STRATEGIC ADMINISTRATION OF POST CONFLICT PEACE BUILDING ACTIVITIES IN NIGERIA: AN ANALYSIS OF POST BOKO HARAM INSURGENCY PEACEBUILDING ACTIVITIES IN NORTH-EAST NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper analyzes the strategic administration of various post-insurgency peace-building activities in the northeast geo-political zone which comprise Borno, Yobe, Adamawa, Gombe, Bauchi and Taraba states. Similarly, it highlights the effect of insurgency, although the damages caused by insurgency differ the impacts cut across the entire northeastern states. The findings of this paper reveal that the federal government of Nigeria has taken the lead in the implementation of various integrated approaches of the post insurgency peacebuilding activities in collaboration with some state governments such as the Establishment of North East Development Commission (NEDC), Amnesty program, Reorientation, de-radicalization and re integration program, Humanitarian response plan (HRP), Recovery and Peacebuilding strategy (RPBS) etc. coordinated and implemented by the office of the National security adviser, NEMA, Nigeria Army etc. at same time NGOs were working hand in hand with the government in post-conflict activities in the region. Similarly, such activities led to positive impacts socially, politically and economically. This paper adopted the use of secondary sources of data in its data collection, anchored on sustainable peace-building theory by J.P Lederach (1997) and recommends more community-based inclusion in the

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implementation of the plans, create and expand programs and projects to cut across victims and other stakeholders to focus more in the economic aspects of the strategic administration.

Keywords: Insurgency, Peacebuilding, Post Conflict, Amnesty, North East.

Introduction

Post-conflict peacebuilding can be seen as "an action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace to avoid a relapse into conflict." Peace building came into existence in the last two decades as one of the principles functions of the United Nations system (George, 2019). The United Nations is not the only organization working in the field of peacebuilding. Other international organizations like the European Union (EU), the African Union (AU), ECOWAS and the Organization of American States (OAS) etc offer aid to affected and fragile nations through the concept of peace building. Even various national governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) contribute both personnel and money to help nations recover from violent conflict.

In North Eastern Nigeria the activities of the Boko haram insurgents devastated the livelihood of many inhabitants of the area, socio-culturally, economically, politically and in almost every aspect of human endeavour, this problem was very pronounced, especially in Borno and Yobe States which left devastating effects the people and their environment. On this note, the federal government of Nigeria decided to implement the administration of post-conflict activities to reduce hardship, ensure sustainable peace and security and development of the region peace-building activities that involve a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening natural capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundation for sustainable peace and development. Peacebuilding is a complex, long-term process of creating the necessary conditions for sustainable peace. It works by addressing the deep-rooted, structural causes of violent conflict in a comprehensive

manner. Peacebuilding focuses on helping individuals, groups and communities to recover from inter and intra-violent conflicts, insurgency, and terrorist activities in the northeast by bringing a wide range of programs such as amnesty, rehabilitation and de-radicalization, skill acquisitions etc.

Recovery from violent conflict is a long-term process, and it requires the expenditure of vast amounts of resources specifically people and money. Peacebuilding is a complex undertaking that involves a multitude of actors. Each organization approaches the field of peace building in a different manner hence government of Nigeria resorted to seeking both local and foreign financial support to actualize these activities.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this paper are to;

i, To analyze the post-conflict peacebuilding activities in the northeast

ii, Analyze various post-conflict peace-building administrative plans and programs in the northeast

iii, Highlight implementation of post-conflict peacebuilding plans among the beneficiaries

iv, Highlight areas of attention of post-conflict peacebuilding activities plans

A Post-Conflict Peace Building in North Eastern Nigeria

Since 2009, according to the United Nations development program, insecurity in the northeast of Nigeria has led to the loss of over 20,000 lives and the displacement of over 2 million people throughout the region livelihoods have been disrupted, and homes, public buildings and infrastructure destroyed. In a part of Nigeria where 80% of people rely on agriculture for their livelihoods, much has been lost, and people have been killed. In many areas, land mines and other remnants of war bring challenges for safe and voluntary return (Gamawa, 2017).

The conflict in North-East Nigeria has cost over 20,000 human lives, significantly destroyed physical infrastructure, disrupted social services and damaged social cohesion among its people, economic and

social activities in the region have been disrupted, and fear and mistrust among the population is widespread. 1.8 million People have been internally displaced from and within the conflict-affected states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe and an additional 170,000 have fled across the border into Niger, Chad and Cameroon.

On two occasions a state of emergency was declared in December 2011, in parts of Yobe and Borno and in May 2013, for some parts of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe, this added the volume of internally displaced persons to largely Gombe State.

In the second instance, the state of emergency was accompanied by upward spirals of conflict. More recently, the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) developed a more integrated approach to counter-terrorism in the form of a countering conflict programme (UNDP 2017, P 11).

The above created a great concern especially by the federal government and other development partners as well as local and international NGOs to venture into several post-conflict peace-building activities in the northeast. However many practitioners of peacebuilding believe the term "peacebuilding" emerged from the former UN Secretary-General Boutros–Ghali's 1992 report Angles for Peace. Secretary–General Boutros Ghali was not the first to introduce the term "peacebuilding" to the international community.

Norwegian scholar Johan Galtung, considered by many to be the founder of peace and conflict studies introduced the term "peace-building" in 1996 (George, 2019). Galtung developed his concept of peace-building through his early writings on peace, negative and positive peace, and direct and indirect (structural) violence. In a 1976 paper presented to the Peace Research Institute in Oslo, Galtung outlined the concept of peacekeeping, peacemaking, and peacebuilding (George, 2019).

B, Strategic Administration and Resettlement Plan

It is important to acknowledge how challenging it is to coordinate the necessary elements of a comprehensive response to a complex emergency such as the one in Nigeria's North-East. There have been

challenges in coordination, coherence and clarity of roles and responsibilities among the many government agencies involved in responding to the crisis. The enormous humanitarian and protection needs of IDPs and affected communities are far from being fully met. Food, access to clean drinking water, and other emergency supplies have been provided to IDPs living in camps and many of those staying with host families in the Northeast as a result of the Boko Haram conflict. (Zayyuni 2021)

National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) has strategically stockpiled emergency supplies in warehouses in Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe states to cater to the needs of the IDPs.

A humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) was prepared in November 2015 and presented the latest analysis of humanitarian needs foreseen in 2016 and includes a country strategy in the post-conflict and forced displacement situation, as well as operational response plans for Adamawa, Borno, Gombe and Yobe States. It covers a range of immediate life-saving needs including; health, food, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter, non-food items, education and protection of civilians. US $248 million has been requested for projects listed under the plan.

As of 16 March 2016, US $16 million has been received for projects listed in the HRP and US $6 million for humanitarian projects not listed in HRP.US $4.5 million from Japan and US $2.2 from Germany (UNDP, 2017 P 31). Currently, 62 partners are providing urgent multi-sectoral humanitarian assistance to conflict-affected people in the most affected states in the North-East. This includes food, water and sanitation, health and nutrition, hygiene services, shelter and non-food items, education, protection including targeted responses for children and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) survivors, early recovery activities and livelihoods. Some 20 national CSOs and NGOs operating in the Northeast play a critical role in the delivery of assistance, especially in areas where international actors are not present or have no access. (NEMA 2020).

Indeed, despite all the efforts currently displayed by national authorities with the support of local and international humanitarian

actors, much still needs to be done to care for the basic human needs of the displaced populations and host communities alike, until the security situation allows for the commencement of recovery interventions. The impact of the Boko Haram conflict on IDPs, on communities currently hosting IDPs and on communities that will be receiving them, has only exacerbated the dire situation, these populations were already limited incomes, resources and assets and the capacities of the existing social services delivery system. Moreover, new displacements of the population have been reported following the regular attacks conducted by Boko Haram and the ongoing military operation. This is especially relevant to early recovery interventions undertaken wherever possible by the humanitarian actors as an integral part of their response to the crisis.

The recovery and peace-building strategy (**RPBS**) therefore was put in place closely coordinated with the humanitarian response plan (**HRP**) to build on its achievements and avoid overlaps (UNDP, 2017 Vol. II P 18). There are a lot of IDP camps across Borno, Yobe and Adamawa States, the most critical IDPs are those that were located in Borno State where most of them became the target of Boko haram fighters, some were filled up with various social vices as well as clashes of interest between the NGOs and Borno State Government. However, some camps were created outside the northeastern region such as the one in Abuja FCT, Kaduna and Niger States.

c, Amnesty Program

This is a program designed by the federal government for the repentant Boko haram fighters which was put in place by the Nigerian government to ensure smooth post-conflict activities in the northeast region which also did not yield much impact. Although some insurgents realistically repented either because of stigmatization or victimization by the public, they decided to join the terror group again, also insincerity from the side of the leadership of Boko haram frustrated such a plan and brought inadequacy of the expected successes in consideration with purpose the plan meant for. But it is worth noting

that still, Amnesty program recorded some successes where some Boko harm fighters realistically repented.

d, Program For De-Radicalization, Reorientation And Reintegration Of Boko Haram Fighters

The federal government under the office of the National Security Adviser with coordination of the Nigeria Army in conjunction with the Gombe State Government established the de-radicalization, re-orientation and reintegration camp at Mallam Sidi, Kwami LGA Headquarters in Gombe State to settle, re-orient and reintegrate the repentant Boko haram fighters. They are taught various vocational and technical skills and knowledge to enable them to blend with people of the society to be productive, also given some formal education and religious teachings, self-reliant and shun crime in whatever form. This development has yielded many results as hundreds of them have graduated from the camp and professionalized in various technical occupations, such as tailoring, welding, mechanics, painting and decorations, GSM and computer system repairs, building designs and many more. Those who successfully graduated from this program have now been re-integrated into society early this year. (Abubakar A 2019).

E, Legislation and Establishment of North East Development Commission (NEDC)

To ensure a workable strategic administrative solution to the post-conflict peace-building activities in the northeast, the two national legislative assemblies of Nigeria initiated and passed a bill signed by the President to establish a northeast development commission with national and statutory mandates to assess, coordinate, harmonize and report on all intervention programs and initiatives by the federal government or any of its MDAs, state governments and other development partners for implementation of all programs and initiatives for the north ease states: Adamawa, Bauchi, Gombe, Borno and Taraba.

This made up the strategic administration of post-conflict peace-building activities in the country apart from the one in the south-south

geo-political zone. In March 2021 the NEDC flagged up the commissioning of its Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Intervention (RRI) project and the graduation of thousands of pioneer grandaunts of its ICT training program. It distributes learning materials, modern ICT starter packs and agricultural inputs to the populace across northeastern states (Wakil 2022).

Discussion of findings

The influx of displaced persons into urban areas of the above states as well as Bauchi, Gombe and Taraba has exacerbated pressure on service delivery mechanisms and local economies that were very weak to start with. Addressing the needs and impacts in the six states derived from the Boko Haram conflict to bring about recovery and build peace in the North-East is a significant challenge (UNDP, 2012 POI).

NEMA has taken the lead in camp coordination and management and has deployed personnel to provide technical support to the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) and the Nigerian Red Cross, to manage the IDP camps in the North-East. Emergency education for displaced children and the SEMAs continue to be overall humanitarian coordination partners.

The international humanitarian response in Nigeria's northeast has provided life-saving assistance to IDPs and host communities. This support aims to ensure a dignified existence as they wait for durable solutions to resolve their current situation. The activities of the Northeast Development Commission have immeasurably impacted so much in post-conflict peace-building activities in the northeast projects such as the provision of settlement and resettlement of victims, reconstruction, rehabilitation, social and economic interventions as well as educational and Agro economic revival plans which consolidated peace, security and reduce the dangers caused by the insurgency.

Similarly, Programs put in place by the federal government, such as the Amnesty program, Program orientation and re-integration programs remained very critical but yielded results which it reduced the tendency of re-occurrence of another insurgency and consolidated peace, development and security, at the same time in the aspect of

intelligence gathering from the repented Boko harm fighters there were successes achieved. However, considering the global economic challenges, the NGOs and other development partners have complimented peace-building activities such as the mass provision of relief and post-relief materials to IDPs and non-IDPs. The NEDC also frequently distributes relief materials to the victims of the Boko haram insurgency in the region as well as offers 'mine risk awareness training' under its Mine risk education project for rural communities, repairs of damaged bridges and schools and other infrastructure as a result of Boko haram insurgency. NEDC generally implement humanitarian and development interventions. (NEDC 2022). This set of post-peace building strategic activities has led to the return of normalcy and high-speed development in all faculties of life in the northeast

Conclusion

This paper explored that insurgency in North-East Nigeria has had devastating impacts on the population, especially in the area of security, peace, social cohesion, development and other economic consequences that cannot be quantified.

The Boko haram insurgency affected almost 1.4 million people and resulted in massive displacement within Nigeria and across the border to Chad, Niger, and Cameroon. Since 2009, the number of IDPs reached 1.8 million of which nearly 80 percent were women, children, and youth (UNDP, 2016). In addition to the destruction of infrastructure/ social amenities and interruption of basic services, the city of Maiduguri, with a 2007 resident population of 1.2 million (2006 Census) is hosting 1.6 million IDPs, with some sheltering in public buildings and schools.

During the conflict, more than 600 teachers were killed. 19,000 teachers were displaced and 1,200 schools were destroyed (UNDP 2016). As the government regains control over some areas that were taken over by Boko Haram and the recovery process starts, signs of social fragmentation, based on ethno-religious, social and other divisions including between IDPs and hosts, are evident in some areas. However, it is worth noting that various post-conflict peace-building

activities were put in place and some of them had yielded positive impacts such as peace, stability, and progress in the socioeconomic and religious activities of the northeastern states while some of the post-conflict activities went with some challenges.

Recommendations

Based on the above, this paper recommends the following for policy formulation to ensure effective post-conflict peace-building strategies in the affected communities in Nigeria.

1. For effective peace-building implementation to be achieved, there should be a deeper understanding of local context using different strategies such as understanding and respecting the community's distinct, ethics, norms, values, language, demographic, ethnic groups, religion, culture and tradition etc. of the affected communities
2. There should be a people-centred, locally-led approach through institutionalized community engagement modalities through a diverse range of local actors to the affected communities.
3. There is an imminent need for the participation of youth and clerics from diverse backgrounds and sectors, to increase investment in leadership of young people at the local level to enable shun and preach against insurgency respectively. At the same time implementation of peace agreements, transitional justice processes, demobilization, disarmament and reintegration programmes to enable the expansion of strategic administration of post-conflict peace-building plans.
4. Finally, post-insurgency peacebuilding stakeholders should pay more attention to economic issues and capacity development to have a self-sustained post-conflict community.

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