



Banditry and Internal Security in Kaduna State: A Case Study of Giwa and Chikun Local Government Areas of Kaduna State: 2019 – 2023

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Abstract

This study examines Banditry and Internal Security in Kaduna State, with a specific focus on Giwa and Chikun Local Government areas between 2019-2023. The persistent wave of Banditry has exposed the weak and uncoordinated response of the security agencies, the lack of intelligence sharing among the security agencies, the limited military and police presence in rural areas, the delays in deployment during attacks, and the lack of trust between local communities and security forces has been revealed as the major bottleneck in addressing banditry activities in the study areas. The objectives of the study were to examine the socio-economic impact of banditry and Internal security in Giwa and Chikun L.G.As, the challenges faced in mitigating banditry activities in the affected areas, the nexus between banditry and Internal Security in Kaduna State , and the strategies employed to mitigate them. The study was anchored on Human Security and Rational choice theory, the Human security theory emphasizes on the idea of preventing threats before it cause harm, therefore, addressing the root causes of insecurity such as poverty and unemployment. Adopting a mixed- methods research design, the study drew data from quantitative and qualitative sources. Semi-structured questionnaires were administered to 400 respondents, which comprise academics, security operatives, traditional and community leaders, selected through purposive sampling across Giwa and Chikun. While Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics via SPSS. The findings revealed that poverty and unemployment, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, cattle rustling, kidnapping, lack of education among youth, limited military and police presence in the affected areas are the main drivers of banditry. Therefore, the study recommends the creation of skills acquisition programs, agricultural empowerment programs and entrepreneurship training among youths by the government, in combination with accessible microcredit facilities which will discourage the engagement of youths in criminal activities. In addition, state should formalize and support community- based vigilante groups under legal and operational frameworks that will ensure accountability and coordination with conventional security agencies, the government should intensify efforts to secure Nigeria's porous borders, strengthen arms regulations, and deploy modern surveillance technologies. Finally, traditional leaders, religious institutions and local civil society organizations should be formally integrated into peace building efforts, with resources and legal backing, to help mediate disputes, resolve communal tensions, and prevent the escalation of conflicts that provide fertile ground for banditry.

Key words: banditry; security; internal security; Kaduna State; Human Security Theory; Rational Choice Theory



1. INTRODUCTION

Banditry has a long history dating from ancient Greece, Rome, and China. Banditry is an armed violence driven principally by the criminal intent to steal and plunder. It is motivated by the quest for economic accumulation. The victims are individuals and communities with material valuables. In central and eastern Europe and the Balkans, it was found in the countryside, in specific conditions such as following wars and massive dislocations and in specific periods, especially in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when the modern nation-state was emerging (Makuljević, 2020). In Latin America, it was part and parcel of an expanding frontier economy. Banditry tended to emerge in remote, difficult-to-control mountainous areas containing large numbers of semi-mobile and state-resistant pastoralists (Baker, 2015).

In Nigeria, Studies have shown that there have been various attacks in Giwa and Chikun Local Government areas of Kaduna State by bandits, which have dispersed and displaced many people from the study area. Importantly, many bandits have been apprehended and are severely under-policed, making them ideal for all types of jungle criminals. As a result, violent crimes like Banditry have thrived in such densely forested locations. Often, most attacks occur in rural settlements in forested areas in the Northwest, where protection is limited (Gaye, 2018).

Statistics have indicated that the high unemployment rate in Nigeria is another element that encourages Banditry in Giwa and Chikun Local Government areas of Kaduna State. Nigeria's unemployment rate was 23.1 per cent in 2019, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), with youth unemployment reaching 55.4 per cent. Similarly, the state's poverty index is 43.5% (KBS, 2020). These rates have continued to rise yearly as Nigerian universities



continue to graduate batches of young people with the expectation of improved jobs and prospects following graduation (Adegoke, 2019).

The creation of most of these bandit attacks and security threats in Giwa and Chikun Local Government areas of Kaduna State has been fuelled by the citizens' fear, which eventually turns to frustration and finally to violence against the government (Suleiman, 2017; Mustapha, 2019). The rising tide of crime in Giwa and Chikun Local Government areas of Kaduna State has been blamed on rising unemployment. As a result, idle youngsters are more likely to engage in criminal activities to keep up with current trends. They will go to any length to become wealthy quickly. Hence, violent crimes such as Banditry become juicy and get quick opportunities.

Unemployment and poverty remain significantly high with a rapidly growing population. Nigeria has surpassed India as the country with the most people living in extreme poverty, with an estimated 87 million Nigerians, or over half of the country's population, living on less than \$1.90 per day. Nigeria has an estimated population of 88.4 million people living in extreme poverty. The number of men in the country living on less than \$1.90 per day is roughly 44.7 million, while the number of women is around 43.7 million. As it stands, Nigeria accounts for 12.9 per cent of the world's population living in extreme poverty in the year 2022. Banditry, terrorism, and other criminal acts are connected to poverty and unemployment. Another important aspect promoting Banditry in northwestern Nigeria is the issue of arms proliferation. Since the fall of Ghadaffi's rule in Libya, there has been a steady influx of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) into Nigeria (Gaye, 2018).



From this, the study enquire on Banditry and Internal Security in Kaduna State using the Case Study of Giwa and Chikun Local Government areas of Kaduna State.

1.1 Statement of the Research Problem

Banditry has emerged as one of the most persistent and devastating security challenges confronting Northwestern Nigeria, with Giwa and Chikun Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Kaduna State among the worst affected. For over a decade, these LGAs have experienced recurrent attacks characterised by kidnapping for ransom, cattle rustling, armed robbery, destruction of property, and killings. The persistence of these attacks has been driven by multiple and interrelated factors, including the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, youth unemployment, poverty, inequality, illicit artisanal mining, weak state presence, and the growing activities of organised criminal networks. Collectively, these conditions have undermined human security and constrained socioeconomic development within the affected communities.

The socioeconomic consequences of banditry in Giwa and Chikun LGAs have been profound. Thousands of residents have been displaced, livelihoods destroyed, agricultural production disrupted, businesses abandoned, and access to essential social services significantly constrained. According to the International Crisis Group (2021), persistent attacks have resulted in extensive loss of lives and property while weakening local economic activities. Agriculture, which constitutes the primary source of livelihood for most households in the two LGAs, has been particularly affected. Fear of attacks has compelled many farmers to abandon their farmlands, thereby reducing agricultural productivity, disrupting food supply chains, and



contributing to rising food prices (Audu, 2024). In many communities, farmers reportedly pay between ₦70,000 and ₦100,000 to armed groups for access to their farms, costs that frequently exceed expected agricultural returns.

The education sector has also suffered significant setbacks. Schools have been attacked, teachers and students displaced, and academic activities repeatedly interrupted, thereby undermining educational outcomes. UNICEF reported that more than 70 children were abducted in Kaduna State in 2021, while insecurity continues to contribute to the growing number of out-of-school children in northern Nigeria (Africa LSE, 2022). In Chikun LGA, prolonged school closures, displacement, absenteeism, and declining academic performance have become common among affected communities (Mathias, Usman, & Ishaya, 2024). The abduction of 287 pupils from Kuriga in Chikun LGA in March 2024 further demonstrated the scale and severity of the security crisis and its implications for human capital development.

Despite series of interventions by the Federal and Kaduna State Governments, banditry remains pervasive in Giwa and Chikun LGAs (Amnesty International, 2024). The persistence of the crisis suggests that existing security responses have not adequately addressed the structural conditions that sustain banditry, including porous borders, the proliferation of illicit arms, weak governance, inadequate infrastructure, widespread poverty, and limited socioeconomic opportunities.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

- i. To examine the socio-economic impact of Banditry in Giwa and Chikun Local Government areas of Kaduna State



- ii. To investigate the nexus between Banditry and Internal Security in Nigeria?
- iii. To identify the challenges faced in mitigating banditry activities in Giwa and Chikun Local Government areas of Kaduna State
- iv. To proffer suitable strategies for containing banditry activities in Giwa and Chikun Local Government areas of Kaduna State.

1.3 Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

1.3.1 Conceptual Clarification

Conceptually, Banditry is a derivative of the term bandit, meaning an unlawful armed group terrorizing people and confiscating their properties. It is synonymous with establishing gang groups that use small arms and light weapons to carry out attacks against people. In this regard, banditry could mean a set-up of criminal activity deliberately designed and carried out for personal gains. Due to the complex nature of bandits' activities, Egwu (2016), in a restricted manner, described banditry as stealing cattle and animals from herders or raiding cattle from their ranches. In the same vein, banditry is reflected in criminal escapades like cattle rustling, kidnapping, armed robbery, drug abuse, arson, rape and the brazen and gruesome massacre of people of agrarian communities with sophisticated weapons by suspected herdsmen and reprisal attacks from surviving victims, a development that has been brought to the front burner of national security (Uche & Iwuamadi, 2018).

1.3.2 Empirical Review

Extensive research highlights the general implications of banditry on national security in



Nigeria. Limited scholarly attention has been directed towards analysing the nuanced impacts within distinct localities.

Watts (1987) wrote on Banditry, rebellion and social protest in Africa, arguing that Banditry had threatened national security due to its operations and actions. In addition, Uche & Iwuamadi (2018) also recorded the Rural Banditry and community resilience in the Nimbo community, and they argued that there were many violent attacks taken by the bandits, which led to frustration and threat of life and properties in the community. Rufa'i (2018), in his writings about Cattle rustling and armed Banditry along the Nigeria- Niger borderlands, opined that the reason for rampant banditry activities in Nigeria is due to the porous border of Nigeria and that makes the bandit to be equipped with a series of sophisticated weapons that are used for their deadly operations. Rufai further suggested that Nigeria should pursue its security interest in protecting its land borders to prevent the inflow of arms or weapons to Nigeria.

Kuna Jibrin (2016), in their journal Rural Banditry and Conflicts in Northern Nigeria, also pointed down how Banditry, kidnapping and cattle rustling are threatening Nigeria. They argued that Banditry has existed for a long time, and its negative impact is getting high and alarming.

From the above-reviewed list clear to understand that this is the first time anyone has written on the Impact of Banditry and Internal Security in Kaduna State: A Study of Giwa and Chikun Local Government areas of Kaduna State. Scholars reviewed various Literature to have a radical departure from the main insecurity trends in Nigeria with a particular reference to Banditry in Kaduna state, Giwa and Chikun Local Government areas of Kaduna State to be precise.



In doing so, all the Literature consulted could not scientifically analyse, compare and contrast Banditry and Internal Security in Nigeria: A Study of Giwa and Chikun Local Government areas of Kaduna State. This thesis is one of its kind to fill in the missing gap. Therefore, this serves as a point of departure from the existing Literature, and this study will serve as a great contribution to knowledge because it is timely among topical issues in Nigerian fourth, an area that needs to be added to speak. Therefore, research on Banditry and Internal Security in Nigeria is needed. A Study of Giwa and Chikun Local Government Areas of Kaduna State.

1.3.4 Theoretical framework: Human Security Theory

The study is anchored on Human security theory is a people centered approach to security. It oppose the traditional idea of security which is state centered oriented, focusing on communities, societies and territorial integrity. The formal concept and theory of Human Security was brought to global prominence by Pakistani economist Mahbub ul Haq, he introduced and formulated the framework in the United Nations Development Programmes' (UNDP) landmark 1994. The theory posit that state should focus more on providing the basic needs of the society and its citizens must be protected by all means available to the State (Lylod, 2000).

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in their Human Development Report (UNDP, 1994) argued that lasting peace requires ensuring individual security and freedom from both fear or want (UNDP, 1994, p. 3). Addressing these fundamental needs serve as a key to achieve global stability.

Human security theory challenges the traditional idea of national security as a primary concern.



It suggests that security should focus more on individual safety and their well-being in the State.

Human security mainly deals with individuals as their core concern against the state. It shifted its focus as a priority to protecting individuals from threats, livelihood and their dignity. Human security go beyond military strategy, though it encompass it, it focus more on addressing issues such as hunger, poverty, diseases, human right abuses, environmental degradation and unemployment.

The theory emphasizes on the idea of preventing threats before it cause harm, therefore, addressing the root causes of insecurity such as poverty and unemployment.

1.4. Methodology

The study adopted a pragmatist research philosophy and a concurrent (convergent) mixed-methods design, in which quantitative and qualitative data were collected within the same general timeframe, analysed separately, and integrated during interpretation to provide a fuller understanding of the phenomenon than either approach could achieve alone (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

The study population comprised residents of Giwa and Chikun LGAs of Kaduna State, with a combined projected population of approximately 982,000 based on the most recent officially disaggregated National Bureau of Statistics (2022) estimates available at the time of the study. Using the Yamane formula at a 5 percent margin of error, a sample size of 400 was derived for the quantitative component. A purposive sampling techniques was used: were 28 respondents were selected across four stakeholder categories, Academics, community Leaders, Traditional rulers, and Security operatives in both Giwa and Chikun LGAs of study. However, a Semi-Structured questionnaires were administered to the 400 respondents, of whom 360 returned valid, properly completed questionnaires, representing a 90% percent response rate. All 28



interviews were successfully conducted, bringing the total number of study participants across both instruments to 360 out of a targeted 400. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations) via SPSS, while qualitative data were subjected to thematic analysis involving familiarisation, initial coding, theme identification, and refinement. Because the underlying data reflect respondents' perceptions and lived experiences rather than independently verified causal facts, the findings reported below are best read as evidence of what stakeholders in Giwa and Chikun perceive to be true of banditry and internal security in Kaduna State.

1.5. Results

Of the 400 questionnaires distributed, 360 were successfully retrieved and properly completed, a response rate of 90% percent. All 28 purposively selected key informants completed their semi-structured interviews, so the qualitative component was unaffected by the questionnaire shortfall. Table 1 summarises the study's data-collection outturn before the substantive findings, organised around the four research objectives, are presented.

Table 1: Summary of Data Collection and Response Rate

Instrument	Target Sample	Achieved Sample	Response Rate
Questionnaire	400	360	90%
Semi-structured interview	28	28	100%
Total participants engaged	360	360	90%

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

Table 2: Banditry has led to significant economic losses for farmers and traders in Giwa and Chikun LGAs.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	290	80.6



Agree	70	19.4
Strongly Disagree	-	-
Disagree	-	-
Undecided	-	-
Total	360	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2026

The table 2 above shows that those persons who strongly agreed with the notion that banditry has led to significant economic losses for farmers and traders in Giwa and Chikun LGAs were 290, representing 80.6% and those who agreed were 70, representing 19.4%.

In an interview with a Farmer, Giwa LGA, he stated that:

Table 3: Bandit attacks have caused the closure of schools and health facilities in the affected areas of Giwa and Chikun LGAs

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	280	77.8
Agree	55	15.3
Strongly Disagree		
Disagree	25	6.9
Undecided	-	
Total	360	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

The presentation in table 3 above shows that those who strongly agreed with the notion that



bandit attacks have caused the closure of schools and health facilities in the affected areas of Giwa and Chikun LGAs were 280 people, representing 77.8% strongly agreed with the notion and those who agreed were 55, representing 15.3%; those that strongly disagreed were 0, representing 0.00% and those who disagreed were 25, representing 6.9% while persons who were neutral were 0, representing 0.0% respectively.

Table 4: Many residents of Giwa and Chikun LGAs have been displaced due to banditry.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	201	55.8
Agree	70	19.4
Strongly Disagree	34	9.4
Disagree	41	11.4
Undecided	14	3.9
Total	360	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

The presentation in table 4 above shows that those who strongly agreed with the notion that many residents of Giwa and Chikun LGAs have been displaced due to banditry were 201 people, representing 55.8% who strongly agreed with the notion and those who agreed were 70, representing 19.4%; those that strongly disagreed were 34, representing 9.4% and those who disagreed were 41, representing 11.4% while persons who were neutral were 14, representing 3.9%.

Table 5: Inadequate government response is a key challenge in addressing banditry in Kaduna State.



Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	325	90.3
Agree	17	4.7
Strongly Disagree	-	-
Disagree	8	2.2
Undecided	10	2.8
Total	360	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

The presentation in table 5 above shows that those who strongly agreed with the notion that inadequate government response is a key challenge in addressing banditry in Kaduna State were 325 people, representing 90.3% that strongly agreed with the notion and those who agreed were 17, representing 4.7%; those that strongly disagreed were 0, representing 0.00% and those who disagreed were 8, representing 2.2% while persons who were neutral were 10, representing 2.8%.

Table 6: Lack of coordination among security agencies hinders effective banditry mitigation.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	250	69.4
Agree	80	22.2
Strongly Disagree	3	0.8
Disagree	25	6.9
Undecided	2	0.6
Total	360	100.0



Source: Field Survey, 2026

The presentation in table 6 above shows that those who strongly agreed with the notion that lack of coordination among security agencies hinders effective banditry mitigation were 250 people, representing 69.4% who strongly agreed with the notion and those who agreed were 80, representing 22.2%; those that strongly disagreed were 3, representing 0.8% and those who disagreed were 25, representing 6.9% while persons who were neutral were 2, representing 0.6%.

Table 7: The activities of bandits have contributed to broader insecurity in Nigeria.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	298	82.8
Agree	59	16.4
Strongly Disagree	-	-
Disagree	-	-
Undecided	3	0.8
Total	360	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

The presentation in table 7 above shows that those who strongly agreed with the notion that the activities of bandits have contributed to broader insecurity in Nigeria were 298 people, representing 82.8% that strongly agreed with the notion and those who agreed were 59, representing 16.4%; those that strongly disagreed were 0, representing 0.00% and those who disagreed were 0, representing 0.00% while persons who were neutral were 3, representing 0.8%.



Table 8: Banditry undermines national sovereignty and weakens internal state control.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	270	75
Agree	45	12.5
Strongly Disagree	12	3.3
Disagree	28	7.8
Undecided	5	1.4
Total	360	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2026

The category of data in the above table 8 shows those who strongly agreed that banditry undermines national sovereignty and weakens internal state control were 270 people, representing 75% who strongly agreed with the notion and those who agreed were 45, representing 12.5%; those that strongly disagreed were 12, representing 3.3% and those who disagreed were 28, representing 7.8% those for neutral were 5, representing 1.4%.

Table 9: Armed banditry is directly linked to the proliferation of illegal arms in the region.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	220	60.1
Agree	85	23.6
Strongly Disagree	25	6.9
Disagree	11	3.6
Undecided	19	5.8
Total	360	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2026



The category of data in the above shows those who strongly agreed that armed banditry is directly linked to the proliferation of illegal arms in the region. There were 220 people, representing 60.1% who strongly agreed with that notion and those who agreed were 85, representing 23.6%; those that strongly disagreed were 25, representing 6.9% and those who disagreed were 11, representing 3.6% while persons who were neutral were 19, representing 5.8%.

Table 10: Strengthening community policing could help reduce the rate of bandit attacks.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	281	78.1
Agree	58	16.1
Strongly Disagree	-	-
Disagree	12	3.3
Undecided	9	2.5
Total	360	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

From the above presentation, it shows that those who strongly agreed that strengthening community policing could help reduce the rate of bandit attacks. From the data, 280 people, representing 78.1% strongly agreed with the notion and those who agreed were 58, representing 16.1%; those that strongly disagreed were 0, representing 0.0% and those who disagreed were 12, representing 3.3% while persons who were neutral were 9, representing 2.5%.

Table 11: Government should empower local vigilante groups under legal frameworks.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
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Strongly Agree	201	55.8
Agree	70	19.4
Strongly Disagree	30	8.3
Disagree	25	6.9
Undecided	34	9.4
Total	360	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

From the above presentation, it shows that those who strongly agreed that government should empower local vigilante groups under legal frameworks were 201 people, representing 55.8% who strongly agreed with the notion and those who agreed were 70, representing 19.4%; those that strongly disagreed were 30, representing 8.3% and those who disagreed were 25, representing 6.9% while persons who were neutral were 34, representing 9.4%.

Table 12: Providing job opportunities and education for youth can help reduce banditry.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	218	60.6
Agree	142	39.4
Strongly Disagree	-	-
Disagree	-	-
Undecided	-	-
Total	360	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

From the above presentation, it shows those who strongly agreed that providing job opportunities and education for youth can help reduce banditry. From the data, 218 people, representing 60.6% strongly agreed with the notion and those who agreed were 142,



representing 39.4%; those that strongly disagreed were 0, representing 0.0% and those who disagreed were 0, representing 0.0%; and persons who were neutral were 0, representing 0.00%.

1.6. Discussion

The findings reveal that poverty and unemployment, cattle rustling, kidnapping, illicit artisanal mining, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and the lack of education among youth are the major causes of banditry in Giwa and Chikun LGAs.

Banditry in Kaduna State, particularly in Giwa and Chikun, has broader national security implications. The frequent attacks on transport routes and mass abductions (including students) indicate an erosion of state authority. This confirms the nexus between local insecurity and broader national instability, particularly in a fragile, multi-ethnic state like Nigeria.

The study also identifies a weak and uncoordinated security response as a key challenge in addressing banditry. Participants highlighted limited military and police presence in rural areas, delays in deployment during attacks, and inadequate intelligence sharing among security agencies. The lack of trust between local communities and security forces also hinders effective collaboration.

A major finding is that residents support a multifaceted approach to banditry mitigation. Suggestions included empowering community-based vigilante groups under a legal framework, creating youth employment opportunities, improving road and communication infrastructure, and increasing the number of trained security personnel in rural communities.

Respondents widely believe that banditry persists partly due to the failure of government institutions to respond swiftly and effectively. Delays in prosecution of arrested suspects, lack



of compensation for victims, and inadequate reconstruction of destroyed villages fuel public discontent. The need for institutional reforms in the judiciary, law enforcement, and local governance structures emerged as a recurring theme.

1.7. Conclusion

This study has examined the rising threat of banditry and its implications for internal security in Kaduna State, using Chikun and Giwa Local Government Areas of Kaduna State as case studies. The findings clearly indicate that banditry has significantly disrupted the socioeconomic life of residents in these areas, leading to widespread displacement, destruction of farmlands and property, closure of schools and healthcare centers, and a general atmosphere of fear and insecurity.

The research has shown that banditry in these LGAs is not only a local security issue but also a national challenge that undermines state authority, weakens governance structures, and contributes to Nigeria's broader insecurity. Weak governmental response, poor coordination among security agencies, proliferation of illegal arms, and limited investment in intelligence gathering have all compounded the problem.

Moreover, the lack of socio-economic opportunities, especially among the youth, has created a fertile ground for criminal networks to thrive. While security operations have been ongoing, they remain largely reactive and insufficient. The failure to address the root causes of banditry—such as poverty, unemployment, weak institutional capacity, and poor rural development—has further complicated counter-banditry efforts.

Therefore, tackling banditry requires a multidimensional and sustained approach. Beyond



military force, there is a need for the state to engage in community policing, legally back vigilante groups, promote youth employment, and strengthen institutions of justice and accountability. It is also imperative for the Nigerian government to invest in long-term development strategies and ensure that local communities are part of the security architecture. Therefore, without restoring security in places like Chikun and Giwa, Nigeria's national development will remain threatened. A stable, professional, and community-embedded security system is vital not just for the people of Kaduna State but for the survival of the Nigerian state and its democratic future.

1.8. Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. To tackle the root causes of banditry, especially poverty and unemployment among young people, the government should invest in targeted skills acquisition, entrepreneurship training, and agricultural empowerment programs in Giwa and Chikun LGAs. These initiatives should be accompanied by accessible microcredit facilities and vocational centers to help young people build sustainable livelihoods and discourage engagement in criminal activities.
2. The state should formalize and support community-based security structures, such as vigilante groups, under legal and operational frameworks that ensure accountability and coordination with conventional security agencies. Community policing efforts should prioritize intelligence gathering, early warning systems, and trust-building between local residents and security forces.



3. The proliferation of small arms and light weapons significantly fuels banditry. The Federal Government, in partnership with regional security blocs, should intensify efforts to secure Nigeria's porous borders, strengthen arms regulation, and deploy modern surveillance technologies. A national arms mop-up campaign targeting unlicensed weapons in rural communities should also be launched.
4. Traditional leaders, religious institutions, and local civil society organizations should be formally integrated into peacebuilding efforts. Government should support these actors with resources and legal backing to help mediate disputes, resolve communal tensions, and prevent the escalation of conflicts that provide fertile ground for banditry.
5. Current government interventions are largely reactive. A more proactive, multi-sectoral approach is needed—one that links security operations with socio-economic development, rural infrastructure, justice sector reforms, and education. Policymakers must prioritize sustained investment in local development, community dialogue, and institutional accountability to build resilience and reduce the appeal of banditry.

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