



## Boko Haram terrorist induced rural – urban migration and Food Security in the Northeastern, Nigeria: An Appraisal

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### Abstract

This paper examines the Boko Haram induced rural – urban migration and Food Security in the Northeast, Nigeria with its attendant consequences of abandoned agricultural activities and inevitable food insecurity. The insurgency became active in 2009 and has decimated several communities, destroyed food crops, ruminant livestock and forced farmers to flee to protective camps. Many now rely on food aid from international organizations, philanthropist or street begging. This paper attempts a review of causes of the insurgence and its implication on the society. This article assesses the implication on individual household economy and proffers probable solutions.

**Keywords:** appraisal, boko haram, migration, food security, Northeastern Nigeria

### Introduction

Insurgency, banditry, militancy and every act of violence takes place across the world for a variety of motives which include political fanaticism, ethnic hatred, religious extremism and ideological intolerance or indifference (Alanamu, 2005) <sup>[6]</sup>. Such incidences have caused societal awareness because they have both implicit and explicit sociopolitical and economic implications. Insurgency globally has a long history. What distinguishes the contemporary insurgency are the magnitude, frightening frequency and the variety of compounding events, resources and expanded opportunities available to the perpetrators of violent acts in the modern state system. In recent times however, corruption, porous national borders, the availability of small and light weapons (SLW) and other weapons of mass destruction have worsened the dimension of violent conflicts thereby introducing new forms of insecurity; and the attendant adaptation and mitigation strategies.

Agbaje (2007) <sup>[2]</sup> suggested that the phenomenon of violent insurgency has become such a defining feature of the Nigerian scene of recent; that it is often not realized that its roots date back to the colonial period. The simmering violence being witnessed in Nigeria today has been linked directly to the fragile and weak character of the Nation State, the foundation of which was arguably laid partly by colonial rule (Osaghae and Suberu, 2005) <sup>[32]</sup> and successive military interregnum.

The most recent and best known of these conflicts is the Boko Haram uprising whose protagonists have been engaged in a sustained rebellion since 2009 with the aim of firstly avenging the massacre of their members by the government backed police and armed forces after an unprovoked funeral procession; and secondly to impose strict, unconventional, sect-styled Islamic rule in the territory they occupied.

The above scenario is part of what Kirk-Greene (1980) referred to as *dammosa hereditas* (burdensome inheritance)

for post-colonial Nigeria. The emergence of violent insurgency in Nigeria has been linked to the invention of the Nigerian tradition of promoting a more or less permanent feature of clueless statecraft and politics (Agbaje, 2007) <sup>[2]</sup>. He argued that, this has reverberated through the poor quality of political leadership as well as the alienation in Nigeria's political economy and socio-economic and cultural landscape. This presumption underscores the extent to which the present is captive to the past, casting doubts on the future which are not likely to be better if far-reaching reforms are not made. This is against the backdrop of the harsh colonial and post-colonial governance policy and the apparent failure of leadership, both within the civilian and military.

Contemporary forms of insurgency in Nigeria constitute a just reward for a country profoundly immersed in sheer socio-political irregularities. The insurgency in Nigeria is therefore explained by the triumph and resilience over the decades of various forms of authoritarianism, state inefficiency and deliberate pauperization of the masses by governing institutions. This has bred disenchantment, disillusionment and frustrations which are being expressed through acts of violence against the state and associated institutions. Like the usual maxim 'if you cannot beat them, you join them'.

The Nigerian state has over the years demonstrated that it has weak institutions of conflict management and resolution, including weak judicial structures which make her conducive to conditions that favour corruption, insurgency and poverty (Fearon and Laiton, 2003) <sup>[12]</sup>. It is no wonder she is common with intractable conflicts, including violent insurgency that is often embedded in political economy issues and rural urban migration and offshore migration (across international boundaries) as resultant outcome. This is the context within which the Boko Haram, militancy, banditry, cultism, kidnapping and armed robbery onslaught will be viewed.

**Boko Haram Perspective in Nigeria**

Many factors have been advanced as explanations as to the pervasiveness of violent insurgency in Africa. This explains why there have been several perspectives regarding the emergence of the Boko Haram Sect. These perspectives include the following:

**Poverty as trigger**

Most writers on the Boko Haram conflict have argued that central to the emergence of the Sect is the pervasive poverty of the Nigerian masses especially in the core Northern Nigerian States. Onokerhoraye posits that “two issues have been consistent in attempts to define poverty: who are the poor and at what level is poverty defined?” (Shija, 2006) [35] This suggests that poverty is an economic phenomenon measured either in terms of the minimum flow of real income per capita, or as a bundle of basic needs which may be qualified.

Further, the Copenhagen Declaration of 1995, as quoted by Edoh (2003) [11] stated that; *Poverty has various manifestations, including lack of income and productive resources sufficient to ensure sustainable livelihoods: hunger and malnutrition, ill-health, limited or lack of access to education and other basic services, increased morbidity and mortality from illness, homelessness and inadequate housing, unsafe environments, social discrimination and exclusion. It is also characterized by a lack of participation in decision and in civil, social and cultural life.*

The phenomenon of poverty has been identified as the major cause of conflict and discord in human societies everywhere. In the opinion of Pwul (2004) [34], it is “a vicious circle and is at the root of terrorism, corruption, fraud, extreme religious views and embezzlement in the society”.

Scholars who identify poverty as the root cause of insurgency in Nigeria often observe that the actualization of a free, peaceful and developed society is impossible where majority of the citizens live below the poverty line. This is because poverty reduces people’s capacity to enjoy their civil, political and socio-economic rights. Edoh (2003) [11] argued that “poverty is very real in Nigeria over the years the quality of life of the Nigerian citizen has progressively nosedived”.

**Table 1:** Poverty by Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria

Geopolitical Zone	1980	1985	1992	1996	2004	2010
South-South	13.2	45.7	40.8	58.2	35.1	63.8
South-East	12.9	30.4	41.0	53.5	26.7	67.0
South-West	13.4	38.6	43.1	60.9	43.0	59.1
North-Central	32.2	50.8	46.0	64.7	67.0	67.5
North-East	35.6	54.9	54.0	70.1	72.2	76.3
North-West	37.7	52.1	36.5	77.2	71.2	77.7

Source: British Council (2012)

The above data is crucial in understanding the state of poverty in Nigeria and especially the Northern region. Clearly, it is shown that poverty in Nigeria is both a rural and urban phenomenon. This explains the notion that violence is paramount; when there is no food, shelter, good health, good education and employment, the next line of action is to destabilize the polity hence the sustenance of the Boko Haram mayhem, banditry, clamour for resource control, kidnapping, cultism and several forms of society’s violence.

**The *Almajirai* phenomenon**

The *almajirai* practice is an old tradition that remains attractive to certain segments of the population of Nigeria. The term ‘*almajirai*’ is reportedly an adulterated spelling of the Arabic ‘*almuhajir*’, meaning a person who migrates for the purpose of learning or propagating Islamic knowledge. *Almajirai* schools are an important medium of education in most Muslim societies. At an early age (usually from six years onwards), it is a common practice in Muslim communities for parents/guardians to send their children/wards to Islamic scholars (*mallams*) to study the tenets of Islam and to imbibe the virtues of self-reliance and discipline (Oladosu, 2012).

The *Mallams* would usually send the children into the streets to beg for alms/food because their upkeep is not provided by the parent that send them for Islamic training (Aghedo and Eke, 2013) [3]; and moreso, that Zakat support system that was hitherto functional in supplementing for the upkeep of the *Mallams* and the pupils during the pre-colonial era has been abandoned by Muslims because of colonial government and subsequent modern democracies or governance. The *almajirai* system is said to have produced eminent jurists, Islamic scholars and religious reformers in Nigeria over the years (Aluaigba, 2009).

However, in recent times, as a result of an increase in population and attendant high enrolments in *almajirai* schools, and the soaring unemployment, many of the graduates from the *almajiri* system end up jobless and idle. For most *almajirai*, prospects for formal education are either very low or non-existent due to parental neglect and lack of governmental initiatives to galvanize education at the initial stage. Accordingly, desolate, hungry and largely illiterate, the *almajirai* become ready instruments of manipulations in the hands of the elite and other mischievous individuals. Available statistics indicated that there are over 10 million *almajirai* in northern Nigeria alone (Oladosu, 2012), and more than half of that number are found in Northeastern Nigeria, which is also the stronghold of the Boko Haram insurgency.

Aghedo and Eke (2013) [3] argued that these itinerant Quranic pupils, not only constitute the largest number of out-of-school children in the country, they present a tremendous challenge to the realization of both national and international conventions and protocols related to children.

**Ethno-religious readings of the Boko Haram Conflict**

In Nigeria, the relationship between religion and ethnicity is likened to that of Siamese twins’ reciprocating gestures (Akov, 2012) [5]. The roots of violent conflicts have been linked to colonialism and the Cold War (Machava, 2008). Others perceive it as a function of bad governance, politicization of ethnic and religious identities, the competition and conflict for political power (Ekanalo, 2006).

Deeply divided States polarized along ethnic and religious fault lines often tend to be fragile and unstable resulting in violent clashes. For instance, Umuleri and Aguleri conflict in Anambra State, Nigeria; Ife and Modakeke conflict in 2001 in Osun State; the Jos crisis between the Christian indigenes and the Muslim settlers in Plateau State. This is because by every known parameter, there are rare points of convergence and consensus among the constituent groups that are required to effectively mitigate the *raison d’etre* for conflict (Ekanalo, 2006). In this context, the emergence of

the Boko Haram Sect in Nigeria’s Northeastern region has been linked with peoples’ attempts at the mobilization of sectarian religious identity to gain an advantage in the country. Indeed, as Osaghae and Suberu (2005) [32] noted, religion and ethnicity are the most politically salient indices for conflict in the country.

The very fact that a country has different ethnic, communal, religious and racial groups does not make division and conflicts inevitable, as some of the most diverse countries (for example, Switzerland, Belgium, Malaysia and Tanzania) enjoy relative peace and stability, while some of the least diverse are the most unstable or violent (for example, Somalia, Rwanda, Burundi, and perhaps Sri Lanka). Fearon and Laiton (2003) [12] claim that “a greater degree of ethnic or religious diversity by itself is not a major and direct cause of violent civil conflict”. Rather, such conflicts are associated with conditions that favour insurgency, including poverty, high level of illiteracy *et cetera* which are indicators of fragile states. The exponential surge in fundamentalist Islamic insurgency, particularly the Boko Haram mayhem, is explained from this phenomenon. In Nigeria, as well as in similar Nations, religious and ethnic identities are more fully formed, more holistic and more strongly felt than class identities as evidenced in the fact that “those who identify with religious and ethnic communities are almost universally proud of their group identities. Also, those who see themselves as members of a social class are somewhat equivocal about their pride” (Lewis and Bratton, 2000) [24]. These two dominant identities have often been implicated in violent conflict in Nigeria and perhaps precipitated the Boko Haram insurgency.

**Illiteracy and Unemployment as causes**

Much of the instability and violence in Nigeria’s Northeast region and in several other parts of the country are a result of illiteracy and unemployment. Clearly, the inability of the State to effectively deliver the basic necessities of life for its people has been the underlining cause of violent conflicts and insurgency in Nigeria (Kwaja, 2009, Otoghile and Akov, 2011) [23, 5]. These challenges are accelerating to exponential levels, even threatening the unity and the existence of the Nigeria State itself, that is, the Boko Haram insurgency.

Despite efforts by government and well-meaning organizations to invest in education, the situation has remained bleak. This scenario is said to be especially worse in Northern Nigeria, where lack of early exposure as well as restrictive and discriminatory cultural/religious practices have reduced the educational opportunities available to the people.

**Table 2:** School Enrolment in Public Primary and Junior Secondary Schools in Nigeria

Year	Primary Schools		Junior Secondary Schools	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
2007	11,086,997	9,382,398	1,688,295	1,310,077
2008	10,252,000	8,728,395	1,899,060	1,552,018
2009	10,154,860	8,663,684	2,081,305	1,676,788
2010	10,215,179	8,826,988	2,260,585	1,864,626

Source: Action Aid, (2012)

The above table reveals that school enrolment in Nigeria is

very low, adult literacy varies widely across geopolitical zones in 2008 it was lowest in the North West (22% female; 58% male) and the North East (23%; 51%). These figures contrast significantly to the southern zones, where there was an average literacy rate of 80% for women and 90% for men (NPC, 2011; Action Aid 2012).

Boko Haram which literally means “western education is unlawful” certainly creates the basis for grave concern. This is in view of its avowed hatred for western education which is crucial for industrial transformation and development. Nigeria cannot afford to be left behind because education is identified as a tool for meaningful progress.

These critical elements often mislead the youths into believing that the western-styled State system is responsible for their plight. Armed with this misleading sentiment, their ‘next course of action is usually to unleash mayhem on State institutions.

**The Role of Impunity**

‘Impunity’ derives from the Latin *impunitas* meaning ‘without punishment’. It thus implies disobedience to the rule of law or due process without consequence. Impunity explains why people act contrary to the expectations of the law and society. Historically, impunity in Nigeria is traced to the years of military interregnum when the government was run in absolute disregard for the rule of law.

The trend has persisted till date despite more than a decade of democratic rule. Impunity manifests in different ways. It is what breeds high-handed corruption, desperation for power, intolerance for political opposition, flouting of traffic rules, power drunkenness, evasion of justice, stealing of public funds and lateness to work. Consequently, electoral irregularity, bribery, crude oil theft, nepotism, political godfatherism and compromised electoral bodies have become defining features of the Nigerian state.

Once impunity is entrenched in a state, that state loses its capacity to pursue and achieve meaningful development or take important steps to tackle corruption, unemployment, and poverty. Accordingly, some people who have lost confidence in the existing arrangements resulting from the widespread culture of impunity usually resort to violent measures to express their frustrations.

**External Factors**

The persistence of violent conflicts in Nigeria’s neighbouring countries has had spill-over effects on the country’s security. In particular, political instability in Libya occasioned by the ouster of Muammar Al Gaddafi led to an influx of refugees and light weapons into Nigeria’s territory. This was enhanced by the porous nature of the country’s borders and the failure of the security institutions which often fail to effectively safeguard the country’s territorial borders. Indeed, it has been noted that most suicide attacks by Boko Haram in Nigeria are orchestrated by foreign nationals notably from the Niger Republic and Chad.

**The Politicization of Insurgency in Nigeria**

Deep-seated poverty, unemployment, socio-political alienation, inequality, and illiteracy have been identified as creating the basis for insurgency and other forms of violent conflict in Nigeria. Lewis and Bratton (2000) [24] asserted that the competitive strain of modern political and economic structures is the explanation for violent insurgency. He opines that the situation is worsened by extreme scarcity of

resources in Nigeria, coupled with the inability or refusal of the state to make a remarkable dent on poverty; factors that have conducted bitter and often violent contestations.

More importantly, when demands of disgruntled groups agitating for one thing or the other are hijacked by the political elite and other self-serving elements in the polity, such struggles become politicized. This is very much the case in Nigeria where politics tends to determine every other sphere of social life. In this way, the struggles waged by insurgent groups are usually perceived as a smokescreen for the advancement of the interests of a select few, who usually benefit from the resulting instability.

Indeed, diversity in religion or ethnicity is not necessarily the precursor of violent insurgency (Lewis and Bratton, 2000; Osaghae and Suberu, 2005; Fearon and Laiton, 2003)<sup>[24, 32, 12]</sup>. Instead, it is the politicization of these identities that triggers violence. Takaya (1992)<sup>[37]</sup> identifies some factors that gave rise to the politicization of identities in Nigeria. This includes:

- The existence of two or more ethnic groups with numerical strengths that can significantly affect the outcome and direction of democratic political process;
- The instrumentalization of ethnicity and religion as legitimizing tools of hegemony in instances when the interests of the political class are under threat;
- The existence of radical thinking within a politically significant ethnic or religious group capable of achieving hegemony;
- The presence of political, social or economic hardships that can cause alliances along ethnic and religious fault lines.

Ukoha's (2005) assertion that ethnic and religious conflicts do not just happen naturally, nor neither are they accidental but are the products of a conscious effort by social actors. This perhaps explains why some eminent politicians in Nigeria have been linked with the activities of the dreaded Boko Haram sect. The wide variety of weapons, resources and information available to them clearly suggests that they have the backing of an influential segment of society.

The sheer destruction unleashed by Boko Haram on strategic institutions and other locations with military precision and expertise is a clear indication that certain highly placed government functionaries are complicit in the on-going assault against the Nigerian State. Thus, we can assume that insurgent activities are hardly motivated by the desire to mitigate inequality and poverty. Instead, most violent attacks on the State are usually overtly or covertly spearheaded and sponsored by a disgruntled segment of the political elite under one guise or the other. These self-serving elements often take advantage of the bitterness of ignorant and frustrated youths already disillusioned by the inept government leadership.

## **The Nexus between Boko Haram and Food insecurity**

### ***Conceptual Framework***

The conceptual approach in examining the nexus between Boko Haram and food insecurity explains that sustainable food production activities must be carried out in a secured environment devoid of threat to both human and material resources. This perspective provides a framework to assess critically sustainable livelihood by looking at the adequate stocks of flows of food and income to meet basic needs of all the household members (Chambers 1995)<sup>[10]</sup>. Livelihood

is assumed to be sustainable when it can cope or recover from stresses and shocks; maintain or enhance its capabilities and asset, while the natural resource base are not undermined whatsoever (Apata, 2010)<sup>[7]</sup>. This assertion was supported by Brundtland (1984) which explained that people's livelihood security is based more or less exclusively on the use of natural resources in perpetuity. According to Apata (2010)<sup>[7]</sup>, a rural farmer is faced with a set of livelihood resources that can influence its outcome. These include:

1. Human resources e.g. skills, knowledge and ability to labour for successful different livelihood strategies;
2. Financial resources e.g. cash, credit and other economic assets such as farming and fishing equipment that are essential for pursuit of any livelihood strategy.
3. Natural resources e.g. land, wetlands, forests and water from which resource and services useful for viable livelihoods flow; and
4. Social resources e.g. social networks upon which the farmers draw, when pursuing different livelihood strategies.
5. Given this conceptual background, the following theoretical frameworks laid veritable credence to the Boko Haram/food insecurity nexus.

### ***Theoretical frameworks***

Several authors (Percival and Homer-Dixon, 1998; Homer-Dixon, 1999 and Gleditsch, 2001)<sup>[13]</sup> had theorized about the links between resources utilization and conflicts. Based on these schools of thoughts, Homer-Dixon articulated the theory of eco-violence on which we can anchor this discourse following Onuoha (2008)<sup>[31]</sup>. Homer-Dixon and Blitt (1998) argued that large populations in many developing countries are highly dependent on four key environmental resources that are very fundamental to food production: fresh water, land for cropping and pastures; fish and forests. Scarcity of these resources resulting from misuse, over-use or degradation under certain circumstances will trigger off conflicts. Crop farmers and herders clash in Nigeria is still an unresolved phenomenon that bothers on shared resources. Homer-Dixon (1999) maintained that decreases both in quality and quantity of renewable natural resources, population increase, and inequitable access to resources can act singly or in diverse combinations to amplify the scarcity, for some population groups, of crop land, water, fish and forests. This in turn can reduce economic productivity, both for the local groups experiencing the scarcity and for the larger regional and national economies. The victims may migrate or be expelled to new lands. Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar is a case in study. Migrating people in groups often cause ethnic conflicts when they move to new areas, while dwindling wealth can cause deprivation and conflicts. The basic theoretical assumption of this theory is that resource scarcity is the product of an insufficient supply, excessive demand or an uneven distribution of a resource that forces some sector of a society into poverty, which perhaps have to be vehemently resisted or otherwise. Indigene/ settlers imbroglio in some States in Nigeria readily comes to mind. On the other hand, these three sources of scarcity are in turn caused by factors such as population expansion, economic development and environmental challenges. Thus, environmental resource scarcity will restrict agricultural and economic productivity, further inducing the disruption of

economic livelihoods (farming inclusive), poverty and migration. Migration can occur either as a result of environmental quality of a habitat that has become inhabitable or, more commonly, because the migrant's economic outcome is probably going to be better in areas with greater resource endowment. So, both restricted productivity and migration are likely to reinforce the segmentation around already existing religious, class, ethnic or linguistic cleavages in a society thus precipitating conflicts.

In this regard, Homer-Dixon presents his notion of environmental (or resource) scarcity with a pie metaphor: qualitative degradation or quantitative depletion which reduces the total size of the pie. A higher number of people sharing the pie simply mean that each share of the pie will shrink. Then, finally, if the pie is distributed in pieces of unequal proportions, some may be too dismal for people to survive on. Within the context of Nigerian ecological regions, the eco-violence theory is analytically fruitful to capture, if not explain, the intricate linkages that can develop between environmental resource scarcity, livelihoods such as farming or agricultural livelihoods, and conflicts. For instance, Onuoha (2008) <sup>[31]</sup> noted that the Lake Chad area where rapid population growth and converging environmental trends contributed to the retreat of the Lake, conflicts in the basin are likely to deteriorate greatly as resource scarcities act together with, or aggravate other conflict-related social factors.

According to Himmelstrand, (1969) <sup>[15]</sup> and Hendrix and Brickman (2013), whereas food insecurity may be a source of grievances that induce conflict, severe food insecurity has a dampening effect on conflict behaviour. There is a higher propensity for communal conflicts to occur in chronically food-insecure environments, though the effects of rapid, inter-temporal changes in food access are less clear. With respect to urban unrest, it is clearer to explain: higher consumer prices, particularly for food and fuel, correlate with increases in urban protest and rioting, which can have adverse effects on institutions and influence policy decisions that affect the whole country.

However, these relationships need to be understood in proper context, as collective action paradigms, political institutions, and market structures can either alleviate or magnify the effects of food insecurity on conflict. Besides, conflict itself is a significant source of reduced agricultural productivity and food insecurity, as it disrupts production and distribution networks of food and marketing of agricultural inputs and products.

### Consequences of Boko Haram

In an attempt to trace the origin of insurgency as experienced all over the world today, Kaldor (1999) <sup>[21]</sup> was of the view that the nature of armed conflicts changed from predominantly interstate to civil wars as experienced with Boko Haram in Nigeria and some affected neighbouring Countries like Chad, Niger and Cameroun.

Violence in non-conflict settings is equally directed against the State and the civilian population (Nett and Rüttinger, 2016) <sup>[29]</sup>. They noted that, it became a serious problem in states with poor governance, inefficient State institutions, and dysfunctional rule of law As they lack the capacity to respond to high levels of violence (Small Arms Survey, 2013). They emphasized that State fragility combined with livelihood insecurity often give rise to violence linked to

“alienated, frustrated, or excluded populations, particularly associated with younger men” (Moser and Rodgers, 2005) in the form of gang violence, cultism, identity conflict, or gender-based violence.

The number of non-State armed groups involved in civil conflicts has increased fourfold as since 2004 as observed by (McQuinn and Oliva, 2014) <sup>[26]</sup>. They emphasized that the changes continued to shape violence and war; there have also been important new developments and changes in patterns of violence and the actor landscape in the last decade. Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), (2015) identified another trend in violence which was described as the increasing presence of violent extremism, manifesting itself in an almost tenfold increase in the number of fatalities from terrorism between 2000 and 2014. In the opinion of Powell and Griffin, (2014) <sup>[33]</sup> terrorism itself is not a new phenomenon, although it is increasingly brutal and regionally networked across borders, and strives in some cases for territorial control. The terrorist groups increasingly recruits foreign fighters and targets private citizens, as opposed to religious, military, government, or business actors (IEP, 2014).

The Boko Haram insurgency is the greatest single cause of displacement in the Lake Chad region with over 2.5 million people becoming a refugee or an Internally Displaced persons (IDP) as a result of it. This crisis alone accounts for 70 percent of the total number of people displaced in the four countries of Nigeria, Chad, Cameroun and Niger. Of all the four countries, Nigeria is the worst hit. Furthermore, most—92 percent—of forcibly displaced people are displaced within their own countries. Forced displacement has had profound, pronounced, and long-lasting impacts in the Lake Chad region, related to the extreme level of violence unique to the Boko Haram conflict and the widespread destruction of private and public infrastructure (McQuinn and Oliva, 2014) <sup>[26]</sup>.

Displacement in the Lake Chad region has also given rise to significant, rapid, and unplanned urban growth, presenting significant urban management and development challenges. The population of cities and towns around the region has multiplied, with places like Maiduguri more than doubling its size in the last two years. This is also true for intermediate cities and small towns across the Lake Chad. The profound implication is that farming is completely abandoned within the community worst hit.

People displaced by the Boko Haram insurgency in the region are experiencing a particularly wide range of profound challenges. Their vulnerability is multidimensional, including severe damage to their social fabric, the extensive destruction of property and infrastructure in their places of origin, and significant basic survival and socio-economic needs that remain largely unmet. These challenges can be summarized as follows:

1. conflict and displacement lead to direct loss of property for the displaced, particularly farm land and livestock, which then translates into a critical food insecurity,
2. loss of their livelihoods, assets, rights, and business networks. This not only jeopardizes self-reliance but is destabilizing to the point that it affects survival chances and;
3. in addition to the access to services and employment opportunities, rights to property and freedom of movement are significantly affected by displacement. This is particularly true for refugees (who have no

rights of citizenship) and IDPs living in camps.

Rights to land vary from country to country—and in the case of Nigeria, from State to State—but in general, displaced people report limited access to land due to cost, security conditions, lack of ownership rights, and long distances between their current settlements and available farm land. The latter is a significant barrier to self-reliance. With the exception of those with previous experience as seasonal migrants, the displaced have few or no connections that would grant them access to a job or to financing. The vicious cycle of poverty and food insecurity continues.

### **Solutions towards combating the Boko Haram insurgency**

The emergence of the Boko Haram insurgency has introduced new forms of insecurity in Nigeria. Analytical examination of the diverse and contending perspectives on the emergence of the conflict although by no means exhaustive, clearly shows that the factors that led to its emergence are varied and multifaceted. At present, the existing counter-terrorism efforts at both the national and State levels have centered on the use of military force in which the full coercive apparatus of State power (including intelligence, economic, judicial and political might) is brought to bear on the insurgents.

The strategy adopted by the government is one of meeting 'violence with violence'. However, the option of dialogue is equally considered leading to the release of Chibok and Dapchi girls. This is because the over-reliance on military response has been shown to be a basic weakness in most counter-terrorism efforts. However, that the sect's apparent refusal to embrace the amnesty offer from the Federal Government has made the option of dialogue problematic. But then, it could be that the sect's members are distrustful of the government's sincerity in pursuing the amnesty deal. They probably perceive it as a ploy to round them up for prosecution.

It is possible nonetheless that military action may prove effective in countering the Boko Haram menace, but the Nigerian State must do more if the vicious circle of the insurgency is to be stopped. Late Kofi Annan is not alone in observing the limit of a purely military approach to the problem of terrorism. Making a similar observation, Richard (1984) observed that "military responses have a limited impact and can breed more terrorists...economic and diplomatic initiatives are needed too, not just military". This implies that a more multi-faceted approach, including enhanced diplomacy is needed to combat terrorism.

Imobighe (2006) <sup>[18]</sup> recommends an integrated conflict management approach in combating terrorism. According to him, this adoption is based on the utilization of problem-solving techniques to comprehensively address the phenomenon of terrorism. This problem-solving technique comprises of conflict prevention, peace promotion, conflict control, conflict abatement and conflict resolution. The idea behind this conflict management circle is to ensure that efforts at conflict management consciously strive to eliminate the underlining conditions that lead to the mobilization of ethnic and religious identities. These primordial identities often create an environment of conflict and discord within the state.

In the final analysis, counter-terrorism initiatives should include both medium as well as long-term strategies. This

means that a broad-based approach against terrorism that focuses not only on State-centric security but on human security, with a view to addressing the root causes of insecurity should be adopted. These could include the provision of basic infrastructures such as education, employment, good roads, electricity, and other poverty-reducing policies and programmes. In this way, the youths (especially from the *almajirai* pool) will be gainfully engaged and would not make themselves available for mobilization and recruitment as insurgents. Besides, adequate resources should be made available to the nation's security institutions to take timely action to catch conflict early and bring warring parties to the negotiating table before conflict escalates into violence.

### **Conclusion**

Insurgency, militancy, banditry, kidnapping and various manifestation of youth restiveness that culminated in the hydra headed Boko Haram was reviewed. Boko Haram induced rural – urban migration and Food Security in the Northeast, Nigeria was examined. Issues relating to the consequence of Boko Haram such as food insecurity, massive rural –urban migration was explored. Similarly, causes of Boko Haram were highlighted and sustainable solution to the menace were recommended.

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