

3.6. Individuals belonging to herder or farmer communities

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: March 2026

This profile refers to individuals belonging in herder and farmer communities, including unarmed civilians but also members of armed groups of herders and farmers and/or communal militias.

The analysis below is based on the following EUAA COI reports: Country Focus 2025, 1.2., 1.3., 2.10., 2.11., 2.12.; Security 2025, 1.1.3., 1.2.2., 1.2.7., 2.1.1., 2.1.7., 2.3.5., 2.3.6., 2.6.3.; Country Guidance should not be referred to as a source of COI.

Nigeria continued to witness violence between herders and farmers. Herders and farmers have also been attacked by Islamist groups.

Step 1: Do the reported acts amount to persecution?

Acts to which individuals belonging in herders or farmers communities, could be exposed are of such severe nature that they would amount to persecution. More specifically, intercommunal violence between herders and farmers continues to cause killings, abductions, destruction of villages, sexual violence and forced displacement.

In addition to these communal conflicts, Boko Haram has also targeted herder and farmer populations in conflict-affected regions, by extorting levies or accusing them of spying or providing information to the military and local militias (see also 3.1. Individuals within the reach of Boko Haram).

Step 2: What is the level of risk of persecution?

The individual assessment of whether there is a reasonable degree of likelihood for individuals belonging in herder or farmer communities to face persecution should take into account **risk-impacting circumstances**, such as:

- **Home area:** The highest levels of violence related to herder–farmer conflicts are reported in the North-Central region (especially Benue and Plateau) and the North-West region (particularly Katsina, Sokoto, and Zamfara) and therefore, individuals from these regions would be at a higher risk of violence in the context of farmer-herder conflict. The North-East remains affected by Boko Haram-related attacks and forced taxation of herders and farmers.

- **Involvement with armed groups:** Those participating in self-defence or vigilante groups would face a higher risk of retaliation from both opposing communities and armed extremist groups, such as Boko Haram.

- **Ownership of land or cattle:** Farmers owning fertile land and herders with large herds would have a higher risk of persecution by both intercommunal and extremist attacks, as land and livestock represent key economic assets. Armed groups sometimes seize cattle or harvests as 'tax' or loot, which deepens economic vulnerability and fuels further displacement.

Step 3: Is there a ground for persecution?

Where well-founded fear of persecution is substantiated for an applicant under this profile, this may be for reasons of ethnicity (ground of **race** and/or **nationality** under QD/QR). For example, Fulani herders, may be collectively blamed for violence and face retaliatory attacks, or Hausa farming communities may be targeted along ethnic lines in parts of the Middle Belt. Persecution may also be for reasons of **religion** as attacks sometimes take on a sectarian character.

The lines between herder and farmer violence and banditry or cultism are often blurred. See also 4.2.2. Criminal violence.



Exclusion considerations could be relevant to this profile, as some individuals belonging to herder or farmer communities may have been involved in excludable acts in the context of the famer-herder conflict, banditry or cultism. See 7. Exclusion.

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