

INTERROGATING THE IMPLICATION OF SMALL ARMS PROLIFERATION AND ARMED BANDITRY ON FOOD INSECURITY IN NORTHEASTERN NIGERIA: A CASE OF DIKWA LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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Abstract

The paper investigated the implication of small arms proliferation and armed banditry on food insecurity in the Dikwa local government of northeastern Nigeria. The study examined the region's susceptible factors of armed banditry and the roles of small arms in armed conflict in the region. The paper explored the implication of small arms and armed banditry on food security challenges that bedeviled the northeastern region. The paper used a qualitative research design in which 20 key informants (KII) were selected for interview. The primary data were complemented with the secondary desk reviews of relevant textbooks and academic journals. Data generated were analysed using descriptive and content analysis. The findings reveal that the primary drivers of the proliferation of small arms and armed banditry in the area are poverty, unemployment, poor salary scale of security personnel, and marginalisation. The bandits have been responsible for the killing of innocent citizens; interactivities of bandits have sent thousands of innocent citizens on the journey of no return, while many are under their captivity. The protracted nature of armed banditry in the region due to accessibility to small arms has exposed millions of people to risks of malnutrition. The paper calls for a multi-faceted approach to mitigate the scourge of armed banditry and eliminate the illicit flow of small arms that stand as obstacles to food insecurity. The paper used anomie theory to explain socio-economic inequality as a significant driver of armed conflict in the region.

Keywords: Armed Conflict, Banditry, Displacement, Humanitarian, Nigeria