

## Internal Displacement of Farmers and Food Losses in Benue State, Nigeria

Uza Dooshima<sup>1</sup> Alamveabee Effraim Idyorough<sup>2</sup> Confort Ugbem-Onah<sup>3</sup> Solomon Chimela Nwafor<sup>3\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Centre for Food Technology and Research, Benue State University Makurdi

<sup>2</sup>Department of Sociology, Federal University of Lafia

<sup>1</sup>Department of Sociology, Benue State University Makurdi

<sup>3</sup>Research Outreach Department, National Root Crops Research Institute, Unudike

\*Corresponding Author: [solomonnwafor8@gmail.com](mailto:solomonnwafor8@gmail.com)

### Abstract

**Background:** Internal displacement has become the norm in far too many countries, often in places with some of the lowest development indicators and the highest levels of violence. In many places it is fueled and perpetuated by unresolved inter-ethnic, religious or political tensions. Displacement affects food security, also provides fertile ground for human rights abuses including torture, rape, killings, as well as forced evictions, forced migration and loss of heritage. In Nigeria, the clashes, instead of abating have been on the increase exponentially to the dismay of rural farmers. However, in spite of the spate of violent clashes between nomadic herdsman and farmers in Nigeria, and other causative factors of internal displacement of rural farmers, adequate social research attention has not been given to the implications and its effects on household food production and food security generally. The study therefore investigated the quantity of food losses from 2016 to 2020 as a result of internal displacement of farmers in Benue State.

**Materials and Methods:** This study employed social survey design. A combination of Cluster sampling, random sampling and purposive sampling was used in selecting 429 respondents for the study. Data was collected with the use of a well semi-structured questionnaire and analyzed quantitatively.

**Results:** The result shows that most of the internally displaced farmers 142 (39.4%) were within the age bracket of 56 – 65 years with 225(62.5%) of the female and that a simple majority of the respondents 139(38.6%) had only primary education. majority of the IDPs 112(31.1) are farmers with farming experience of 16 – 20 years. 131(36.4%) and 99(27.5%) of the respondents had farm sizes ranging from 1-2 hectares and 3-4 hectares of land respectively with majority of them having been displaced for over 12months. The results on quantity of food lost indicated a level of decrease in quantity of crop production from 2016-2020 which is evidence that violence and internal displacement have negatively influenced agricultural productivity and investment.

**Conclusion:** The study recommended a process of peace building which is multi-faceted, involving re-establishing security and law and order; reconstruction and economic rehabilitation; reconciliation and social rehabilitation; and political transition to creating a more accountable governance structures and institutions

**Key Words:** Internal Displacement; Food Losses; Cassava; Yam

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### 1. Introduction

Internal displacement has become the norm in far too many countries, often in places with some of the lowest development indicators and the highest levels of violence. In many places it is fueled and perpetuated by unresolved inter-ethnic, religious or political tensions. Displacement affects food security, also provides fertile ground for human rights abuses including torture, rape, killings, as well as forced evictions, forced migration and loss of heritage (Nwalia, 2017).

Worldwide, the rate of internal displacement has been on the increase, the Internal Displacement Monitoring (IDMC, 2013) accounted that in 1982, only 1.2 million people were IDPs in 11 countries; however, by 1995, there were 20 to 25 million in more than 40 countries, almost twice as many as refugees. At the end of 2008, there were 26 million people worldwide who had been internally displaced by conflict, general violence or violations of human rights. This figure rose to 27.1 million at the end of 2009 and 27.5 million at the end of 2010 (IDMC, 2013). The estimated figure at the end of 2012 was 28.8 million indicating that additional 6.5 million people were newly displaced, nearly twice as many as the 3.5 million during 2011. IDPs suffer emotional

problems which are characterized by memory of fearful events and nightmare (Durosaro and Ajiboye ,2011), loss of livelihoods, frustrations, abuses, threats of assaults among others (Mazo, 2011). The misery of displaced persons has in recent years become a formidable problem of global significance and implications (Ladan, 2006).

In recent times, Nigeria has been plunged into series of clashes springing flashes of armed attacks and silent killings at different locations in the forms of Boko Haram in the North eastern part of the country, farmers/headers crises in many states of the federation, Agitations for the Emancipation of the Republic of Biafra in the South East, Militants in the Niger Delta Area among several others. These crises have impeded the basic right of freedom of movement of people within the area. Unsuspecting villagers are attacked on their way to farm, isolated houses are besieged and burn to ashes living the people homeless and displaced.

The Boko Haram insurgency has led to extensive displacement of households which in turn has become a major factor affecting food security in the northeast of Nigeria. Already poor and vulnerable host communities have absorbed large numbers of people fleeing violence, which has placed considerable pressure on fragile agricultural and pastoral livelihoods, while the insecurity has severely disrupted markets and food availability. In July 2016, the Nigerian Minister of Health declared a “nutrition emergency” in Borno State. Critical levels of food insecurity and malnutrition have been reported in the worst-hit and least accessible areas. Millions of people face severe food insecurity with some areas having seen no food production in the last three years, poor access to markets, high prices of staple foods, low incomes, depleted household food stocks, and the adoption of extreme coping strategies. Some 4.5 million people are now severely food insecure in the three northeastern states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. Of these, more than 65 000 people are classified in phase 5 (Famine), while the number of those in phase 4 (Emergency) has tripled since March 2016, reaching over 1 million.

In recent times, the issue of violent clashes and instability between farmers and nomadic herdsmen across the regions in Nigeria has become a major focus to the Nigerian Government, International and National or indigenous development organizations. This to a large extent, if not nipped in the bud, may affect the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 2 which aims at ending hunger, achieving food security and improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture by 2030. The clashes, instead of abating have been on the increase exponentially to the dismay of helpless Nigerians. However, in spite of the spate of violent clashes between nomadic herdsmen and farmers in Nigeria, and other causative factors of internal displacement of rural farmers, adequate social research attention has not been given to the implications as its effects on household food production and food security generally. With the tremendous population increase in Nigeria, this has constituted a threat to food security as farmers are displaced from their farmlands.

Agricultural production in any country requires an enabling environment to reach its maximum potential, sustainable development in agriculture among other things demands a peaceful co-existence between the producer communities. But despite Nigeria’s great potential to increase agricultural productivity and food production particularly in northern regions, serious crises of conflicts in these areas have worsened the already existing challenges to production, such as climate change, poor soils and lack of access to credit and extension services.

Internal displacement is a formidable challenge to economic development, threat to food security and sustainable livelihood of the agrarian communities (Ukamaka, Danjuma, Mbolle, Achonam, and Mbadiwe, (2017). The implication of the conflicts resulted to the insecurity, displacement, disability and death, poor food production, widespread hunger and malnutrition in the North-Central geo-political zone of Nigeria.

Not only has the displacement of rural farmers limited food production and increased food losses, it also has the propensity to deny people access to food and availability of food supply. Prices of food remain extremely high around the country and are expected to continue increasing due to current inflation and recession. Conflict affected households thus face additional strain in accessing stable food due to their reduced purchasing power.

Several efforts have been made internationally and locally to curtail the rate of internal displacement yet the menace is still on the increase. Though several studies have been conducted to ascertain the effects of displacement, not much has been done on rural farmer displacement and its impact on food security. Most of the studies on displacement centre on displacement from Natural sources or disasters like drought, flood, and landslides and so on. It is in view of the above that the study investigated the quantity of food losses from 2016 to 2020 in Benue State

The invasion of north-central states by herdsmen have forced farmers to abandon their fertile farmlands, rendering several communities deserted and reduced farmers to tenants in internally displaced persons (IDPs) camps. Nweze (2005) noted that many farmers and herders have lost their lives and herds, while others have

experienced declining productivity in their herds. This according to Olobatoke, and Omowumi, (2017) implies food insecurity in Nigeria.

In addition, Abughdyer, (2016) stated that a total of 664.4 hectares (56.4%) of farmland were destroyed in Benue state between 2010-2014 in three local government areas, namely Agatu, Guma and Logo as a result of farmers and herdsman crises. This development indicates a great danger for food production in Nigeria since the state is the hub of the nation's food security.

Also four farmers interviewed for this paper were located in Benue and Nasarawa states. They reported large drops in their average production of yam, maize, millet, rice and sorghum, from before the conflict in the period 2004-2008 to the period during the conflict; 2009-2013. This reduction in the output of crops is due to a combination of factors. First, there has been reduction in the availability of labour due to the threat of attacks on farmers on their way to their fields. Both farmers and farm labourers are afraid of attacks on the farms or on the roads to farms. The lack of labour has caused inadequate and improperly timed weeding and harvesting. Second, the four farmers interviewed have experienced a situation where they were forced to abandon their farmland leaving them to be overgrown by weeds. This resulted to low productivity.

Similarly, the Assessment Capacity Projects (ACAPS) thematic report (2017) opined that approximately 132,818 are said to be facing IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) levels of food insecurity in Benue; 167,561 in plateau; and 212,348 in Kaduna states as at December 2016, with 12,063 in Phase 4 in Plateau state. 46,000 were projected to face crisis of food security conditions in Benue, Kaduna, and Plateau states from June to August 2017. The report further goes to state that Prices of food remain extremely high around the country and are expected to continue increasing due to current inflation and recession. Conflict affected households thus face additional strain in accessing stable food due to their reduced purchasing power. Any food assistance has been inadequate and irregular. Members of the Goska district in Southern Kaduna made up of about 156 households, report receiving food assistance once, and enough for only 30 families.

According to Okereke, (2012) and Bello (2013), the conflicts in most part of Nigeria especially the Fulani herdsman and farmers clash are largely uncalled for. Farmers can no longer farm peacefully because of Fulani herdsman. These Fulani herdsman and farmers clash have pitched Christians and Muslims against each other. Recent studies conducted by Okereke, (2012) and Kasarachi, (2016) have shown that, serious conflict erupt between Fulani herdsman and farmers leading to loss of lives, valuable properties and destruction of vast expanse of arable agricultural farmlands thereby posing serious threat to food security since farmers for fear of attack could no longer go to farm and harvest their farm produce.

Tersoo (2016) assessed the impact of Farmers/Herders conflict on food security in Benue State, Nigeria. The paper examined how the conflict has impacted on food security in Benue State. The result showed that so many human lives were lost; farm lands, residences and schools were destroyed, leading to a decline in farm output (causing food insecurity) and human capital loss. The study therefore recommended a strong government policy on the localization of the pastoralists in line with the world best practices to avoid further conflicts.

## 2. Materials and Methods

This study employed social survey design. Survey design relies on the techniques of sampling a large number of subjects by interviewing and or the use of questionnaire. The study was carried out in Benue State. Benue is a State in the North central region of Nigeria, it has a population of about 5,741,800 (National Bureau of statistics, 2016); its total land area is 34,059km<sup>2</sup> and it is the 11<sup>th</sup> largest land mass in the country. Benue State has its capital at Makurdi. The name Benue is named after the River Benue and the state was formed from Benue Plateau on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February 1976 along with Igala and some parts of Kwara State which were carved out to become part of the present Kogi State. Some popular towns in this state include Vandeikya, Gboko, Ogbadibo Katsina-ala, Okpokwu, Obi, and Makurdi which is the state capital of Benue.

Benue State falls within longitude 7<sup>o</sup>47<sup>1</sup>, 10<sup>o</sup>0E and latitude 6<sup>o</sup>25<sup>1</sup>, 8<sup>o</sup>8<sup>1</sup>N, the State shares boundaries with five other states in Nigeria. It share boundary with Nasarawa State to the North, Taraba State to the East, Cross River State to the South, Enugu State to the South-West and also with Kogi State to the west, hence it shares International boundary with the Republic of Cameroon to the South-East.

**Figure 1: Map of Benue State Showing Distribution of Local Government Areas by Zones**



There are 23 local government areas in Benue State namely Ado, Katsina-Ala, Oju, Agatu, Konshisha, Okpokwu, Apa, Kwande, Oturkpo, Buruku, Logo, Tarka, Gboko, Makurdi, Ukum, Guma, Obi, Ushongo, Gwer-West, Ogbadibo, Vandeikya, Gwer, Ohimini. However, the dominant dwellers in Benue State are the Tiv, Idoma, Igede, Etulo, Abakpa, jukun, Nyifon, Akweya . The Tiv are the major dominant ethnic group, they occupied about 14 local government areas with the Etulo and Jukun, however, Idoma, IgedeAkweya ,Nyifon occupy the remaining nine local government areas, while other migrants like the Igbo, Hausa , Yoruba and some other minor other tribes in Nigeria leave among them.

A combination of Cluster sampling, random sampling and purposive sampling was used in selecting the respondents for the study and data collected with the use of a well semi-structured questionnaire. Benue State is divided into three senatorial districts, namely, North East senatorial district (Zone A) North West Senatorial District (Zone B) and Benue South Senatorial district Zone (C). These three Senatorial Districts make up the three clusters selected for this study

One (1) L.G.A was purposively selected from each of the three senatorial districts. These are L.G.As that has the greater number of displaced persons. Logo local government area was selected from Zone A. Makurdi Local government area was selected from zone B. Agatu local government area was selected from zone C. Furthermore, two (2) internally displaced persons (IDPs) camps and two (2) communities were randomly selected from Logo and Makurdi L.G.As while only two communities were randomly selected from Agatu L.G.A. This is because there is no IDP camp in zone C, as displaced persons are living within the host community.

The total number of registered displaced households in the six (6) selected communities (11,353) and four (4) IDP Camps (4,886) is sixteen thousand, two hundred and thirty nine (16,239). This figure therefore represents the sample frame (Benue State Emergency Management Agency 2018)

**Table 1: Sampling Frame of the Study Areas**

ZONES	LGAs	IDP CAMP	HHS	COMMUNITIES	HHS
A	LOGO	Abeda CAMP Ayiin Camp	422 1271	Abeda community Ugba community	3546 1431
B	MAKURDI	Abagena Camp Agan Camp	1990 1203	Abagena Community Ichwa community	1165 1650
C	AGATU			Usha-Agatu Engila-Agatu	2214 1347

The sample size for each zone was determined by a mathematical formula given by Miller and Brewer (2003) as;

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(\alpha)^2} \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

Where: N is the sample frame for the twelve communities,

n is the sample size and

α is the margin of error (fixed at 5%).

$$n = \frac{16239}{1+16239(0.05)^2} = 390$$

In addition, ten percent (10%) of the number of intended respondent was added to take care of unavailable, unreachable or unwilling respondents. This will make room for missing cases or responses. This will enable us the opportunity to ensure that responses do not fall below 390. That brings the total number to 429 respondents. Data for the study was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and mean

Table 2 captures the details of the sample frame and the sample size for the selected local government areas in all the zones in the study area.

**Table 2: Sample Size Selection Plan**

Zones	LGAs	Camps	Sample frame	Sample size	Communities	Sample frame	Sample size
A	LOGO	Abeda Camp	22	<b>11</b>	Abeda community	3546	<b>93</b>
		Ayiin Camp	271	<b>33</b>	Ugba community	1431	<b>37</b>
B	MAKURDI	Abagena Camp	990	<b>52</b>	Abagena Community	1165	<b>30</b>
		Agan Camp	203	<b>37</b>	Ichwa community	1650	<b>43</b>
C	AGATU				Engila-Agatu	2214	<b>58</b>
					Usha-Agatu	1347	<b>35</b>
<b>Sub total</b>			<b>4886</b>	<b>133</b>		<b>11353</b>	<b>296</b>
<b>Grand total</b>		<b>16,239</b>					<b>429</b>

### 3. Results and Discussion

Table 3 shows that most of the internally displaced farmers 142 (39.4%) were within the age bracket of 56 – 65 years. This was followed by young people mostly children and teens who were Less than 30years 88(24.4%). The least displaced were able bodied young farmers within the age range of 31-55. From the result, old and week farmers from the ages of 56 and above 206(57.4%) were displaced more than any other age bracket. This implies that older persons form a significant proportion of IDP and refugee groups. This result is in consonance with the assertions of (FAO 2020) that older persons form a significant proportion of groups of IDPs and refugees, as 35-65 per cent of them may be over 60 years.

The sex shows that 225(62.5%) of the internally displaced farmers were female while 135(37.5%) were male. This emphasizes that female farmers were displaced more than their male counterparts. 163 (45.2%) of the IDPs

were married, 74621.1%) were single while 122 (33.8%) of the displaced persons have lost either their husbands or wives.

Table 3 below also revealed that most of the respondents constituting 139(38.6%) of the respondents had only primary education closely followed by those with no formal education 122(33.9%). 89(24.7) had secondary education and only 10(2.8%) of the IDPs had tertiary Education. Similar results were reported by Oyekanmi and Okeleye (2007) and Olaniyi, Adetumbi, and Adereti, (2013) in southwest Nigeria. The result implies that internal displacement can interrupt education of the populace, harm their wellbeing and hinder their development. It can reduce their future livelihood opportunities, creating a poverty trap that endures even after displacement. Education plays a central role in the lives of displaced youth. Being able to access quality education is a key factor for integration, protection and for ensuring better conditions for their lives. Displacement poses many challenges to accessing quality education. Schools in poorer communities are seldom sufficient for displaced youth or those in host communities, teachers and educational personnel are often unavailable, there may be shortages of teaching materials, and insecurity may limit students' ability to attend classes (Ferris and Winthrop (2010). School dropout is often related to insufficient family resources. Leaving school to work and help support the family is the main reason that displaced boys in Afghanistan are out of school (UNESCO (2011). It is also a key educational issue in Iraq (Ferris and Winthrop (2010). Dropping out of school can have long-term repercussions on future livelihoods as well as food security

Table 3 also revealed that most of the respondents 297 (82.5%) were Christian, 47(13.0%) were Muslims while 16(4.4%) of the displaced persons were traditional worshiper.

**Table 3: Socioeconomic Characteristics of Displaced Farmers in the Area.**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Age</b>		
Less than 30years	88	24.4
31 – 45	22	6.0
46 – 55	44	12.2
56 – 65	142	39.4
Above 65	64	18.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	135	37.5
Female	225	62.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	163	45.2
Single	76	21.1
Widowed	122	33.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Educational Qualification</b>		
No formal education	122	33.9
Primary Education	139	38.6
Secondary Education	89	24.7
Tertiary Education	10	2.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Religion</b>		
Christianity	297	82.5
Islam	47	13.0
Traditional	16	4.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2021



Table 4 reveals that majority of the IDPs 112(31.1) are farmers with farming experience of 16 – 20 years followed by 98(27.2) with farming experience of 11-15 years. 72(20%) of the IDPs had farming experience 6-10 years while about 56(15.6%) of the IDPs had farming experience of above 21 years. Majority of the displaced farmers 131(36.4%) had farm sizes ranging from 1-2 hectares of land, 99(27.5%) had farm size of 3-4 hectares of land. In all, 71(20%) had between 7 hectares and above. 111(30.8%) of the IDPs had income ranging from 501,000-750,000 naira annually, 98(27.2%) of them had 251,000 – 500,000 as annual income while 81(22.5%) had 1,000,000 and above annually from agricultural activities. The result indicates that the all of the displaced persons are majorly farmers and by implication food production is expected to reduce and therefore, they cannot be said to be food secured. Most of the farmers 223(61.6%) have been displaced for about 1-6 months, 66(18.2%) have been displaced for about 13-18 months, 45(12.5%) have been displaced for 19-24 months while about 21(5.9%) of the IDPs affirmed that they have been displaced for over 25 months.

**Table 4: Socioeconomic characteristics of Internally Displaced Farmers in Benue State**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Years of farming experience</b>		
1 – 5	22	6.1
6 – 10	72	20
11 – 15	98	27.2
16 – 20	112	31.1
21 and Above	56	15.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Farm size before displacement</b>		
Less than 1 hectares	0	0
1-2 hectares	131	36.4
3-4 hectares	99	27.5
5-6 hectares	59	16.4
7-8 hectares	23	6.4
9-10 hectares	22	6.2
11 hectares above	26	7.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Estimate of annual income from farm prior to displacement</b>		
Less than 100,000	17	4.7
100,000 – 250,000	53	14.7
251,000 - 500,000	98	27.2
501,000 - 750,000	111	30.8
1,000,000 and above	81	22.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Number of years displaced</b>		
1-6 months	223	61.8
7 – 12 months	5	1.5
13 – 18 months	66	18.2
19 – 24 months	45	12.5
25months and above	21	5.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2021

***Quantity of Food Lost As A Result Of Internal Displacement of Farmers in Benue State from 2016 To 2020***

From the result in table 5, cassava and yam were the major food crops produced by the respondents. Others include rice, cowpea, groundnuts and oranges among other. Cultivation of these crops has enabled some families to cater for their own needs to a large extent. During harvest season, most agricultural produce in the country used to command low prices because of the glut in the market and this does not allow farmers to get huge returns for their efforts in terms of labour and other resources invested in farming. Even at low prices, some farmers are still unable to sell their produce and as a result, most of them perish as there are inadequate modern storage facilities to store them coupled with the factor that Nigeria is a country that is bedeviled with epileptic power supply. Also, there are insufficient industries to transform or add value to some of these produce so that they can be sold locally or exported to other countries.

### ***Cassava***

The result revealed that in 2016, 108(30%) of the respondents lost between 6001-8000kg (6-8 tons) of cassava while about 147(41%) of the IDPs lost estimated quantity of cassava from 2001kg to 6000kg (2-6 tons). However, 89(25%) of the IDPs lost bigger quantities which were estimated to be from 8001kg and above. In 2017, majority 188(52%) lost about 2001kg to 6000kg (2-6tons) of cassava in the farm. 99(28%) lost from 6001 to 8000kg of cassava while only 52(14%) lost 8001 and above. This implies that the losses of 2016 reduced the productive capacity of the IDPs in 2017, thus only a few were able to produce beyond 800kg. In 2018, 199(55%) lost from 2001kg to 6000kg. the result implies that as the year go, the production capacity of the farmers reduces. Only 44(13%) of the respondents were able to produce 8001kg and above. In 2019, 188(52%) lost from 100kg of cassava to 4000kg while 172(43%) lost from 4001kg to 8000kg. the result implied that farmer could not plant more. This could be for the fear of attack and destruction as the case may be While in 2020, about 186(52%) lost from 4001kg to 8000kg of cassava. This problem poses serious implications for food security in the country as Nigeria is said to be losing about \$9billion annually due to post harvest losses in the agricultural sector (Taiwo-Oguntuase, 2017). Putting that in clear perspective and on crop by crop basis and according to a report published in 2013 by (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (2013) on food losses in cassava and maize value chains in Nigeria, the total sum of monetary losses of cassava at the farm gate and during processing, storage, transport and marketing amounted to around ₦144 billion while the total sum of monetary losses in maize value chains amounted to ₦120.4 billion

### ***Yam***

The result revealed that in 2016, 147(41%) of the respondents lost between 100kg-4000kg (1-4tons tons) of yam while about 202(56%) of the IDPs lost about 4001kg to 10000kg (4-10 tons). However, 11(3%) of the IDPs lost bigger quantities which were estimated to be from 10001kg and above. In 2017, majority 132(37%) lost about 100kg to 4000kg of yam in the farm. 141(39%) lost from 4000 to 8000kg of yam while about 87(24%) lost 10000kg and above and above. In 2018, 73(20%) lost from 8000kg and above. 70(19%) lost about 8000kg in 2019 while 63(18%) lost about 8000kg in 2020

Approximately one-third of the food produced (about 1.3 billion ton), which worth about US \$1 trillion, is lost globally during postharvest operations every year. According to Gustavsson, et al (2011), food waste and loss is a large and increasingly urgent problem and is particularly acute in developing countries where food loss reduces income by at least 15% for 470 million smallholder farmers and downstream value chain actors, most of whom are a part of the 1.2 billion people who are food insecure.

The results above indicated a level of decrease in quantity of crop production which is evidence that violence and internal displacement have negatively influenced agricultural productivity and investment. This could be linked to disruption of the supply and distribution of inputs and outputs, price shocks and massive displacement of labor. These compounding challenges make agricultural investments difficult to maintain in politically volatile environments which according to the assertions of Yigzaw, and Abitew,(2019) is an indication that Internal displacement denies innocent persons access to food, shelter, and medicine and exposes them to all manner of violence. The result implies that in the course of displacement, brain and labour are drained out of the affected areas (rural-urban migration), with the resultant effect of scarcity of labour, skills and knowledge needed for rural agricultural production which has a direct consequence on food security status, economic status and even health status of the populace. The findings agrees with the assertions of Abass, (2012), that productivity of smallholder farmers has been on the decline for some years now and at the same time the rate of rural-urban migration has been on the rise. Those moving from rural to urban areas constitute certain classes, categories and strata of the society that are basically plagued with certain social and economic problems in which poverty ranks highest and most fundamental.



A lot of factors are responsible for postharvest losses in Nigeria and losses occur from harvesting down to processing stage and at the level of the consumer, losses are also recorded. For instance, harvesting of crops like tubers such as yam and cassava requires digging and at times, some of the tubers break and others get stuck in the soil especially during dry season particularly if the soil is full of small stones, gravel etc. Losses also occur in transportation, storage, marketing etc. According to a report by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (2013), it was also indicated that the total value of maize (green and grain) and feed lost between harvest and marketing in Nigeria was ₦120.4 billion

**Table 5: Approximate quantity of food lost as a result of internal displacement of farmers in Benue State from 2016 to 2020**

Quantity lost	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Cassava</b>					
100kg-2000kg	16(4)	22(6)	52(14)	77(21)	75(21)
2001kg-4000kg	79(22)	78(22)	101(28)	111(31)	89(24)
4001kg-6000kg	68(19)	109(30)	98(27)	98(27)	69(19)
6001-8000kg	108(30)	99(28)	65(18)	74(21)	117(33)
8001-10000kg	56(16)	34(9)	21(6)	-	10(3)
10001 and above	33(9)	18(5)	23(7)	-	-
<b>Yam</b>					
Qty lost	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
100kg-2000kg	64(18)	78(22)	93(26)	-	-
2001kg-4000kg	83(23)	54(15)	31(9)	121(34)	123(34)
4001kg-6000kg	66(18)	43(12)	101(28)	98(27)	76(21)
6001-8000kg	48(13)	98(27)	62(17)	71(20)	98(27)
8001-10000kg	88(25)	67(18)	57(16)	70(19)	63(18)
10001 and above	11(3)	20(6)	16(4)	-	-
<b>Other food items</b>					
Qty lost	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
100kg-2000kg	65(18)	63(18)	-	32(8)	-
2001kg-4000kg	83(23)	78(22)	143(40)	78(22)	54(15)
4001kg-6000kg	92(26)	65(19)	64(18)	64(18)	72(20)
6001-8000kg	107(30)	111(31)	78(22)	165(46)	102(28)
8001-10000kg	34(9)	30(8)	43(12)	21(6)	93(26)
10001 and above	15(41)	13(4)	32(8)	-	39(11)

**Field survey 2021**

Quantity and quality reduction is one of the immediate consequences of postharvest losses. Quantity and quality of farm produce depreciate rapidly if they are no buyers for them and if there are no storage and processing facilities to preserve them or transform them into either semi-finished or finished products. Postharvest loss accounts for direct physical losses and quality losses that reduce the economic value of crop, or may make it unsuitable for human consumption and in severe cases, losses can be up to 80% of the total production (Bello, (2013). In African countries, these losses have been estimated to range between 20% and 40%, which is highly significant considering the low agricultural productivity in several regions of Africa (Abass, 2012).

**4. Conclusion**

Conflicts have constituted severe threats to the means of survival and livelihoods of both the internally displaced farmers and the entire communities in Benue State. These conflicts have demonstrated high potential to exacerbate insecurity and food crisis particularly in rural communities where most of the conflicts are localized, with reverberating consequences nationwide. Conflict in Nigeria has persisted and stands out a threat to national food security, livestock production and eradication of poverty with farmers often regarded as the most vulnerable. It is a formidable challenge to economic development, threat to food security and sustainable livelihood of the agrarian communities. The outcome of conflicts always results in the insecurity, displacement, disability and death, poor food production, widespread hunger and malnutrition of people and communities. The study recommended a process of peace building which is multi-faceted, involving re-establishing security and law and order; reconstruction and economic rehabilitation; reconciliation and social rehabilitation; and political transition to creating more accountable governance structures and institutions

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