know, we were all running and trying to save our lives, so when they requested for our phones we just gave them without asking any questions, as we rushed to enter the classroom.”<sup>179</sup>

Another eyewitness also said his phone was collected by soldiers before he entered the classroom: “Around 5:30pm we were all seated in the village when we heard gunshots. I was trying to run behind some children. They ran past the primary school and behind it and as I was about to do the same, one of the soldiers called me and said I should go into the classroom and that there were many of our villagers

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169 Amnesty International did not see a copy of the letter sent to the Chief of Army Staff but the army chief’s letter to the Inspector General of Police mentioned that a letter dated 10 March 2017 from Ajiri (Afo) National Youth Development Association from Nasarawa State was sent to him (Chief of Army Staff)

170 The letter from the army, with reference number, AHQ DATOPS/G3/240/232/15, was signed by Colonel S. Sulaiman for the Chief of Army Staff

171 Amnesty International saw the letter from the Inspector General of Police signed by CSP Promise C. Udeh, Principal Staff Officer II to the Inspector General of Police

172 Agwada is a town in Kokona LGA of Nasarawa State and is about 125 kilometres from Nasarawa LGA

173 Interview with Amnesty International in Abuja, 7 November 2017

174 According to the petition, which was also sent to Amnesty International, 57 villages and communities were affected

175 Amnesty International saw and obtained copies six of the statements made by the villages to the police

176 Statement to Force Criminal Investigation Department (FCID) Abuja Command, 25 May 2017

177 Statement to Force Criminal Investigation Department (FCID) Abuja Command, 25 May 2017

178 See: 27 villagers killed in a school guarded by soldiers in the chapter, Coming face-to-face with death, page 28

179 Phone interview with Amnesty International on 15 May 2018



inside. So, I stopped to go in. They (soldiers) asked for my phone and when I gave them, they told me to go in and I did.”

The eyewitness added that he saw a soldier beckoning on the gunmen to go into the classroom and that he managed to escape just in time, before they [gunmen] got in.

“When I entered I did not sit down like the others had. I was just wandering around and restless in the classroom. I had gone to the door to open it and see if I could go outside and to watch what was happening, when I saw one of the soldiers beckon to the Fulani that there were people inside the classroom. So I left the door and went to the window. I was able to open the window. As I was opening the window, the Fulani had already opened the door to the classroom and they were looking at us. That was when I jumped out of the window.”<sup>180</sup>

Another witness, who also survived the attack, told Amnesty International that he also saw the gunmen being invited to enter the classroom by the soldiers.

He said: “Soldiers asked me to follow the villagers into the classroom but I told them I wasn’t going in there. They said if I didn’t go in they would shoot me, so I told them to go ahead but that I wasn’t going into the classroom. So, they ordered me to go and lie down on the ground in the school compound as punishment, which I did. While lying down, I turned and saw one of the soldiers beckoning with his hand on the Fulani, asking them to enter the school.”<sup>181</sup>

The attack happened, in spite of a curfew being in place and when the gunmen arrived at the school, there was no soldier present. The gunmen went into the classroom and opened fire on the people, killing 27 of them.

The army reportedly said it would investigate how the attack happened under the watch of its men at a time when there was supposed to be restriction of movement.<sup>182</sup>

No report of any investigation has been made public and at the time of writing this report, the Chief of Army Staff had not responded to Amnesty International’s request for information.

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180 Phone interview with Amnesty International, 15 May 2018

181 Phone interview with Amnesty International, 15 May 2018

182 Punch, Despite curfew, suspected Fulani herdsmen kill 27 in fresh Plateau attack, 17 October 2017, available at: <https://punchng.com/fulani-herdsmen-defy-curfew-kill-27-in-plateau-attack/>

## 8. HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS BY SECURITY FORCES

*“I was among the youths who early that morning tried to put out the fire the soldiers set to houses. What we did was that when they set a house on fire, we would wait for them to move to other houses before coming out of the bush to try put it out. They saw us and ran after us but did not want to run after us into the bush. They were in a hurry, as we saw that they missed some houses and moved very fast,”*

a 35-year-old resident in Opalo Village, Lamurde local government area of Adamawa State narrated.

### 8.1 OPALO, ADAMAWA STATE

Residents told Amnesty International that in January 2018, soldiers from 23 Brigade stationed in Lamurde local government area of Adamawa State arrived at Opalo Village in a search of their colleague, who they said was missing. Residents told Amnesty International that they heard about the disappearance for the first time from the soldiers, adding that no soldier had come to the village before.

Amnesty International interviewed six residents of the village separately and they all said it was soldiers who attacked them, despite media reports that a group from the herders community carried out the attack on their village.

A 45-year-old woman, who had her house and property vandalised, said the soldiers arrived in the early hours of 25 January.

She said: “We were at home when soldiers came. We don’t know why they broke into our homes. We saw them with weapons so we had to run away. They entered our homes, entered our rooms, and broke our TV, table, and mirror. They scattered all they found in the building and even broke the door to the house. They vandalised our cars parked in the compound. They also burnt down my children’s room with all their clothes in it. My son was injured while running.”<sup>183</sup>

183 Interview with Amnesty International in Opalo, Adamawa State, 21 April 2018



 Bullet casing found in Naka, Benue State, after soldiers from 707 SF Brigade attacked it on 19 April 2018. ©Amnesty International Nigeria

A 37-year-old man told Amnesty International that he was one of those who helped to put out the fires set by the soldiers to houses in the village.

“I was among the youths that early morning that tried to put out the fire the soldiers set to houses. What we did was that when they set a house on fire, we would wait for them to move to other houses before coming out of the bush to try put it out. They saw us and ran after us but did not want to run after us into the bush. They were in a hurry, as we saw that they missed some houses and moved very fast,”<sup>184</sup> A 35-year-old resident of Opalo Village, Lamurde LGA of Adamawa State narrated.

Another resident of the village, a 60 year-old man, said that after the arrest of the village head by soldiers, other residents ran to nearby villages.

“We would come back to our village in the morning to cook and go to farm, but in the evening, we would leave to sleep in the other villages. Some of our youths hid in the bush nearby when the soldiers were setting fire to the houses. They [youths] used the cover of dark to sneak out of the bush to try to put out the fire. The soldiers would run after them and they would run back into the bush. If it wasn't for this act by the youths, more houses would have been burnt down and destroyed.”

## 8.2 NAKA, BENUE STATE

On 19 April 2018, soldiers from 707 SF Brigade deployed to the town of Naka, Headquarters of Gwer West local government area in Benue State, attacked residents and set 298 houses on fire in what seemed like a reprisal for the killing of their colleague.

A missing soldier's corpse was found in a shallow grave near Naka community. In response, soldiers shot in the air as they set houses on fire, threatening to shoot anyone who came near them.

“On that day, the 19th April at about 9am, some of our people in Makurdi [Benue State capital] told us that soldiers were on the way to Naka. At that period, the herdsmen were terrorising us daily. People

184 Interview with Amnesty International in Opalo, Adamawa state, 21 April 2018

were always running into the bush to sleep. The soldiers came in about six trucks. We all ran into the surrounding bushes. They barricaded the end of the community and were setting houses ablaze. People who dared to come close were threatened and asked to leave or risk being shot. The operation lasted for about 2-3 hours and when we came back about 300 houses were burnt down.”<sup>185</sup>

In a letter to the Brigade Commander, 707 Brigade, the chairman of the local government said that despite complying with the military’s directive to produce the suspects in the murder of the soldier, soldiers went ahead to attack Naka, killing two people in the process, including an old man who was burnt alive in his home. In the same letter, the chairman also accused the commander of 72 Special Forces Battalion of threatening his life over the phone.<sup>186</sup>

### 8.3 KWESATI, TARABA STATE

When Amnesty International visited Kwesati Village in Ussa local government area of Taraba State in May 2018, several residents told the organisation about the brutal harassment by soldiers they’d had to endure, including breaking into their homes in the middle of the nights to harass and threaten and beat them. Some of the acts, as documented by Amnesty International, could amount to torture, which is prohibited absolutely under several treaties that Nigeria is party to,<sup>187</sup> as well as the country’s own Constitution.<sup>188</sup>

A 28-year-old farmer and resident of Kwesati said soldiers came into his home between 3am and 4am, leaving his wife and children scared and stole his money.

He told Amnesty International: “I heard a knock at my door at around 3am and when I asked who it was, they said they were soldiers. So, I opened the door and they entered, searched the house and took me to where they parked their vehicles in the market square. They then asked me to bring out the gun I had, but I said I had no gun. They started to beat me. They told me to lie on the ground and one of them stepped on my back with his boots. They used a whip, stick, belt to beat me. As they were beating me, they kept asking for the gun and I kept saying I had no gun.”<sup>189</sup>

Amnesty International researchers saw scars on the man’s back that were consistent with his testimony. A widow and mother of five told Amnesty International that soldiers stole N150, 000 (\$415) from her home when they forced their way into her house, saying that they were looking for weapons.<sup>190</sup> The money had been contributed and given to her by members of the women’s cooperative society she belongs to and was meant to be handed over to another woman, whose turn it was to receive the contribution.

In a security report sent to the state governor on 13 April, the chairman of Ussa local government confirmed the abuses perpetrated by soldiers against residents and said neither he as the chief security officer of the local government nor his chiefs were informed about the military operations in the villages. The report states:

“Our men, women, youths and children were being searched, molested, beaten and touched, for no cause. Houses were broken into in search of firearms. We have reports and pictorial evidences of army’s brutality against our innocent people, where people were beaten up and tortured with wounds and injuries in their bodies and marks of canes.

“The army carried their operations at very odd hours in the midnight middle of the night and forced doors opened. We also have cases and complaints of army stealing people’s monies after breaking into people’s houses”.<sup>191</sup>

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185 Interview with Amnesty International, Naka, Benu state, July 2018

186 Amnesty International has in its file a copy of the letter.

187 Including UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 7; African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights, Article 5.

188 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999), Article 34(1)(a).

189 Interview with Amnesty International in Kwesati Village, Ussa LGA, Taraba State, May 2018

190 Interview with Amnesty International in Kwesati Village, Ussa LGA, Taraba State, May 2018

191 Summary of security report covering year 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, and January to March 2018



 A house in Shafaron Village in Adamawa State destroyed by NAF rocket fire on 4 December 2017. ©Amnesty International

## 8.4 NUMAN AND DEMSA, ADAMAWA STATE

In responding to the attacks on villages under Numan and Demsa local government areas of Adamawa State on 4 December 2017, the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) deployed an Alpha jet and EC 135 attack helicopter. Rather than solve the problem, the Air Force only compounded it, as 35 of the 86 victims died from the NAF's rocket fire, according to Amnesty International's research.<sup>192</sup>

Five of the seven villages attacked by gunmen were hit by rockets fired from the sky by NAF, leaving 3,000 houses destroyed.<sup>193</sup>

Amnesty International gathered evidence, from these villages including first-hand testimonies, which confirms that there were no members of security forces present during the attacks to protect residents. A resident of Dong, one of the villages attacked during the air raids, told Amnesty International: "The jets arrived around 11am. We ran and left the village at around 7am when the attackers approached. We stayed in the bush for about three hours. The jets arrived at about 11am and when we saw and heard them approaching, we were very happy that the government was here to help. The jets went round the town very fast, then came back and started to bomb houses, including the Chief's palace.

"The jet bombed two places in Dong: the third one was around where the people were fighting, but they did not target the Fulani gunmen. We saw two jets, the jets spent like 20 minutes in our village. The jets were bombing empty places where there were no people. They didn't go after the Fulani gunmen on the other side where they had gathered and were fighting people. The people the jets bombed and killed were more than the people killed by the Fulani gunmen.

"In the evening, a helicopter came and started bombing and shooting. The helicopter went to where people were hiding and started shooting. When the helicopter arrived, there was already calm in the village. Our

<sup>192</sup> Nigeria: Dozens killed as military launches air raids on villages beset by spiralling communal violence, Amnesty International, 30 January 2018 (accessed on 1 September 2018), <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/01/nigeria-dozens-killed-as-military-launches-air-attacks-on-villages-beset-by-spiralling-communal-violence/>

<sup>193</sup> Across the five villages visited by Amnesty International, some 3,000 homes were destroyed

people were packing our dead before the helicopter came and started shooting. The helicopter killed people in the bush where the people were hiding. The jets passed over our heads in our hiding place. I told the villagers to lie down on the ground.”<sup>194</sup>

In its response to Amnesty International’s report on this incident, published on 30 January 2018,<sup>195</sup> the Nigerian Air Force denied responsibility for the damage and casualties, saying it only responded to a request by the army to support it and other security forces.<sup>196</sup>

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194 Interview with Amnesty International in Dong Village, Adamawa state, April 2018

195 Interview with Amnesty International interview in Dong Village, Adamawa State, April 2018

196 Response to Amnesty International allegations of Nigerian Air Force human rights abuses, Nigerian Television Authority, 30 January 2018, available at, <http://www.nta.ng/news/20180130-response-to-allegations-by-amnesty-international-of-nigerian-air-force-human-rights-abuses/>

# 9. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 guarantees every person the right to life. Chapter four of the 1999 Constitution states that: “Every person has a right to life, and no one shall be deprived intentionally of his life, save in execution of the sentence of a court in respect of criminal offence of which he has been found guilty in Nigeria.”<sup>197</sup>

In the same vein, the Constitution is clear on where the responsibility lies when it comes to the protection of lives and livelihoods – the government. Chapter 14(2)(b) states that the security and welfare of Nigerians shall be the primary purpose of government, and this means all organs of government, be it the executive, legislative or judiciary.<sup>198</sup>

Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognises that “Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.”

The right to life is also protected, among others, by:

Article 6(1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political rights (ICCPR) which provides “Every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life.” (ratified by Nigeria in 1993)

Article 4 of the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights (ACHPR): “Human beings are inviolable. Every human being shall be entitled to respect for his life and the integrity of his person. No one may be arbitrarily deprived of this right.” (ratified by Nigeria in 1983)

Under the ICCPR, the right to life allows no derogation, even in time of public emergency that threatens the life of the nation.<sup>199</sup> In addition, everyone in Nigeria also has the right to liberty, security and to not be subject of torture, other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (other ill-treatment) or arbitrary arrest and detention. Article 9(1) of the ICCPR reads: “Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention. No one shall be deprived of his liberty except on such grounds and in accordance with such procedures as are established by law.”

Similarly, Article 6 of the African Charter provides: “Every individual shall have the right to liberty and to the security of his person. No one may be deprived of his freedom except for reasons and conditions previously laid down by law. In particular, no one may be arbitrarily arrested and detained.”

The same treaties also provide protection from torture and other ill-treatment, as explained above. Article 2 of the Convention against Torture obliges State parties, among other things, to criminalise torture and prohibit it absolutely (Articles 2,4), take all measures to prevent torture and other ill-treatment (Article 2) investigate, prosecute and punish such crimes (Articles 12, 13, 4) as well as to provide adequate reparations to victims (Article 14).

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197 Chapter Four of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria: Fundamental Rights. 33.(1)

198 Chapter 2 of the 1999 Constitution: Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy. 14. 2. (b)

199 See Article 4(1).

Nigerian security forces are required, when using force, to comply fully with the principles of legality, necessity and proportionality, in accordance with the UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials and the UN Basic Principles for the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials. Security forces must apply non-violent means as far as possible before resorting to the use of force, and they should resort to the use of force only where it is permitted under Nigerian law, where it is necessary and in a proportionate way. In particular, the use of firearms is an extreme measure, which must be seen as the last resort. Intentional lethal use of firearms may only be made when strictly unavoidable to protect life. The responsibility of states under international law to protect human rights such as the right to life is not restricted to controlling acts by state institutions and officials. States also have a duty to exercise due diligence in preventing, stopping, investigating and punishing human rights abuses by non-state actors and ensuring reparations for victims.<sup>200</sup> In its authoritative General Comment on Article 6 of the ICCPR, the Human Rights Committee, the expert UN body charged with overseeing the implementation of this Covenant, clarified that “States parties must also ensure the right to life and exercise due diligence to protect the lives of individuals against deprivations caused by persons or entities, whose conduct is not attributable to the State.” It further explained that “States parties are obliged to take adequate preventive measures in order to protect individuals against reasonably foreseen threats of being murdered or killed by criminals and organised crime or militia groups, including armed or terrorist groups... and reduce the proliferation of potentially lethal weapons to unauthorised individuals.”<sup>201</sup>

Amnesty International is deeply concerned that the government of Nigeria has failed to comply with its obligation to exercise due diligence, failing both to address the underlying causes of the violence between herders and farmers described in this report and to stop violence when it did occur, resulting in the death of hundreds of people, the destruction of thousands of homes and extensive harm to people’s livelihoods. Nigerian security forces are also required to act in accordance with international human rights law and standards in relation to arrests and detention. International law prohibits arbitrary arrests and detention. Detained individuals must be treated in a humane manner and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person, including regarding access to food and hygienic conditions, as provided, among others, in Article 10 of the ICCPR and in the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules).

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200 See, for instance, UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, General recommendation No. 35 on gender-based violence against women, updating general recommendation No. 19, UN Doc. CEDAW/C/GC/35, 14 July 2017, paras. 24-6.

201 Human Rights Committee, General comment No. 36 (2018) on Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, on the right to life, UN Doc. CCPR/C/GC/36, 30 October 2018, paras. 7, 21.



# 10. CONCLUSION

From state to state, community to community, Amnesty International had documents and heard accounts of security forces failure to protect people from deadly attacks by violent groups in the context of the farmers-herders clashes, even when they provided information about impending attacks. The organisation spoke to government officials and community leaders, who all confirmed that there are regular security meetings held and attended by representatives of all security agencies, other government officials and community leaders. At the local government level, these meetings are headed by the local government chairperson while at the state level, the governor heads it. In addition, village heads also hold security meetings and report to their paramount rulers (very senior traditional rulers), who regularly pass the information to the government and security forces.

In other instances, villagers called security officials to report the threats facing them but several times, no action was taken. In many cases, security forces arrived after attacks had happened, including in places they could reasonably have arrived at earlier to stop the attacks.

Both farmers' and herders' community members blame the government and security forces for supporting either side. Amnesty International's research indicates this is partly because of the fact that perpetrators of the crimes are getting away, encouraged by government's glaring unwillingness to live up to its obligations.

# 11. RECOMMENDATIONS

## 11.1 TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA

### Ending impunity

- Ensuring thorough, effective and impartial investigations and prosecution of any person, including members of security forces, who perpetrated abuses; wilfully ignored attacks in Abia, Adamawa, Anambra, Benue, Cross River, Delta, Ebonyi, Edo, Ekiti, Enugu, Kaduna, Kogi, Nasarawa, Niger, Ondo, Oyo, Plateau, Rivers, Sokoto, Taraba and Zamfara state and Abuja.<sup>202</sup> The findings of these investigations should be made public
- Move swiftly to domesticate the Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons into the national laws and ensure the full and effective implementation of the Convention

### Protection of civilians

- Investigating all allegations of wilful negligence, complicity and other failures of security forces to protect civilians

### Addressing underlying causes of the crisis

- Ensure that members of both farmer and herder communities enjoy their human rights, including rights to land, water and pasture, which are at the heart of the crisis
- To manage and deal with communal tension, the Nigerian authorities must ensure that areas designated as grazing reserves, corridors and cattle routes are not encroached upon. This should include adopting a past system, where people were appointed and stationed at or close to the reserves to make it easy to monitor and manage these areas and prevent encroachment by farmers
- Ensure that herders do not graze on farmlands and any herder that allows his cattle to graze on and destroy farmlands is promptly arrested, investigated and prosecuted

### Urgent humanitarian needs

- Ensure that all people displaced as a result of the crisis are provided with adequate relief, including protection, shelter, food, healthcare
- Ensure that all people who have suffered losses from the crisis are provided with adequate compensation

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<sup>202</sup> States that Amnesty International monitored and documented cases of farmer-herder killings between 2016 and 2018

## **11.2 TO THE NIGERIAN SECURITY FORCES**

- Equip and train police on modern policing techniques compatible with international human rights standards to effectively deal with the current challenges
- Individual commanders should be investigated and prosecuted for attacks in areas where troops under their command are stationed, where there is evidence that they failed to act to stop these attacks
- Make public reports and findings of investigations, while respecting the safety of witnesses and the rights to privacy and due process
- Security forces must ensure that while responding to attacks, their response at all times, does not result in the violation of human rights

## **11.3 TO THE STATE GOVERNMENTS**

- Provide the necessary support to all those, including farmers and herders, particularly in Adamawa, Benue, Kaduna, Plateau, Taraba and Zamfara states, who are displaced and in dire need of shelter, food, healthcare and protection
- Ensure that community leaders that encourage members of their communities to perpetrate violence are thoroughly, independently and impartially investigated and prosecuted if found guilty

## **11.4 TO ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES [ECOWAS]**

- Hold an extraordinary session of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government to deliberate on the farmers-herders clashes in the region, including Nigeria, to find a meaningful and durable solution the problem by supporting accountability mechanisms to ensure suspected perpetrators are brought to justice.



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# HARVEST OF DEATH

## THREE YEARS OF BLOODY CLASHES BETWEEN FARMERS AND HERDERS IN NIGERIA

This report documents the violent clashes between members of farmer communities and members of herder communities in parts of Nigeria, particularly in the northern parts of the country, over access to resources: water, land and pasture. It also documents the failure of the Nigerian government in fulfilling its constitutional responsibility of protection of lives and property by refusing to investigate, arrest and prosecute perpetrators of attacks. The report shows how government's inaction fuels impunity, resulting in attacks and reprisal attacks, with at least 3,641 people killed between January 2016 and October 2018, 57 percent of them in 2018 alone.

Amnesty International discovered that majority of the attacks by both sides were retaliatory, which then affected nearby communities because of the ethnic connection with the targeted communities.

Amnesty International found evidence showing that security forces received information about impending attacks and in some cases, came in contact with attackers but did nothing to stop or prevent the attacks. Amnesty International documented at least seven cases where security forces were aware of attacks but did nothing.

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