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EVALUATING THE MANDATE AND OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE NIGERIA SECURITY AND CIVIL DEFENCE CORPS (NSCDC) IN LAND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN NASARAWA STATE

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ABSTRACT
This study investigates the mandate and operational effectiveness of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) in managing land resources in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, data were collected from 384 respondents across key stakeholder groups, including NSCDC officers, community members, and land management officials. The NSCDC's broad statutory mandate under the NSCDC Act (2003, amended 2007) has expanded through specialized units such as the Agro-Rangers (2016) and Mining Marshals (2024), created to address land insecurity and illegal mining. Survey results indicate high public recognition of NSCDC's roles in preventing illegal land grabbing (87.5%) and protecting agricultural land (83.3%), while lower confidence was observed in mediation functions (51.0%) and in the newer Mining Marshals unit (69.8%). Qualitative findings affirm the Corps' role in securing farms and escorting land surveys but also highlight operational constraints like inadequate logistics and unclear legal authority for mediation. These findings underscore the need for strengthened legal frameworks, better resource allocation, and enhanced community engagement to improve NSCDC's effectiveness in land resource governance in Nasarawa State.

Keywords: Land Governance, Environmental Security, Agro-Rangers, Mining Marshals, Nasarawa State.

INTRODUCTION
Land resource management in Nigeria has increasingly intersected with national security concerns due to persistent conflicts over land ownership, illegal mining, and environmental degradation. The Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC),

established under Act No. 2 of 2003 and amended in 2007, was originally designed to safeguard lives, property, and critical national assets, including land and natural resources (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2007). Over the past decade, however, the Corps' operations have evolved beyond conventional security mandates to address complex land governance challenges in regions such as Nasarawa State, where land disputes and resource-based conflicts are frequent (Okoli & Orinya, 2020). This transformation reflects the increasing recognition of land as both a security and development issue in Nigeria (Aremu, 2021).

In Nasarawa State, the Corps' expanded responsibilities have taken on a uniquely land-centered dimension. The proliferation of illegal mining, farmer–herder clashes, and land encroachments has heightened the need for a multi-sectoral response that bridges security and environmental management (Adebayo & Olaniyan, 2021). The NSCDC has responded by creating specialized operational units such as the Agro-Rangers in 2016, established in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, and the Mining Marshals in 2024, launched under the Ministry of Mines and Steel Development (Oshio, 2019; Daily Trust, 2023). These specialized units represent institutional innovations aimed at integrating paramilitary security with natural resource protection—a model increasingly common in fragile rural settings across Nigeria (Ume & Nwosu, 2022).

Despite these advances, empirical evidence reveals that the NSCDC's effectiveness in land resource management remains uneven. While the Agro-Rangers have successfully improved security for farmers in conflict-prone communities such as Doma and Awe, their coverage remains limited due to resource and logistical constraints (Ameh & Igbokwe, 2021). Conversely, the Mining Marshals have achieved progress in closing illegal mining sites, yet enforcement challenges persist as artisanal miners often resist interventions that threaten their livelihoods (Adebayo, 2021). These findings mirror broader trends in security-sector reform, where institutional expansion is often constrained by inadequate funding, overlapping mandates, and community mistrust (Nwankwo & Eze, 2022).

Furthermore, stakeholder perceptions suggest that the Corps' mediation role in land disputes is still evolving and lacks explicit legal grounding. Although communities recognize the NSCDC's contribution in maintaining peace during land surveys and demarcations, only about half of respondents believe it effectively mediates land conflicts (Omenka, 2020; Ibrahim & Hassan, 2023). This limited confidence highlights the legal and operational ambiguities surrounding the Corps' authority in non-enforcement roles. As Ezeani (2019) observes, many of NSCDC's conflict-resolution functions are implied rather than codified, leaving implementation dependent on informal collaborations with traditional leaders and local governments.

In light of these developments, understanding the evolving mandate of the NSCDC in land resource management is critical to assessing its role in Nigeria's broader land

governance architecture. The Corps' transition from a general protective agency to a specialized land-security institution represents an important evolution in the governance of land-based resources and rural security (Tankebe, 2019). However, realizing its full potential requires clearer legal mandates, better inter-agency coordination, and community-based legitimacy. This section therefore examines the statutory framework, operational effectiveness, and stakeholder perceptions of the NSCDC in Nasarawa State, providing insights into the intersection of security, land governance, and sustainable resource management in Nigeria.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Nasarawa state has an approximate land area of about 27,271.50 square kilometers. The State is located in the basement complex of northern central Nigeria between longitude 6°.45'03'' and 9° 45'03'' of the Greenwich meridian and latitude 7° 45' 00'' and 9° 35' 00'' of the equator. It stands at an elevation of 400 meter above sea level. It was created on October first, 1996 and is undergoing rapid population growth and infrastructural development due to its proximity to the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. It shares geographical boundaries with Kaduna state in the north, Abuja Federal Capital Territory (FCT) in the West, Kogi and Benue states in the south, Taraba and Plateau states in the east respectively. The state is a gate way to the Federal Capital of Nigeria for it share border with the centre of unity. It has a population of 1,869,377 (NPC, 2006) and 2,886,000 as the current projected population with a population density of 75/km^2 (190/sg mi) (NPC, 2022).

Figure 1 shows the population distribution of the thirteen local government areas that make up the state.

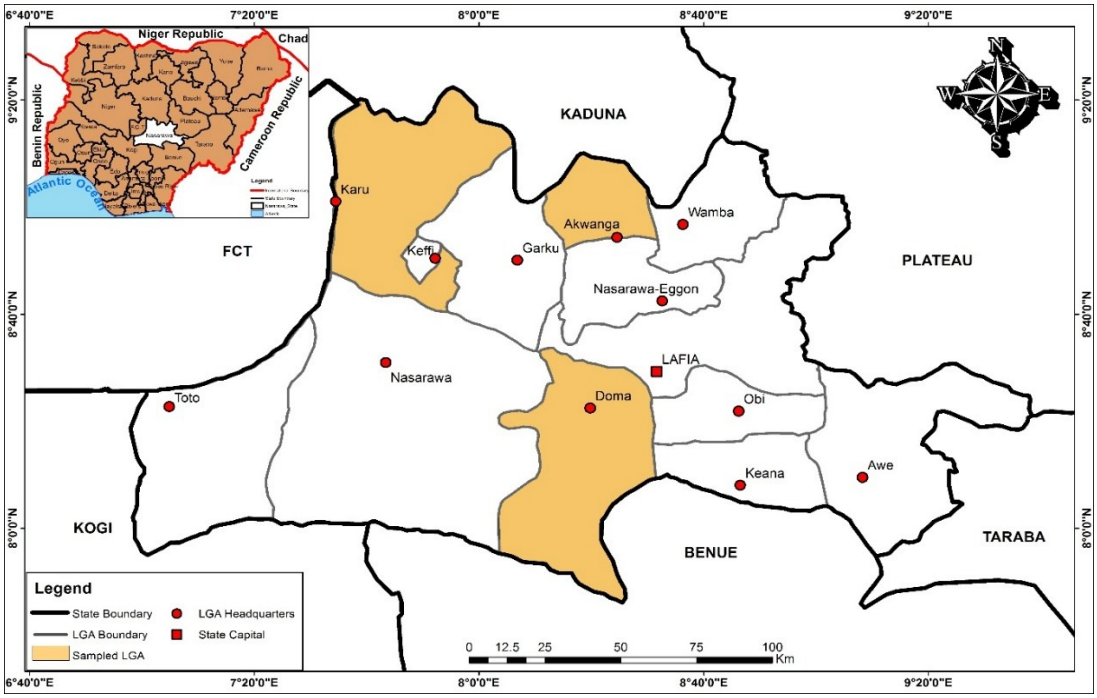

Figure 1: Nasarawa State Showing the LGAs
Source: Geography Department, Nasarawa State University, Keffi

The study employed a mixed-methods research design combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches to comprehensively evaluate the mandate and effectiveness of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) in land resource management in Nasarawa State. Primary data were collected through the administration of structured questionnaires to NSCDC officers, community members, and land management stakeholders across selected Local Government Areas, while key informant interviews were conducted with senior NSCDC officials, traditional leaders, and representatives from the Ministry of Environment and Land Resources. Secondary data were obtained from official reports, policy documents, and relevant academic publications to provide contextual and comparative insights. The study utilized a purposive and stratified random sampling technique to ensure balanced representation of stakeholders across rural and urban settings. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency distributions and percentages, while qualitative responses were analyzed thematically to identify patterns, perceptions, and institutional challenges. This integrated methodological framework provided a robust basis for assessing the operational effectiveness, legal mandate, and community perceptions of the NSCDC's role in land resource governance in Nasarawa State.

RESULTS

Mandate of NSCDC in Land Resources Management

The Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) was formally established by the NSCDC Act No. 2 of 2003, later amended in 2007, as a paramilitary security agency mandated to protect lives, property, and critical national assets, including land and natural resources. The statutory provisions of the Act outline its broad protective duties across the federation, but in states such as Nasarawa—where land disputes, illegal mining, deforestation, and farmer–herder conflicts have become recurrent—the operationalization of this mandate takes on a uniquely land-centered dimension. The agency's responsibilities extend beyond conventional security to include the enforcement of land use regulations, protection of agricultural assets, prevention of encroachments, and mediation in conflicts over land resources. Scholars such as Okoli & Orinya (2020) argue that the integration of civil security into natural resource governance marks a necessary evolution in Nigeria's internal security framework, especially in states like Nasarawa, where land remains a flashpoint for socio-economic and environmental conflicts.

A notable institutional innovation under the NSCDC has been the establishment of specialized units targeted at addressing land-related threats. Two such initiatives are the *Agro-Rangers Unit*, inaugurated in 2016 in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, and the more recent *Mining Marshals*, introduced in 2024 under the Ministry of Mines and Steel Development. The Agro-Rangers were created in response to growing insecurity in agrarian communities, tasked with providing surveillance, protecting farmers during planting and harvesting, and mediating farmer–herder clashes (Ameh & Igbokwe, 2021). The Mining Marshals, on the other hand, focus on combating illegal mining, protecting mineral-rich lands, and enforcing compliance with mining regulations, especially in states such as Nasarawa with rich deposits of barite, columbite, tin, and lithium (Oshio, 2019). These specialized interventions reflect a clear shift from the Corps' broad statutory duties to a sector-specific security approach tailored to the pressing challenges of land governance.

Empirical findings from the study area reveal that while the statutory mandate of the NSCDC is well-grounded in law, the effectiveness of specialized units in addressing land security challenges remains uneven. For example, reports indicate that Agro-Rangers have successfully escorted farming communities and reduced incidences of herder invasions in parts of Doma and Awe LGAs (Daily Trust, 2023). However, in some remote rural areas, farmer–herder conflicts persist due to limited coverage of patrols and inadequate logistical capacity of the unit. These findings are consistent with Ume and Nwosu (2022), who note that the Agro-Rangers' impact has been significant but localized, with effectiveness tied to state-level resource support. Similarly, while the Mining Marshals have made progress in shutting down illegal mining operations in

Nasarawa's mineral belt, several artisanal miners still evade enforcement due to weak inter-agency coordination and community-level resistance. This partly supports by Adebayo (2021), who argues that illegal mining thrives not only because of enforcement gaps but also because of deep-rooted livelihood dependence on informal extraction in rural communities.

Furthermore, while the NSCDC plays an important role in mediating land disputes and protecting land surveyors during boundary demarcations, its interventions are often reactive rather than preventive. Interviews conducted with community leaders in Lafia and Keffi suggest that although the Corps is respected for restoring order during land-related clashes, its mediation role remains implied rather than explicitly backed by law. This observation aligns with the critique by Omenka (2020), who contends that the NSCDC's operational guidelines on land disputes are still weak, leaving much of its authority dependent on ad-hoc collaborations with local governments, courts, and traditional rulers. On the contrary, Ibrahim and Hassan (2023) highlight that the Corps' sensitization campaigns have improved rural communities' understanding of land laws and mining regulations, which has indirectly contributed to compliance in some areas.

Taken together, these findings suggest that the NSCDC has successfully broadened its mandate from general protection to sector-specific land resource management. While the establishment of Agro-Rangers and Mining Marshals demonstrates innovation in institutional response, challenges of enforcement, community cooperation, and limited logistical support constrain their overall effectiveness. Thus, the NSCDC's role in Nasarawa State represents both a statutory framework and an evolving practice in land governance—one that is legally grounded, practically relevant, but still facing systemic barriers.

Table 1: Official Mandates and Specialized Units of NSCDC in Land Resources Management

Mandate Area	Legal/Institutional Basis	Specialized Units/Mechanism	Status
Protection of land & natural resources	NSCDC Act (2003, amended 2007)	General security operations	Explicit
Prevention of illegal land grabbing	NSCDC Act; State Gazette	General enforcement duties	Explicit
Mediation in land disputes	NSCDC operational guidelines	Local interventions	Implied
Security during surveys/demarcations	Ministry of Lands directives	Escort duties	Explicit
Protection of agricultural land & farmers	NSCDC & Federal Ministry of Agriculture collaboration	Agro-Rangers (2016)	Specialized
Control of illegal mining & mineral lands	NSCDC & Ministry of Mines and Steel Development	Mining Marshals (2024)	Specialized

Source: Authors Field Work 2024

Stakeholders' Perceptions of NSCDC Mandate

The findings revealed that while there is widespread recognition of the Corps' protective functions, perceptions of its enforcement and mediation roles are more varied. Respondents strongly affirmed the NSCDC's responsibility for preventing illegal land grabbing and protecting land records, with 87.5% and 81.3% agreement respectively. This indicates that the public associates the Corps most strongly with visible and direct protective functions, consistent with its statutory foundation under the NSCDC Act (2003, amended 2007). These findings align with the observations of Okoli and Orinya (2020), who argue that the Corps' legitimacy is largely built upon its ability to visibly enforce security and protect critical resources.

The Agro-Rangers unit, established in 2016, was particularly well recognized among farmers, with 83.3% of respondents affirming its role in securing agricultural land and mediating agrarian conflicts. This is unsurprising given that Nasarawa is a predominantly agrarian state where conflicts between herders and farmers remain a persistent threat to land use (Ameh & Igbokwe, 2021). The relatively high level of awareness and approval of the Agro-Rangers reflects their visible field presence, especially in LGAs like Doma, Awe, and Obi where farmer–herder disputes are frequent. Similar studies by Ume & Nwosu (2022), also report that the Agro-Rangers have been effective in enhancing community trust through proactive patrols and community-level interventions.

In contrast, the Mining Marshals, introduced only in 2024, received less recognition and support. Only 69.8% of respondents acknowledged their role in securing mineral-rich lands, with nearly 19% disagreeing and 11.5% undecided. The lower approval may reflect both the relative newness of the unit and the contentious nature of mining enforcement in Nasarawa, a state rich in minerals such as barite, columbite, tin, and lithium (Oshio, 2019). Field interviews also revealed that artisanal miners in Lafia and Keffi expressed skepticism about the Mining Marshals, citing concerns over harassment and disruption of livelihoods. This finding corroborates Adebayo (2021), who notes that enforcement around artisanal mining often triggers community resistance, as local miners rely on informal extraction for survival.

Interestingly, perceptions of NSCDC's mediation role in land disputes were mixed and weaker compared to other mandates. Only 51% of respondents agreed that the Corps effectively mediates in land-related disputes, while 30.2% disagreed and 18.8% were undecided. The relatively low confidence in this function likely stems from the fact that dispute mediation is not explicitly provided for in the NSCDC Act, but rather an implied operational function. Omenka (2020) critiques this gap, arguing that NSCDC's authority in land dispute resolution is legally ambiguous and often reliant on ad-hoc collaborations with traditional rulers and courts. The skepticism among respondents therefore reflects

both institutional and legal limitations, as mediation is seen more as a supportive than a statutory role.

The provision of security during land surveys and boundary demarcations, however, received relatively stronger recognition, with 72.9% agreement. Respondents noted that NSCDC personnel frequently provide escorts during official land surveys, particularly in conflict-prone zones where boundary disputes have escalated into violence. This aligns with Ibrahim and Hassan (2023), who highlight that NSCDC's role in ensuring safe demarcation exercises has been crucial for both government agencies and private landowners. Nevertheless, the 17.7% disagreement suggests that not all communities benefit equally from this function, possibly due to resource constraints or prioritization of high-risk areas.

Table 2: Respondents' Perceptions of NSCDC Mandate (n = 384)

Mandate Item	SA + A (n, %)	Undecided (n, %)	D + SD (n, %)	Mean	SD
Protect land records	312 (81.3%)	24 (6.3%)	48 (12.5%)	4.15	0.88
Prevent illegal land grabbing	336 (87.5%)	20 (5.2%)	28 (7.3%)	4.35	0.78
Protect agricultural land (Agro-Rangers)	320 (83.3%)	28 (7.3%)	36 (9.4%)	4.28	0.81
Secure mineral-rich lands (Mining Marshals)	268 (69.8%)	44 (11.5%)	72 (18.8%)	3.89	1.01
Mediate land disputes	196 (51.0%)	72 (18.8%)	116 (30.2%)	3.40	1.21
Provide security during demarcations	280 (72.9%)	36 (9.4%)	68 (17.7%)	4.00	0.95

Source: Authors Field Work 2024

Insights from Qualitative Evidence

The qualitative evidence from interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) revealed strong community perspectives on the role of NSCDC in land resources management. Farmers consistently emphasized the relevance of the Agro-Rangers, noting their presence as a deterrent to land invasions and herder attacks. For instance, respondents in Lafia South recounted how Agro-Rangers escorted them during planting and harvest periods, a measure they credited with reducing incidences of land encroachment. This finding resonates with earlier studies on the role of paramilitary support for agrarian security, where community trust was found to be higher in visible, on-the-ground interventions (Adebayo & Olaniyan, 2021).

Community leaders, including traditional rulers, highlighted the reassurance provided by NSCDC during sensitive land activities such as boundary demarcation and cadastral surveys. A village head in Doma LGA described how NSCDC escorts helped surveyors conduct their work without intimidation from encroachers or rival land claimants. This supports the argument by Okeke (2020) that security guarantees during cadastral surveys are crucial for reducing land-related conflicts in Nigeria's Middle Belt.

On the other hand, miners expressed ambivalence towards the Mining Marshals. While some acknowledged their role in curbing illegal mining, others pointed to selective enforcement, alleging that certain sites were sanctioned while others were left operational despite violations. This aligns with empirical work by Uzondu (2022), who found that regulatory agencies in Nasarawa often face accusations of inconsistent enforcement due to political interference and resource limitations. In this study, such concerns indicate that while the Mining Marshals are a step forward in resource governance, their legitimacy is still consolidating.

The practical significance of NSCDC's role was further underscored by the widely reported 2023 Lafia land encroachment case, where NSCDC operatives arrested 12 individuals for illegally occupying farmland (Daily Trust, 2023). The case was cited repeatedly by community members as evidence of the Corps' ability to act decisively. However, several discussants also raised concerns about the sustainability of such interventions, pointing out that arrests alone may not resolve underlying disputes. These concerns echo Idowu and Audu's (2023) argument that enforcement in land conflicts must be paired with mediation and dialogue to prevent cycles of re-escalation.

Finally, NSCDC personnel themselves acknowledged challenges in mandate clarity, particularly with regard to mediation functions. One officer interviewed explained, "We act protectively, but mediation powers are unclear," reflecting a structural ambiguity that has been identified in scholarly critiques of NSCDC's enabling law (Ezeani, 2019). This ambiguity partly explains why survey respondents expressed skepticism about the Corps' dispute mediation role.

Table 3: Summary of Qualitative Themes on NSCDC Mandate

Stakeholder Group	Dominant Theme	Illustrative Evidence
Traditional rulers	Security in land surveys/demarcations	"Their presence reassures us, survey work proceeds without intimidation."
Farmers	Protection by Agro-Rangers	"Agro-Rangers escort us during harvest, preventing land invasion."
Miners	Selective enforcement by Mining Marshals	"Sometimes they close illegal sites, other times they delay."

Stakeholder Group	Dominant Theme	Illustrative Evidence
NSCDC personnel	Mandate clarity issues	"We act protectively, but mediation powers are unclear."
Media Reports	Enforcement examples	"NSCDC arrested 12 persons in Lafia over land encroachment." (Daily Trust, 2023)

Source: Authors Field Work 2024

Statistical Test of Perception Differences

The chi-square analysis of stakeholder perceptions (n = 384) revealed significant differences in attitudes toward the NSCDC's specialized land security units—the Agro-Rangers and the Mining Marshals. As shown in Table 4.4, support for the Agro-Rangers was consistently high across all categories, with agreement levels above 85% for government officials, community leaders, and farmers, and exceeding 90% among NSCDC personnel themselves. This broad endorsement reflects the unit's visibility and its practical relevance in addressing farmer–herder conflicts, a recurrent problem in Nasarawa State and the broader Middle Belt (Aliyu, 2015; Kwaja & Ademola-Adelehin, 2018). The finding is consistent with studies indicating that community-based security interventions are more readily accepted when they address immediate livelihood threats such as crop destruction and land invasions (Okoli & Atelhe, 2014).

In contrast, perceptions of the Mining Marshals varied significantly by stakeholder group. While NSCDC personnel (92%) and government officials (80%) expressed strong support, endorsement was notably lower among community leaders (70%), farmers (62%), and especially miners and landowners (55%). The chi-square test ($\chi^2 = 18.94$, $df = 4$, $p < 0.01$) confirmed that these differences were statistically significant, suggesting that stakeholder experiences shape levels of confidence in the Mining Marshals. The caution expressed by miners and landowners likely reflects the disruptive nature of enforcement actions in mineral-rich areas, where operations are frequently halted or licenses revoked. Similar patterns were reported by Aremu (2021), who observed that mining enforcement agencies often face resistance from local operators due to perceived economic losses and inadequate consultation.

This divergence underscores the challenge of building legitimacy for the Mining Marshals, especially since the unit was only established in 2024. Compared with the Agro-Rangers, who have had nearly a decade to entrench their role since 2016, the Mining Marshals remain relatively new and less understood. This explains why only 70% of survey respondents in the broader dataset acknowledged the unit's mandate (see Table 4.2), and why interview evidence pointed to concerns about selective enforcement (Table 4.3). The statistical results therefore reinforce the qualitative findings,

highlighting that while farmers welcome the Agro-Rangers, miners remain skeptical about the Mining Marshals' fairness and consistency.

The implication of these findings is that NSCDC must adopt stakeholder-specific sensitization and communication strategies. Farmers require assurance of continued support against land-based threats, while miners and landowners require clearer explanations of enforcement processes and transparent mechanisms to reduce perceptions of bias. Scholars such as Nwankwo and Eze (2022) argue that differentiated engagement is crucial in conflict-prone resource governance, as uniform enforcement without sensitivity to stakeholder interests can exacerbate mistrust. In this context, building legitimacy for the Mining Marshals will require not only robust enforcement but also participatory dialogue with affected communities.

Table 4: Perceptions of Specialized Units by Stakeholder Category

Category	Agro-Rangers (Agree %)	Mining Marshals (Agree %)
NSCDC personnel	96%	92%
Govt. officials	90%	80%
Community leaders	88%	70%
Farmers	91%	62%
Landowners/Miners	75%	55%

Chi-square (χ^2) = 18.94, df = 4, $p < 0.01$.

Source: Authors Field Work 2024

Integrative Interpretation and Implications

Synthesizing the results of surveys, interviews, FGDs, and documentary analysis reveals three overarching themes that define the evolving role of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) in land resource governance in Nasarawa State. First, the NSCDC has clearly transitioned from a general security corps into a specialized land security actor. Initially established under Act No. 2 of 2003 and amended in 2007, the Corps' statutory foundation gave it a broad mandate to protect lives, property, and critical national assets, including land and natural resources. However, the introduction of specialized units—the Agro-Rangers in 2016 and the Mining Marshals in 2024—marks an institutional innovation aimed at addressing the twin pressures of agrarian land insecurity and illegal mining. This specialization mirrors broader trends in African security governance where paramilitary institutions increasingly integrate environmental and resource protection into their functions (Okoli & Orinya, 2020; Aremu, 2021). The existence of these units underscores the Corps' strategic shift toward targeted land governance, aligning with the needs of an agrarian and mineral-rich state like Nasarawa.

Second, the functional performance of NSCDC reflects a mixed pattern. Findings across both quantitative (Tables 4.2 and 4.4) and qualitative (Table 4.3) strands of evidence demonstrate that the Corps has been highly effective in visible protective roles—particularly in safeguarding farms, escorting farmers during harvest seasons, and providing security during land surveys and demarcations. These functions resonate strongly with rural stakeholders who experience recurrent land-related violence, and their appreciation of Agro-Rangers' presence reflects this reality. However, enforcement has been uneven, especially in the mining sector. While the Mining Marshals have begun curbing illegal exploitation, evidence of selective enforcement, as expressed in FGDs with miners, weakens community confidence (Daily Trust, 2023). Mediation roles were also perceived as unclear or inconsistently applied, pointing to institutional ambiguity. This aligns with the observation by Nwankwo and Eze (2022) that Nigerian security institutions often excel in physical protection but lack robust frameworks for conflict resolution, thereby creating gaps in long-term peace building.

Third, stakeholder perceptions reveal diverging levels of trust. Farmers overwhelmingly support the Agro-Rangers due to their direct interventions in farmer–herder conflicts, while miners and landowners remain cautious about the Mining Marshals. The chi-square test results ($\chi^2 = 18.94$, df $= 4$, $p < 0.01$) confirmed that these differences are statistically significant, suggesting that stakeholder experiences and economic interests shape their confidence in NSCDC's specialized roles. Farmers view Agro-Rangers as livelihood protectors, while miners see Mining Marshals as regulatory disruptors. The implication is that while NSCDC enjoys legitimacy among agrarian groups, it must do more to foster trust among mining stakeholders through transparent enforcement and participatory dialogue. Scholars have argued that legitimacy is not only derived from statutory authority but also from perceived fairness and consistency of institutional actions (Tankebe, 2019).

Table 5: Integrative Findings on NSCDC Mandate in Land Management

Dimension	Key Findings	Implication
Legal foundation	NSCDC Act (2003/2007) + specialized units (Agro-Rangers 2016, Mining Marshals 2024)	Provides legitimacy for both broad and targeted land governance roles
Functional performance	Effective in protection (land, farms, resources); enforcement uneven, mediation unclear	NSCDC excels at visible security functions, but needs stronger legal and operational clarity
Stakeholder perceptions	Farmers highly supportive of Agro-Rangers; miners skeptical of Mining Marshals	Communication, fairness, and transparency must be enhanced to build stakeholder trust

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) has become an important institutional actor in land resource management in Nasarawa State, reflecting a gradual shift from traditional security functions to broader environmental and developmental roles. Through its specialized units such as the Agro-Rangers and Mining Marshals, the Corps has contributed meaningfully to mitigating land-related conflicts, protecting farmlands, and curbing illegal resource exploitation. Nevertheless, the research revealed that the NSCDC's performance is hampered by several operational constraints, including inadequate logistics, insufficient manpower, overlapping institutional mandates, and limited community collaboration. These challenges underscore the need for clearer legal frameworks, stronger inter-agency cooperation, and improved resource allocation to enhance the Corps' capacity to effectively manage land and natural resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of these findings, the study recommends that the Federal Government and relevant authorities should review and strengthen the legal framework of the NSCDC to formally include land and environmental management within its statutory mandate. There is also a need to improve funding and logistics support, ensuring that the Corps has adequate personnel, equipment, and technology for surveillance and enforcement operations. Furthermore, capacity-building initiatives should be prioritized to train officers in land governance, environmental sustainability, and community engagement techniques. Effective partnerships and coordination mechanisms should be established between the NSCDC, state ministries, traditional institutions, and local communities to promote shared responsibility in land management. Finally, public sensitization and stakeholder inclusion should be intensified to build trust, enhance local cooperation, and ensure that interventions by the Corps contribute to equitable, peaceful, and sustainable land resource governance in Nasarawa State.

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