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“Towards Youth Engagement in Reducing  
the Farmer- Fulani Herdsmen Crisis in  
Kwara State, Nigeria”**

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# Fulani Herdsmen with sophisticated weapons but refuse the latest agricultural technology



# Abstract

- The Crisis between Farmers and Fulani Herdsmen in Nigeria has gone viral, many precious human lives, livestock and farmland have been lost, a problem that started from desertification in the predominantly Muslim Northern part of Nigeria, which makes herdsmen to move predominantly Christian Westward and Southward part of Nigeria. This crisis has evolved into different forms, involving international terrorist organizations like “ISIS”.
- What is the win win strategy for all? Anti Grazing Law or Cattle Colony? Peace is possible. This action plan strategises finding a lasting solutions towards youth engagement in preventing community Fulani Herdsmen crisis in Ekiti Local Government of Kwara State, a community that borders between the North and West of Nigeria

# Nigeria Statistics (Source: Wikipedia)

- Federal Republic of Nigeria
- Capital Territory: Abuja
- Area: 923, 768 km<sup>2</sup>
- Water (%) : 1.4
- Population: 2019 estimate: 199,315, 249
- Density : 215/km<sup>2</sup>
- Average per capita annual income: USD 6130
- Gini (2010) : 43.0 medium
- HDI(2017) : 0.532
- Religion: Islam (50%), Christianity (40%), Other Religion (10%) 2016 Census

# Kwara State Statistics

## (Source: Wikipedia)

- Geopolitical zone: North Central
- Date Created: 27<sup>th</sup> May 1967
- Capital : Ilorin
- Area: 36,825km<sup>2</sup>
- Population: 2, 365,353
- 16 Local Government
- Ekiti local government has an area of 480km<sup>2</sup> and population of 54,850 at the last 2006 Census
- Among the communities in Ekiti are Aare-Opin, Isolo-Opin, Osi, Ikerin-Opin, Oke-Opin, Epe-Opin, Owaatun-Opin, Etan, Obbo-Aiyegunle, Eruku, Ajuba, Isapa, Koro and Ejiu



# Fulani Herdsmen

- The Fulani Herdsmen of Nigeria are predominantly nomadic people whose major occupation is the raising of livestock. They originated from Sahel in the West African region, however with the negative effect of Climate Change, they have moved South into the Guinea Savannah and the Tropical Region of West Africa and can be found majorly in Benin Republic, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Senegal, Mali, Mauritania, Niger Republic and Nigeria
- After the Uthman Dan Fodio JIHAD, the Fulani immigrant in Northern Nigeria, won the war and dominated and integrated into the Hausa Culture of Northern Nigeria, with the Installation of an Emir in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria, a predominantly Yoruba Culture conquered territory during the JIHAD
- Over 30 million people of Fulani descent lives in the Northern part of Nigeria (Gordon, 2010)

# The State of the Affairs

- The Fulani-farmer conflict in Nigeria can be linked with severe poverty, inequality, migration, and religious intolerance and has caused severe pain in the Middle Belt States like Benue, Plateau, Taraba (Usman Leme, 2017), the increasing demands for more grazing lands has resorted into violent conflict between the Fulani herdsmen and farmers in the Green Middle Belt of Nigeria (Bukari, Sow & Scheffran, 2018)
- Over tens of thousands have been internally displaced across many cities in Nigeria, the most vulnerable to this crisis is women and children because their husbands were killed and they have suffered severe poverty and lack of access to justice in the system (International Crisis Group, 2017)

# The State of the Affairs

- Recently, the Christian Leaders in Nigeria claimed that over 6,000 Christian farmers have been killed by the Fulani Herdsmen, and the failure of the government to intervene in due time has caused more social instability and economic pressure on household (Clark, 2018)
- The continued Desertification and Deforestation in the North has caused more battles for farmland and water , with little or no education among the Fulani Herdsmen.
- We need urgent attention to address the root cause of the crisis (Ndubuisi, 2018, Ningxin Li, 2018, )



# The State of Affairs

- With over 25 million cows presently in Nigeria and likelihood forecast of 60 million cows in 2050, the population growth rate in Nigeria need to be addressed to reduce the ever increasing battle over lands and resources because climate change and environmental degradation in Nigeria is one of the root cause of this crisis (Fabiya & Otunuga, 2016; Muhammed 2017)
- This crisis has put Muslim Fulani Herdsmen and Christian Farmers against one another across Nigeria, and report of some Ethnic Cleansing in Nigeria has worsen the matter (Mustapha & Ehrhardt, 2014)

# Anti Grazing Law? Or No Grazing Law

- The Benue State Anti Grazing Law “Just as the herdsmen’s economy depends on the cows, so does the farmers’ economy depends on the land. No one should be denied of such inheritance” (1)
- Ekiti Local Government is in Kwara State, is the Border town between the Ekiti State Anti-Grazing Policy neighbor, where an Anti Grazing Law has been implemented, which makes it a complete scenario for study, and Kwara State with no such effective Anti Grazing Policy (2)
- The Ekiti Local Government in Kwara State speak the local dialect of the people in Ekiti State, and possible scenario of a Fulani Herdsmen caught in the border and quickly sent with the Cattle to the neighboring villages where they can be punished and where the existing Anti-Grazing Law can be enforced (2)

# Ekiti State Anti Grazing Law

- “Ekiti State Anti-Grazing Law includes a prohibition of cattle and other ruminants grazing in Ekiti State, the law states in part, that “no person shall cause or permit any cattle or other ruminants belonging to him or under his control to graze on any land in which the Governor has not designated as ranches, no cattle or other ruminants shall by any means move or graze at night and that cattle movement and grazing are restricted to the hours between 7:00am to 6:00pm’. Anyone caught grazing on portions of land or any farmland not allotted by government shall be apprehended and made to face the law. (2)

# Ekiti State Anti Grazing Law

- Any herdsmen caught with firearms and any weapons whatsoever during grazing shall be charged with terrorism. Any cattle confiscated shall be taken to government cattle ranch at Erifin and Iworoko Ekiti community in the state. ‘Any farm crop destroyed by the activities of any apprehended herdsmen shall be estimated by the agricultural officers and the expenses of the estimate shall be borne by the culprit. “Any herdsman who violates any of these rules shall be imprisoned for six months without option of fine, the speaker said (2)

# Anti-Grazing Policy Impact Evaluation

- The anti grazing policy has resulted in more violent conflict in States like Taraba and Benue State
- The Anti Grazing Policy was effective in Ekiti State, being a predominantly Western State, it reduced the crisis of many Fulani Herdsmen due to strong political support from the State Government and the Local Government Authorities, thereby motivating Edo State to pass the Second Reading of the Law in their State. (Sylvester, 2017)
- State and Local Government Authority should create and design arable land as grazing zones and reserves for livestock.



# Anti-Grazing Policy Impact Evaluation

- The People of Ekiti Local Government of Kwara State fears that the new grazing reserves to be created by the State Government may result in Fulani Colony with the risk of future JIHAD which may eventually lead to the Fulani taking over their territory as it has been demonstrated in Kwara State. Therefore the land should belong to the community who gave the reserves and should not be sold to the Fulani Herdsmen but only permitted to graze in such designated territories across the State.
- Policy is important. The Fulani Herdsmen without adequate deradicalization programme by the government will have little or no effect in the long run on the radicalized Fulani Youths

# Action Plan

- The **Radio Strategy** for Educating the Wives and Children of Fulani Herdsmen about the Culture of Peace Building and Community Development, on Bond FM 92.5, the Radio with the Largest Coverage in Nigeria



# Action Plan

- Promoting the Politics of Love instead of the Politics of Hate has existed for a long time in my country and in the rural community
- Afforestation Programme sponsored by a Youth Lead initiative in the Northern Part of Nigeria to reduce the negative effect of Climate Change, as Nigeria experienced Heat Waves in 2019 that killed so many people
- Promoting Dialogue between the Fulani Herdsmen and the Community Members in Ekiti Local Government of Kwara State and promoting the Enforcement of Good Public Policy that will sustain peace to the people and peace to the Environment.

# Strategic Partners

- Women Development Centre, Abuja, Federal Capital Territory
- Federal Ministry of Information and Culture, Nigeria
- Nigeria Youth Service Corps, Kwara State Chapter
- The Palace of Obbo-Aiyegunle, the Traditional Ruler and a First Class King in Ekiti Local Government
- Bond FM 92.5
- Afric-aus Transpacific Solutions Nig. Ltd as a financial partner because we have an active policy to dedicate part of our annual profits for corporate social responsibility

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