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Human Rights and the Humanitarian Implications of the Security Situation in Northern Nigeria

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Abstract:

This paper explored human rights and humanitarian impact of the security situation in Northern Nigeria. This is against the backdrop of rising spate of insecurity occasioned by inter-communal/ inter-ethnic clashes, farmers-herders crisis, and disputes over land, boundary conflicts between indigenous people and settlers, communal and ethno-religious clashes, electoral violence as well as insurgency. To achieve this, it employed a doctrinal research method and relied on content analysis of relevant literatures such as statutes, books; journals; newspapers, magazines; conference, seminar and workshop papers and internet materials. It argued that the security situation in northern Nigeria have resulted in socio-economic and political insecurity, forced internal displacement, humanitarian challenges, gruesome abuses of human rights. This paper submitted that this scenario portends serious threat to the sustenance of national security in Nigeria. This paper recommended that government should address risen poverty, inequality, unemployment and deprivation among its citizenry especially the youths; intensify the enforcement of legal and human rights mechanisms that seek to provide protection for victims against human rights violations by the state, as well as abuses by non-state actors. Also required is increased access to justice and accountability for all abuses and violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law regardless of the position or rank of the perpetrator, creating unhindered and secure access for humanitarian agencies to the displaced and other civilians in need of assistance as well provide remedies for women and girls whose human rights have been violated, strengthening of international human rights monitoring mechanisms in collaboration with national human rights institutions, provide training for security agencies in particular on respect of human rights in the context of preventing arbitrary use of force, tackle corruption and ensure a direct link between victims and agencies involved in providing humanitarian services and an increase in budgetary allocation for agencies saddled with the responsibilities of managing displacement and other humanitarian activities such as National Emergency Management Agency(NEMA) and State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA).

Keywords: Northern Nigeria, Human Rights, International Humanitarian Law, Security, and Humanitarian Crisis

1. Introduction

Northern Nigeria consists of 19 out of 36 states clustered into 3 geo-political zones of North-West: North-East: North-Central. This region according Human Rights Reportⁱ had in the last ten years been characterized by rising violence as a result of inter-communal/ inter-ethnic clashes, farmers-herder's crisis, and disputes over land, boundary conflicts between indigenous people and settlers, communal and ethno-religious clashes, electoral violence as well as insurgency. These conflicts have manifested in socio-economic and political insecurity, forced internal displacement, gruesome abuses of human rights and humanitarian challenges that affected more than fourteen (14) million peopleⁱⁱ. In response to these conflicts, the security forces continue to commit serious human rights violations including extra-judicial executions, detention without trial, rape, torture, and enforced disappearance. The police and military continued to commit torture and other ill treatment while people have continued to live in a climate of fear and insecurityⁱⁱⁱ.

Inter-communal conflict and insecurity across the region, including conflict over farm and grazing land and insurgency generated 3,600 reported fatalities and 194,859 displaced persons between January and December 2013 according to the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and the National Commission for Refugees, (NCFR) and NGOs across the country^{iv}. These incidences took place in Nasarawa, Borno, Kaduna, Benue, Taraba, Adamawa, Yobe, Kano and Plateau

states and in the capital city of Abuja^v. In 2012, at least 792 fatalities were reported from inter-communal conflict and insecurity. Activities of the militant group known as Boko Haram (BH) (including an attack on the UN building in August 2011) have heightened insecurity mostly in northern states including Plateau, Kano, Borno, Kastina, Bauchi, Yobe, Kaduna, Kogi, Niger and Gombe^{vi}.

The Boko Haram attacks for example increased in 2012 than in 2010 and 2011 combined with the attacks causing a higher death toll^{vii}. The violence, which has continued into 2013, 2014 and 2015 has increased in both scale and sophistication and have resulted in risen refugee and humanitarian challenges. ^{viii}Epidemic-prone diseases such as measles, meningitis, cholera and occur as recurrent outbreaks^{ix}. Insurgent activities have led to social dislocation of the population in the affected states. Thousands of people have been forced to acquire the status of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) because they have been compelled to leave their homes to safer places. Furthermore, the psychological trauma that victims of insurgency suffer is tremendous. This especially affects children, some of who have watched their parents killed in their presence during raids by the Boko Haram members. In fact, out of fear, some abducted school children who managed to escape from the group get scared of going back to school to continue their education. The risk of future large-scale emergencies remains high due to the increasing frequency and scale of violent conflicts; terrorism; malnutrition, food insecurity and spread of communicable diseases and pandemics; rapid population growth and urbanization; increased vulnerability due to poverty, unemployment, displacement and migration. As a result, Moses Aluaigba^x noted that the consequences of these variegated forms of attacks have been humongous. Apart from the huge economic losses incurred as a result of insurgent attacks on infrastructure with grave effects on development in the north that will take years to rectify. The economic activities in Northern Nigeria, in general, and the North-East Zone, in particular, have been thrown into a state of inertia because of heightened insecurity. This paper examines human rights violations and the humanitarian implications of the security situation in Northern Nigeria with a view to making recommendations to address the situation.

2. Definitions of Terms

2.1. Human Rights

Human Rights are rights possessed by all persons by virtue of their common humanity to live a life of freedom and dignity.^{xi} They are universal and are the same for everyone' everywhere. These rights according to Alubo and Piwuna are inalienable; they are neither be taken away nor given up and they are indivisible, there is no hierarchy among rights and no right can be suppressed in order to promote another right.^{xii} Human Rights act as great safeguards against the tyranny of the majority and a considerable protection of the minorities. The duties of states to protect, promote and give effect to human rights has also been provided for in the Nigeria Constitution under Chapter IV, Section 33-43. The rights which are guaranteed and inalienable rights of every citizen of Nigeria includes: right to life, right to dignity of human person, right to personal liberty, right to fair hearing etc^{xiii}.

Given that human rights are backed by provisions of the law, for there to be a violation, there must be a form of infringement of rights guaranteed under an existing law. To violate the most basic human rights for example is to deny individuals their fundamental moral entitlements. It is in a sense, to treat them as if they are less than human and undeserving of respect and dignity. Examples of violations include acts typically deemed crimes against humanity such as genocide, torture, slavery, rape, deliberate starvation etc. Human rights violations cut across all spheres of man's existence and the Nigerian security services have been accused of being one of the greatest violators of the said rights in Nigeria.^{xiv}

it should however, be noted that in many constitutional democracies including Nigeria, there exist some limitations to the application human rights. For example, in Nigeria, the constitution permits derogation from strict observance or adherence to human rights in S. 45^{xv} of the Constitution. Section 37, 38, 39, 40 referred to in section 45 of the Constitution deals with the right to: private and family life, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, expression and the press, peaceful assembly and association. Government is permitted to derogate from certain fundamental rights in the interest of defence, and public order. In the light of the provisions of S. 45 of the Constitution, in appropriate cases, members of the armed forces may violate human rights of individuals without repercussions. Right to life and personal liberty may be circumscribed during periods of emergency.

2.2. International Humanitarian Law

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) means international rules, established by treaties or custom, which limit the right of parties to a conflict to use the methods or means of warfare of their choice, or which protect states not party to the conflict or person and objects that are or may be, affected by the conflict.^{xvi} IHL deals with a whole gamut of issues - prevention, control of armed conflict, post conflict legal and administrative measures^{xvii}. There are basically two types of IHL - the Law of The Hague and the Law of the Geneva. The law of The Hague involves over 800 body of rules which have become complex^{xviii}. IHL rules, especially the four Geneva Conventions of 12th August 1949 are of universal application. In addition, there are two additional protocols of 10th July, 1977. It is seminal to note that the Law of Geneva and the Red Cross and its activities share same origin as they are linked, dating back to 1859, in Italy^{xix}. In 1949, after the Second World War, the existing conventions were revised and supplemented in the form of the first^{xx}, second and third conventions.^{xxi} In internal armed conflicts, basically, international humanitarian law regulates conflicts and makes it obligatory for parties in a conflict to spare

persons not participating in hostilities and by restricting excessively dangerous or indiscriminate means and methods of warfare.

2.3. Security

Generally, security can be defined as the totality of actions and measures as well as legislative and operational procedures taken to ensure peace, stability and the overall well being of a nation and its people^{xxii}. Security refers to a feeling of safety from harm or danger and the defense, protection and preservation of core values. In short, security has to do with survival and human existence^{xxiii}. With the end of the cold war, the concept of security has been scrutinized and expanded to include human security" instead of its traditional military pre-occupation as it used to be previously. Accordingly, human security is seen as peoples' safety from threats and protection from sudden hurtful disruptions in patterns of daily life^{xxiv}. With the increasing threats to homeland security by non-state actors, the notion of security has now become elastic to include other than the military component, economic strength, internal cohesion, good governance, environment, quality of life, technology, health, education, political stability and social justice.

Broadly speaking, security can be classified into two via; internal and external perspectives. External security has to do with the security of the nation's territorial borders and her protection from external aggression while, internal security implies freedom from or the absence of those tendencies which could undermine internal cohesion and the corporate existence of the nation and the ability to maintain its vital institutions^{xxv}. Internal security involves the government coordination of all those actions that would guarantee that the equilibrium of state is constantly maintained or quickly brought to normality whenever it is threatened by any form of civil disturbances or distractions from students, political, ethnic or religious groups. The above assertions revealed that internal security suggests freedom from threat and the ability of the government to create and sustain an atmosphere conducive for the pursuit of economic interest by the population without interruptions from anybody. And when there is a threat, it includes the ability of the government to quickly intervene through agents and strategies to minimize the impact on the citizenry.

Furthermore, it includes the capacity of the government to create and maintain agencies and mechanism, and even institution that would guarantee freedom, from danger. Therefore, a threat to life and property be it from the armed robbers, insurgency attacks, civil disturbances, political thuggery, cattle rustling, road blocks that endangered the road users and other distractions are symptomatic of lack of internal security. Elaborating further, Nwolise^{xxvi} submitted that security of the individual citizens is the most important thing. He argued that security is for the citizens and not citizens for security and without citizens no security is needed for a vacuum. Thus, internal security is the act of keeping peace within the borders of a sovereign state or other self-governing territories.

Deriving from above definitions, internal security may be conceived as the freedom from or the absence of those tendencies which could attenuate internal cohesion and corporate existence of the nation and its ability to maintain its vital institutions for the promotion of its core values and socio-political and economic objectives, as well as to meet the legitimate aspirations of the people. This conception is applicable in this study for several reasons. First, it is more all-encompassing, than the narrow strategic conception, and second, because it gives vent to the intricate connection between public perception and internal security management. Thus, it can be deduced that, insecurity is the presence of and/or apprehension of those tendencies that could undermine internal cohesion and corporate existence of the nation and its ability to maintain its vital institutions for the promotion of its core values and socio-political objectives, as well as meet the legitimate aspirations of the people. It also implies the presence or apprehension of danger to life and property, and the presence of a non-conductive atmosphere for the people to pursue their legitimate interest within the society. It embodies the presence, or apprehension of threat to, and or direct violation of security. It implies threat to the individual's security, the state security and the security of the environment. These conditions are evident in violent conflicts experienced in Northern Nigeria over the years occasioned by inter-communal/ inter-ethnic clashes, farmers-herders crisis, and disputes over land, boundary conflicts between indigenous people and settlers, communal and ethno-religious clashes, electoral violence as well as insurgency. The failure of government to adequately address these situations has not only made people to live in a climate of fear and insecurity but posed serious threat to national security.

2.4. Humanitarian Crisis

A humanitarian crisis is an event or series of events that represents a critical threat to the health, safety, security or wellbeing of a community or other large group of people, usually over a wide area.^{xxvii} Humanitarian crisis can be classified as follows: 1. Natural disasters: earthquakes, floods, storms and volcanic eruptions, 2. Man-made disasters: conflicts, plane and train crashes, fires and industrial accidents, 3. Complex emergencies: when the effects of a series of events or factors prevent a community from accessing their basic needs, such as water, food, shelter, security or healthcare; e.g. war, terrorism^{xxviii}. Complex emergencies are typically characterized by: 1. extensive violence and loss of life; 2. displacement of populations; 3. widespread damage on societies and economies; 4. the need for large-scale, multi-faceted humanitarian assistance; 5. the hindrance or prevention of humanitarian assistance by political and military constraints; 6. significant security risks for humanitarian relief workers in some areas^{xxix}.

Humanitarian crisis could be seen as any situation in which life or well-being will be threatened unless immediate and appropriate action is taken and which demands an extraordinary response and exceptional measures. The concern is with the

prevention of threats to life or wellbeing through timely and appropriate action^{xxx}. Similarly, Harmer^{xxxi} identifies humanitarian crisis as any situation in which there is an exceptional and widespread threat to life, health or basic subsistence that is beyond the coping capacity of individuals and the community. This implies the need for intervention and response that go beyond the relief of symptoms and that might extend to support to livelihoods and the diversification of coping strategies. A humanitarian crisis is seen as a singular event or series of events that are threatening in terms of health, safety or well-being of a community or large group of people.^{xxxii}

3. Causes of Insecurity and Humanitarian Crisis in Northern Nigeria

Writing on insecurity West Africa, Ladan^{xxxiii} stated some of the general root causes of insecurity in Northern Nigeria to include: poor implementation of constitutional measures to address past socio-economic and political injustices, inequities and imbalances and a feeling of among the diverse Nigerian populace, a sense of marginalisation, discrimination, exclusion and disadvantage. Failure by the state to effectively prevent and control the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and their possession by militant sectarian and ethnic militia groups, among others. The negative culture of do or die politics and the struggle for the sharing of national cake at the centre (distributive federalism) arising from undue concentration of power and resources at the federal level (centre) to the disadvantage and impoverishment of the federating units (states and LGAs), politicization of ethnicity and manipulation of religion by the elites for their selfish ends thereby providing a fertile ground for extremism, intolerance, ethno-religious violent conflicts and perpetual cycle of recriminations or revengeful killings^{xxxiv}.

Similarly, Angela and Ugwuoke^{xxxv} implicated poverty and unemployment to the risen insecurity situation in Northern Nigeria. A recent World Bank (2010) report released at a United Nations summit rated Nigeria as second poorest country in the world with most Nigerians living below poverty line. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS 2012) about 60.9% of Nigerians in 2010 were living in 'absolute poverty'. In 2011, the figure rose slightly to 61.9% and in BBC news (2012), the number of Nigerians living in poverty was put at 61%. The highest poverty rates are recorded in the North-West and Northeast geopolitical zones with a poverty rate of 77.7% and 76.6% respectively (NBS 2012)^{xxxvi}. The reason is not far-fetched considering that these zones are riddled with conflicts. Absence of basic services, unemployment, bad governance and corruption provide an avenue for disgruntled members of the society to be radicalized. The situation is such that no day passes without news of one form of killing by insurgents or the other. Many properties have been destroyed and lives lost to these insurgents who advocate the jettisoning of western education. High levels of poverty in the rural areas continue to fuel rural-urban migration which strains the coping mechanisms in cities across the country.^{xxxvii} As a result of unequal opportunities young people from the rural areas resort to prostitution, illegal drugs and armed robbery and other criminal activities^{xxxviii}.

In a related study Charas Madu Tella^{xxxix} attributed the insecurity in the region to systemic and political corruption. This has contributed to government failure and breakdown of institutional infrastructures. The state of insecurity in Nigeria is greatly a function of government failure, traceable to systemic and political corruption. It has added another dimension of violent conflicts which has eroded national values. Corruption is bad not because money and benefits change hands, and not because of the motives of participants, but because it privatizes valuable aspects of public life, bypassing processes of representation, debate, and choice. Corruption hampers economic growth, disproportionately burdens the poor and undermines the effectiveness of investment and aid^{xl}.

Farmers-herder's conflicts have generated serious security problems in northern Nigeria. Ibe, et al^{xli} quoting Olayoku noted that these conflicts have been most rampant in the middle belt States of Kaduna, Plateau, Benue and Nasarawa. For instance, in Benue State following a bitter rivalry between the Tiv and Fulani ethnic groups, a total of 853 people lost their lives in 2014^{xlii}. Out of the 23 local government areas in Benue state, the rampaging herdsmen invaded and occupied 14 local government areas. Six soldiers attached to the 72 battalion in Makurdi were killed in the cross-fire that ensued between the two groups during this period. Five of the soldiers were killed in Agatu in January this year while one captain, was beheaded in Guma local government area of Benue state. The Tiv people in Guma, Gwer, Gwer-West, Makurdi and other towns at the border with Taraba state have recorded about 458 deaths and over 350 communities have been sacked and are now living in refugee camps^{xliii}. In Taraba State Since 2013, the Christian communities in Southern Taraba Senatorial District and those on the fringes of the Central Senatorial District, especially in Gassol and Bali local government areas, have come under attack from the Hausa Fulani Muslim herdsmen; killing women and children.^{xliii} International crisis group the incidence in Barkin Ladi and Riyom Local Government Areas in Plateau State which has witnessed frequent attacks between herders-farmers since 1999. In Sho district of Barkin Ladi for example the aggression has become particularly sharp since 2014. This included an attack in July 2015 that killed fourteen individuals travelling on the road between Sho and Barkin Ladi. In 2015, there were four attacks in July, four attacks in August and eight attacks in September^{xliv}.

Election-related violence elections in Nigeria have also led to violence with significant humanitarian implications in northern Nigeria. Fourteen states were affected by election violence in 2011 with over 800 people killed, and more than 70,000 displaced, in three days of rioting^{xlvi}. This according to Nigeria stability and reconciliation programme^{xlvii} is because elections in Nigeria have frequently been characterised by malpractice and violence, and the two elections that preceded the 2011 elections, in 2003 and 2007, were particularly flawed. An analysis of the Nigeria Watch database of electoral violence for the period between June 2006 and May 2014 revealed 915 fatal incidents related to elections. A spatial analysis of the Nigeria Watch database shows that the bloodiest geopolitical zone is the Middle Belt, with 1,463 deaths. The region is characterized by

pre-existing ethno-religious tensions, just as in the Northwest (911 deaths). Most electoral violence in northern Nigeria was found to have an ethno-religious background^{xlviii}.

Insurgency has also been a major driver of humanitarian and insecurity crises in Nigeria^{xlix}. An assessment carried out by the UNCT in September 2013 noted that insurgency and the subsequent state of emergency in the North-East Nigeria will generate over 60% of the humanitarian case load for 2014. Since January 2010 Boko Haram has been involved in over 24% of violent conflicts^l. While the insurgents have mainly operated in the North-Eastern geo-political region, they have often carried out sporadic attacks on Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The insurgents have continued to vary their strategies and tactics usually attacking soft targets such as school children in dormitories and travellers along thinly-secured highways^{li}.

Conflicts and in insecurity in northern Nigeria have also been caused by suspicion and distrust among various ethnic groups and among the major religions in the country^{lii}. Ethno-religious conflict is a situation in which the relationship between members of one ethnic or religious and another of such group in a multiethnic and multi-religious society is characterized by lack of cordiality, mutual suspicion and fear, and a tendency towards violent confrontation^{liii}. Inter-communal conflicts are underlying factor of displacement and casualties in Nigeria. The conflicts are usually centred on disputes over land, ethnic and religious differences and are especially common in the North-Central geo-political zones involving "indigenous" Christians and pastoralist Muslims who are viewed as "settlers"^{liiv}. Protracted inter-communal conflicts regularly lead to death and displacement throughout Nigeria. In 2013, at least 733 fatalities were reported and an estimated 70,000 people were displaced from communal conflicts in Plateau, Nasarawa, Taraba, Kogi and Benue states^{liv}.

Weak security system has contributed to the level of insecurity in Nigeria, and this can be attributed to a number of factors which include inadequate funding of the police and other security agencies, lack of modern equipment both in weaponry and training, poor welfare of security personnel, and inadequate personnel. ^{lvi} Combined with this is the present police-population ratio of 1:450 which falls below the standard set by the United Nations. The implication of this is that Nigeria is grossly under policed and this partly explains the inability of the Nigerian Police Force to effectively combat crimes and criminality in the country^{lvii}.

Porous borders have also been observed to have contributed to insecurity in northern Nigeria arising from uncontrolled movement of people. As a result of the porous borders there is an unchecked inflow of Small Arms and Light Weapons into the country which has aided militancy and criminality in Nigeria^{lviii}. Available data show that Nigeria host over 70 percent of about 8 million illegal weapons in West Africa. ^{lix}Also, the porosity of the Nigerian borders has aided the uncontrollable influx of migrants, mainly young men, from neighbouring countries such as Republic of Niger, Chad and Republic of Benin responsible for some of the criminal acts^{lx}.

4. Humanitarian Implications of Insecurity in Northern Nigeria

4.1. Human Right Abuses

Human Rights Watch report^{lxi} indicated that Boko Haram insurgency has led to violation of human rights and commission of serious crimes by both the insurgents and the government forces. The military and police, for instance, have committed human rights abuses and extra-judicial killings. Nigeria's security forces continue to commit serious human rights violations in their response to Boko Haram. Since 2009, thousands of people suspected of having links to Boko Haram have been extra-judicially executed or unlawfully killed by the Nigerian army and police. Hundreds more have been victims of enforced disappearances and since 2012, thousands of suspects died in military and police custody. The JTF frequently conducts raids usually following attacks by Boko Haram in which ordinary people are arrested en masse and detained in military detention centres for lengthy periods, often without charge or trial and without access to their families and lawyers.

Amnesty International report^{lxii} found that the security forces appear to have repeatedly used firearms against people when there is no imminent threat of death or serious injury and have intentionally used lethal force in circumstances other than when it was strictly necessary to protect life. Only recently, the apex Human Rights Organisation issued a report that it has evidence of extra-judicial killings and atrocities by troops fighting Boko Haram insurgents. The report said that the Baga massacre occurred after Boko Haram insurgents killed a Nigerian soldier.^{lxiii} It further stated that, in reprisal, Nigerian troops attacked the small fishing community of Baga, shooting at civilians and setting private buildings on fire. Residents claimed 185 people were killed and 2,000 houses razed down. The report blamed government troops and Boko Haram for gross violations of human rights.

On the side of the insurgents, heinous human rights abuses and war crimes have also been committed^{lxiv}. Relevant instances include: forced conversion of people of other faiths to Islam; wanton attacks on churches and mosques; murder, torture and persecution of members of other religions others include killing of women, children and civilian (non-combatant) populations^{lxv}. These excesses of the government forces have been documented thus: during raids in communities, often in the aftermath of Boko Haram attacks, members of the security forces have executed men in front of their families; arbitrarily arrested or beaten members of the community; burnt houses, shops, and cars. Government security agencies routinely hold suspects incommunicado without charge or trial in secret detention facilities or have subjected detainees to torture or other physical abuse^{lxvi}. On the whole, both the insurgents and the government forces (the JTF) have had records of human rights abuses^{lxvii}. In Jos, Plateau state for example, there have been numerous cases of villagers been shot and slaughtered in their sleep, with survivors pointing accusing fingers at the special task force constituted to help obliterate the problem in the first

place. Akhaine and Chizea^{lxviii} reported that 17 people were shot dead by security forces during a protest in Kaduna state on 17th April and another 118 killed on 27th April in the same state with several houses burnt. Abbah^{lxix} further observed that over 300 people were killed in the Fulani/Farmers clashes that lasted for five (5) months in Nigeria.

Although, government had taken a few steps to investigate or prosecute officials who committed violations, whether in the security forces or elsewhere in the government, impunity remained widespread at all levels of government^{lxx}. Government have continuously been criticised for her failure to investigate or prosecute most of the major outstanding allegations of human rights violations by the security forces or the majority of cases of police or military extortion or other abuse of power^{lxxi}.

4.2. Impact on IDPs and Refugee Crisis

The security situation in northern Nigeria has had damaging impact on the lives of millions of people. Hundreds of thousands of people have been forced to seek refuge in neighbouring countries and thousands more have been made internally displaced^{lxxii}. According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) the crisis in north-eastern Nigeria, has caused more than 520,000 people, mainly women, children and elderly people have been forced to flee inside Nigeria or seek refuge in neighbouring countries (Niger, Cameroon and Chad)^{lxxiii}. As at July 2015, there were 1.3 million internally displaced persons (56 per cent of which are children) in Nigeria (with the State of Borno hosting the largest population): 81,693 displaced persons across four divisions of the far north region in Cameroon; and 18,882 displaced persons in Chad, including returnees from Nigeria, spread across four districts^{lxxiv}. The internally displaced are held in camps, informal settlements, host communities, with families, in rented houses, in places of worship and public buildings and at border crossings. Consequently, their enjoyment of the rights to education, food, health, shelter, and water and sanitation has been greatly reduced. Numerous displaced children have no access to education, while those who remain in their communities often receive poor quality education owing to insecurity, the lack of teachers (who have fled and the destruction of schools. The displacement tracking matrix (DTM) of January 25, 2017 indicates that there are an estimated 1,899,830 IDPs (337,353 households) in Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe. This represents an increase of 129,386 individuals (7 per cent) from 1,770,444 (311,478 households).^{lxxv} As at 2017, Amnesty international reports at least 2 million internally displaced persons in northern Nigeria; 80% of them lived in host communities, while the remainder lived in camps. The vast majority of IDPs were identified in Borno (1,506,170), followed by Adamawa (147,528) and Yobe (112, 269). As at July 2015, there were 1.3 million internally displaced persons (56 per cent of which are children) in Nigeria (with the State of Borno hosting the largest population): The internally displaced are held in camps, informal settlements, host communities, with families, in rented houses, in places of worship and public buildings and at border crossings. Consequently, their enjoyment of the rights to education, food, health, shelter, and water and sanitation has been greatly reduced.^{lxxvi} Numerous displaced children have no access to education, while those who remain in their communities often receive poor quality education owing to insecurity, the lack of teachers (who have fled and the destruction of schools. The protection concerns in some camps for displaced persons in Nigeria include insecurity, tensions among residents, and between them and host communities, and sexual and gender-based violence.^{lxxvii} According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, as many as 3 million people in northern Nigeria alone would not meet their basic food needs without humanitarian aid after July 2015.^{lxxviii} Since the escalation of violence in north-eastern Nigeria in 2013, thousands have fled across the border into Cameroon, Chad and the Niger, while attacks in the Niger have forced people from Diffa to flee across the border into Chad^{lxxix}. This has resulted in a major refugee crisis in the region. In Niger, OHCHR was informed by UNHCR that, as at July 2015, some 16,000 Nigerian refugees were in Diffa, and that 40 per cent of all refugees in Diffa were children. In Chad, as at July 2015, 7,139 refugees from Nigeria and the Niger were spread across 3,132 households in its Dar es Salaam refugee camp, in Chad^{lxxx}. Minawao camp, situated in far north region of Cameroon, has witnessed the largest influx of refugees in the Lake Chad basin. Established in July 2013, the camp hosts (as at July 2015) 40,995 refugees, largely from the States of Adamawa and Borno in Nigeria^{lxxxi}.

4.3. Food Insecurity

The insurgency and attacks in North East and the insecurity situation in Northern Nigeria have continued to pose serious challenges to agriculture and household food security in that area^{lxxxii}. Food continues to be the prevalent unmet need of more than half of the displaced people surveyed, in both camps and host communities. 60% people cited food as their biggest unmet need in this round, a decrease from 66 percent in the last DTM assessment. This was followed by non-food items (NFI), such as blankets and mosquito nets, with 21% of the displaced population citing NFIs as their most important unmet need. Medical services and shelter were both the unmet need for 7 percent people, while 1.9% felt water was needed most. A lot of poor households depend on their farm produce as their main source of food and family income and have as a result of displacements arising from the crisis been facing a lot of difficult times. The movement and transportation of food items whether in the form of food aid from the government or NGOs to the displaced households or to the markets where they are sold have also been seriously hampered.^{lxxxiii} According to Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET), insurgency and subsequent state of emergency has led to population displacements and disruptions to market, trade, and income generating activities. Household food stocks in the affected areas also depleted earlier than normal in 2013 due to below-average crop production. As a result, poor households in Borno and Yobe states are facing crisis^{lxxxiv}.

4.4. Impact on Health and Education

Health services and social amenities in northern Nigeria especially the north east have been disrupted and are in various states of disrepair^{lxxxv}. Access to reproductive health (RH) services, especially emergency obstetric care has reduced due to depleted stocks and unavailable qualified health professionals, difficulty with transportation to health facilities, delay at military checkpoints and inability to afford the services are also jeopardizing timely interventions, particularly for safe delivery. Access to children during supplemental immunization activities e.g. Polio and Measles has significantly declined in security compromised communities in Borno and Yobe States as well as in communities with frequent communal conflicts. Disease surveillance and response activities have also been limited in these areas. In addition, there is low capacity among health workers in the frontline and inadequate number of health personnel who are poorly motivated. Epidemic-prone diseases such as measles, meningitis, and cholera occur as recurrent outbreaks in northern Nigeria. Massive population displacement has caused serious decline in health levels. Displacement-induced social stress and psychological trauma are sometimes accompanied by the outbreak of relocation related illnesses, particularly parasitic and vector-borne diseases such as malaria and schistosomiasis. Unsafe water supply and improvised sewage systems increase vulnerability to epidemics and chronic diarrhoea, dysentery, and so on. The weakest segments of the demographic spectrum-infants, children, and the elderly-are affected most strongly^{lxxxvi}. Frequent power cuts, fuel shortages, production and maintenance of water works along with infrastructure damages have a direct impact on water supply availability in the area. Access to water treatment chemicals has also become increasingly difficult. Water utilities establishments in most parts of the affected local governments were moribund even before the declaration of the state of emergency. Furthermore, the psychological trauma that victims of insurgency suffer is tremendous. This especially affects children, some of who have watched their parents killed in their presence during raids by the Boko Haram members. In fact, out of fear, some abducted school children who managed to escape from the group get scared of going back to school to continue their education.

The education sector in northern Nigeria have also suffered serious setback due to insecurity. Most of the school age children in crisis area of northern Nigeria states have had their opportunities for schooling severely constrained. The education sector in the North-Eastern States for example which has remained the target of attacks has been particularly hard hit by the crisis. In Borno State for example seventy-seven (77) schools and five hundred and fifty-three (533) class-rooms offering basic education have been burnt, 9,546 desks destroyed since 2009^{lxxxvii}. In the public senior secondary and high schools, 25 teachers and three students have been killed. In private schools, 10 students and one teacher have been killed. The Ministry of Education materials and buildings have also been vandalized in some schools by unknown gunmen. Basic education has most been affected and efforts to build back better will take long. The schools worst affected by the violent attacks are those located in the old Maiduguri City and those in Marte, Kala-Balge, Gamboru Ngala and Mobbar in northern Borno. An estimated 15,000 children have stopped attending schools and 50 out of 175 schools have been burnt down (Borno State Ministry of Education, 2013). In Yobe State, the educational system has equally suffered greatly from the activities of the group^{lxxxviii}. On February 25, 2014, the Federal Government College in Buni Yadi was invaded and 43 students and staff were killed and 16 female students abducted. An earlier attack at the College of Agriculture Gujba in 2013 led to the deaths of 40 students. Similarly, Government Secondary School, Mamudo had earlier been attacked on July 6, 2013, where 42 students and some teachers were killed. The Yobe State government puts the cost of the classrooms burnt at N2.5bn^{lxxxix}. The Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT) in Yobe revealed that Boko Haram had killed 171 teachers since the insurgency started in 2009. The escalating level of violence is threatening the education of hundreds of thousands of children as school attendance has plummeted in many areas affected by the conflict.

4.5. Unemployment and Social Disintegration

The risk of losing wage employment is very high both in urban and rural displacements for those employed in enterprises, services, or agriculture. Expropriation of land removes the main foundation upon which people's productive systems, commercial activities, and livelihoods are constructed. This is the principal form of de-capitalization and pauperization of displaced people, as they lose both natural and human-made capital. This is especially common in cases of bomb-blasts. Violent crisis causes social disintegration at many levels. When people are forcibly moved, production systems are dismantled. Long-established residential communities and settlements are disorganized, while kinship groups and family systems are often scattered. Life-sustaining informal social networks that provide mutual help are rendered non-functional. Trade linkages between producers and their customer base are interrupted, and local labour markets are disrupted^{xc}.

4.6. Wanton Deaths and Destruction of Properties

Violent conflicts most often than not leave behind a track of deaths and destruction of properties. This has been the case in northern Nigeria which has witnessed increased cases of insecurity and insurgency in the last decade. In the North East for example, government sources in Borno and Yobe States have estimated that some 20,000 civilians, including an undetermined number of women and children, have been killed by Boko Haram since 2009.^{xc} Civilians have been shot, beheaded, amputated, stoned, drowned, burned and bombed^{xcii}. This have turned majority of women into widows and children into orphans in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states. There have been sixty-four (64) incidences of terror attacks by the Boko Haram sect in the North-East region since 2009-2014, with different methods of attacks ranging from armed attacks, bombing and explosions, midnight/terror attacks, mass murder/suicide raid, assassination/murder and abductions^{xciii}. These

attacks have claimed the lives of not less than two thousand three hundred and twenty people in 2009 and three thousand in 2010. In 2011, not less than three thousand five hundred and sixty lives lost and three thousand seven hundred in 2012. Four thousand four hundred and twenty lives lost in 2013 and in 2014, not less than five thousand lives have been lost. Entire villages, such as Lassa, in State of Borno, Nigeria, were burned down during attacks in December 2014^{xciv}.

4.7. Abductions Problems

Insecurity in northern Nigeria has led to rising cases of abductions. Boys were mainly abducted by Boko Haram for indoctrination in its ideology and for recruitment into its fighting force, while women and girls were abducted for sexual exploitation, forced marriages, labour and religious conversions to Islam. To date, the whereabouts of many of the victims is unknown, and those who have attempted to escape have been beaten and received death threats. The abduction of 276 schoolgirls from Chibok, State of Borno, on 14 April 2014, is well-known. Although one hundred and (106) girls have been rescued, another one hundred and thirteen are still in captivity. In April 2015, the Nigerian army rescued 293 abducted women and children from the Boko Haram stronghold in Sambisa forest. Many of the women and girls were reportedly pregnant. The army reported having rescued more than 600 women and children since the counter-insurgency. The number of those who managed to escape is unknown. OHCHR was able to confirm that, as at June 2015, 307 rescued women and children had been enrolled in a "de-radicalization" programme run by the Government of Nigeria to prevent recruitment by Boko Haram and to demobilize its members^{xcv}.

5. Responses to Insecurity and Humanitarian Challenges in Northern Nigeria

Nigerian government, the international community and other stake holders have carried out several measures at checkmating the humanitarian crisis in Northern Nigeria. The federal government for example had carried out the following: the signing of AU IDP Convention by the Nigerian Government on October 2009 in Uganda to protect and assist IDPs especially those in North East Nigeria^{xcvi}. Although eight years down the line this convention has not been ratified and domesticated. The involvement of National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) for the coordination of emergency relief operation to IDPs and the distribution of agricultural inputs to farmers to boost food security in North East Nigeria; the establishment of Strategic Response Plan by National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), since 2013 at various communities in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa States to cater for the humanitarian needs such as food insecurity, malnutrition and epidemics to displaced persons; the establishment of a five years developmental plan (2010-2015) under NCFR with the responsibility for overseeing all IDPs and refugee matter in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa States; setting up of committees to analyse the root causes of the violence and security challenges in the north-east and other parts of the north and to make recommendations, setting up of victims support fund;^{xcvii} deployment of joint task forces operations to areas under violent attacks across the north and recently the establishment of North East Development Commission.

Government had also set up committees to analyse the root causes of the violence and security challenges in the north-east and to make recommendations.^{xcviii} It also set up an inquiry following allegations of human rights violations implicating the army and the Civilian Joint Task Force. In December 2014, the military authorities concluded an inquiry by which it concluded that extrajudicial executions allegedly perpetrated by the army were sometimes committed by members of Boko Haram wearing military uniforms and using arms seized from the army. It did not establish responsibility for State actors. Following an audit of Boko Haram detainees conducted in 2013 by a joint investigation task force and its recommendation for improving the screening of suspects, the Nigerian army released in early July 2015 100 men, 24 women and 58 children suspected of terrorist activities. A victims 'support fund and the Presidential Initiative for the North-east to support reconstruction, recovery and economic development were established in July and November 2014 respectively. In March 2014, in Nigeria, the Office of the Attorney General created a specialized section to handle terrorism-related cases to expedite the handling of prosecutions. However, OHCHR noted that prosecutions have not been commensurate with the large number of detained Boko Haram suspects^{xcix}.

The international community had also carried out various actions to combat humanitarian challenges in Nigeria. Some of these include: the involvement of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) through the strengthening of its field operations in communities in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states in the expansion of community-based first-aid programme and the mobilization of urgent water/sanitation initiatives since 2011 to date; the provision of medical aid, clean water, food and other essential household items to help meet the immediate needs of displaced persons at various communities of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states; the upgrading of water/sanitation infrastructures in various camps where IDPs commonly sought refuge, delivering long-term community benefits as well as the donation of medical/surgical materials to various health centres; support the provision of deliveries of supplies and services such as food, shelter, health, water, sanitation and hygiene(WASH) and nutrition to the growing influx of Nigerian refugees in Chad, Niger and Cameroun since 2013.^c Despite these efforts by government and other stakeholders to address the humanitarian challenges in Northern Nigeria, the situation has remained precarious. Also, some of the measures adopted have largely raised human rights concerns, in particular with regard to arrest, detention and fair trial guarantees for persons deprived of their liberty in connection with the counter-insurgency measures.

6. Challenges to Humanitarian Response in Northern Nigeria

There are several challenges faced by government and other stakeholders in the management and coordinating of humanitarian activities in Nigeria. Eweka and Olusegun ^{ci}identified absence of humanitarian law and policy framework to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of humanitarian agencies in Nigeria. The lack of systematic data collection continues to pose serious challenge of difficulty in estimating the exact total number of displaced people in need as well as the lack of access to rural areas by various humanitarian agencies due to its volatility^{ci}. Also, Nigeria has no legislation that deals explicitly with IDPs as it has only ratified but not domesticated the Kampala Convention on IDPs^{ciii}. Serious gaps still exist in the availability of credible data and information for humanitarian planning and action in Nigeria. Similarly, deficiency in information sharing between the government and its humanitarian partners as well as lack of awareness of the actions carried out by different humanitarian partners often leads to replication of activities and waste of resources^{civ}. There is also paucity of funds for and institutions devoted to conflict sensitive peace-building which are essential in order to effect change and achieve durable solutions^{cv}. Alleged cases of corruption have also been reported against officials perpetuated through diversion of funds and materials meant for humanitarian projects.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper set out to explore human rights and the humanitarian implications of the security situation in Northern Nigeria. The essence of the paper is to situate the humanitarian consequences of the phenomenon of insecurity. From the standpoint of the conflicts in northern Nigeria, the paper observed that insecurity has resulted in dire humanitarian consequences in the region. These consequences include human casualties/ fatalities, population displacement and refugee crisis, human rights abuses, education and health crisis etc. In the light of the foregoing, the paper submitted that violent conflicts constitute a veritable threat to national security in Nigeria, hence the need to devise a means of ensuring a pragmatic solution to it. In this regard, a number of factors would therefore need to be addressed, including targeting the underlying drivers of insecurity. Government also needs to take the following measures:

1. Address risen poverty, equality, unemployment and deprivation among its citizenry especially the youths. Assistance should be centred on social inclusion, education, youth employment, empowerment, natural resource management, investment in infrastructure, and environmental protection. This requires engagement from the Nigerian authorities, civil society, governments of neighbouring countries, and the international community.
2. Government should intensify the enforcement of legal and human rights mechanisms that seek to provide protection for victims against human rights violations by the state, as well as abuses by non-state actors. Government should address the arrest and detention of people by the JTF, police and State Security Services (SSS) in Maiduguri and other parts of the country which is often conducted outside the provisions of both Nigerian law and international human rights law and standards.
3. Increase access to justice and ensure accountability for all abuses and violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, regardless of the position or rank of the perpetrator, bearing in mind that there can be no amnesty for the most serious crimes; and publish the outcome of investigations undertaken, and provide adequate and effective redress for victims.
4. Create unhindered and secure access for humanitarian agencies to the displaced and other civilians in need of assistance as well provide remedies for women and girls whose human rights have been violated, including for sexual violence, provisions for psychosocial counselling, rehabilitation and social reintegration, comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services, including HIV treatment.
5. Take measures to re-establish children's access to education, including for girls, and particularly for those children displaced by the conflict; and rebuild schools destroyed during attacks and secure access to schools, while ensuring also the protection of teachers and students;
6. Support the strengthening of international human rights monitoring mechanisms in collaboration with national human rights institutions, and of national human rights protection systems, including the internal accountability mechanisms of security agencies. Strengthen the human rights capacity of the United Nations country team to respond more effectively to and to address systematically allegations of human rights abuses and violations.
7. Provide training for security forces in particular on respect of human rights in the context of counter-terrorism and preventing violent extremism, on the basis of the commitment to comply with human rights norms and standards, as well as international laws.
8. Government should fight corruption and create a direct link between victims and agencies involved in managing humanitarian activities. The activities of such agencies must be constantly monitored and supervised to forestall abuse of office.
9. Government should increase budgetary allocation for agencies saddled with the responsibilities of managing displacement and other humanitarian activities such as NEMA and SEMA. There is need for government to build displacement camps across all the states of the federation especially in crisis prone States.

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