

Original Article | **Open Access** | Peer Reviewed



National policy and ethnic politics in RUGA policy: Rethinking Inclusive Policy for Sustainable Peace in Nigeria

Emmanuel Oluniyi ADEMOLA¹

¹ College of Agricultural Management and Rural Development, Department of Communication and General Studies, Peace and Strategic Studies Unit, University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria; ademolaoluniyi@gmail.com, Phone No +234 8033611888; +234 8098611888.

ORCID iD:

0000=0003-1462-0158.

Copyright and Permission:

© 2024. The Author(s). This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0), which permits sharing, adapting, and building upon this work, provided appropriate credit is given to the original author(s). For full license details, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

Address for Correspondence:

Emmanuel Oluniyi ADEMOLA, College of Agricultural Management and Rural Development, Department of Communication and General Studies, Peace and Strategic Studies Unit, University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria. (ademolaoluniyi@gmail.com)

Article History:

Published: 12 May 2025

Abstract

The occurrence of conflicts between herders and farmers with unexplainable attacks has led to increase insecurity in Nigeria, given reason for fear of ethnic invasion and land grappling. Attempts by government to proffer solutions has not yielded any good result; considering the opposition and outright rejection of proposed policies include: Rural Grazing Area (RUGA) policy, 2018-2027 National Livestock Transformation Plan, Cattle colonies, Grazing routes among others. Out of all policies attempted to proffering solution to herder's farmers problems in Nigeria, RUGA policy remains a controversial one. The government had designed RUGA to create security for pastoral families and curtail cattle rustling with occurrence of conflicts, as well as provide a palliative as an alternative to peace and security of lives and properties in Nigeria. This study contends that, (RUGA) like other policies are purposed amidst perceived misconception and overwhelming ethnic sentiment. It concludes that there is need for collective responsibility and mutually beneficial inclusive policy which recognizes collective interest for sustainable peace in Nigeria.

Keywords

Herders-Farmers, RUGA Settlements, policy, sustainable peace, Nigeria

Volume 12, 2025

Publisher: The Brooklyn Research and Publishing Institute, 442 Lorimer St, Brooklyn, NY 11206, United States.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30845/jesp.v12p5>

Reviewers: Opted for Confidentiality

Citation: Ademola, E. O. (2025). National policy and ethnic politics in RUGA policy: Rethinking Inclusive Policy for Sustainable Peace in Nigeria. *Journal of Education & Social Policy*, 12, 48-60. <https://doi.org/10.30845/jesp.v12p5>

Introduction

Among all attempted policies proposed to proffer solution to herder's farmers conflict in Nigeria, RUGA policy as; (Rural Gracing Area) for the Fulani herders across Nigerian states, is found to be most criticized one. The policy has suffered different criticism from Nigerian stakeholders. RUGA policy was proposed amidst the occurrence of repeated conflicts between herders and farmers in Nigeria. The objection and outright rejection of RUGA policy however, occurred mostly because of ethnic complexity in Nigeriaⁱ. Extant literature revealed that greatest difficulties experienced in addressing and resolving issues surrounding herders, farmers conflict in Nigeria occur in the politicization of the conflicts, the policy as well the legal regimes and the blockages to the enactment or implementation of laws that can redress the key challenges posed by the conflict. There has been general perception that conflict between the farmers herders' ethnic groups has ever been in increase since the drought of the 1970s and 1980s which has accompanied migration of a huge number of pastoralists into the fringes of the humid forest zone of West Africa. This massive increase of the incidence of farmers-herders conflict, in a large proportion are on the blame of policy failure which have all considered as reason for policy plunging in the Guinea Savannah region of West African statesⁱⁱ.

Incessant-ethnic conflicts as well as ethno- religious conflicts which have been a common experience in many African countries; Nigeria is in no exemption. Nigeria a union of separate ethno-cultural units that occupied a land terrain, former British colony. Nigerian State is pluralistic in nature, a multi-ethnic state; a nation-state with over 300 groups of diverse ethnic groups and religious identity. The diversity of her religion and ethnicity with the complex web of politically salient identities and history of chronic and seemingly intractable conflicts and instability qualifies Nigeria as one of the most deeply divided states in Africaⁱⁱⁱ. Every ethnic group in Nigeria is dissimilar to one another based on the uniqueness of their cultures, languages, religions and value systems. Though, Nigeria's motto is unity in diversity, nonetheless, from the beginning, the country has not been able to successfully accommodate the interest of all the divergent ethnic groups within its territory.

Series of rebellions, insurgency, reaction and counter reaction to the government policies as well as public revolts have entrenched the multicultural nature of the Nigerian States. Notable among which are: oil subsidy riot in 2011, #EndSARS demonstration in 2020, the Yoruba and Hausa Kano riot of 1953, the ethno-religious massacre in Kano, Kaduna and Plateau in the wake of sharia judicial system in 1960 and 1966. The Nigerian Civil War in 1967-1970, the census crisis, the Maitatsine uprising in Kano in the late 1980s, and the Yan Tatsine riots in the early 1980s^{iv}. Other theatres of conflict like, Zango Kataf in Kaduna State in 1992, Zaria Shiites outbreak, Jos Mayhem, Kaduna religious riots, Maiduguri onslaughts, Nupe-Yoruba conflict in Kwara, TivJukun and Fulani Conflict, Gwantu crisis in (2001-2003)^v; the Boko Haram insurgency and most current conflict which has kept erupting and claimed more lives is farmers' herders' bandit attacks. Apart from having a greater effect on the national security; its ethnic dimension and perception posts the fear of ethnic domination, sentiment or ethnic cleansing^{vi}.

In their assessment of the conflict, some scholars have linked armed Fulani militant ethnic based pastoralists semi-nomadic group with the deadly Boko Haram group^{vii}. The Militia group has been named the fourth deadliest terror group in the world and has consistently been on the list of violent groups between 2015 and 2019 in Nigeria^{viii}. The conflict has evolved from spontaneous reactions to provocations to deadlier premeditated attacks, particularly in some north central states as: Benue, Plateau, Adamawa, Nasarawa and Taraba states. The Herder-Farmer Conflict has claimed 3,641 lives between January 2016^{ix} and October 2018; 57 percent in 2018 alone^x. The recent infiltration in southern Nigeria has been considered a Boko Haram in different form and shape a target to infiltrate the southern part of the country which conventional Boko Haram could not penetrate; it is suggestive of insurgency^{xi}. The outpouring of armed herders into southward states Nigeria with different reports of criminal ventures as kidnapping, armed robbery, banditry, murders and rape have been all traceable to Fulani ethnic militants.

Many scholars had related Herder's farmers conflicts it to ecological and resource struggle as well as breakdown of traditional mechanism governing resource management and conflict resolution^{xii}. Other have seen the dynamics of the conflict as the increasing availability of modern weapons, including the availability of automatic weapons^{xiii}, where powerful interests seem to support certain groups with weapons in order to advance their own causes through sponsored violence^{xiv}. Some have depicted the violence as a continuation of ethno-religious struggle that had predate the colonial era therefore, seen the upsurge in farmer-herder violence as confluence of four developments: the ongoing expansion of land under cultivation, environmental degradation across Africa's Sahel region, and the recent rise of large-scale cattle rustling^{xv}. Few however, have considered the government policies as well as politic, policy formulation on whether its proffering solution or prolongs the conflict. This work therefore, explores the

narrative of the conflicts as well as series of government measures, vis-a-vis policies formulation, dispositions and responses of Nigerian stakeholders to the government policy.

The work adopts descriptive survey method with in-depth interview of selected key informants among the ethnic groups from the selected states from the; North central, Southeast and Southwest respectively. The selected states within these areas are: Benue and Kogi, Enugu and Imo with Oyo and Ekiti. The work interrogates the causal factors of herders' farmer's conflicts, the security and economic implications, the looming food crisis, the ethnic perception of government policies especially, the RUGA policy and the likely economic benefits to the nation and the citizenry. Both Eco-violence, Conspiracy and Group theories are found relevant to narrate the cause of incessant conflicts in Nigerian states, and are subsequently discussed

Theoretical Framework

Eco violence theory explains that environmental scarcity can contribute to civil violence, including insurgencies and ethnic clashes. Environmental scarcity according to Homer-Dixon^{xvi} helps to drive society into a self-reinforcing spiral of violence, institutional dysfunction, and social fragmentation. He explains the causes of the conflicts by analyzing relationship between environmental factors and violent conflicts. de Soysa, observed that the issue of environmental pressure as a source of conflict revolves largely around resource degradation and resource scarcity^{xvii}.

The incidence of violence will probably increase as scarcities of crop, land, freshwater, and forests worsen in many parts of the developing countries. The affected people often migrate or be expelled to new lands. Their movement often trigger ethnic conflicts when they move to new areas, while decreases in wealth can cause deprivation conflicts. This inapplicable to the scenario as it experienced in Nigeria where the rampaging herders move their cattle southwards during the dry and northwards in the wet season. What appeared certain in the course of these movements are encroachment of farmland and crops which lead to frustration by herders who accuse the farmers of rustling their cattle, resulting in conflicts with unquantifiable consequences.

Though, eco-violence theory has encountered many critics, it remains relevant. The trio of; Seter et al noted that the role of environmental scarcity in violence is often obscure and indirect. ^{xviii} Agbese also argued, based on different reasons and more importantly, the peculiarity of Nigeria's experience which lies in instances where the land is available for the herders, yet they often clash with their hosts^{xix}. de Soysa, identified several other factors which mediate the effects of environmental pressure. These according to him are intervening variables range from cultural conceptions of the environment, nature and degree of social cleavages, the availability of social capital, nature of institutions, skills and ideological propensities of leadership and groups, among others. On this note the configuration of the conflicts, the nature and degree of attacks and killings ascribed to the herders in Nigeria that seldom suffer any casualties. Agbese is of opinion that it's wrong to describe them as clashes since most attacks by herders were unprovoked; especially when the attackers chose to strike at night^{xx}. There was no evidence that those attacked ever faced the attackers or that they had a chance to fight back as in the cases of Plateau State and Agatu community in Benue State^{xxi}. Therefore, while the eco-violence theory attempted to establish nexus amongst resources, conflicts and security issues yet, it does not explain in full the contemporary causal factors, sustenance and escalation of herders-farmers' conflicts, especially, in Nigeria. This gives reason for considering the conspiracy theory.

Conspiracy theory is the conviction that a group of actors meets in secret with agreement and the purpose of attaining some malevolent goal. Conspiracy theory embodies three principles as: nothing happens by accident, nothing is as it seems, and everything is connected^{xxii}. Different events and practices in Nigeria are explained by reference to the machinations of powerful people, who have also managed to conceal their role. Conspiracies typically attempt to usurp political or economic power, violate rights, infringe upon established agreements, withhold vital secrets, or alter bedrock institutions^{xxiii}. It has been observed that powerful people work together in order to withhold the truth about some important practice or some terrible event. Therefore, conspiracy between interested parties or some covert but influential agency (typically political in motivation and oppressive in intent) is responsible for an unexplained event in the society. Conspiracy theory has been variously linked to a crisis of trust in government and government apparatus, to the undermining of democratic deliberation, a weakening of the state's capacity to govern and even to the growth of violent extremism; as well as group polarization^{xxiv}. Various cases of conflict in Nigeria involving the Fulani pastoralist and farmer therefore, consist of acts of conspiracy.

The group theory conception removed the veil of rhetoric that obscured the actual operation of government behind abstractions like 'the national interest'^{xxv}. The theory posits that individuals are important only when they are part of

or on behalf of group interests^{xxvi}. Public policy is known as the product of the group struggle, what may be called public policy is the equilibrium reached in the group struggle at any given moment, and it represents a balance which the contending factions or groups constantly strive to win in their favour^{xxvii}. The theory elucidates how each of the various groups in a given society tries to influence public policy to its advantage at the policy formulation level. It conceives the society as a mosaic of numerous interest groups, with cross-cutting membership. The theory emphasizes a group as individuals that may, on the basis of shared attitudes or interest, make claims upon other groups in society. According to Fox et al. public policy may derive from interest groups who continuously interact with policy makers to influence the policy making process^{xxviii}. On this account, group theory may be surmised as: turning to aid from government in order to increase its personal or private purpose; way of seeking the authority's attention to make their demands safe and sustainable; achievement of government control through dominance in number, technique and intensity^{xxix}. Public policy usually reflects the interests of dominant groups and most time those group either as a tribe or ethnic group that dominate the political power.

Causal factors and Historical perspective of farmers herders' conflicts in Nigeria

Conflict between herders and farmers has existed since the beginnings of agriculture even while their cooperation at time havened mutually benefited. The prevalence of tsetse and low settlement densities however, kept the incidence of clashes at a low frequency until the twentieth century^{xxx}. The incessant conflicts experienced in recent times between Fulani herdsmen and farmers however, not felt only in Nigeria, but entire Sahel of West Africa in the tropics which has claimed many lives and properties. Fulani pastoralists of West and Central Africa trace much of their current political, religious, and socio-cultural identity from the eighteenth and nineteenth century jihad which sedentary them within conquered communities. The Fulani are said to originate from Senegambia, before spreading across some 20 states in West Africa and the Sahel, up to Western Sudan and the Central African Republic^{xxxi}.

Herder and farmer groups have very different values, customs, physical and cultural characteristics, disputes between them are frequently characterized as ethnic conflict. Thus, Farmer-herder differences in Nigeria are not only seen as resources conflict but are also sometimes represented as ethnic conflict. The major pre-occupation of herders is to take very good care of their herds.

This largely involves the search for good grazing grounds in respect of pastures and water for the cattle^{xxxii}. In the process, they resist any area that could be hazardous to the health of their herds, such as tsetse fly infested environments^{xxxiii}. Herders are constantly in motion from place to place searching for better grazing ground and indeed they are commonly found in various rural settlements within the northern, middle belt and southern parts of Nigeria. By the flow of their movement, they frequently trespass farmlands owned by local farmers in their host communities destroying crops and valuables which results in competing with Farmers for grazing routes. Herdsmen travel hundreds of miles in large numbers with their cattle in search of pasture, but against what they are known for before this period, they often move around with fire-arms with the excuse of defending their cattle^{xxxiv}. They have been reported to be the people identified as quick resort to fight in the defense of their interest. They have the reputation of seeking for a revenge at a slighted provocation. Under such situation, they are readily prepared for conflict, and any conflict at this point becomes colossal, having direct negative impact which saw ethnic, political, economic and religious overlapping interests. The consequences are seeing in deep distrust where farmers and community members seeing herdsmen as invaders who are at a mission to claim their lands.

The conflicts have caused the country over \$14 billion, loss of the means of livelihood, increase in prices of food stuff, impoverished thousands of farming and pastoralists households, and led to destruction of property, frustration and abuse of people's fundamental rights, especially women and children who often suffered sexual abuse, abduction and killings; reprisal attacks on various communities, general insecurity and instability^{xxxv}. The conflicts have appeared intractable, enduring overtime and escalated because of perceived politics and conspiracy between the people, government, and the states where they have happened. The politics of complacency and conspiracy on the part of political elites in the conflicts were aptly captured on the inability of the government proposed policies to resolve the issue of indigene and settler dichotomy; the failure of the government to revive the grazing reserves; the controversy over Nigerian land use Act, and land tenure policy which have long time, alienates the peasants; the inability of the government to come up with efficient enabling policy to regulate grazing/transhumance practice; the inefficiency or excesses of state security apparatus in ensuring objective application of relevant public law^{xxxvi}.

Nigerian Government, policies, politics and contradictions

In the attempt to curtailing the re-occurrence tragedies between herders and farmers in Nigeria, several interventions and policies have been put in place at different levels; both at state and national level. In fact, numbers of grassroots policies and initiatives have tried to address the problem. The first which was from state was the Benue state anti-open grazing law made and fixed with its implementation effect from 1st November 2017. In a similar move, both Taraba and Ekiti states had replicate Benue, while other states like Anambra, Bayelsa, Imo, Jigawa and Niger have taken some measures on conflict resolution mechanism. In Jigawa state, a permanent grazing reserves and water pumping windmills was provided at well-thought strategic locations by the state government. The Taraba State Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law No 7 of 2017 prohibits open movement of livestock in search of pasture and to provide for the establishment of ranches and for other matters connected to it.

At national level, a recommendation was made in 2014 conference where delegates from the conference recommended that nomadic cattle rearing should be stopped; the delegates recommended that cattle ranches should be established across the country^{xxxvii}. On this note, President Goodluck Jonathan's in 2014, formed up an inter-ministerial technical committee on grazing reserves, proposing strategies to end the conflicts. Concurrently, a political committee was also set up on grazing reserve which was chaired by the former governor of Benue state (Gabriel Suswam) with the committee demand the release of sum N100 billion (\$317million) by Central Bank of Nigeria for the construction of ranches in all the 36 states in the country. With the defeat of President Jonathan in March 2015 general election, the implementation of proposed policy was interrupted^{xxxviii}.

On his assumption of office, President Muhammadu Buhari has promised in his inauguration speech in May 2015, stated among other things that he was going to end; the Boko Haram insurgency and the perennial violent clashes between the Farmers and Herders. Having this in mind, he directed the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD) to formulate a comprehensive livestock development plan including measures to curb farmer-herder clashes. On August 2015, a FMARD committee recommended short-medium and long-term strategies, including development of grazing reserves and stock routes.

There was a move by Senator Zainab Kure to make the Federal Government enact a law to allow the establishment of a national grazing reserve commission. The bill which was titled *National Grazing Reserve (Establishment)*, Bill 2016, was designed to empower federal government to establish at least one grazing reserve in each of the 36 State of Nigeria^{xxxix}. This bill which had passed the second stage, was rejected because it is against the intent and purposes of the 'Land Use Act' while at the same time, seeing to have override public interest.

In attempt to affect the incessant conflict in January 2016, the National Grazing Reserve (establishment) Bill was sent to the National Assembly for consideration. Part of this Bill read that, Grazing Reserves would be the property of the Federal Government and could not be alienated by the President (PLAC, 2016: Part III, 15). Other parts of the Bill give power to the Commission to acquire lands for the use of grazing routes from states. Audu Ogbeh, the then minister of Agriculture, revealed that President Mohammadu Buhari's directive was to establish 30,00 hectares of grazing reserve within six months^{xl}. This policy could not be implemented due to the oppositions from the people and mostly governors from southwestern states who were opposed to key into the policy suggesting the contradiction of the policy to Land Use decree of 1978 where all land situated in the territory of each state in the country is vested in the Governor of the state^{xli}. It was considered as an attempt without consent of the governors or State Legislations, and seen contradicts the Land Use Act of 1978, which grants power to the Governors given common slogan; attempt to Islamize or Fulanize Nigerian states^{xlii}.

With the outright rejection of grazing reserve; the Federal Government proposed another policy tagged, on January 2018 tagged "Cattle Colony" as a step-in policy taken further to solve the problems between the herdsman and farmers by designating vast tracts of lands in each state as herding grounds. Designated cattle colony is purposed to be designed that Herdsmen would use as a settle place to feed their livestock and hence, avoid the disturbance of fertile agricultural lands that belong to farming communities. It was supposed to prevent the herders from being attacked by the cattle rustlers, who are generally rampant in the north^{xliii}. The minister further stressed that 16 states in the country had accepted to the policy and enjoined others to join, stating that states and local governments could refuse to host a 'cattle colony' within their borders^{xliv}. Each colony is expected to cover 5,000 hectares (about 25km by 20km) and would be a cluster of ranches, with resources and facilities including grass, water, veterinary services, mills for converting Agro-waste to livestock feed, schools, hospitals and markets, all secured by agro-rangers^{xlv}.

While most of the 16 states that volunteered their lands for the project were mostly from the North-west, those from the south rejected it. Some of the reasons for rejections were that; there are limited lands and that project is a new Fulani imperialistic act through which the presidency would place the south at mercy of Fulani invasion. It was seen as a way to provide government's subsidy for Fulani herders, and that it was a far-fetched solution to the incessant clashes. As a matter of sensitizing the public on the importance of the policy and the intention of the government, President, through his Special Assistant on Media and Publicity, Chief Femi Adesina, while responding to a question on attachment to ancestral land urged those against the policy to rethink; noting that, they are better off living with the ranches and colonies than dying through the repeated conflicts. He stated that:

Ancestral or no ancestral attachment? You can only have ancestral attachment when you are alive. If you are talking about ancestral attachment, if you are dead, how does the attachment matter?" (Femi Adesina, 2018)^{xlvi}.

In spite of appeal, the opinion and perception of the people especially, those from southern part of the country did not change on the proposed policy. In furtherance of government efforts to proffering solution to the conflicts, National Livestock Transformation Policy was announced on 19 June 2018. This was target at encouraging a gradual switch from open grazing to a modern ranching. The government announced that it would run from 2018 to 2027 as a multifaceted intervention to modernize livestock management, improve productivity and enhance security. Under this initiative the states (Adamawa, Benue, Ebonyi, Edo, Kaduna, Nasarawa, Oyo, Plateau, Taraba and Zamfara) were selected as the pilot states, with 94 ranches to be established in clusters of four at 24 locations spread over those states. Monies worth about 179 billion was also planned into the project. The project was rejected outrightly first by the Fulani ethnic group. representative of the Miyetti Allah Kautal Hore, the Fulani Socio-Cultural Association; Mr. Saleh Alhassan while responding in the interview argued that:

They had rejected it on some grounds which include: fear of most landowners in the southwest who would not lease out their ancestral lands to the herders. He stressed further that cattle breeds are not ranching-friendly as, open grazing remain their culture, among others^{xlvii}.

As a continuation to the nomadic school educational policy, the Federal government under the Commission for nomadic education added additional role to the commission to promote, educate and pass information to the Fulani extract with provision of a *Fulani Radio*. The radio service was proposed to operate on frequency of 720KHz and will be strictly in Fulani language, dedicated to the group^{xlviii}. The government had budgeted 1,399, 811, 307 for the commission. Other allocations were also added under the Ministry of Agriculture for livestock production which comprises of grazing reserves among other things. For instance, the allocation for the national Grazing Reserves Development was decimated to engulf N6, 903,882,142 pn 2019 budget^{xlix}.

This among others are found by Nigerian as authoritative allocation of resources in favour of Fulani extraction. For instance, the radio station is purely a Fulani one whereas, the various groups that the Fulani comes into conflict with are not Fulani! Other argument is that, similar project worth of same amount has not been projected for the farmers. Also, Federal Government idea of acquiring a government funded Amplitude Modulation (AM) Radio Broadcast license to educate herdsmen, and to foster peace and harmony between the group and crop farmers wherever they were in collision, is seen as a confirmation of an alleged conspiracy by other ethnic groups.

Within its efforts to putt last solution to the conflict, on 25 June 2019, the Federal Government came up with the idea of RUGA policy. The Rural Grazing Area (RUGA) was proposed to be piloted in eleven states namely: Sokoto, Adamawa, Nasarawa Kaduna, Kogi, Taraba, Katsina, Plateau, Kebbi, Zamfara and Niger with another unnamed state. The settlements were supposed to comprise grazing areas and villages with some basic infrastructure a school, a health center, and a veterinary. The Permanent Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, **Mohammed Umar**, announced that the settlements will house nomadic herdsmen who breed animals. According to him, The RUGA settlement are as were supposed to accommodate them and their livestock, which would make it easier to identify the grazing routes of the herders and would allow for fewer conflicts with the settled farmers.

The policy was perceived by other ethnic groups to have been endorsed by the pro-north ethnic groups, which including the pressure group, Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN) given assumption that RUGA is from Hausa language. Amidst of this, the spokesperson for the Presidency, Garba Shehu, express the intention of government that:

The Federal Government is proposing (RUGA) in order to curb open grazing of animals that continue to pose security threats to farmers and herders. The overall benefit to the nation includes a drastic reduction in conflicts between

herders and farmers, a boost in animal protection complete with a value chain that will increase the quality and hygiene of livestock, in terms of beef and milk production, increased quality of feeding and access to animal care and private sector participation in commercial pasture production by way of investments^l.

In similar vein, Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, **Mohammed Umar** stated further that:

We felt that to do away with herders-farmers' conflict, we need to settle our nomads and those who breed animals. We want to put them in a place that has been developed as a settlement, where we provide water for their animals, pasture, schools for their children, security, agro-rangers. We also felt that we need to develop cattle markets whereby you don't need to be transporting animals through very long distances. We will also bring in investors that will set up modern centers where cattle breeders can slaughter their animals. When we do that, a lot of other things will come up. We are going to change their lifestyle, take them away from our streets and from wandering in the bush and develop districts, hamlets and towns and in the next five to 10 years you will never see a nomad moving about, wandering or kidnapping. And this will end all these security challenges^{li}

The settlement was supposed to provide basic amenities such as schools, hospitals, road networks, veterinary clinics, markets and manufacturing entities that would process and add value to meats and animal products.

RUGA Policy, politics and ethnics contradictions

Out of all policies attempt to proffering solution to herder's farmers problems in Nigeria, RUGA remains a controversial one. The government had designed Ruga to create security for pastoral families and curtail cattle rustling, as well as provide a palliative as an alternative to peace and security of lives and properties in Nigeria^{lii}. There was public uproar as reactions and counter-reactions to the policy. The re-actions were from all parts of the country in different tones, full of ethnic narratives. While some were seen as propaganda, some were taken for threats. A spokesman for the Coalition of Northern Group, Abdul-Azeez Suleiman, for example, gave a warning statement that, the debates on whether to accept the RUGA policy or not. He emphatically stated that:

While we warn all state governments that stand against the implementation of the RUGA Initiative to desist and give peace a chance, we place President Buhari and the Federal Government on notice that they must completely stop this raging madness within 30-days beginning from today, Wednesday (Abdul- Azeez, august 27, 2019)

Another respondent from southwestern state posts that, the policy would have created ethnic tensions especially when Nigeria is a multi-ethnic country, he wondered why only the Fulani were considered for such huge project.

He further stated that such policy would only increase the population of the Fulani in these 36 states where Government wanted to introduce the policy referring to the experience of Fulani invasion and their historical narrative. The policy according to him is an open cheque that can be used to occupied more lands in the southwest states. He stated that this can be made possible because the Fulani at present has more advantage since, they are having one of their own as the President. He queried government thinking; and what is going to be the intake of other ethnic groups in this policy? Would government also make a policy similar to this in favour of farmers among other ethnic groups in Nigeria (In-depth interview with a key informant in Saki, Okeogun Area of Oyo State, Nigeria.

Sharing similar fear of insecurity and ethnic perception, another respondent notes:

The RUGA project by its design is a seductive way of taking peoples lands away from them to serve the interest of the Fulani headsmen. When they have not been given permanent settlement in their host states, the manner and pattern of their infiltration into other states in southwest revealed there is a secret agenda to occupied our land not to even talk about the havocs they have caused on the people farms and numbers of death. (In-depth interview with Elder Alaribe, a cashew farmer from Enugu state, 20 September, 2019)

He explained that policy would not do anything good than further the ethnic sentiment since the policy has already been noted to promote Fulani hegemony at the disadvantage of other ethnic groups.

A respondent from Benue state demonstrated his fears of the belligerent nature of the Fulani herdsmen based on the different encounters in the state. He advised that Fulani should not be trusted as they could turn things against their landowners. Given to those encounters and his experience as a local administrator; he described Fulani as someone that an average southerner would never trust again considering the recent damage they have suffered (Solomo Odey, a Local Farmer, from Agatu community in Benue state, 10 September, 2019).

Another respondent from Osun state referred to the RUGA policy as another partition in Nigerian states by Fulani ethnic group especially, with president Muhammadu Buhari as their kinsmen. To him, Buhari is only trying to complete the unfinished work of Usmandan Fodio Jihad of 1804 when Hausa lands were being occupied. He suggested that, rather than making RUGA settlement compulsory and mandated project for all states, it should be optional for any states that interested in such livestock economic project noting that policy still have a laudable benefit notwithstanding.

According to Alhaji Abdullahi Bodejo, the National President of Miyetti Allah Kautel Hore, he reiterates that the Fulani herders can relocate to Sambisa Forest and that Fulani did not even ask for RUGA:

Nobody requested for RUGA settlement in the first place. The Fulani already have their RUGA. What is the meaning of RUGA? "Is it not a place where you have the Fulani houses? So, we already have RUGA but I do not know why all the confusion about all the issues concerning the Fulani in this country. This is because we have grazing reserve areas and people are not talking about it. They initially talked about the cattle colony and from there, they now started talking about RUGA. They said they wanted to settle the Fulani in one place but did anybody tell them what they wanted to do? Nobody had any meeting with them on the issue of RUGA but I noticed that there are now desperate people who claim to be Fulani leaders by all means^{liii}

See how innocent Fulani people are being chased away in the Southeast and other places as if they are not Nigerians. What caused these things is the issue of RUGA while the Fulani being chased away do not even know about the RUGA policy.

A respondent from Enugu State queried Federal Government thinking of RUGA policy of granting peoples' land to non-indigenes without their consents considering that it has been established that most of the Fulani Herdsmen are not Nigerians, but migrant. He puts it thus:

In the last couple of weeks, Nigerians mounted a sustained serious resistance to the unpopular 'RUGA' policy and its implementation by the 'Fulani Government' of President Muhammadu Buhari. Hear them again; it is now e-Registration for illegal immigrants!! Who are these illegal immigrants? The obvious answer is, the promoters of, and the numerous cross border Fulani herdsman currently terrorizing Nigerians in their ancestral homes as allowed by Muhammadu Buhari's government (In-depth Interview September, 2019)^{liv}.

Similarly, another respondent condemned the policy while referencing the culture of the Fulani which transhumance, he argued that they will still go about grazing outside the settle area whenever there is shortage of the facilities provided or what happens when the grasses within the RUGA is exhausted by the herd? He further stated that, the policy has a political undertone and if government is sincere, such settlement in a particular state should have been done for indigenes who intend to rear herds and not for non-indigenes. To him:

The policy has something very good and important but the content of the policy and the period of the proposed policy is counterproductive. If the policy is truly meant to ending herdsman/farmer clashes and prevent cattle rustling the government should have allowed private individuals to get involved in the acquisition of land and the business of ranching. (In-depth interview with a respondent from Kogi State)^{lv}.

Representatives and the leading figures of Socio-cultural groups in the southwestern southeast Nigeria, the popular Afenifere and Oodua People's Congress groups were not left out of the discourse. Aare Ona Kakanfo of Yoruba land, and the leader of Oodua People's Congress; Chief Gani Adams, queries how Herdsmen go about carrying sophisticated weapons unchallenged by the security forces if not because they are being supported. He argued that:

How can ordinary Fulani herdsman be holding AK 47? In our findings, the AK 47 rifle goes for about N1 million and with many bullets. We are looking beyond ordinary Fulani herdsman...We have realized that there are some forces behind them in three phases; those who strike in the bush, those who issued statements to back them up and those who are strategists, who give instructions to those who strike (In-depth Interview with Chief Gani Adams, 2019).

Like Afenifere position, the National Publicity Secretary of Ohanaeze Ndigbo, Uche Achi-Ukpaga, said that ranching remains the way out, but the ranches should be built in the north where the cattle are:

Our position on RUGA is that it should be cancelled and not suspended. Suspension is like keep-in-view. Some of the actions of the government are laughable. We want RUGA to be cancelled. We don't want it in the South. If we must do ranching, let them do it in the north where there is a large expanse of land lying fallow. Why coming to the South where the land is congested? (Secretary, Ohanaeze Ndigbo)

The National Secretary of the Niger Delta group, Dr Alfred Mulade, advised the government to steer clear of the issue, and anyone, who wished to set up ranches, should be free to do so. He stated that:

Ranching is okay but it should be left to the herders just like the way any Igbo man hires a shop in any part of the country for his business (Afred Mulade, 2019).

Government according to him should steer clear of it, because cattle rearing is purely a business venture just like any other business. If the herders feel they need to do ranching, they could buy land in any part of the country. The government cannot force anything down the throats of the people. The group's Coordinator, the Taraba Volunteer Group, a civil society organisation commended Mr Joseph Terence, and Legal Adviser, Mr Nierus Johnson, in Jalingo, Taraba appreciate President Muhammadu Buhari for listening to the voice of reason and suspending the proposed RUGA but said:

RUGA settlement was clearly against the import and the provisions of Section 42 (1) b of the 1999 Constitution as amended which provides for equal treatment for all communities and citizens. "Rather than spend huge sums of money to benefit only a community in the name of RUGA settlement, such funds should be used in alleviating the sufferings of millions of Nigerians in IDP camps (Joseph at Internally Displaced Camp, September 2019).

Professor Wole Soyinka while responding to the folly nature of RUGA policy describes President Bihari's gesture as a deceitful way to a lot undue favour to his kinsmen and at the same time encourage herders' men who have murdered with impunity. Describing the Herdsmen and the kinds of nefarious acts he stated that:

They kill without any compunction, they drive away the farmers who have been contributing to the food solutions in the country, the cattle eat their crops and then you come up with RUGA. I think that there is going to be trouble in the country, if this RUGA thing is not handled imaginatively and with humanity as priority. Any country where cattle take priority over human life is at an elementary stage^{lvi}.

To some opinion leaders in the selected states, while the policy appeared to be good economic wise, as it tends to be a value chain to the increase livestock and beef production, job opportunities long time investments; attempt taken by the Federal Government to use its prerogative power to forcefully acquire land in any state of Nigeria for herdsmen is what they, felt that is unconstitutional. And on this reason majority of respondents from southeast in their responses rejected the policy^{lvii}. The nature in which the policy was bugled into the budget of the ministry of Agriculture without the consent of the Nigerian and the Ninety National Assembly suggests that there could be some element truth in the suspicion as well as allegation of an Islamisation and fulinazation agenda; as presently described. On this note, Christian groups have repeatedly argued that the government had a hidden agenda to Islamize the country through these settlement schemes, with the reasoning that President Buhari himself is a Fulani and a Muslim. It seems serving only those engaged in cattle business; while those who are farmers and who have suffered the same in the conflict are neglected. In fact, it is said to be preferential and sentimental, which only serves a particular group interest. The President to them have vested interests especially with his declaration of his asset in 2015 when he stated that he has 270 heads of cattle.

As at when RUGA policy was suspended, Southern and Middle Belt Leaders Forum (SMBLF) have already raised an allegation against federal government claiming that there is a clandestine plan by the Federal Government to repeal the Land Use Act, and take over the control of lands in the country from state governors. This they said, was to enable the government to subsequently implement the suspended RUGA project Several questions from different quarters were further raised reason why the FG is not going ahead with RUGA in some northern states that have accepted the policy if the whole idea was not about land-grabbing in the South and Middle Belt states. The political gladiators and pressure group are of the view that the Federal Government's support for local government autonomy was hinged on the RUGA scheme to allow "aliens" to take over allotted land under the programme. The Secretary of Christian Association of Nigeria CAN in the 17 Southern States, Dr Joseph Ajujungwa said:

The suspension of the programme by President Muhammadu Buhari may not be its end, said there was every indication though it is claimed that it has been suspended, the underground work is still going on. Every Southerner should be watchful, even as we pray, we do not need to keep quiet; they are experts in underground work. We do not have land to give to anybody as a grazing field or colony and we call on the South-East governors to maintain their stand that they do not have such a place. Do you know what it means to give 10 hectares of land to herdsmen?^{lviii}.

To this author, while government has overlooks and indeed ignored the essential stages of good policy making as: agenda setting, policy formulation, adoption and implementation; Nigerians have equally failed to understand that policy and the livestock economy would not have been economy policy to favour Fulani ethnic group alone.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Different regimes and government in Nigeria have made different attempts as concern the policies mediate on the incessant conflicts between farmers and herders. RUGA policy among other previous proposed policies was announced to give relief to the farmers host communities as well as the herders who have also been faced with attacks by bandits and cattle rustlers. The perceived historical mistrust among the ethnic groups in Nigeria, however, have brought about suspicion; given reason for the slogans or agendas such like Fulanization and Islamization agenda with the fear of taking over their ancestral land and fear of non-vacation if the lands are needed by their coming generations among others. It is observed that infusion of ethno-religion and political affections appear to have befuddled our understanding of the underlying character of the pastoralist, farmers conflicts given the audacious armed banditry, robbery, kidnapping, and cattle rustling allegedly perpetrated by the arms bearing herders. This is intandem with Scholar's work over the years that among other factors the fear of domination, marginalization, ethnicity and religion remains the major problems of the Nigerian Federal System ^{lix}.

It is observed that even while the RUGA policy had been declared suspended, the apprehension and suspicion of an ethnic domination remained pervasive. The ethnic suspicion which seems to predate Nigeria independence era, rather than farming the herders' farmers violent conflict appropriately as a contestation over valuable resource use. There has been growing tendency towards dressing it with the toga of ethno-religious uprising where which each group use to mobilize to protect their interest. RUGA policy and other though might have proffered a positive solution; it was rejected for the obvious reasons, which had been given over the years considering the ethnic complexity^{lx}.

What this study found, which is peculiar to previous policies, is that the Nigerian government had gone beyond introducing the policy but have already budgeted into budget, huge sum of money without due consultations with collective involvement of ethnic groups. It appears clearly that the federal government somersaulted its policy fashion from agenda setting to implementation. Such policy error does not ensure confidence rather, it undermines trust, it raises more question than it proffers solutions. The hasty and clandestine attempt by the Federal Government and its RUGA policy had led to apprehension

Policy experts have agreed that public, policymaking is a process and not a one-off event; it is thus characterized as a dynamic, complex, and interactive system through which public problems are identified and countered by creating new public policy or by reforming existing public policy^{lxi}. Where any policy is contrived to advance sectional or vested interests, that policy ceases to be in the common interest. That is exactly where Nigeria finds itself with the controversial Rural Gracing Areas (RUGA) settlement. The folly and falsities of that policy are deep-seated and very polarizing. Like every other policy, in theory, every public policy ought to meet of three definitional premises or a combination of two to efficiently regulatory, distributive or redistributive. Most Nigerian policy do not in any sense meet any of these parameters. If the policy makers carryout their duty with transparency, there would be more cooperation from Nigeriansand slogan such asfulanisation or islamization would be minimize. Though, the fact remained that we are facing economic challenges which require modernization of old modes of production and this is not in doubt with the problems associated with the changing security and social integration in the current crisis; a period when an atmosphere of ethno-religious suspicion has replaced the previous harmonious coexistence. Thus, whatsoever it is merit, there is need for policy rethink for collective beneficial and inclusiveness of all Nigerian ethnic groups.

Conflict of Interest: None declared.

Ethical Approval: Not applicable.

Funding: None.

References

- Arıcan, H. O. B. (2022). The Effect of the Computer Anxiety Levels of Physical Education Teachers on Distance Education Competence: Structural Equation Model Analysis. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 11(1), 112-124.
- Asrizal, A., Dhanil, M., & Usmeldi, U. (2023). The effect of STEAM on science learning on student learning achievement: A Meta-Analysis. *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan IPA*, 9(4), 1650-1657.
- Azeem, A. (2018). Study of academic anxiety and academic achievement among secondary school students. *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences*, 8(3), 147-161.
- Brook, C. A., & Willoughby, T. (2015). The social ties that bind: Social anxiety and academic achievement across the university years. *Journal of youth and adolescence*, 44, 1139-1152.
- Carey, E., Devine, A., Hill, F., & Szűcs, D. (2017). Differentiating anxiety forms and their role in academic performance from primary to secondary school. *PloS one*, 12(3), e0174418.
- Cazan, A. M., Cocoradă, E., & Maican, C. I. (2016). Computer anxiety and attitudes towards the computer and the internet with Romanian high-school and university students. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 55, 258-267.
- Halder, U. K. (2018). English language anxiety and academic achievement. *UGC Journal*, 4(3), 138-147.
- Lee, A. (2015). Determining the effects of computer science education at the secondary level on STEM major choices in postsecondary institutions in the United States. *Computers & Education*, 88, 241-255.
- Master, A., Cheryan, S., & Meltzoff, A. N. (2016). Computing whether she belongs: Stereotypes undermine girls' interest and sense of belonging in computer science. *Journal of educational psychology*, 108(3), 424.
- Nolan, K., & Bergin, S. (2016, November). The role of anxiety when learning to program: a systematic review of the literature. In *Proceedings of the 16th kali calling international conference on computing education research* (pp. 61-70).
- Núñez-Peña, M. I., Suárez-Pellicioni, M., & Bono, R. (2016). Gender differences in test anxiety and their impact on higher education students' academic achievement. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 228, 154-160.
- Pekrun, R. (2017). Emotion and achievement during adolescence. *Child Development Perspectives*, 11(3), 215-221.
- Selinger, A., & Gröstenberger, E. (2024). The effect of gender and age on computer self-efficacy, computer anxiety and perceived enjoyment among Austrian secondary school teachers. *MAP Education and Humanities*, 4, 1-9.
- Torkzadeh, G., & Angulo, I. E. (1992). The concept and correlates of computer anxiety. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 11(2), 99-108.
- Torkzadeh, G., & Angulo, I. E. (1992). The concept and correlates of computer anxiety. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 11(2), 99-108.
- Zhan, Y., Hong, J. C., & Zhao, L. (2024). Effects of goal achievement motivation on K-12 students' resilience in STEAM activities: the mediating role of in-school social supports. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, 1-17.

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The views, opinions, and data presented in all publications are exclusively those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and do not necessarily reflect the position of BRPI or its editorial team. BRPI and the editorial team disclaim any liability for any harm to individuals or property arising from the use of any ideas, methods, instructions, or products mentioned in the content.

Endnotes

- Ademola, E.O. Herder-Farmer Conflicts and RUGA Policy: Why Nigerian Stakeholders are at Loggerheads over Rural Settlements? *Journal of Ethnic Studies Review*.43 (3): 103-121, University of California (2020).
- Thebaud, B. and Batterbury, S. Sahel pastoralists: Opportunism, struggle, conflict and negotiation, a case study from Eastern Niger. *Glob.* 2001. 11: pp69-78 *Environ. Change*.
- Blanco-Mancilla, G. Citizenship and religion in Nigeria: Comparative perspectives of Islam Christianity in Kaduna state. *Institute of Development Studies*, (University of Sussex, 2002).
- Egwu, S. G 'The Political Economy of Ethnic and Religious Conflicts in Nigeria'. In Festus Okoye, ed. *Ethnic and Religious Rights in Nigeria*. Human Rights Monitor, Kaduna (1998).
- Egwu, S.G. *Ethnic and Religious Violence in Nigeria*, Jos: African Centre for Democratic Governance (AFRIGOV) (2001).

Ademola, E.O. Ibid.

McGregor, Andrew. "Alleged connection between Boko Haram and Nigeria's Fulani Herdsmen could spark a Nigerian Civil War" *Terrorism Monitor*, XII, 10: (2014) pp 8-10.

ICG. 'Herders against Farmer: Nigeria's Expanding Deadly Conflict' *Africa Report* No 252, (Belgium: ICG (2017).

ICG. 'Stopping Nigeria's Spirally Farmer-Herder Violence. *Africa Report* N° 262. 26 July. Belgium: ICG (2018).

AI "Harvest of Death: Three years of Bloody clashes between Farmers and Herders in Nigeria" Abuja. (2018) <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/AFR4495032018ENGLISH.PDF>

Obi.A. Insurgency by Other Means. *News Express*. 2016. [http://www.newsexpressngr.com/news/details.php?news=22947&title=Insurgency by other means](http://www.newsexpressngr.com/news/details.php?news=22947&title=Insurgency+by+other+means)> Retrieved 25 December 2019.

Oyama, S. "Farmer-Herder Conflict, Land Rehabilitation, and Conflict Prevention in the Sahel Region of West Africa" *African Study Monographs*, 50: (2014) 103–122.

Hussein, Karim, Sumberg, James & Seddon David "Increasing Violent Conflict between Herders and Farmers in Africa: Claims and Evidence" *Development Policy and Review*, 17: (1999) pp 397-418

Seddon, D. & Sumberg, J. "Conflict between Farmers and Herders in Africa: An Analysis" (1997) DFID: UK, 1-2.

Baca, M. Farmer -Herder clashes Amplify challenge for Beleaguered Nigerian Security. *Global Observatory* (2015). Retrieved <<http://theglobalobservatory.org/2015/07/farmer-herder-nigeria-buhari-abuja-fulani>

Homer-Dixon, T. F. *Environment, scarcity, and violence*. Princeton (NJ): Princeton University Press (1999)

de Soysa, I. Eco violence: Shrinking pie or honey pot? *Global Environmental Politics* (2002),2:4, Retrieved 20 October 2019 from http://www.svt.ntnu.no/iss/Indra.de.Soyas/published/gep_ecoviolence.pdf

Seter, H. & Theisen, O. M. "Environmental and security parameters". In OECD, Conflict over resources and terrorism: Two facets of insecurity. OECD Publishing, (2013). Retrieved 23 August 2019 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264190283-2-en>. pp. 14-31

Agbese, D. Fulani herdsmen? Here are the grim statistics. (2017, Retrieved 3 November 2019 from <https://guardian.ng/opinion/fulani-herdsmen-here-are-the-grim-statistics>

Ibid

Agbese, D. 2017, Ibid.

Barkun, M. A "Culture of conspiracy: Apocalyptic visions in contemporary America" (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

Sunstein, C. R., & Vermeule, A. Conspiracy theories: Causes and cures. *The Journal of Political Philosophy*, 17, (2009). pp 202–227. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9760.2008.00325.x>

Sunstein, C. R. & Vermeule, A. Conspiracy theories. University of Chicago Public Law & Legal Theory Working Paper, (2008) No. 199.

Garson, G.D. *Group Theories of Politics*. California: Sage Publications, Inc. (1978)

Dye, T. R. *Understanding Public Policy, Fourth Edition*, NJ: Prentice-Hall (1981).

Anderson, J.E. (1997). *Public Policy-Making: An Introduction 3rd ed*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Fox, W., Bayat, S., & Ferriera, N. Introduction. In W. Fox, S. Bayat, & N. Ferriera (Eds.), *A guide to managing public policy* (pp. ix-xi). Cape Town: Juta & Co. (2006).

Baskin Darryl, "American Pluralism: Theory, Practice, and Ideal" *The Journal of Politics*, 32, 1:1970 71-95.

Blench, R. and Dendo, M. "The transformation of conflict between pastoralists and cultivation in Nigeria". Paper in press for the *Journal Africa*, edited by M. Moritz (2003).

Shehu, D. and Hassan, W. Women in Dairying in the African Savannah: Their Contribution to Agro-pastoral Household Income in the Dry NorthWest of Nigeria. *Nomadic Peoples*. No. 36/37 (1995). pp 53-64

Blench, R. Conflict between Pastoralists and Cultivators in Nigeria: Review paper prepared for DFID, Nigeria. 9 August (2010).

Tonah S. Managing farmer-herder conflicts in Ghana's Volta Basin. *Ibadan Journal of Social Sciences*, 4(1):200633-45

Omilusi, D.O. Roving terrorists or innocuous cattle grazers? Between herdsmen's economic survival and community annihilation in Nigeria. *Cultural Relations Quarterly Review*. Vol. 3. (2016) pp48-76

Omotola, S. & Hassan, I. Herders' and farmers' associations and social conflicts in Northern Nigeria. In M. J. Kuna & J. Ibrahim (Eds.), *Rural banditry and conflicts in Northern Nigeria*. Abuja: Centre for Democracy and Development. (2015) Pp. 217–255

Okoli, A. C. Pastoral transhumance and dynamics of social conflict in Nasarawa State, North Central Nigeria. In M. J. Kuna & J. Ibrahim (Eds.), *Rural banditry and conflicts in Northern Nigeria*. (Abuja: Centre for Democracy and Development, 2015). Pp. 389–446

Amzat, A et al. Terrorist in the name of Herdsmen. *The Guardian Newspapers*, 29 April 2016.

Eromo, E. Nigeria land disputes fuel surge in herdsmen violence. (2016) <http://uk.reuters.com/journalists/eromo-egbejule> [accessed on January 27th 2018]

Odufowokan, D. "Herdsmen or Killer Squads?" *The Nation Newspaper*, 30, March 2016.

Vanguard Newspaper, "Herdsmen" and Gathering Storm, 28 April 2016.

Mabogunje. L "Land Reform in Nigeria: Progress, Problems and Prospects". Paper presented in the Presidential Technical Committee on April 2, 2009.

Ademola E.O. Herder-Farmer Conflicts and RUGA Policy: Why Nigerian Stakeholders are at Loggerheads over Rural Grazing Settlements. *Ethnic Studies Review* (2020) 43 (3): 103–121

Ibid

Orji, Sunday "Nigeria's 'cattle colony' problem: Why a controversial policy proposed by the Nigerian Government will not resolve land disputes in Nigeria" (2019) 8 February.

Yusuf, A Vincent and Buhari, Safina "Ogbeh defines 'cattle colonies' ranches as panacea to farmers-herders crisis" *DailyTrust*, 14 January (2018). <https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/ogbeh-defines-cattle-colonies-ranches-as-panacea-to-farmers-herders-crisis.html> (accessed 6-9-2019).

Femi Adesina is Special Assistant on Media and Publicity to President Muhammadu Buhari, (2018).

Alhassan "Nigerians won't be able to afford beef if we stop open grazing now—Alhassan is the Miyetti Allah Kautal Hore Secretary General 7 July(2019).

Sahara Reporter, "Southern and Middle belt Leaders Reject Fulani Radio Station Founded by Federal Government" May 23, 2019.

Federal Republic of Nigeria, "Appropriation Bill". Abuja: Ministry of Finance. (2019)

Saturday Punch "Growing insecurity and Buhari's struggle to sell the RUGA solution" 6 July, (2019, p.36)

Umar is the permanent Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Mohammed Umar [FMARD] 7 things you should know about Buhari's controversial RUGA settlements in *Pulse News* online

Mudashir, I., Ogbonna, N., & Aliyu, A. "Nigeria: Why Government is Establishing Ruga Settlements –

Presidency". *Daily Trust*, Abuja. 1July, 2019.

Abdullahi Badejo is the National President of Miyetti Allah Kautel Hore Socio-cultural organization of Fulani cattle breeders in Nigeria.

Interview in Enugu, South east September 2019

Interview

Punch Newspaper. "Power politics and Conflict in Nigeria". 30 July, 2019.

Onyekpere, Eze "The Ruga Controversy" *The Punch*, 1 July (2019).

Ajujungwa is the CAN Secretary for the Seventeen states in Southern Nigerian States

Osaghae, E. E., & Suberu, R. T. A history of identities, violence and stability in Nigeria Oxford: Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity, (University of Oxford. 2005). p. 95.

Ademola, E.O. 2020. Herder-Farmer Conflicts and RUGA policy: Why Nigerian stakeholders are at Loggerheads over rural gracing settlement? *Ethnic Studies Review* 45 (3) 103-121

Obaze H. O. "Folly and Falsities of RUGA Settlement" *Business DayNewspaper* 9 July (2019). <https://businessday.ng/opinion/article/ folly-and-falsities-of-RUGA-settlements/>