

THE COMPROMISED STATE



**How Corruption Sustains Insecurity
in Nigeria**

EDITED BY

Chris M.A. Kwaja | Yunusa Z. Yau



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Preface



Violent conflicts in Nigeria are not only endemic and unending but also are widely spread across the country, with increasing human cost. The conflicts tend to have no closure; even as new ones are added to old ones. Yet millions of Naira are pumped in the name of both restoration of peace and rebuilding destroyed communities, with no serious outcomes. The money is gone while peace has failed to be restored. Communities are to be rebuilt. In this context, interests have emerged that profit from the conflicts that are not interested in ending the conflicts.

The media is suffused with reports, revealing several cases of government officials, entrusted with public funds, for either restoration of peace or to purchase equipment for the army or even the rebuilding of burnt communities, who have pocketed the money, doing nothing about the assignments they were given. A typical example was the case of a former Secretary to the Federal Government who took money meant for the rehabilitation of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the North East and claimed to have given contract to a company, which happened to be his own, to cut grass in order to accommodate the IDPs instead of provide relief materials and services to them. The case is still in court. There was also the

mind boggling diversion of billions of money meant to buy arms and ammunition for the army to politicians to use for electioneering campaign while the army remained unequipped. Within the military and other law enforcement agencies, there have been stories about salaries and allowances of combatants that have disappeared into the pockets of their heads. They in turn have taken it upon themselves to intimidate and harass communities they were sent to protect, extorting money, food and even taking over their farms, abusing their rights and sexually abusing their women. There have also been protests by IDPs who complained of corrupt practices by relief workers and officials, including sexually abusing female IDPs. Some of those have been sacked but much of the stories and reports have remained un-acted upon by the authorities.

Increasingly, a war economy is springing up and consolidating across the landscape of conflicts in the country in which the conflict entrepreneurs are continually stoking the fire of conflicts, ensuring that the conflicts are never resolved and brought to closure. They seem to be more interested in the prolongation of the conflicts than in ending them.

It was this that led us to assume that there is a strong link between corruption and conflicts in the country, a link that is sustained by conflict profiteers who have made it difficult or impossible to end these conflicts. In this context, we conceived of this research as an opportunity to investigate to what extent corruption is implicated in the various conflicts we see in Nigeria. We were interested in unearthing these links and how they are embedded within the conflict system.

We therefore decided to select a couple of violent conflicts where it was possible to examine and explicate corruption in activities associated with some of the parties that are represented in the

conflicts. These conflicts include the Boko Haram in the North east, banditry in Zamfara, kidnapping in the North west. We also were also interested in conventional transactional corruption in the context of conflict and so we wanted to research into the reconstruction, rebuilding and resettlement programme of the federal government as well as how corruption impacts more generally on human rights situation in the country.

We thought to understand this connection and shed light on all its ramifications, thereby helping to create visibility about it and help to draw public attention to it. This, we hope, will catalyse a more elevated stakeholder engagement to address corruption in the context of conflicts. Our twin objective here is that first, by bringing this category of corruption to the fore, we hope that stakeholders will address it. Addressing it will contribute to reducing corruption and also help in creating the necessary conditions for the resolution of the conflicts, bringing them to closure.

Accordingly, a number of suggestions and recommendations flowing from the study are offered. The book also pays attention to existing gaps in the fight against corruption and how these gaps could be addressed to enhance the effectiveness of the fight against corruption. It also examined different existing and developing opportunities that could be leveraged to contribute in curbing corruption not only in the context of conflicts but also corruption generally in the country.

We hope that the book will make some contributions to the discourse around corruption and the efforts to both fight corruption and promote peaceful co-existence in the country.

Y. Z. Yaú
Executive Director
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: INVESTIGATING THE CORRUPTION, INSURGENCY AND CONFLICTS NEXUS IN NIGERIA

By

Chris M.A. Kwaja, PhD.

Introduction

Nigeria is caught in a wave of security predicaments. Acrimonious group politics and pockets of identity conflicts have for long marked the country's ethnoreligious diverse landscape. Secessionist agitations in the South East, militancy in the oil-rich Niger Delta and so-called indigene/settler disputes in the North Central have remained sources of perpetual rancour and insecurity over the last few decades. However, none of these upheavals has put as much strain on the nation's security forces like the on-going Boko Haram insurgency and the recent upsurge in farmers/herders' conflicts in the North Central and North East regions. The colossal loss of lives and scale of devastation that have trailed these twin threats have continued to shock observers. It is estimated that between 2011 and 2018, the Boko Haram insurgency involved over 3,000 violent events resulting in more than 37,000 deaths and about 2.4 million displaced persons.¹ These figures put Boko Haram ahead of most other extremist groups and in the same league with ISIS and al-Shabaab in terms of the scale and impact of their deadly campaigns.

Academics, pundits and policy experts have analysed the causes, impact and strategies for addressing these security quandaries (See Adesoji, 2011; Onuoha, 2012; Okpaga, Ugwu, & Eme, 2012). Security analysts have recently been particularly interested in why the huge and rather costly security measures deployed to tackle these violent crises have not yielded commensurate results (Bappah, 2016; Gray & Adeakin, 2015). Despite the military operations being undertaken which have been sustained by an increase in budgetary allocations and other circumstantial expenses, there has been a surge in terrorist activities, especially in Borno since early 2018, after a period of calmness between late 2015 and 2017 in what the Federal Government termed a technical defeat of Boko Haram. Contrary to claims that Boko Haram has been extinguished, recent expert analysis suggests the group “remains a remarkably consistent and potent threat, driven by local dynamics.”² Similarly, military and police efforts aimed at ending farmer/herders' violence have proven futile. Despite the large number of forces deployed to apprehend assailants, the frequency and scale of killings, banditry and kidnappings have increased in recent months. Activities of criminals and violence against civilians particularly in Adamawa, Benue, Plateau, and Taraba and Zamfara have continued unabated underscoring the incapability of the security forces.

The unremitting escalation of terrorism and the farmers-herders' conflict in Nigeria despite military responses does not only challenge the adequacy and effectiveness of the responses but it also questions, in policy terms, the judicious utilisation of fiscal allocations to the security sector for the execution of various military operations. There are arguments in extant policy discourses that point verifiably to the impact of economic and financial corruption on the efficiency of military operations against terrorism and insurgency in particular and Nigeria's security sector in general. This paper is part of the discourse.

Using the state responses to terrorism and the farmers-herders' conflicts in North East and North Central zones as its primary focus, it x-rays how corruption in the security has impacted on the efficiency or otherwise of military operations in these zones. It also examines why economic and fiscal corruption is prevalent in Nigeria's security sector. Finally, the paper proffers recommendations on how to tackle economic and fiscal corruption in the security sector to ensure efficient military operations against terrorist and farmers-herders' conflicts across Nigeria.

Specifically, the report offers an in-depth examination of the scale and dimensions of corruption in Nigeria's security sector and how this pervasive malaise has hindered the sector's various branches from delivering on their constitutional mandate of protecting lives and property. The report is structured thus: following this introduction, the first part provides a concise account of the bloody activities of insurgents and the internecine conflicts and violence that spiralled from conflicts between farmers and herders. The second part maps out the military strategies and tactics so far employed in response to violent extremism and the rising incidence of farmers/herders' violence, banditry, kidnapping and general insecurity. The third part illustratively discusses the scale and various dimensions of corruption in the security sector and identifies the underlying causal mechanisms. The fourth and concluding part outlines some recommendations for checking and minimizing corruption as a means for boosting the capacity and morale of security forces.

The Twin Threats of Boko Haram and Farmers/Herders' Conflicts

Boko Haram ranks among the deadliest extremist groups in modern history.³ Primarily based in Nigeria's North East but with transnational affiliations, the group has since 2009 continued to orchestrate a bloody insurgency that has put Nigeria's ranking on the Global Terrorism Index (GTI) at an all-time high (see Table 1). Between 2009 and December 2015, it is estimated that the activities of the group led to the death of over 30,000 persons and the displacement of about 1.6 million others and 17,738 refugees in Nigeria (IDMC, 2016). Reports say, in 2018 alone, Boko Haram killed an estimated 1,814 persons including 30 soldiers and humanitarian aid workers, which is more than double the 2017 figure (*This Day*, August 10, 2018). Cumulatively, it is estimated that as at September 21, 2018, Boko Haram has killed about 37,500 persons, displaced an estimated 2.4 million others and rendered 228,000 people internal refugees (see CFR, 2018).

Table 1: Nigeria's Ranking in the Global Terrorism Index (GTI): 2010-2018

Year	Impact (Score)	Ranking
2010	6.31	-
2011	7.24	7/163
2012	7.24	7/163
2013	8.20	-
2014	8.58	4/163
2015	9.21	3/163
2016	9.31	3/163
2017	9.01	3/163

Source: Global Terrorism Index (GTI).⁴

Boko Haram's violent campaigns have involved a spree of bombings and commando-style attacks on security installations, religious organisations, learning institutions and public places. Though the North East—the group's main base—has been the most targeted, urban areas like Jos and Abuja in the North Central and Kano and Kaduna in the North West have also had their fair share of extremist violence. Some of the most notable terrorist attacks in Nigeria since 2009 include the October 1, 2010, Independence-day bombing at the Eagle Square in Abuja; the June 16, 2011 bombing of the Nigeria Police Force Headquarters in Abuja; the August 26, 2011 bombing of the UN House in Abuja; the December 25, 2011 bombing of St. Theresa's Catholic Church, Madalla, Niger State in which 27 persons were killed (Onuah and Eboh, 2011) and the November 24, 2014 attack at the Central Mosque, Kano in which about 120 died and 126 others injured (Mark, 2014); the April 15, 2014 abduction of 276 female students of the Government Secondary School, Chibok, Borno State; the February 19, 2018 abduction of 110 schoolgirls from the Government Girls' Science and Technical College (GGSTC), Dapchi, Yunusari Local Government area of Yobe State, among others.

As noted elsewhere, Nigeria's North Central was also a hotbed of Boko Haram attacks. For example, between 2012 and 2015, Jos—Plateau State's capital city—recorded a series of bombings. In 2012, several churches, including the Church of Christian in Nations (COCIN) headquarters and St. Finbarr's Catholic Church were targeted leaving scores dead and dozens injured. The bombings that left the most casualties occurred in 2014 and 2015. On 20 May 2014, two bombs exploded within a short distance of each other around the city's main market vicinity killing over a hundred people. In December, the same year, another twin-explosion killed about two hundred people in the

same vicinity. On 5 July 2015, two explosions and a gun attack left some 44 people dead and many more injured.⁵

Most fundamentally, in August 2014, Boko Haram declared some parts of Borno State as its sovereign Caliphate. Thus, the activities of the group do not only threaten human and national security, but they also challenge the territoriality and sovereignty of the Nigerian state including the stability and legitimacy of political regimes (Ogbonnaya, 2016). The threats to security occasioned by the Boko Haram insurgency have been heightened by yet another security concern: the sedentary farmers and nomadic herders' conflicts. While conflict between farmers and herders is not new, there has been resurgence since 2015. Over these recent years, violent incidents have become more frequent and deadly with negative implications for the country's ranking in the Global Peace Index (see Table 2).

Table 2: Nigeria's Ranking in the Global Peace Index (GPI): 2010-2018

Year	Impact (Score)	Ranking
2010	2.628	131/163
2011	2.613	137/163
2012	2.709	146/163
2013	2.693	148/163
2014	2.710	151/163
2015	2.910	151/163
2016	2.877	149/163
2017	2.849	149/163
2018	2.873	148/163

Source: Global Terrorism Index (GTI).⁶

Across Nigeria, farmers/herders' clashes have resulted in social dislocation and human displacement, loss of lives and means of livelihood, strained and rancorous relationships, with attendant

consequences on national and human security. In 2016, an estimated death toll of 2,500 people was recorded from the conflict with 62,000 displacements and US\$ 13.7billion economic losses to Nigeria (*The UK Bulletin*, 2018). In early 2017, over 100 people were killed in Southern Kaduna alone and 549 other deaths recorded across 14 States (ICG, 2017). Similarly, 168 deaths were recorded in January 2018 alone in Adamawa, Benue, Kaduna, Ondo, and Taraba States and between January and June 2018, about 1,300 persons have died in the conflict with a total of 99,427 households affected and billions of naira in property lost (ICG, 2018). With the increasing frequency and death tolls, the conflict is proving to be potentially more dangerous than the Boko Haram insurgency. It is estimated that the conflict claimed six times more civilian casualties than the Boko Haram insurgency in 2018 (Kwaja and Ademola-Adelehin, 2018).

Military Operations in Response to Boko Haram and Farmers/Herders' Conflicts

State responses to Boko Haram and farmers/herders' conflicts have been multi-faceted and varied. Largely, however, these responses have been military in nature and approach. For instance, since a joint police-military operation codenamed Operation FLUSH, which was led by Colonel Ben Ahanotu and coordinated by the Borno State special security task force, deployed in 2009 to quell Boko Haram violent revolt, the use of the military to combat terrorism and insurgency has become a trend with the military involved in Internal Security Operations (ISOs) in about 32 States of the Federation (Oyedele, 2017). Similarly, in response to the spiralling farmers-herders' violence, the Nigerian Federal Government deployed the military to stabilize the region and increase security. As Kwaja and Ademola-

Adelehin (2018) have noted, the use of the military for ISOs by the Federal Government is supported by Section 217(c) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, which allows for the deployment of the military when “acting in aid of civil authorities to restore order when called upon to do so by the President” especially when the sophistication and complexity needed for an operation exceed the capacity of the Police. In the case of the sedentary farmers and nomadic herders' conflict, Kwaja and Ademola-Adelehin (2018) noted that the deployment of the military was justified by the significant access to and use of sophisticated weapons by perpetrators of attacks on communities, which in most instances have proven overwhelming for the Police.

Besides the military and the Police, the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) established via Act 12 as amended by Act 50 of 1999, to, among other things:

- (a) Formulate policy on all activities relating to the disaster management in Nigeria and co-ordinate the plans and programmes for efficient and effect response to disasters at the national level, and
- (b) Monitor the state of preparedness of all organisations or agencies which may contribute to disaster management in Nigeria⁷ has over the years been in the forefront of the management of emergencies and humanitarian situations that are occasioned by either the Boko Haram terrorist or the sedentary farmers and nomadic herders conflict.

To ensure effective and efficient execution of all military operations in the war against terrorism and insurgency, budgetary allocations to the security sector has since 2010 been on the increase although with some decline in 2014 and 2015 (see Table 3).

Table 3: Security Sector Budgetary Allocations: 2010–2017

MDAs	2010 (N' Bn)	2011 (N' Bn)	2012 (N' Bn)	2013 (N' Bn)	2014 (N' Bn)	2015 (N' B)	2016 (N' B)	2017 (N' B)
Defence	291.71 9	348.03 7	359.73 6	397.75 6	340.33 2	358.46 6	443.07 7	469.83 8
Police Affairs	82.552	13.279	5.979	8.506	7.268	4.318	NA*	NA*
Police Formations & Command	245.09 5	295.66 6	308.47 4	311.14 8	292.25 2	329.66 9	308.91 9	313.51 5
Police Service Commission	3.865	2.611	2.238	2.229	1.796	0.784	0.947	1.465
Office of the National Security Adviser	107.14 8	109.85 5	123.48 8	116.45 9	110.72 5	84.13	88.875	123.49 0
Total	730.37 9	769.44 8	799.91 5	836.09 8	752.37 3	777.36 7	841.81 8	908.30 8

Source: Various Appropriation Acts as passed by the National Assembly

*In the 2016 restructuring of MDAs, Police Affairs was brought under Police Formations and Command Headquarters

These budgetary allocations do not include the US\$1 billion the FGN under President Goodluck Jonathan borrowed in 2013 to fund the anti-terrorism war and the US\$21 million that President Muhammadu Buhari approved for the Multinational Joint Task Force in June 2015 (the *Punch* 2014; the *Punch* 2015).

Corruption and its Impact on Nigeria's Defence and Security Sector

Nigeria is listed among the world's most corrupt countries (see Table 4). This socio-economic malaise is pervasive and has not spared the country's security sector. Transparency International (2015) ranks Nigeria's defence and security sector as one of the most corrupt in the world. Dating back to the era of military rule, the problem is most prevalent in the area of fiscal finance, operations, procurement and personnel. This, according to Page

(2018a), has not only hollowed out the military and security services in Nigeria, but it has also rendered them unable to effectively combat Boko Haram or address ethno-religious and communal conflicts such as the spiralling farmers-herders' conflicts, among others.

Table 4: Nigeria's Ranking in the Corruption Perception Index (CPI): 2010-2018⁸

Year	Score	Ranking
2010	3.1	98/178
2011	2.4	143/183
2012	27	139/176
2013	25	144/177
2014	27	136/175
2015	26	136/170
2016	28	136/176
2017	27	148/180
2018	2.873	148/163

Source: Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index Reports, 2000–2018

The scope and scale of corruption in the security sector are humongous and, as will be discussed in a subsequent subsection, its impact is colossal. For instance, in late 2014 and early 2015, the former National Security Adviser (NSA), Col. Sambo Dasuki, allegedly diverted US\$2.1 billion in security spending into private hands in what has become known as the *Dasukigate*. As Kwaja, Ogbonnaya and Udoh (2017) noted, the non-detection of the Dasuki saga despite the various alarms raised in 2014 as to the monumental corruption being perpetrated in the security sector is a clear indication of the shortcomings in security sector oversight in Nigeria. Beside the Dasuki arms procurement

scandal, there was the alleged diversion of N3.9 billion by the former Chief of Defence Staff, Air Chief Marshal Alex Badeh (Agande and Nnochiri, 2016; Ogala, 2018), in what has come to be regarded as one of the worst cases of corruption in Nigeria's security and defence sector.

Before his assassination on December 18, 2018, Badeh was facing prosecution for allegedly misappropriating N3.9 billion while in office as the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) during the Goodluck Jonathan administration (ISSA, 2018). As has been argued by some security analysts, the assassination of Badeh is seen as part of the attempt to cover up the corruption in Nigeria's defence and security sector.⁹ Coming very closely after the assassination of Major General Idris Alkali on September 3, 2018, who until his death was the Chief of Administration of the Nigerian Army, Soniyi (2018) has argued that “the death of a former Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal (rtd.) Alex Sabundu Badeh (who became Chief of Defence Staff), and that of a former Chief of Administration of the Nigerian Army, Major General Idris Alkali, on September 3, 2018, were not a mere coincidence.”

The foregoing points to the absence of fiscal discipline and guidelines to ensure that budgetary implementations comply with approved rules within Nigeria's security and defence sector. The consequence of this is that despite sharp increases in ad hoc defence spending since 2010, military operations in the North-East zone and efforts to combat the recurrent sedentary farmers and nomadic herders' conflict remain hampered by equipment, material, and pay shortages. For instance, in 2014, an anonymous soldier had chronicled that:

The corruption in the Nigerian military environs is higher than in the political sector. In my Unit, soldiers live without accommodation. In the little space

available, they are being paired up to two and three in a room. Still, millions are being spent on the gigantic edifice of the Airlodge located near Ribadu Square, Jimeta, Yola, which is meant for senior officers. Millions are located to the ongoing project of the Air Chief Marshal A. S. Badeh's golf club (along Jambutu Numan Road, Yola). I know that soldiers serving in 37 BSG and 75 STG, Yola (war zones) are not being paid their operational allowances. It is crystal clear to us that the funds are coming from the DHQ Abuja, but the money is diverted to the private pockets of a few chosen ones. Our colleagues in the Nigerian Army have to endure a similar fate.

Moreover, till date, military sources, according to Page (2018a), blame the deaths of eighty-three soldiers in a late 2016 Boko Haram ambush directly on equipment shortfalls and low morale resulting from an uptick in corruption among army leaders. Similarly, the attack by Boko Haram on the Nigerian Army 157 Task Force Battalion in Metele, Borno State, on November 18, 2018, in which the Nigerian Army lost over 118 soldiers including the Battalion Commander, while 15 others remain unaccounted for till date, was blamed on poor weapon and logistics supply (Nwabughio, 2018). The Metele attack was one in a series of back-to-back attack on military formations by the Boko Haram terrorist groups in the last three months. Examined against the background of the fact that the Federal Government recently approved the release of US\$1 billion for arms procurement from the Excess Crude Account (ECA) (Odunsi, 2018), it calls to question how budgetary expenditure in the security defence sector are utilised. The situation is however made much more worrisome by the claim by the Nigerian Army Headquarters that it has not accessed any money

released for arms procurement (Ajayi, Marama, & Erunke, 2018).

Another means through which corruption is fuelled in the defence and security sector is through the use of what is popularly known as 'security votes.' Security votes, according to Page (2018b), are budgeted funds provided to certain federal, state, and local government officials to spend at their discretion on—in theory—anything security-related. They are budgeted separately from planned security expenditures such as personnel salaries, allowances, equipment, training and operational expenses. Security votes also differ from extra-budgetary defence spending that may be authorised by the President—often in secret—from opaque sources like the Federal Government Independent Revenue account. A military relic, security votes have, in practice, become opaque discretionary accounts ('slush funds') that serve several overlapping functions:

- ❖ Formal: Supplement army, police and other security agencies' expenditures, often because their budgets have been embezzled or withheld;
- ❖ Informal: Mobilise and sustain non-state security actors (e.g. vigilantes, youth volunteers, local militias);
- ❖ Political: Channel public funds into political patronage networks, party coffers, or to cover the cost of elections including campaigns, vote-buying, rigging, hiring thugs and post-election litigation; and
- ❖ Personal: Personally enrich senior politicians, officials and security officers.

According to Transparency International (2018), security votes in Nigeria total US\$670 million annually. At the federal level, the number of security votes tucked into the federal budget

increased from about thirty in 2016 to over 190 in 2018, and their total value increased from ₦9.3 billion (\$46.2 million) to ₦18.4 billion (\$51 million). What makes security votes susceptible to corruption is that they do not follow established budgeting process, they are not independently audited, do not pass through legislative oversight or public scrutiny, there are no guidelines for classification and declassification, and they are appropriated without public tenders or competitive bidding. Given that they are unaudited in cash and are exempted from normal budgetary processes and procurement rules, most of the expenditures from security votes are lost to corruption. The same applies to state and local governments. In most cases, they are spent on subjects that are neither security-related nor play security-related roles, suggesting that the primary purpose of these payments is to divert the funds into private hands.

Besides the military, the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) is another state security agency where corruption is prevalent and endemic. The force is endemically corrupt, poorly paid, and often predatory. A study showed that some Divisional Police Offices in Nigeria receive as low as N14,000 (fourteen thousand Naira) only as quarterly overhead cost (NIPSS, 2018) despite the uptake in defence and security sector allocation including the NPF since 2010. According to the Human Rights Watch (2010), the police is Nigeria's most-bribed public official. Corruption in the police manifests in the form of extortion, embezzlement, or petty bribery including falsification of manpower. For instance, in March 2018, the Office of the Accountant General of the Federation (OAGF) identified over 80,000 ghosts (or fake) workers in the Nigeria Police Force, which is over 20 percent of the total workforce (Udo, 2018). Senior police officers operate a perverse system of returns in which rank-and-file officers must send up their chain of command a share of the money they extort from the public. Similarly, the United Nations Office on Drugs

and Crime (UNODC) (2017)¹⁰ has indicated that of all adult Nigerians who had direct contact with a police officer, almost half (46.4 percent) paid them a bribe. This rate varies widely between states; however, it suggests that some state police commands are more corrupt than others. Corruption in the NPF extends to favouritism and nepotism in recruitment, posting and promotion. Since 2015, recruitments in the NPF have tended to favour people from the northern part of the country while promotions have been characterised by bribery scandals involving senior police officers (Olafioye, 2017; *The Detail*, 2018; *Leadership*, 2018).

As in the military, the consequence of corruption in the police is that the force is unable to address Nigeria's many internal security challenges including the recurrent sedentary farmers and nomadic herders' conflict. Despite presidential approval to recruit 10,000 personnel yearly, the police manpower, in particular, has been severely impacted by corruption. With a current workforce of about 370,000 personnel to about 180 million Nigerians, which does not meet the United Nations recommendation of 222 police officers per 100,000 citizens or one police officer to 400 citizens, it is argued that the Nigerian state is highly under-policed (News Agency of Nigeria 2017). Filling the security vacuum left by the country's understaffed police, the Nigerian Army has assumed domestic policing roles, conducting Internal Security Operations (ISOs) for which it is ill-suited in 22 states of the Federation. This deterioration of NPF capacity was exposed in 2013 when journalists televised slum-like conditions at the country's supposedly premier police training college.

The Nigerian intelligence community made up of the Department of State Security (DSS), the Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) and the National Intelligence Agency (NIA), has

also been marred by corruption. For instance, in 2017, the NIA came under scrutiny for the discovery by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) of US\$43.5 million locked in a private apartment in the Osborne Towers, Ikoyi, Lagos which was reportedly meant for covert projects. The controversy surrounding that discovery led to the sacking and ongoing prosecution of the former Director-General of the Agency, Ayo Oke (Ogundipe, 2017; BBC, 2017; Daniel, 2017). The consequence of the corruption scandal in the NAI, according to intelligence experts and analysts is that it has “exposed the underbelly of the nation's foremost spy organization, the National Intelligence Agency.” Secondly, such corrupt practices by a spy organisation such as NIA makes it act as if it is above the law occasioning a difficult situation for it to be held accountable for its actions, performance and the public investments made in it (Atuma, 2017). Similarly, the DSS under Lawal Daura was involved in what was described as “multibillion Naira fraud.”

In the paramilitary agencies, the management and staff of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) have been indicted of corruption in the management of national emergencies and humanitarian crisis. According to Page (2018a), graft, fraud, and extortion within Nigeria's humanitarian sector continue to exacerbate one of the world's largest humanitarian crises: the displacement of over 2 million people by the Boko Haram conflict. Assuming the role of middlemen in the relief effort, officials from NEMA and its state counterpart agencies (SEMAs) frequently obstruct international aid efforts, embezzle relief funds, and waylay supplies meant for internally displaced persons (IDPs). He further noted that these humanitarian agencies have become conduits for diverting millions of dollars in emergency humanitarian spending into private hands. For instance, in 2017, the EFCC arrested the head of Gombe SEMA

Danlami Rukuje for allegedly redirecting and selling relief materials meant for IDPs (EFCC News, 2017).

Another such pseudo-humanitarian, according to Page (2018:32), is Mohammed Sani Sidi, Director General of NEMA from 2010 to 2017, who allegedly padded the Agency's budget, using inflated contracts to embezzle millions for himself and more senior government figures. Sani Sidi also awarded a US\$128,000 contract to provide temporary shelters for IDPs to a company belonging to the son of Ali Modu Sheriff, the former Borno State Governor who was an early political sponsor of Boko Haram founder Mohammed Yusuf (Thurston, 2018).

The scale of corruption in NEMA came to public knowledge with the recent revelation that the Agency misappropriated a whopping sum of N33 billion without due authorization. The sheer enormity of it shocked the Nigerian public.¹¹ Among the major infractions was that government officials diverted the sum of N5.8bn earmarked for “emergency intervention and food security in the North-East” in 2017, and another N17bn released from the Ecological Fund to NEMA. Most fundamentally, the Office of the then Acting President Yemi Osinbajo authorised the release of N5.8 billion from the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the Federation through a memo in June 2017 without prior approval by the National Assembly. Against these revelations arising from investigations by the House of Representatives, the House indicted the Director-General of NEMA, Mr Mustapha Maihaja, over alleged embezzlement of funds over N33bn under his watch and recommended for his sack (Fabiya and Ameh, 2018).

Corruption in NEMA has had implications for the management of the humanitarian crisis in Nigeria, especially the case of IDPs in various camps within the North-East zone. As some reports

claim, the latest IDP deaths are not from bombs but disease, disgracefully 18 dying of cholera. These deaths are directly due to Nigeria's failure to cater for the needy with 'common' clean 'pure' water. The Nigerian Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) charged with anticipating, preventing and managing the disaster, continues to fail these IDPs in camps.

On the whole, corruption in the defence and security sector in Nigeria results in lack of appropriate weapon system and poor logistics for the military and paramilitary agencies saddled with the responsibility of combating terrorism and insurgency in the North-East zone as well as in tackling the sedentary farmers and nomadic herders conflict in the North West and North Central zones. Thus, despite the conduct of various military operations such as Operation Lafia Dole in the North East and Operation Safe Haven in the North Central, among others, the violent activities of insurgents and the farmers-herders' conflict remain prevalent. Similarly, corruption has rendered humanitarian agencies such as NEMA incapable of managing the humanitarian crisis in areas devastated by violence.

Consequently, therefore, the capacity of both the military and paramilitary agencies within the defence and security sector to effectively manage the spate of security and humanitarian crisis arising from both the Boko Haram insurgency and the sedentary farmers and nomadic herders conflict have been negatively impacted upon by corruption. In 2016, President Muhammadu Buhari alluded to this fact when he asserted that corruption in the military is responsible for Nigeria's loss of 14 LGAs to Boko Haram in Borno State (Nwabughio, 2016). In a similar vein, the International Strategic Studies Association (ISSA) has asserted that corruption in the military is responsible for the faltering Boko Haram war in the North East. In a Special Analysis of its Defence and Foreign Affairs released on December 28, ISSA revealed that massive corruption among top

military chiefs appointed by President Muhammadu Buhari is the reason Nigeria is losing the war against Boko Haram (ISSA, 2018).

Causes of Corruption in the Security and Defence Sector

Several institutional, legal and policy factors account for the pervasive corruption in Nigeria's defence and security sector with its negative consequences. There is a sense in which the secretive nature of the budgetary process in the defence and security sector accounts for the high rate of corruption in the sector. For instance, whether at the Federal or State levels, the appropriation and allocation of security votes do not pass through the constitutionally approved budgetary process. Thus, besides the process being shrouded in secrecy, security votes are not audited. This secretive nature of the budgetary process is deeply entrenched in the character of the institutions within the security sector.

For instance, there is the assertion by some security analysts that despite democratic reforms and institutionalisation, the military has remained “excessively opposed to public scrutiny and criticism” (Kwaja, Ogbonnaya Na Udoh, 2017). This is a widely held position among Nigerian populace. Given their antecedents, the Nigerian security services have often been seen as either an alternative and/or independent power centre, hardly subject to scrutiny by either the legislative bodies or independent civil institutions. Immersed in this aura of secrecy, Fayemi (2012) noted that the security sector has successfully managed to keep prying eyes at bay under the pretext of protecting national security, thus preventing proper parliamentary and extra-parliamentary monitoring of security agencies. The consequence of this is that there is a general sense that the Nigerian security sector operates outside of an effective

framework for democratic accountability in Nigeria and that this situation relates to a culture of impunity, opacity and poor management; and limits the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery to the State and the people.

The second factor is the weak or outright failure of oversight function by institutions such as the legislature and the judiciary. According to Kwaja, Ogbonnaya and Udoh (2017), pointers to this failure of oversight include the excessive financial corruption and economic crimes within the sector as evidenced by the ongoing investigations into and recovery from alleged culprits in the “Dasuki arms deal” scandal; an investigation into the misappropriation of USD 2.1 billion meant for the procurement of military hardware by the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) in 2012. In a related development, Aluko (2015) alluded to this manifest failure of oversight institutions when he asserted that the inability of Nigeria's legislative body to carry out its oversight functions over the security sector constitutes a major constraint to security sector performance. This he believed has created loopholes for corruption and politicisation of the sector. He further submitted that this failure is largely due to executive or presidential control over the sector, rather than the representatives of the people, the National Assembly. The non-detection of the Dasuki saga despite the various alarms raised in 2014 as to the monumental corruption being perpetrated in the security sector is a clear indication of the shortcomings in security sector oversight in Nigeria.

Several factors have been identified as being responsible for the obvious failure of legislative oversight of the security sector. First, members of the legislative oversight committees for security-related agencies and institutions lack the technical knowledge, the requisite expertise and relevant competencies to provide the

necessary oversight on the security sector. This lack of capacity and technical competences among members of the legislative bodies is caused by low retention rates, which does not give room for the building of capacities and institutional memories by legislators. For instance, in the 7th National Assembly, 2011-2015, out of 469 legislators (109 Senators and 360 Members of the House of Representatives), 187 were re-elected, while the remaining 282 were elected for the first time.

In the current 8th National Assembly, there is less than 31 percent retention rate. Thus, the low retention rate in the legislature does not give room for capacity building and results in loss of institutional memory, which is detrimental to effective legislative oversight. Furthermore, the lack of technical capacity of legislators, lack of clarity on the oversight role, lack of resources to engage in house professionals and consultants, as well as ineffective communication with military professionals often results to gaps in policy legislation and oversight. The second factor is the inefficient use of the committee system in the legislature. Although there is an institutionalised and standing or permanent committee system in the National Assembly, in practice, it has been largely driven by what respondents have described as “*ad-hocery*” rather than a systematic arrangement underscored by general principles of oversight in the governance of the security sector (see Kwaja, Ogbonnaya and Udoh, 2017).

The third factors that account for the failure of legislative oversight include the following:

- I. The politicisation of the leadership of the oversight institutions;
- ii. Compromise of standards due to undue demands from oversight institutions on security agencies; and
- iii. The politicisation of the military in internal security

operations (ISOs).

Besides the failure of institutional oversight of the defence and security sector, the absence of social audit and citizen action are other factors that account for corruption in the sector.

Organisationally, the social audit involves institutional mechanisms for measuring, understanding, reporting and ultimately improving an organisation's social and ethical performance to achieve the following:

- i. Assessing the physical and financial gaps between needs and resources available for local development;
- ii. Creating awareness among beneficiaries and providers of local social and productive services;
- iii. Increasing efficacy and effectiveness of local development programmes;
- iv. Scrutinising various policy decisions, keeping in view stakeholder interests and priorities, particularly of service recipients; and
- v. Estimating the opportunity cost for stakeholders of not getting timely access to public services.

On the other hand, citizen action has to with public engagement of institutions of the state including those in the defence and security sector to hold them accountable for their actions or inactions. Both social audit and citizen action are absent in Nigeria's defence and security sector. Again, this is due to the nature and character of the institutions within the sector, which operate in an environment of opacity and imperviousness. As earlier noted, Nigeria's defence and security institutions and services are naturally seen as either an alternative and/or

independent power centre, hardly subject to scrutiny by either the public, the legislative bodies or any other independent civil institutions. The consequence is that they operate as though they are institutions outside the laws of the state. This has implications on how they receive and spend allocations.

Finally, executive recklessness and fiscal impropriety are other fundamental factors that account for corruption in the defence and security sector in Nigeria. For instance, there are several cases of defence and security expenditure by the executive without legislative approval as stipulated by law. For instance, on September 5, 2014, the South African authorities seized arms worth US\$9.3 million purchased by two Nigerians and an Israeli citizen on behalf of Nigerian security services. That purchase did not follow parliamentary approval (see Eyoboka and Omonobi, 2014). In December 2017, the Federal Government withdrew US\$1 billion from the Excess Crude Account (ECA) for military procurement without parliamentary approval. Again, in April 2018, there was a showdown between the National Assembly and the Executive for the withdrawal of US\$496 million from ECA by the Executive for purchase of military equipment including Tucano Helicopter, without parliamentary approval (Isah and Ayado, 2017; ICiR, 2018). Such withdrawal and procurement that do not go through legislative budgetary approval create fertile ground for corruption in the defence and security sector.

According to Aluko (2015), this situation is occasioned by the fact that the 1999 Constitution gives the Presidency almost absolute control over the defence and security sector without serious consideration to the legislature, which constitutes the eyes of the people in the governance process. The lack of a clear pronouncement in the Constitution on the issues of the military's accountability to the people and their elected

representatives poses another set of challenges. In other words, the 1999 Constitution does not sufficiently empower the National Assembly to effectively check the excesses of the executive arm of government, especially concerning the control and governance of the most critical domain of State power – the defence and security sector.

Key Findings on the Link between Corruption, Conflict and Insecurity

Humanitarian responses with specific reference to the provision of security as well as relief remain one of the prominent aspects of responses to insurgency and violent conflicts in Nigeria. There is a sense in which several factors have been responsible for the series of humanitarian government.

The linkage between Corruption and Human Rights Violation.

There is documented evidence on the relationship that exists between corruption and violation of citizens' rights. This is underscored by the logic that corruption produces unequal and discriminatory outcomes in terms of the extent to which citizens access humanitarian and security related aids.¹² In specific terms, there are documented cases related to the diversion of relief materials by government officials and other entities, misapplication of funds by institutions and agencies as evident with the activities of the former National Security Adviser, Col. Sambo Dasuki¹³ and the former Secretary to the Federal Government, Babachir Lawal¹⁴ respectively. The primary consequences of these were that citizens were denied the right to access primary aids such as food, clothing, and health among others.

Absence of a Social Audit Framework: The absence of a framework for social audit in relations to how funds dedicated to

addressing conflicts and insurgencies do not recognize the place and role of communities. Hence, there is a disconnect between the communities and implementing groups and institutions both state and non-state. Many of the people that are supposed to be the primary beneficiaries of humanitarian interventions are ignorant of their needs.¹⁵ The fact that they are not aware of how much monies have been devoted to a particular project or intervention makes it difficult for them to monitor and track the activities of the organisations or institutions concerned. Such situations of non-disclosure continue to create as well as widen the gulf between the communities as beneficiaries of an intervention and the entities that have the mandate to deliver on such tasks. In the words of a respondent in the North East region, *“Boko Haram emerged because the state is 'corrupt'. In the eyes of the citizens, the state is also corrupt in the way it allocates and uses resources to fight Boko Haram”*.

Manifestations of State Capture: The institutions and framework put in place in response to conflict and insurgency are viewed as attempts by the ruling class to create opportunities for the cronies to accumulate resources, thereby consolidating their perpetuation tendencies of corruption and manifestations of state capture. For instance, while several Special Task Forces (STFs) have been established by the military under the guise of internal security operations, with the huge amount of money deployed, very little attention has been accorded the police as the primary institutions with the mandate for internal security management.¹⁶ In the sense, the notion of state capture connotes aspects of corruption that is linked to poor governance that are reinforced by clientelism and patronage. In the words of a respondent:

The many military operations in the northeast and the central region of the country such as the Operation

Lafiya Dole, MNJTF, Operation Safe Haven, Operation *Ayem Akpatuma* (Cat Race), Operation *Harbin Kunama* (Scorpion Sting) {I} and {II} in the northeast region, Plateau, Benue and Kaduna state among others, are consequences of neglect of the police as the primary institution for the management of internal security. Many citizens view this approach of using the military at the expense of the police as an attempt by the military hierarchy to create opportunities for the commanders to make money.¹⁷

The Duplicity of Initiatives and Efforts as Enablers of Corruption: With government, there were several initiatives and efforts towards responding to emergencies in the country. For instance, the NEMA, the Victims Support Fund (VSF), Presidential Initiative on the North East (PINE), Presidential Commission on the North-East Initiative (PCNI), NEMA, the Bama Initiative, were all geared towards addressing the humanitarian crisis in the northeast region. The Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) was also involved in peace building and security related interventions, which made coordination difficult as a result of the challenge of duplicity and competition between and among government agencies. Recently too, the North East Development Commission (NEDC) was inaugurated by President Muhammadu Buhari. Such multiplicity of initiatives and structures for responding to emergencies by the government further complicates efforts towards transparency and accountability.

Disregard for Due Process and Procurement Guidelines: Disregard for due process as spelt out in the guidelines for procurements has been a major driver of corruption in both government institutions and non-state entities. For instance, during a public hearing that was convened by the Senate to look

into the way and manner monies were spent on issues related to the north-east, it was reported that the PINE was unable to account for \$9.7 million that was spent on contract-related expenditure.¹⁸ The former Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Babachir Lawal was also indicted in a Senate Committee report for mismanagement of funds amounting to \$1.4 million under the guise of weeding grass in some Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camps.¹⁹

Diversion of Relief Materials: The diversion of relief materials meant for victims of insurgency and conflicts in the country has been a lingering issue that has not been accorded serious attention by the government. Across the country, government officials either divert relief materials or some persons who connive with individuals and groups involved in transportation and distribution as the case may be. For instance, officials of the Borno State Emergency Management Agency in-charge of food and other relief materials were reported to have re-bagged and diverted rice that was meant for displaced persons in the state.²⁰

Lack of Transparency associated with Security Votes: Though security provisioning is exclusively, and primarily the responsibility of the federal government, state and local governments have become major spenders on security. In fact, across the three tiers of governments, federal, state and local, there has been an entrenched practice of spending public funds under classified expenditures known as 'security votes'. In recent years, there has been a surge in the amount of monies spent by public office holders under the guise of either complementing the efforts of the federal government on security provisioning or crafting policies and projects for security considerations. It was reported that spending linked to security vote in Nigeria amounts to over N241.2 billion annually.²¹ The reality today is that security votes have become major conduits for public funds

to be expended by the executive outside the oversight of the legislature and anti-corruption institutions such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC). While Section 2(3)(d)(v) and 4 of the Freedom of Information Act makes it mandatory for details of spending on security-related issues to be made public,²² the lack of transparency and accountability that characterize how security-related funds are spent remains a major source of concern.

Recommendations

Strengthen the Mechanisms for Transparency and Accountability in Public Expenditure: Within the framework of democratic governance, transparency and accountability constitute key obligations that both state and non-state entities involved in humanitarian response should abide by. By strengthening the mechanisms for transparency and accountability, it allows for greater trust on the part of the beneficiaries of such interventions, which also insulate the processes from undue interferences.

Design a Framework for Social Audit of Humanitarian Responses: For the communities to be directly involved in issues relating to responses on conflicts and insurgencies, as currently witnessed in the country, there should be a concrete framework for their involvement in ways that enables them to track and monitor funds dedicated to such issues in terms of how they are utilized, with clarity around how they can seek remedies for infractions by persons, groups and institutions involved. The ultimate goal of the social audit is to ensure that beneficiaries of interventions are fully aware of such interventions with improved knowledge and skills to effectively monitor such interventions and their impact.

Establish and Support Publish What You Spend

Campaigns: This represents a public accountability framework that empowers people to be better informed about interventions that are designed to address their needs. In the context of the prevailing challenges concerning insurgency and conflict, the skills of groups should be built and supported across affected communities as a basis for ensuring they agitate for greater transparency by organisations and institutions involved in humanitarian response. Through campaigns such as publish what you spend, it would be easy for the communities to put pressure on the affected entities to be open in their dealings from a standpoint of knowledge, as against situations of opaqueness. There is sense greater transparency in the way funds are spent by both the state and non-governmental entities would empower communities to demand social accountability through the availability of information as well as the right communication tools and channel for combating corruption. This would also translate into clearer and concrete mechanisms for seeking redress when infractions are identified.

Greater Synergy and Coordination among State

Institutions: In the context of humanitarian response, there should be a one-stop-shop for ensuring greater coordination between and among government institutions at all levels of governance so as to checkmate duplicity in government responses particularly as it relates to spending. By working together harmoniously, their combined effect would far outweigh the sum of their efforts. The establishment of the office for the coordination of humanitarian efforts, which covers both insurgency and conflicts the country, is an important pillar for engendering such cooperation. Through synergy and collaboration, it would be cost-effectiveness in the way and governmental and non-governmental actors on humanitarian

and other peace building deploy manner resources and security-related responsibilities.

Ensure End-User Involvement in the Distribution of Relief Materials: To address the challenges associated with the diversion of relief materials, such responsibilities should benefit from monitoring by the end-users. As long as they are involved, they would be properly informed about the quantity, the officials involved, the contractor to supply or distribute, as well as the modality for delivery and distribution to the beneficiaries. As long as the citizens are adequately informed and involved in such processes, it instils confidence in the government or non-governmental entity involved. Such citizens' oversight over the distribution of relief materials would inform greater transparency in ways that guarantee end-user reach.

Ensure Greater Transparency in the use of Security Votes: In the light of the fact that the FoI act makes it mandatory for public funds to be made public to citizens as a way of ensuring greater transparency and accountability, efforts should be made by both the civil society and the media towards making security votes an unacceptable and criminal act by public officials. One way to achieve this is to put a ceiling in terms of the amount of money that public officials are authorized to spend, from the federal, state and local governments, under a classified budget line of security vote. This represents one of the proactive ways of guaranteeing the government's accountability in the use of public resources.

Conclusion

From a political economy standpoint, there is a thriving value-chain in the conflict and security landscape that is sustained by acts of corruption, which makes the delivery of humanitarian

interventions far from the people. This is linked to the vested interests that individuals and groups pursue, which is at variance with the overall national interest of providing safety, security and relief to citizens that are victims of emergencies. Addressing the challenges associated with corrupt practices in the fight against insurgency and other forms of conflicts, as well as humanitarian assistance in Nigeria, would provide a sound pathway towards reducing the pain that victims undergo due to the unpatriotic acts of some individuals, groups or institutions.

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CHAPTER TWO

IMPACT OF CORRUPTION ON THE RECONSTRUCTION AND REBUILDING OF THE NORTH EAST

By

Abdulrahman Abu Hamisu

Abstract

The paper investigated the impact of corruption on the reconstruction and rebuilding of the North East. This has become necessary in the face of massive attention it has received and continues to receive in recent time. As two-pronged strategies that combine kinetic and non-kinetic forms of intervention towards ending the insurgency, it is necessary to investigate the impact of corruption on the reconstruction and rebuilding of the region considering the huge impact it ought to have made on the fight against insurgency in the past and the impact it is currently making in the overall strategy to overcome the insurgency in the North East. To accomplish this task, the paper leveraged secondary sources and the theory of agent-principal to establish the presence of corruption in the reconstruction process. The findings indicated that apart from the fact that corruption is prevalence in post-conflict reconstruction environment such as the North East of Nigerian; its impacts are diverse, direct and indirect, and negative and positive. The paper also found one positive impact of corruption that is often neglected by researchers investigating its impact; that is, its ability to call attention to itself, instigating in the process, protests and agitations, public opprobrium and, in some cases, anti-corruption reforms wherever and whenever it is pervasive. The paper

concluded that reconstruction of the North East needs anti-corruption reforms more than any other thing and recommended that it should be vigorously pursued by all actors delivering interventions in the region to ensure that the goals of winning hearts and minds necessary to bring the war to an end are accomplished.

Introduction

The reconstruction of the North East began with the establishment of the Presidential Initiative for the North East (PINE). The initiative was to tackle pre-insurgency, insurgency as well as post insurgency challenges. This is in line with the principle of post-conflict reconstruction and rebuilding. Post-conflict reconstruction and rebuilding refers to a set of interrelated activities that are meant to construct and reconstruct social relationships, destroyed houses, social amenities and infrastructure and to tackle immediate, short, medium and long term development challenges of the conflict-affected area. PINE was established to tackle challenges such as these which is what post-conflict reconstruction is expected to do. The process could commence when the conflict is still on-going or whenever there is a complete cessation of hostilities. As a framework for peace and the winning of the hearts and minds of the people, it usually commences with humanitarian assistance, livelihood support, peace building, reconstruction and redevelopment of a conflict-affected area. Post-conflict reconstruction in Nigeria should not be an exception.

However, no sooner had the reconstruction commenced in the North East, nearly all of the agencies involved were enmeshed in corruption, an act that affected their performance, credibility, integrity and peoples' confidence in them and their activities. Being that most of the agencies of government that were found to be corrupt were statutory agencies that cannot be undermined like PINE, most of them continued to exist till date while some of the

heads and staff of these agencies were occasionally sacked. Sometimes, corrupt officials are sacked and prosecuted; others are not sacked or prosecuted. Some are sacked but not prosecuted. Babachir David Lawal is a case in point. For instance, PINE which is at the heart of the reconstruction process was undermined as a result of corruption cases to pave way for the emergence of the Presidential Committee of the North East (PCNI). However, the leadership of PINE was not prosecuted for the missing USD 8.9 million. The PCNI that replaced PINE was to address several challenges that include corruption, absence of coordination, duplication of efforts and lack of transparency and accountability in the post-conflict reconstruction process as a whole. Almost three years later government institutions responsible for the stabilization and reconstruction of the North East were said to be 'marred by corruption, while institutional rivalries and overlapping mandates impede collaboration, obscure lines of accountability, and result in ad-hoc interventions.'(Brechenmacher, 2019:13).

As a result, it is therefore imperative to establish the presence of corruption in the reconstruction process and also investigate its impact on the reconstruction and rebuilding of the North East to make far-reaching recommendations that will rejig the reconstruction programme of the federal government of Nigeria because of the corruption that has impacted it negatively in the past. To do this, the paper is structured into seven parts. Part one is the introduction followed by part two which discusses the methodology. Part three is a review of the literature. Part four is the findings. Part five discusses the findings. Part six details out recommendations while part seven concludes the paper.

Methodology

The study is a qualitative research which relies on secondary sources of data such as government policy documents, journals, studies, Newspapers, interview and internet sources to establish the

relationship between post-conflict reconstruction and corruption before proceeding to show the presence and impact of corruption on reconstruction as an activity and how this further impacted the lives of the people, their well-being, the redevelopment of the North East region and the need for reforms such as anti-corruption reforms. The research is anchored on and rightly guided by, the principal-agency theory of corruption which proponents argued that between the principal and agent hired to deliver certain good on-behalf of the principal, there is information asymmetry often utilized by the agent to further his/her interest, invariably affecting the interest of the principal negatively (Klitgaard, 1988). What this means is that the agent leverages information available to him/her to pursue ends that are different and opposite of the ends the principal sought and for which (s)he was employed. Often referred to as abuse or corruption in Nigeria, it is a betrayal of trust arising from the pursuit of ends that are inimical to the interest and well-being of all including that of the principal due to self-seeking attitudes of agents. This understanding guided the research.

Literature Review

In most of the literature, post-conflict reconstruction is conceptualized as activities, practices, programmes and projects specifically designed to halt conflict or war situation to facilitate peace and reconciliation as well as long term redevelopment of a conflict-affected area through construction and rebuilding. Post-conflict reconstruction tackles conflict-related challenges in three different ways. The first are challenges thrown up by the war such as medical screening, acute malnutrition of children, psychosocial support, temporary shelter, food and non-food items and general protection, followed by insurgency induced challenges. And lastly, it envisaged post-conflict challenges and the general development of the conflict-affected areas. In the case of the North East, all of these were merged into one document and strategy known as the Buhari Plan. The Plan detailed all interventions ranging from

military intervention, humanitarian assistance, security and social stabilization, education and social development, reconstruction and rebuilding to overall economic development of the region. In a nutshell, the document combined security with social and economic development. What was missing was the reforms. Reform is highly critical in post-conflict reconstruction because it plays critical roles in shaping the opinion of the people about their perception of government and service delivery. Without reforms especially anti-corruption reforms, reconstruction exercise would be a hollow exercise.

Post-conflict reconstruction as conceived by African Union Policy on Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development, on one hand, noted that it is the pursuit of human security in a post-conflict environment (2006). In a related development, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) African Post Conflict Reconstruction Framework detailed five interrelated activities as post-conflict reconstruction activities. These include 1) security, 2) political transition, governance and participation, 3) socio-economic development, 4) human rights, justice and reconciliation and 5) coordination, management and resource mobilisation.

Panic (2005) on the other hand indicated that post-conflict reconstruction includes economic reform, reconciliation, external participation, poverty reduction and development. One thing that is discernible in post-conflict reconstruction is that it has no universally accepted constitutive components which define it. It varies from place to place due to differences of conflict and the post-conflict reconstruction that is required. Therefore, what constitutes post-conflict reconstruction is determined by the nature and causative factors of the conflict and likely post-conflict challenges. Notwithstanding, it is beginning to dawn on students and experts on the post-conflict reconstruction that it is highly susceptible to corruption hence, the need to fight corruption in post-conflict reconstruction (UNDP, 2010).

Corruption and Post Conflict Reconstruction

Rose-Ackerman (2008) in her study of post-conflict reconstruction of three countries, namely, Angola, Guatemala and Kosovo concluded that post-conflict reconstruction furnishes incentives for corruption, self-seeking and self-dealing, admonishing that the only way out is to check corruption in post-conflict reconstruction by pursuing institutional reforms, increase transparency and accountability, and the protection of rights and civil liberties. Harvey (2012) on his part noted that post-conflict reconstruction is highly susceptible to corruption and wonders why anti-corruption reforms are always marginalized in post-conflict reconstruction.

Corruption, a practice, action and deed that is known to deny, influence, erode, derail and destroy, has been identified as the major causative factor of insurgency in many parts of the world (MacLachlan, 2018; Chayes, 2015). Magrin and de Montclos (2018) in their study of the Lake Chad revealed that Borno State which is the epicentre of the insurgency has a long history of corruption dating back to the colonial era when people pay kickbacks to officials for services. It is not surprising then that it is the epicentre of the insurgency.

Corruption, whether it is committed in the North East or elsewhere in Nigeria, is known to deny people the much-needed resources, development and anti-corruption programmes and reforms that would foster efficient service delivery while, at the same time, communicating positive changes to the people to win their hearts and minds, which is the purpose of governance and service delivery in a post-conflict reconstruction environment. Instead of this, corruption persisted under the reconstruction, denying people reforms and the most important changes that ought to have won peoples' hearts and minds. This resulted in institutional dysfunction, absence of efficient and effective service delivery and diversion of funds meant for post-conflict reconstruction, which affected the quality of services being

delivered and its impact on the psyche of people. As Nixon and Mallet (2017: vi) argued in their examination of service delivery thus:

...what also comes out strongly is the potential for service delivery to actively damage people's perceptions of government. This is particularly the case when people have had bad experiences at facilities or in those spaces of accountability and interaction...Linked to this is the finding that...perceived unfairness, corruption or exclusion are important factors influencing how people connect their experience of services to their views of government. This speaks to the idea, already established by historical evidence, that services have the potential to act as vehicles for transmitting or signalling wider norms and values – both for the good and the bad.

Although, the North East region presented Nigeria with a unique opportunity to communicate to the whole world new governance strategy that is anti-corruption; pro-people that promotes efficiency, effective service delivery; anti-prebendalism (the corruption of governance) and pro-development; that is, a strategy that prioritizes public interest over private or tribal interests. Unfortunately, the desire to maintain status quo remains and, most times, overrides the need for reforms that infuse changes in the system; a situation that made Shettima (2017) warned that a return to status quo in the North East is not an option. According to Magrin and de Montclos (2018), the model of reconstruction and rebuilding adopted for the North East favours a return to status quo; a status of corruption, impunity, abuses, high rate of unemployment, low school enrolment, low capacity utilization, high maternal and infant mortality rate and general underdevelopment (LCBC/AUC, 2018; Buhari Plan, 2016; NEST, 2016).

Corruption and the Reconstruction of the North East

Cases of corruption ranging from grand corruption, administrative to political corruption abound in the reconstruction process in the North East (Brechenmacher, 2019; Magrin and de Montclos, 2018; Ayitogo, 2018). Like the diagnosis of the causative factor(s) of the conflict by government policy documents which refused to acknowledge the role of corruption in the emergence of Boko Haram, anti-corruption reforms were never contemplated or even highlighted and discussed as a major factor in the conceptualization and delivery of post-conflict reconstruction for the North East. Either because framers of the post-conflict reconstruction model for the North East has corruption mindset or because they are not willing to give up their corrupt dealings and practices which later characterized the reconstruction process. Another plausible explanation could also be that public officials who framed the reconstruction interventions in the reconstruction documents do not want to indict themselves or confirm Muhammad Yusuf's assertion that indicted them. Whatever is the motive, reconstruction as African Union Policy on Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development argued is about human security (AU, 2006). Unfortunately, reconstruction in Nigeria has two meanings and outcomes: the one conceptualized and the one that will manifest during the implementation. Both may end up contradicting themselves as a result of corruption as argued by Brechenmacher (2019:16):

On the ground, reports of government officials, traditional leaders, and local politicians diverting aid abound. Both NEMA and its state-level counterparts have been led by political cronies who have been accused of diverting millions of aid dollars into private hands.⁷⁴ For local-level stabilization efforts, the scale of corruption poses multiple challenges: it undermines citizen trust in the recovery process, risks worsening perceptions of government

neglect, and draws money away from urgent reconstruction and service delivery needs. It also perverts political incentives: as long as certain federal, state, and local actors are benefiting financially from ongoing insecurity and the continued influx of resources into the northeast, they have little interest in seriously tackling the crisis and its drivers.

This contradiction is not unconnected with the self-seeking attitudes of government officials and those in authority whether formal or informal. Most government agencies saddled with the reconstruction exercise were alleged to be corrupt (Brechenmacher, 2019). Some of these alleged corruptions were later proven by different probe panels. Top on the list of government agencies indicted for corruption is the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA), the Nigerian military, the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) and the Presidential Initiative for the North East (PINE). The ONSA together with the Nigerian Army, two institutions that are to secure the North East for the commencement of reconstruction and rebuilding, were involved in the diversion of a whopping sum of 2.1 billion USD meant for the procurement of arms and ammunition for soldiers in the battlefield in the North East. Furthermore, the military was also accused of various acts of human rights violations and extortion at checking points (Amnesty International, 2015; Magrin and de Montclos, 2018); acts that smack from reckless abuse of power and mandate – corruption.

Issues of diversion of food and abuses also abound. The House of Representative Committee on Emergency and Disaster Preparedness found that NEMA diverted the sum of 5.8 billion Naira meant for the procurement of food for the IDPs in the North East and another N1, 150, 000,000 being subsidy cost purportedly paid on rice that was to be purchased by the World Food

Programme; an international NGO intervening in the North East which has its funds. The Committee also noted the diversion of the sum of N1.5 billion meant for the purchase of rice the supposed beneficial states government officials testified they never received (Aytogo, 2018). The findings of the probe were complemented by the incessant protests of the IDPs against NEMA and SEMA officials in the camps for short-changing them. Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), a term that described sexual abuses, continued to surface in the camps and elsewhere despite the campaigns; an act that was being committed by the same officials that are to protect the very women they are exploiting sexually in the form of sex for food or any other favour as payments.

PINE, a federal government body responsible for the reconstruction of the North-East under former President, Goodluck Jonathan, could not account for \$ 7.9 million. Security votes, slush funds used for corrupt purposes, were said to have increased tremendously between 2016 and 2018 (Brechenmacher, 2019). Babachir Lawal, the former Secretary to the Government of the Federation was sacked by President Muhammadu Buhari as a result of corruption and probe of PINE, which he supervised. In Gombe, the SEMA boss, Dr Dallami Arab Rukuje and Isa Garba were convicted recently for conspiracy, criminal misappropriation, aiding and abetting that borders on the carting away of some building materials meant for the IDPs (Alhassan, 2020). There were many Babachirs and Rukujes that are supposed to be languishing in jail if reconstruction is to make the desired impact. Yet they are walking the street free either because they were not investigated or simply because they were protected by their godfathers. According to one of the internally displaced persons, “Nearly all government officials we have come in contact with are corrupt, except very few who are God-fearing. Even our people here in the camp collude with them to cheat us. Wherever one turns, corruption is everywhere. May God save our country from corruption.”

Coordination, which is the most effective way of reducing corruption through the elimination of duplication of efforts, was also dealt a fatal blow by the weight of competition that stems from self-seeking activities of the majority of the actors. This led to many accusations and counter-accusations that some of the actors (local, national and international) abused their mandates including spying for the insurgents. For example, the same military accused of profiting from the war also accused the Action Against Hunger, Mercy Corp and UNICEF of spying or feeding Boko Haram (Kazeem, 2019).

Furthermore, the International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) who always argued that the interest of the displaced is their interest were also alleged to have spent a substantial amount of their funds on overhead cost and logistics rather than on the people on whose behalf the funds were sourced. Just like the INGOs, MDAs were not left out of the resistance to the PCNI coordination role. The PCNI Dashboard which is an innovative device that would have enabled coordination of all interventions to the North East and also assist to eliminate duplication and corruption was also resisted. This hindered transparency and accountability in the process. It could be said that the conflict and the reconstruction were fully commercialized by the actors in the past before the arrival of President Muhammadu Buhari on the scene in 2015. 'If you remove self-seeking from the psyche of an average Nigerian public official, corruption will disappear overnight', noted one of the interviewees.

Presently, it is difficult to say with confidence where Nigeria is currently on the scale of reconstruction given the nature of the post-conflict reconstruction and the impact of corruption on the process. It cannot be said with certainty that Nigeria is at the level of early recovery or stabilization phase. The entire process continues to oscillate between early recovery and stabilization in the last 11 years. Available evidence points to a fact that suggests that most actors are not ready for anti-corruption and real reconstruction. Hence the

overwhelming concentration on humanitarian assistance with little reconstruction and peace building efforts here and there in order show that they are interested in reconstruction. Whereas it is more of an unwritten agreement to keep the IDPs in the camps to keep on attracting funding what would be stolen eventually. 'Every day, we hear people saying they have been feeding while we are starving. This is not good. People are just using our plight to make name and money posited one of the IDPs interviewed'.

Magrin and de Montclos (2018) express this fear differently when they noted that the conflict may be used by the elite to demand more funding like their counterparts in the Niger Delta who used their internal development crisis to demand more funding again and again only for such funds to be looted through phantom projects, inflation of contracts and payment for contracts awarded but not executed. This fear has been confirmed by Brechenmacher (2019) who noted that the reconstruction process is fraught with corruption and diversion of aids; a practice that characterized reconstruction in North-East Nigeria and the rebuilding of the Niger Delta region respectively.

Findings: Impact of Corruption on the Reconstruction Process

It has been established by independent researches that the reconstruction process is fraught with corruption right from the local government level to the state and the federation levels (Brechenmacher, 2019; Magrin and de Montclos, 2018; LCBC/AUC, 2018). These acts of corruption were committed by the different actors intervening in the North East. The task now is to show their impact on the reconstruction and rebuilding of the North East and what should be done.

As already established, reconstruction and rebuilding are aspects of post-conflict reconstruction that rely on human and material resources to bring positive and impactful changes into the lives of

the victims of a conflict. Notwithstanding, it is a fact that human beings are inherently greedy and selfish, which make them prefer self over everyone else. This explains why self-seeking and dealing that are tantamount to abuse and corruption in public space are part of human nature. However, the same man who is selfish and greedy is also empathic, sympathetic and altruistic in deeds at other times. The North East has witnessed and continues to witness the presence and prevalence of both – selfishness and show of love from the same man who is selfish and greedy. The two opposing groups that have been battling each other for the soul of the reconstruction in the North East derived their very existence from this. This has also produced two types of actors whose actions and inactions have also produced their impact that continued to influence and shape the direction of the reconstruction. This is because these two opposing groups cut across all tiers of government, agencies and the entire North East. They are there in the military and those agencies that are charged with the responsibility of rebuilding the North. The truth is, in every society, one finds the display of the contradiction inherent in human. That contradiction is what often leads to a conflict of interest and societal conflicts. And these conflicts, according to an academic interviewed, 'is the result of interplay between selfishness and altruism which leads the less selfish to confront the selfish, leading to conflicts of different types and magnitudes in the society.'

In the North East, the group that want peace are in the majority compared to those that want corruption out of the system. And it is when corruption is successfully checked that there can be peace argued the academic. It is, therefore, noteworthy that there is a correlation between anti-corruption and peace. Without anti-corruption, people will continue to use the insurgency or the plight of the IDPs to perpetrate corruption and endlessly enrich themselves. This is obvious from the actions of some actors who said they are supposed to rebuild the region. 'Only very few actors implementing one form of interventions or the other in the North

East is not corrupt,'asserted one of the senior citizens of the affected states. Though the IDPs have consistently protested acts of corruption perpetrated against them from the very beginning or against any observed lapses or anomaly compared to the rest of the population who are always silent whenever an act of corruption is perpetrated except for the occasional outbursts of either the Governors of the states in the region or the Borno State's Elders Forum. This refusal of the remaining population to join the IDPs and other Nigerians who are sympathetic to their course to protest or expose corruption continued to rob the region huge resources and dossier of acts of corruption that are being perpetrated in the region. *'If you remove corruption from us in Nigeria, our problem is solved'* noted one of the interviewees. In the estimation of one of the interviewees who has worked for an NGO in the North East, *'Every Nigerian is corrupt. The only difference between those who are corrupt and those who are not is an opportunity for corruption'*. This is quite true. However, an act cannot be deemed corruption until it has been committed and unravelled. Some of the acts of corruption perpetrated have been unearthed by probe panels. These acts of corruption can be leveraged to indicate the impact of corruption on the reconstruction process.

Direct and Indirect Impacts of Corruption: The impact of corruption on the reconstruction process is both direct and indirect. The direct impact includes those that result from the perversion of the reconstruction process to pursue other ends that are directly inimical and antithetical to the goals and aspirations of the post-conflict reconstruction as well as those of the people. Reconstruction as earlier noted is an act of replacing destroyed infrastructure, social relationships, social fabrics and cohesion as well as the redevelopment of conflict-affected areas. It also involves political, economic and or anti-corruption reforms. In the North East, reconstruction of infrastructure, social relationship, order and development is just an aspect of the entire post-conflict reconstruction, which is broader in scope and reach. This aspect of

the reconstruction that focuses on rebuilding was the actual focus of PINE before it was undermined. In addition to providing shelter and food to the IDPs, PINE embarked on reconstruction exercises across the North East that include construction and reconstruction of primary/secondary schools and police stations in Adamawa and Yobe States respectively. While IDPs in Borno got temporary shelter, unfortunately, the numbers cannot be ascertained because government agencies in Nigeria unlike their foreign counterparts that are intervening in the North East do not publish their scorecards with verifiable statistics, as a result of many reasons that include contract inflation and, sometimes, poor execution. These factors affected the drive for transparency and accountability and may likely affect the same drive in the future as reconstruction progressed.

For instance, the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) always provide details of the total number of populations reached in households, the total number to be reached and the number yet to be reached, cost per household and even per head (See HRP, 2018). This sort of transparency and accountability the reports usually provide has been lacking in the reconstruction process as a result of the same reason that made it extremely very difficult for the federal and state government agencies delivering interventions in the North East to advertise contracts and also present their scorecards like their foreign counterparts. Most federal and state agencies usually hide under the emergency not to advertise, making collusion and cheating possible. Even the contracts that were advertised in Nigeria are sometimes worked out in favour of cronies, friends and families. 'Take out corruption from Nigerians and the country would be fine' argued one of the academics interviewed.

A lot of contracts are mostly awarded before they are advertised in Nigeria. The recent revelation that one single individual got 300 contracts from the Niger Delta Commission confirms this (Yusuf and Kanabe, 2019). Alex Kalejaiye averred that the problem with the

commission (that is, the Niger Delta Development Commission) is not solely one of leadership crisis but the issue of fraud in high places (Yusuf and Kanabe, 2019). Other instances of corruption of note that impacted the lives of the people and the North East region negatively are the diversion of food and non-food items meant for IDPs by NEMA and SEMA officials and deprivation and poverty the IDPs were subjected to. The region continued to suffer as a result of the denial of the most important benefits of reconstruction which is the infrastructure needed for socio-economic development, poverty reduction, the promotion of the well-being of the people and restoring citizens trust and confidence in government once more. This is in stark contrast with the on-going reconstruction in the North East.

It is a fact that corruption has continued to deny the people enhanced well-being because of the change in focus. The focus changed from infrastructure provision, poverty reduction, reconstruction of social relationship and job creation that are long term to humanitarian support that is short term and provides quick and easy returns for corrupt government officials. This change has not been helpful to the cause of the people of the North East and the federal government of Nigeria. As noted by one of the former staff, one of the organizations that is deeply involved in the reconstruction process right from inception:

The bane of the reconstruction and rebuilding of the North East is abuse, corruption and self-seeking. This has distorted everything as all actors compete to use the name of the people of the North East to justify dubious schemes that advance their interest before the interest of the people and that of the region

Other indirect impacts of corruption include outcomes that ended up producing other negative impacts that are always apprehended as causative factors of the insurgency by government documents or independent researchers. Those negative impacts include bad

governance, poverty, unemployment, impunity, underdevelopment, high infant and maternal mortality rates, illiteracy and high out of school children catalogue by the NESTS, RPBA and the Buhari Plan instead of corruption which is a major culprit.

Negative and Positive Impacts: The findings showed that reconstruction process is dominated by people and persons that are too comfortable with the on-going conflict because it is bringing in more resources to the region and, by implication, to themselves, their families, friends and cronies (Brechenmacher, 2019); the same persons and people that are supposed to be at the forefront of ending the conflict. These set of persons cut across the institutions entrusted with the reconstruction and rebuilding of the North East. They are in the North East as they are also found all over the country and beyond. The conflict is providing many actors opportunities to make money from the rebuilding as Brechenmacher (2019) noted in her study, though her findings are not new.

As already shown, the North East has a very long history of corruption just like any other parts of the country. Every self-seeker sees opportunity in every situation to either loot or contribute to the escalation of the problem including war situations. Therefore, and as it is all over the world, every conflict merchants and the corrupt wherever they are, see conflict and reconstruction as an opportunity to feather their nests. As such, the drug dealers, the unemployed that are being employed by international organizations, the landlords that are inflating rent and requesting for more than one year in payment, the contractors that are being engaged to provide different services, the hotels and restaurants, the taxi drivers at the airport and the corrupt officials that are at the helm of affairs who are using the conflict as a cover to siphon public resources for their personal use are all in business. And the business is a 'good' one because every one of them is happy because the conflict is spinning cash and other forms of benefits, not minding the impact of their

actions on the insurgency. All they are concern about is the benefits that are accruing to them. 'We, when I say we, I mean all us, are part of the problem. We are too selfish as people. Only God will help us.'

Furthermore, restoration of civil authority which ought to be the foundation of the reconstruction was not given the right attention it deserved. Police stations that were rebuilt in Bama and elsewhere have no furniture, such stations are only partially functional. The Civilian JTF now performs the role of the Nigerian Police Force and other security agencies in Borno. While in Yobe, vigilantes augment the role of the police. In Adamawa, it is the hunters. Why this is not bad since they are complementing the government, it tells the story of lack of seriousness of those charged with the reconstruction and rebuilding. The excuses for not focusing on reconstruction have been insecurity or inadequate funding. Notwithstanding, it is this insecurity that the reconstruction programme should solve in such a way that complement the military efforts. The focus of most federal agencies responsible for the reconstruction however has been geared directly or indirectly towards keeping the IDPs in camps. They are also happy keeping the war going to continue to attract more funding that will be looted. The concentration of these agencies on food and non-food items to the detriment of reconstruction of social life that will empower the people reveals one thing; the pervasion of the reconstruction as an intervention by deliberately shifting the focus of the rebuilding of the region from investing in infrastructure and reconstruction of social life to investing heavily in short term spending that supports consumption, which is in itself abuse and corruption. The fear today is the likelihood that the IDPs may develop dependency syndrome. This is one of the negative impacts of a reconstruction that prefers to give handouts to the people rather than empower them to be self-reliant as they used to be before the insurgency for some obvious reasons already highlighted.

Additionally, corruption has been denying the region development. A reconstruction that is not perverted ought to have provided the

region with economic and social infrastructure that has been lacking before the insurgency. While the Buhari Plan talked about reconstruction, most actors including the PCNI did not give it priority attention. Assuming it is not possible to reconstruct those infrastructures in the conflict-affected areas as a result of insecurity that is often cited by some of the actors, what about the areas that are not affected either within or outside the affected local government areas or states?

For instance, Northern Borno is the most affected region. If it is not possible to build or rebuild destroyed infrastructure in that area, what about the expansion of social services in the host communities or other parts of the state that are hosting the IDPs? What about other states that are not affected but are serving as host communities? Affected states like Adamawa and Yobe are relatively peaceful compared to Borno State which is the epicentre of the insurgency. What stops federal agencies from embarking on the reconstruction of these areas? Granted, the insecurity is a constraint. What about Borno State Government that rebuilt Bama, one of the most devastated and hard-hit Local Government Areas? One of the Borno State government officials interviewed noted that *the federal agencies involved in the reconstruction of the North East have no excuse if Borno State Government and other entities like the Victims Support Fund are rebuilding infrastructure such as schools destroyed by local government secretariat and livelihood sources.*

Speaking about the PCNI, while responding to a question on the impact of the PCNI on their lives, an IDP said 'We really don't know what they are doing. Sometimes they give us food. Some other times they don't give us. They are not consistent like other donors. So we don't know what they are doing about the rebuilding of our homes and communities'. Notwithstanding the negative impact of corruption on the reconstruction, there is one positive impact the negative impact of corruption has produced. It brought not only local attention and opprobrium to itself but also the reconstruction of the North East including military handling of the war. This is one

significant impact of the negative impacts of corruption on the failing post-conflict reconstruction. This has been neglected by researchers and scholars researching corruption. It is pertinent to note at this juncture that corruption has one significant characteristic whenever and wherever it is committed; it always exposes itself, however, hidden, thereby eliciting public condemnation, protest and opprobrium which always haunt it because it has a way of reducing the expected outcome of a programme or project during the conversion process. As an academic interviewed argued:

Most researchers continued to dwell on the negative impact of corruption while ignoring its positive impact too. No time corruption has never elicited uproar, protest or even revolution. The act known as corruption contains within itself positive and negative, which are the forces that shape it and those that are either on the side of corruption or against.

Corruption as a very corrosive agent of destruction has been haunted in the North East since the emergence of Boko Haram which indicted it as the source of peoples' suffering. The IDPs have consistently protested against it whenever they are short-changed by corrupt officials. Even Nigerians that do not share the same ethnic or religious affiliation with the people of the North-East continued to protest the handling of the post-conflict reconstruction especially the performance of the military until it emerged that money earmarked for retooling the army was diverted and stolen. Up till this moment, questions are being asked concerning how the reconstruction of the region is being handled. No one knows how much has been expended on the war and the reconstruction. This is shrouded in secrecy and has become a mystery. 'The people are afraid to talk or protest as a result of fear of being killed or excluded from benefitting from interventions' said one of the founders of a local NGO in Adamawa state interviewed. Noting further, he averred that 'not that the people are not aware of

what is happening. They are quite aware. But they are incapacitated by language and fear of being victimized'.

However, today, things are changing gradually. Anti-corruption reform that was neglected by the federal government in the conception of post-conflict reconstruction, especially government policy documents that are directing responding to the conflict in the North East is gaining traction. The affected states are beginning to sign up for anti-corruption reform programmes supported by international organizations. These anti-corruption programmes include the *Open Government Partnership* programme of the World Bank and the DFID funded *Partnership to Engage, Reform and Learn* (PERL). Adamawa State has already signed up to the two programmes. While Borno and Yobe are yet to sign up to the Open Government Partnership, the three have signed up for the PERL programme of the DFID. This is cheering news because the North East needs anti-corruption reforms more than any part of the country now. The reason is that the war on the insurgency is more of psychological warfare than military confrontation since it involves winning hearts and minds of the people to silent the guns. The absence of which has made it easy for Boko Haram to recruit those that are aggrieved due to the presence and prevalence of corruption in the system; the same corruption that triggered the emergence of Boko Haram sect in the first place. This has been assisting the cause of the insurgents instead of the government. Most of the interviewees advised that 'If the government is serious about winning the war against insurgency in the North East, it should intensify the fight against corruption in the reconstruction of the North East.'

Another positive finding is Governor Babagana Zulum's approach and attitude to governance, which could be termed anti-corruption in all ramifications. Referred to as 'Zulumification' of governance in Borno, the governor is everywhere, supervising and inspecting buildings and even distribution of foods to the IDPs which are major conduit pipes through which the people are short-changed

by public officials and private entities hired by the government to deliver public good. This has stemmed corruption significant as well as protests either by the people or the IDPs. It has also enhanced the quality of delivery including quantity – value for money. This means that corruption is a problem to be solved and not to just sit back and continue to lament without taking any concrete steps. His actions are synonymous with preventive anti-corruption practice I would call problem-solving attitude/capability.

Problem-solving attitude/capability is a set of practices that are brought upon seemingly intractable problems or challenges to surmount them. This the Governor realized long ago even before becoming the Governor of Borno State. He has used and continued to use this method to get results. As a public official, you have to be a field person not minding one's executive position. This has been his belief and the reason he has been able to surmount every challenge thrown at him even before assuming office as a Governor of Borno State. Since then, a lot of things have changed in Borno State. Through his problem-solving attitude and capability, the antics of public servants and private organizations, especially contractors that specialize in the supply and use of fake and sub-standard items such as blocks for public building are now changing. IDPs now enjoy full measures of items they are to enjoy. Public officials in Borno State now take very seriously their jobs. The military is now constantly being put on its toes. This goes to show that problem-solving attitude/capability is all that will need to overcome the menace of corruption in Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

It is evident from the findings that abuses of a different kind happened in the North East. These abuses are the direct impact of corruption on the reconstruction of the North East and the rebuilding. The impact is diverse, direct and indirect, negative and

positive. The direct impact affected and continues to affect the redevelopment of the region by the federal government of Nigeria as well as the well-being of the people by denying them the much-needed infrastructure, employment opportunities and income that is critically needed by the people to survive. The first impact of corruption is on the conception of post-conflict reconstruction. The conception of post-conflict reconstruction for the North East deliberately discountenanced the role of corruption in the making of the insurgents and the impact of same corruption on the counter-insurgency measures of the federal government of Nigeria. This failure laid the foundation for the failure of the post-conflict reconstruction model for the region.

As it is evident in all activities of human beings, however, threats are always imminent. It is for this reason that measures in the form of mitigants are developed and entrenched to attenuate the impact of the already identified threat(s). Though, available literature indicated the presence of corruption, not checking it is what is bad. Nigeria has refused to sincerely check corruption in governance despite the availability of anti-corruption bodies and laws lamented as a civil servant currently working in one of the anti-corruption agencies. He further noted that the problem is not unconnected with the pervasive nature of the culture of corruption, abuse and impunity in the country, Nigeria. In the case of the North East, only direct and indirect impacts of corruption were documented by government officials as causative factors rather than indicting the main culprit, corruption. This could be as a result of their determination to continue to perpetrate corruption using the destructions and existing pre-conditions as justifications to continue to steal from the people or because they don't want to confirm the position of late Muhammad Yusuf who consistently indicted corruption perpetrated by government officials as the major causative factors that brought upon the people of Borno State and, by implication, the entire North East hardship and suffering.

Before Muhammed Yusuf, several studies indicted corruption as

the cause of our national woes (see Jega, 2005; Ojakaminor, N. D). Unfortunately, majority of the studies that indicated corruption as the root cause of our failure as a nation and as a people were and are still mostly the outcome of efforts of independent researchers rather than government officials. In such an atmosphere of dishonesty and insincerity of government officials who are supposed to be solution providers and bearers, solutions would be difficult to find. Because solutions will never flow from the correct diagnosis of the problem at hand since the chief article in the trade of most of the officials is dishonesty and corruption. And if solutions do not flow from correct diagnosis, proposed solutions will never address identified real challenge(s) or problem(s). This is because in such a situation, what has been apprehended as problems are not the real problems but mere symptoms, thereby failing the first test of diagnosis adduced by Deng Xiaoping.

According to Xiaoping, truth should always be sought from fact (In Makaruddin, 2002). This is where lies the problem; if, for instance, truth did flows from fact as Xiaoping rightly admonished, the North East Governors which commissioned NESTS, the European Union and the World Bank-supported by the federal government of Nigeria that developed the Recovery and Peace Building Assessment and the PCNI which designed the Buhari Plan would not have discarded anti-corruption and institutional reforms the way they did; a major plank on which the entire post-conflict reconstruction ought to rest on, knowing that it was corruption that led to the emergence of Boko Haram in the first place. It is this failure from the very beginning that has been haunting the reconstruction of the North East simply because those charged with the rebuilding of the region right from the very beginning of the conflict deliberately refused to accept the obvious that the solution to the conundrum the North East has become in recent time has everything to do with the neglect of anti-corruption and institutional reforms. The way forward is 'to ensure that anti-corruption and institutional reforms are made part and parcel of the

rebuilding of the North East' according to a civil society activist in Borno State.

Furthermore, findings also indicated that the battle between those that wanted corruption out of the reconstruction process to attain peace, stability and development and those that are perpetrating and perpetuating corruption that is denying the people resources that are needed for the development of the region and enhancement of the peoples' well-being is still on. Who will eventually win is just a matter of time. It is, however, gratifying to note that endemic corruption which has consistently denied the people of the North East true reconstruction and rebuilding that will generate peace, employment, income and development respectively, has produced its backlash in the form of anti-corruption protest movement across the length and breadth of Nigeria and beyond. This has been producing its positive impact in the form of government anti-corruption that has consumed some public officials, especially the anti-corruption war of the federal government of Nigeria despite its reactive nature. The reactive nature of the fight against corruption in Nigeria incentivizes corruption and corrupt acts.

Most countries in the world that have successfully checked corruption are countries that possess or institutionalized proactive anti-corruption mechanisms within public institutions and follow them religiously. In the case of Nigeria, anti--corruption measures and mechanisms exist. Only that they are either not followed or they are deliberately perverted. The case of the PCNI dashboard is a clear example. The refusal to accept and use it for reporting points to one direction; Nigerian public officials are not ready to part ways with corruption. 'When this government (that is, Buhari government) came in, we thought corruption would have been a thing of the past. It is still here with us. But not like before. Similarly, an interviewee noted that 'if the government is serious about ending the war, it should on anti-corruption in all its ramifications'. Anti-corruption remains the only area that has been neglected. Yet it is the secret to the final onslaught that would make the Government

of Nigeria win the war against the insurgency in the North argued an interviewee that worked with multiple organizations that worked in the North East.

It is also realized from the findings that corruption possesses both negative and positive impacts respectively. While its negative impacts include denial of reforms, development, employment opportunities to the people of the region and poverty reduction, it also generated anger in the people that ensured consistent protest which led to probes and the arrest and prosecution of government officials at the federal and state levels despite the fears being expressed. Anti-corruption has gained traction at the state level too. The only weakest link is the local government administration that remained comatose. The three affected states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe are already benefitting from the Partnership to Engage, Reform and Learn (PERL), a DFID funded reform and anti-corruption programme. However, Adamawa State is ahead of the remaining two states of Borno and Yobe after signing the Open Government Partnership being funded by the World Bank. It is hoped that whatever is learnt will be extended to the affected local government areas because it is most needed here. *'Since the war started, local governments are said to be receiving their allocations. We are yet to see what they have done for their people that were displaced'* according to the civil society activist interviewed.

Furthermore, it is important to note that the future belongs to anti-corruption if genuine reconstruction of the North East is to be achieved. According to Panic (2005): “To have any chance of success, post-conflict strategies must, therefore, concentrate from the start on institutional changes and policies that promote reconciliation, reconstruction and reduction in absolute poverty and income insecurity”; a position that was reinforced by the *Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery & Resilience of the Boko Haram Affected Areas of the Lake Chad Basin Region* and *Crisis and Development: Lake Chad Region and Boko Haram* published in 2018 respectively. This line of thought of Panic conforms to the

sentiments of most of the respondents interviewed. There is the need for public officials especially the Governors of the remaining North-East States to borrow a leaf from Governor Zulum who has decided to become a general supervisor to get amazing results rather than executive governor with nothing to show at the end of his four or eight years tenure.

Recommendations

The Federal Government of Nigeria: anti-corruption reforms should be pursued vigorously in collaboration with state governments, though high-level corruption has been associated with the federal system of government and post-conflict reconstruction making our problem a very serious and complex one. The success of post-conflict reconstruction of the North East does not lie in more funding alone or undermining of institutions that are found to be corrupt but anti-corruption reforms and commitment to poverty reduction. This should be the focus of the federal, state and local governments as well as all partners and donors. Secondly, the focus should be on rebuilding the destroyed LGAs that have been recovered from the insurgents. Though most of the villages and hamlets are gone forever, there is a need for the expansion of the surviving settlements. This is where the settlements regrouping started by the PCNI would make the most impact. As one of the interviewees lamented, 'we are suffering. The government should come to our rescue'.

The Affected States: The responsibility to reverse all the negative trends in the North East lies on the State Government. Therefore, the affected states will do better if they understand that it is their responsibility to rebuild their states in partnership with the federal government of Nigeria. Adamawa, Borno and Yobe should elaborate schemes that herald reforms and poverty reduction by keying into the Open Government Partnership like Adamawa to advance anti-corruption reforms in their respective states.

Reconstruction should be genuinely pursued. It should not be turned into a cash cow or used as justification to increase security vote. State governors could learn one or two things from Governor Zulum's approach to governance, the office of the Governor and service delivery in Borno State and his attitude to governance. The office of the Governor and service delivery is revolutionizing governance and service delivery in Borno currently, thereby ensuring value for money; enhance service delivery and significant reduction of opportunities for corruption.

All affected Local Governments: Although Local Government Areas all over the federation except for those that are under the FCT are indirectly control of the state governments. They are lacking in all governance structure and institutions. This has been affecting the governance and development of the LGAs. The reconstruction of the conflict-affected areas should restore civil authorities and it should be based on LGA by LGA to avoid opacity that will continue to gulp money in the name of reconstruction without commensurable output and impact. For instance, the unit of the intervention of the Victims Support Fund (VSF) and even the Borno State Government is LGA by LGA. This model should be adopted. Anti-corruption reforms are needed at this level more than at any other tier of government. This should be pursued going forward. Everything in the LGAs needs to be reconstructed.

North East Development Commission: The North East Commission should learn from the failure/mistakes of the PINE, NEMA and the PCNI. Their failure resulted from failure to pursue anti-corruption reforms in the post-conflict reconstruction for the North East. This impacted the process negatively because the post-conflict reconstruction was and still is susceptible to corruption as shown by Rose-Ackerman (2008) and Harvey (2012). This means that anti-corruption should take the front burner. The Commission must find a way to impress anti-corruption reform on the states of the North East and also deploy the dashboard and

ensure that other actors including federal, state and local government as well as donors and development partners key into it.

Moreover, reconstruction should focus more on reconstruction than humanitarian assistance. This is because while the former can redevelop the region and provide income and economic opportunities for the people, the later tends to impose dependency on the people. The Buhari Plan should be reviewed and anti-corruption measures, reforms and poverty reduction schemes and strategies should be incorporated into it. "I hope, the Commission will learn from the indictments of those organizations that said they were reconstructing the North East and working for the people only to be indicted by probe panels that they were actually stealing from the people," admonished another academic interviewed.

Donors and Development Partners: while it is good to indulge in self-seeking and dealing, it should not be to the extent of jeopardizing the interest of all, especially the people of the North East. Everything should be done to assist Nigeria to overcome the insurgency, corruption and poverty that have afflicted the region, which has produced the current state of unrest. Programmes that enhance the capacity of the people of the North East and government officials should be pursued. Donors and development partners need to do more to push for reforms in the North East. Actions and activities that are inimical to the interest of the people of the North East and their well-being should be avoided at all cost to avoid suspicion.

Boko Haram Members and their Supporters: The war has entered the eleventh year. Scores have been killed and displaced. Houses and infrastructure destroyed. The environment devastated. The future of the region is hanging on the balance. Therefore, it is high time members of the sect and its supporters embraced peace.

Civil Society: There is need for more vigilance by the civil society as well as holding all actors accountable in addition to being at the

forefront of the demand for anti-corruption reforms that would make reconstruction more beneficial to the people rather than those charged with it. The failure of the reconstruction to achieve its goals should be blamed squarely on the civil society that refused to play its role as a watchdog that is supposed to be. This has almost robbed the people of the region the huge benefits of reconstruction according to the academic. The civil society needs to wake up to its responsibilities.

All Actors: Actions that will derail or sabotage the reconstruction should be avoided. Man is indeed very selfish by nature. This selfishness should be tempered with sympathy and empathy for the aged, young and the widows who are currently at the mercy of a society that is in disarray and government whose officials are interested in lining their pockets than tendering to the needs of the displaced and the region. The conflict should not be used as a money-spinning venture because lives are involved. Anti-corruption measures that help reinvigorate the fight against the insurgency, service delivery and reconstruction should be collectively developed, pursued and entrenched.

All Government Institutions: Pursuing anti-corruption measures within and without is the way forward to help calibrate the war against insurgency, unemployment, poverty, abuses and corruption that are the major propellants of the war. Corruption, poverty and unemployment have a way of radicalizing the people especially when they understand that their poverty and unemployment are not natural but man-made. This has been radicalizing the people. The reconstruction tends to do the same if the amount of money deployed in the North East for reconstruction cannot solve the problem of poverty and unemployment. This will lead to more radicalization and availability of recruits that will find their ways to the waiting arms of Boko Haram, thereby increasing their fighting force and strength.

All Anti-corruption Agencies: Nigeria's anti-corruption strategy

and the framework should be changed from being reactive to proactive as a way of making corruption very difficult by proposing and entrenching of measures and practices that strangulate corruption within institutions before they are committed. This is the only way to dissuade people from even committing it in the first place let alone escaping justice as it has been happening. The plugging of loopholes and leakages should not just stop at the level of revenue generation but also should be extended to the procurement process and contract award to proceed from there. Security votes should be declared illegal and abuse of office. 'I agree; we need to do more' according to the staff of one of the anti-corruption bodies in Nigeria interviewed.

Conclusion

The greatest threat to every human endeavour in the world and anything positive that will benefit man is corruption. Corruption has been found to have deprived many benefits the same way it is denying the people of the North East the benefits of reconstruction and rebuilding as a result of the selfish interest of the few that are dominating the process. The way forward requires diverse interrelated actions from all actors and stakeholders. These actions have the value potential to contributing towards reforming of the reconstruction and rebuilding process as suggested in the recommendations. Actions required include anti-corruption reforms and restoration of the reconstruction process to what it is, which is the replacing of what has been lost or building new ones, creation of employment opportunities and income-generating activities, winning of hearts and minds of the affected population to achieve the objective complementing the effort of the military to win the war, by ensuring peace and stability necessary for the overall development of the region.

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CHAPTER THREE

THE IMPACT OF CORRUPTION ON THE COUNTER-INSURGENCY EFFORTS IN NORTH-EAST NIGERIA

By

Hassana Ibrahim Waziri

Abstract

The Boko Haram insurgency is the deadliest insecurity challenge Nigeria is fighting since 2009, despite numerous efforts to counter it. The dimension and dynamics of corruption have thwarted efforts towards ending the crisis. This study relied on document materials and key informant interviews from Borno, Adamawa and Yobe States, the most affected in the North East region, to analyse data from security agents, state and non-state actors, civil society organization, IDPs, CJTF, and host community members to collect data. The study revealed that despite various counter-insurgency efforts categorized as military and non-military phase, local, non-state and state actors, regional and international interventions, the insurgents still implicit massive and dastardly attacks on civilians in the study areas. The study identified endemic corruption in all the phases of the counter-insurgency operation, the impact of which manifests in the resurgence of attacks, destruction, the inability of the military to protect people's lives and property and to address critical humanitarian issues to end the insurgency. Corruption, lack of commitment of actors exposed and exacerbated fundamental weaknesses and ill-preparedness of Nigeria, particularly the security architecture in-terms of equipment, troop training and motivation. This has frustrated, demoralized and fatigued security

forces, reduced and under-utilized the capacity of the military and other security agents to effectively confront the insurgents. Corruption has dwarfed the provision of quantity and quality of social services and livelihood support to affected communities, increased people's vulnerability, and eroded trust in the counter-insurgency process and encouraged connivance with the insurgents. This gave the insurgents an edge over all counter-insurgency efforts and overstretched the ability of security forces to end the insurgency. The study recommended the need for transparency, investigation and prosecution of all corrupt cases, address issues of motivation, payments of entitlement of security operatives, effective use of intelligence and involvement of police, as well as integrated crisis management approach to explore other means for ending the crisis.

Introduction

The deeply-rooted nature of corruption in Nigeria remains one of the greatest challenges that has prevented effective delivery and achievement of all intended objectives in both public and private spheres of governance. Corruption in Nigeria is rampant and endemic, and all efforts towards addressing the problems have continued to fail woefully. Conflict in Nigeria has also become the bane of virtually all the regions. The discourses on the link between conflict and corruption have equally dominated every corner in Nigeria, and the relationship seems to wax stronger “despite efforts to respond to the causalities and consequences of conflict” as pointed out by Kwaja (2019, p.1). One of the most devastating violent conflicts Nigeria is currently battling is the Boko Haram insurgency that has continued to claim lives and property. Varying figures exist on the number of lives lost and property destroyed in the North East. This is as a result of under reportage of the insurgency and in some instances sensational report as well as lack of coordinated efforts in obtaining accurate figures. According to UN OCHA in its 2020 World Report, “an estimated 27,000 lives

were lost since 2009” (www.hrw.org), while figures by Dele and Kankara (2019, p. 2) estimated about 100,000 lives lost. Magrin and Montclos (2018, p.16) stressed that “a key challenge in the development field is the reliability of statistics emanating from various actors, where data or statistics produced by aid and emergency players are often disparate, sparse and sporadic in time and space”. It is, however, certain that the figures run into thousands and millions in terms of lives and property lost respectively, although different bodies give varying figures as estimates.

The response to quell the Boko Haram insurgency since its emergence in 2009 and particularly from 2012 to 2014 by the then PDP government was adjudged to be weak and abysmal. Since the change in the government headed by Retired General Muhammadu Buhari in 2015, the counter-insurgency efforts carried out ensured the recapture of 20 local government areas out of 27 in Borno, 12 out of 17 in Yobe State, and seven out of 21 heavily affected in Adamawa States that were hitherto under the control of the insurgents, yet most IDPs in reclaimed LGAs are yet to return, particularly in Borno State.

However, the relative peace gained since 2017 gradually began to relapse with the rising resurgence of attacks, killings and destructions of property as well as kidnapping for ransom by the 2 prominent Shekau and ISWAP factions since their split in 2016. The recent public outcry, for the removal of all the Service Chiefs who are at the helm of the counter-insurgency efforts and overall security of Nigeria, is due to their inability to curb rising insecurity, borne out of perceived corrupt practices by the Nigerian army and other stakeholders in affected regions and especially in the North East region. A recent example is a public outburst by the Executive Governor of Borno State, Professor Babagana Umara Zulum when he encountered military personnel extorting money from motorists who do not have national identity cards along Maiduguri-Damaturu road. The video of the incidence went viral on social

media, thereby generating lots of concern. Although the Chief of Army Staff and the President have repeatedly claimed the decimation and defeat of Boko Haram insurgents, and also the position of capability and equipment to deal with the Boko Haram insurgents, these claims remain futile since dastardly and massive attacks still occur especially in Konduga, Chibok, Damboa, Gwoza LGA's in Borno, Tarmuwa in Yobe and Madagali in Adamawa states. It is because of this that the study focused on how corruption has impacted on the counter-insurgency efforts, through a conceptual review.

Context

The North East region of Nigeria which comprise six states of Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe has been in the limelight beyond the shores of Nigeria due to the Boko Haram terrorist activities. The three states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe (BAY) are the worst hit in magnitude and spread of sheer disruption, destruction and devastation, thus constitute the focus of this study, even though, Borno State remains the most critical, as the main theatre of operation for and against the insurgency. The population of the North East is about 18,972,965 according to the 2006 Census, although displacements and migration of people as a result of various factors including the Boko Haram crisis has altered this figure. “The population of Maiduguri was estimated to be 0.9 million according to the 2006 Census, with potential additional 1.5 million people by 2017” (Magrin and Montclos, 2018, p. 34), likely due to the cross-migration from within and without the region as refugees or internally displaced population. The major means of livelihood of the people is agriculture, livestock farming, fishery, and trading with other parts of the country and cross border commerce with countries from the Sahel up to Libya.

Majority of the people live in rural areas with the limited provision and access to basic infrastructural needs. Before the Boko Haram

insurgency, “the North East region had the lowest human development indicators in the country occasioned by governance neglect, resulting to dire conditions of infrastructural decay, illiteracy, poverty, ethno-religious conflicts and rising insecurity” (Brechenmacher, 2019, p.10). This condition is worsened by the state of the porous border with neighbouring countries of Chad, Cameroun, the Niger Republic where activities of smugglers enable cross-border contraband/proliferation of small arms and weapons, human trafficking, kidnapping, assassination and general criminality. “Rapid desertification, excessive heat and drought caused by the negative impact of climate change in the North East region” (Bonaventure and Kingsley, 2017, p.1) has also encouraged migration of people and livestock, and further plunged the people to hardships and deteriorating live conditions. The dire condition of life in the North East has equally been attributed to the negative effects of the receding Lake Chad river basin and desert encroachment which also accelerated the creation of a perfect environment for youth restiveness and violent conflicts over dwindling resources. The inability to meet up and address people's concerns, needs and grievances from this region by the government increased loss of confidence in leadership. Thus, ”preaching conducted by Mohammed Yusuf (the late Boko Haram leader) against exploitation and corruption among Muslim ruling class and government officials, fitted perfectly to the frustrations of unemployed youth, who lack basic public services, and opportunities, thus encouraged youth to join the Boko Haram insurgency (Magrin and Montclos, 2018, p.131).

Political and religious conflicts are not new to the region either, as records of electoral and religious violence speak in volumes. The 2007 and 2011 elections violence and the Maitatsine religious crisis of the 1980s are ready examples. The experiences from this violence must have heightened the emergence of thugs and non-state actor's armed groups often used by politicians in the North East. “The feeling of injustice, neglect and marginalization among the people

of this region compared to southern parts of the country in terms of basic infrastructure like education, health, potable water, roads, electricity and lack of employment opportunities is a popular narrative for massive enrolment of youth into Boko Haram group” (ibid). Therefore, a combination of political and socio-economic factors played a major role in increasing the insecurity architecture and violent prone region in Nigeria.

Despite numerous counter-insurgency efforts from various stakeholders, the Boko Haram terrorists have continued their destructions. The gradual resurgence of the Boko Haram violence from 2018 into 2020 calls for scrutiny of the strategies employed and more importantly, obstacles that seem to taunt the gains of the counter-insurgency efforts. Although corruption in Nigeria is said to date back to the oil boom era, its dynamics has continued with impunity and unabated. Corruption in the counter-insurgency efforts today is no different. “Various flaws have marred the counter-insurgency efforts apart from lack of trained personnel, appropriate equipment and technology; there are also flaws in the general preparedness by the Nigerian government to quell the relatively small group of rebels in the fight against the insurgency (Mosindi, 2018, p. 252). The impact of corruption on the counter-insurgency efforts is manifest in not only the resurgence of attacks and destruction but also in the insensitivity of stakeholders to address critical issues necessary to end the insurgency. This is evident by the inability of the state apparatus, which seem weakened to contain more insecurity challenges all over the country. Major concerns at the early stage of the insurgency were mainly issues around lack of political will due to doubt and/or denial of the existence of Boko Haram, appropriate military equipment as echoed by the then Governor Kashim Shettima, and extortion by soldiers.

Methodology

The data collected for this research was mainly from a desk review of materials from textbooks, scholarly publications, newspapers and web articles, which complement the information gathered. Key informant interviews (KII) were also conducted with security agents, community members, the Internally Displaced Persons from camps and host communities, local civil society organizations who partner with international non-governmental organizations, host community members, traditional and opinion leaders, including males, females, youth and the elderly. Three states were selected for the research namely: Borno, Adamawa and Yobe (BAY) States, which are the most affected. Respondents were largely selected from Maiduguri, Borno State due to its position as the epicentre of the insurgency. The KII of Borno and Adamawa States were carried out face-to-face with respondents while that of Yobe were via telephone as a result of heightened attacks experienced along Maiduguri –Damaturu road as at the time of the study. Two research assistants and one note-taker were recruited for the fieldwork in Borno State, while one assistant was utilized in Adamawa State. The researcher also relied on personal experience and observations as a resident in Borno State since 1986.

Conceptual Issues

The issue of corruption in Nigeria has dominated public discourses due to the rampant and high level of impunity involved. Corruption has permeated every stratum of Nigeria's collective existence and continued to exhibit many phases and dimensions of its destructive consequences. Corruption in Nigeria remains an immense concern to all and “it is at the core of the crisis of governance, stable democracy, rule of law, development and welfare of citizens (Ibeanu and Egwu: 2007, p.181). Although corruption connotes different meaning to different authors, the consequence of corruption in all its ramifications is the destruction of society at

large. “Embezzlement, stealing and extortion are the commonly perceived forms of corruption” (Joda, 2011, p.13). However, in a general sense, corruption is also about exploitation where Aminu (as cited in Myrdal, 1968, p. 7) defined corruption “to include all forms of improper or selfish exercise of power and influence attached to a public office or special official position”, (Nye, 1967, p.7) “as material enrichment or opportunities through means other than those established by rules and procedures of an office”, and (Heinecke, 1982, p. 7) “as a forced diversion into private hands of the material wealth intended for the effective achievement of socially desirable ends resulting in deprivation and impoverishment of the many to the advantage of the few”. These definitions perfectly fit into the Nigerian context. The words corruption and insecurity have forcefully become synonyms among Nigerians due to the strong link established between them. The fight against the Boko Haram insecurity and corruption, in particular, formed the central campaign issues that ousted the Jonathan administration in 2015 and ushered in the current Buhari administration. Thus, the counter-insurgency efforts of the Buhari administration was expected to end the decade-long insurgency by now.

Counter-insurgency (COIN) is defined by the United States as “comprehensive civilian and military efforts taken to simultaneously defeat and contain insurgency and address its root causes” (<https://en.m.wikipedia.org>). Similarly, counter-terrorism connotes “the various forms of response to pre-empt, prevent and eliminate terrorism using intelligence, counter-intelligence, as well as military and paramilitary forces to tackle all forms of terrorism” (Imobighe and Eguavoen, 2006, p.9). Thus, various governments invariably utilize varying strategies to deal with insurgencies. (Staniland, 2012, p.244) stated that “political elites equipped with limited resources engage in a cost-benefit analysis to determine what they believe constitutes acceptable outcome, this calculus often than not results in policies that focuses more on mitigating the harm caused by an insurgency than achieving a decisive defeat”.

All insurgencies are unique based on their local peculiarities, as such; no lesson can be universally applied because the circumstances of each conflict are different. The principle of successful counter-insurgency according to classical counter-insurgency theorist, Robert Thompson include clear political aim, act upon the law and use of minimum force, civil-military cooperation, priority on political measures and intelligence. The principle also seeks accommodation for participation in the government of the country with the reconcilable armed opposition. It provides public goods to ensure loyalty and prevent support for insurgent groups. To Beumer (2014) “counter-insurgency is simply a government's efforts meant to prevent the insurgents from succeeding”. The big question here is, has the efforts employed succeeded in preventing the insurgency?

Counter-insurgency Efforts in North-East Nigeria

Conflict dynamics over space and time depend on the nature of the insurgency such State is facing, its local peculiarities, capacity, level of technological advancement, the will power and commitment of the political leadership to end the conflict. Despite variation in counter-insurgency approaches adopted globally, there is an area of semblance in the operational strategy irrespective of their nomenclature. The counter-insurgency efforts in North-East Nigeria could therefore be categorised under; militarization phase, local non-state and state actors, regional and international co-operation and linkages interventions.

The basic purpose of the state is the maintenance of internal security and territorial integrity as well as the provision of the common good for its citizens. Thus with the emergence of the Boko Haram insurgency, the first response from the government was swift action to quell the uprising which resulted in the establishment of temporary peace, law and order across the early major flashpoints in the North East. With the regrouping and

resurgence of the Boko Haram insurgents taking over communities and hoisting of flags, the Federal government made several but frantic efforts of both non-military and military approaches.

The key ones identified by Agbor and Abdullahi (2017, p.162) included but not limited to the establishment of the National Focal Points on Terrorism (NFPT), the National Committee on Security in the North East, the passage of the Anti –Terrorism Prevention Act 2011 and the constitution of the Presidential Committee on Security under the chairmanship of Ambassador Usman Ghaji Galtimari. At the individual level, the mediation efforts of former Nigeria's President Olusegun Obasanjo when he paid a condolence visit to the family of the late Boko Haram leader, Muhammad Yusuf in Maiduguri in 2013 to broker peace is notable.

The first military approach to counter-insurgency was the demolition of the *Markas* (the Boko Haram centre) and deployment of armed forces to the North East. Then a state of emergency was declared in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa States on the 14th of May 2013. As the strength of the insurgents grew, the Federal government launched Operation Restore Order 1, 2 and 3, from 2011 to 2013 (ibid, 2017, p.161), a military coded operations that culminated in the creation of the Joint Task Force (JTF) comprising of all the components of the Nigerian security architecture; the Police, Army, Air force, Navy, Nigeria Security and the Civil Defence Corps, the Nigerian Customs Services and the Immigration Services to restore law and order in the North East particularly in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe were also achieved. To fulfil his campaign promises, President Buhari appointed new Service Chiefs. Lieutenant General T. Y. Buratai, who was then the Commander of the Multinational Joint Taskforce was appointed as the Chief of Army Staff (COAS) in 2015. The Theatre of operation moved to Maiduguri from Abuja to tackle the insurgency head-on. The COAS changed the early operation *Zaman Lafiya* (living in peace) to *Zaman Lafiya Dole* (living in peace is mandatory) to

enhance the Decimation, Domination and Occupation strategy adopted by the COAS to “give credence to political aims over military goals (ibid: 2017. p.176).

Response by the military was generally considered to be high-handed, especially to male youth, suspected to be Boko Haram members. Invariably, male youth became the target of arbitrary arrests and detention by the military, while Boko Haram forced the youth to support them or be killed, sometimes extending such threats to relatives. This forced the youths to form a vigilante group called '*Yan Gora*' to save themselves from suspicion by the army and death sentence by Boko Haram.

The Civilian Joint Taskforce (CJTF), a local vigilante group emerged to join local hunters to assist the military when horrific violence became unbearable for people in Borno State, and later in other affected states. The CJTF included women who played significant roles and also protected males during the early violent atrocities. The CJTF assisted the military in identification for arrest, Boko Haram members, which eventually drove out the insurgents to remote communities resulting in the takeover of some LGAs in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe States. The CJTF received the support of elders and various state governments, for their contributions towards the counter-insurgency. The Borno State government trained and placed some of them on its payroll under the BOYES i.e. Borno Youth Empowerment Scheme (www.thenewhumanitarian.org).

State, non-state actors and philanthropists like the Dangote Foundation also embarked on massive socio-economic recovery, reconstruction, rehabilitation and peace building efforts, to support the transition to peace and stabilization, in the socio-economic sphere; education, the building of mega schools, houses, health facilities, roads and mopping of IEDs etc. Setting up and maintenance of the Internally Displaced Peoples camps, distribution of basic needs materials and numerous humanitarian

efforts are still on-going in all of the most affected states.

The complexity and conflict dynamics on the causes of the Boko Haram insurgency “revolves around environmental issues, poverty, Islam, community allegiance, poor governance and corruption”, (Magrin and Montclos, 2018, p.129), which cut across the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin because of the porosity of national boundaries and similarities in socio-cultural identities. Thus successful counter-insurgency operation required the affected countries of Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon to pull together their human and material resources to end the insurgency. High-level discussions, several bilateral and multilateral agreements were therefore reached by the affected countries to end the insurgency. This ensured further strengthening of the existing Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) which comprised military contingents from Nigeria, Benin, Chad, Cameroun and Niger to include counter-terrorism operations in 2012 (Waziri: 2017:281). Both military and non-military approaches were adopted by the United Nations, European Union, and the African Union to pass various legislations to support and reinforce existing conventions against terrorism. Notable among the international donors are the UN specialised agencies: UNICEF, UNDP, WHO and the British Council. International efforts according to Brechenmacher (2019, p.29) was categorized under (i) programmes to strengthen local conflict prevention and mitigation system (ii) restore local governance and basic services (iii) foster social cohesion and reintegration of former combatants.

More stabilization measures were enabled at international level since improved security in 2017 where key donors set up the Oslo Consultative Group on prevention and stabilization in the Lake Chad. Others were the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the African Union Commission, a strategy for regional stabilisation, resilience and recovery as well as bottom-up stabilization programme to address the drivers of conflict (ibid). The efforts by the Nigerian government include the Presidential Committee on

North-East Initiative (PCNI) set up to coordinate and advise all humanitarian interventions, transformational and development efforts, and the newly inaugurated (8th May 2019) coordination body, the North East Development Commission (NEDC). “About 36 leading international Non-Government Organizations are committed to alleviating the humanitarian crisis in the North East (Okafor, 2018). The extent and impact of these counter-insurgency efforts should have ended the insurgency and revitalized the region as a whole. However, the cankerworm of corruption has eaten too deep into the fabric of all efforts, leaving the masses at the mercy of the insurgents.

Corruption Dynamics and Dimension in the Counter-insurgency Operation

Understanding corruption dynamics and pattern existing within the main component of counter-insurgency operation constitutes key elements of discussion on the impact of corruption in the counter-insurgency operation in North-East Nigeria. The identified phase of counter-insurgency operation often has peculiar corruption dynamics and sometimes an overlapping pattern of corruption. The early military response to the threats of Boko Haram has been infested with corrupt practices which impinged negatively on the counter-insurgency efforts. One of the high profile corrupt practices which though manifested lately is the popular Dasuki-gate in which the former National Security Adviser (NSA) Sambo Dasuki was charged by the EFCC on the alleged diversion of 2.2 billion dollars meant for the procurement of arms to enhance the Nigerian troops' firepower to face one of the most deadly local, but highly determined and ruthless terrorists. Disturbing is the revelation that such official sleaze had ministerial and presidential authorization for the diversion and sharing of the fund as revealed by Mosindi (2018, p.252): “Money that was allocated and approved to train and equip the Nigeria troops was diverted for other purposes that were unrelated to security matters

while the Troops put their lives on the line on behalf of the country”.

The most basic counter-insurgency efforts thus began on the platform of corrupt budgetary implementation. Corruption has been sustained especially among soldiers who had engaged in extortions as military top brass divert, mismanage and embezzle soldiers' allowances. The alleged disappearance of military and operation equipment in a questionable circumstance, some of which were recently recovered by the Special Anti-robbery Squad (SARs) and the Rapid Respond Squad (RRS) from the insurgents along Damaturu-Maiduguri road in January 2020, further exposed corruption allegations in the fight against the terror group, which the military failed to effectively defend. Similarly, active participation of the military in economic activities like building of hotels and hospitality centres, land grabbing, cattle and livestock keeping, fish and vegetable trading such as onions and pepper as well as *Keke (tricycle)* transportation, are well-known commercial activities the military engaged in. A Keke rider in Maiduguri said “I don't truly believe they want this to end. They are profiting too much from it, there is a lot of money still to be made (*Keke tricycle rider*) in the Conciliation Resources and Kukah Center Policy Paper (2018, p.10). In some communities, the locals were completely banned from participating in these economic activities which were monopolized by the soldiers and their agents.

The open extortion from motorists and commuters by the security operatives caught red-handed by the Executive Governor of Borno State, Professor Babagana Umara Zulum in January 2020, has been happening since when the roadblocks were mounted as part of strategies of curbing activities of the insurgents. There is also sustained outcry in social media by soldiers in the frontline about nepotism in the redeployment process and poor rotation of troops, “some Soldiers have spent seven years without redeployment, which frustrates and fatigues the soldiers, this also gives the upper hand to the insurgents” (KII, Army Colonel, Field operative, 2020).

The pervasive corruption among military top brass and other ranks encouraged the resurgence of the dastardly violence in states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe, leading to widespread public condemnation and repeated calls for the resignation of all the Service Chiefs, as corruption in the military is an open secret.

Corroborating the level of corruption in the local content of the counter-insurgency, Magrin and Montclos (2018, p. 142-143) revealed that “counter-terrorism, military secrecy and impunity have exacerbated corruption in North-East Nigeria”, where embezzlement and gross abuse of state fund override the provision of Fiscal Responsibility Act, as a mechanism for entrenching probity and accountability in the conduct of state business including counter-insurgency operations”. Thus “security vote” serves as a conduit pipe to siphon money by state officials under the guise of discretionary spending to respond quickly to insecurity”. Such corrupt practices by government officials are openly discussed among ordinary citizens. Reference is often made to outrageous properties owned by corrupt officials such as landed properties, houses, petroleum stations, luxury cars among others.

The CJTF, some of who bear arms, are equally accused of various corrupt practices from the on-set, ranging from systematic sexual abuse, diversion of humanitarian materials, assault, torture and killing of perceived Boko Haram (thenewhumanitarian.org: 2013). Some of the CJTF members are found to be informants and suppliers of the insurgents. “Believe me some CJTF members collaborate to sell recharge cards, food supplies, fuel, pure water and drugs to the insurgents (KII, CJTF, 2020). Of recent, about 10.5 tons of Cannabis was impounded in GRA, on 8th February 2020 reported during the local NTA News in Maiduguri, which maintains and sustains the stamina to commit atrocities by the insurgents. In fact, “concerns regarding the continued existence and actions of the CJTF has raised issues of legality, control, conduct and the future of the members at the end of the insurgency” (Kazir, 2017). Similarly, corruption found especially

among other ranks in the military also exists among the CJTF. A former CJTF leader in Borno State confirmed his resignation due to the level of impunity in corrupt practices, which he affirmed “cannot allow me to continue as a CJTF leader” (KII, former CJTF Leader, 2020).

Corruption in the humanitarian intervention also exists among actors who often key into Federal Government counter-insurgency operations in critical needs, social services and livelihood. The process of recruitment of personnel for the distribution of materials, collection of data as well as demographic profiling of vulnerable members of the internally displaced persons is laced with corrupt practices. Recruitment of staff into NGOs largely depends on family and social ties, cronyism and connection as merit and technical competence are secondary considerations. Bastardization in the recruitment process is hinged on perceived material gains, from corruption and better pay packages (KII, Host community member, 2020).

Equally, there is connivance to divert humanitarian intervention forms among government officials, local partners, traditional leaders, security agents and CJTF responsible for such distribution. This could have influenced actions by the Borno State Governor to personally partake in the distribution of relief materials in various communities, to bypass corrupt officials. IDPs and host community members are defrauded to buy food (fake) ration tickets allegedly provided by the World Food Programme (WFP). “My family bought 3 WFP tickets at the total cost of 18,000 Naira to collect food worth 47,500 each (N142, 500), but we, later on, found out that the community youth, women and local leaders connived to cheat us. They were arrested but released the following day. Up till now nobody has said anything to us” (KII with IDP, host community, 2020). A female IDP showed one of the ration tickets with number SRC Borno 3002277 for IDPs B/S (Borno State) sold to them. A local NGO confirmed that “we sometimes 'grease' the palms of the security agents before they allow us passage to deliver food items to

critical areas, while we see them allow trucks and lorry-loaded with concealed items, which they do not check because they have bribed their ways through” (KII with local CSO:2020).

The chunk of resources budgeted for the intervention also ends up for personal welfare and peculiarly interest, transportation, air ticketing, accommodation, and bogus allowances for officials and security personnel at the detriment of the vulnerable. The rift between the military and some INGOs suspected of aiding and abating the insurgents through logistics, support and intelligence leading to the suspension of Action Against Hunger, UNICEF, and Mercy Corps (29million Naira: \$94,771 found with driver) in Borno and Adamawa (www.africanews.com) is another example of how corruption is ravaging the fight against insurgency in the North East. Equally, the interception of the American made anti-missile resistant trucks by the Nigeria Customs Service in Fofure, Adamawa State, in 2019, without official clearance from the NSA is also clear evidence of corruption ongoing in the fight against the terror group. International counter-insurgency efforts have also admitted and identified rampant corruption, ineffective coordination responses with various federal, state and local elites benefiting from the continuation of the crisis in addition to challenges of overstretched, underscored and corruption-plagued military (Brechenmarcher, 2019, p.7). Consequently, the goodwill by international bodies is abused and misused to the detriment of the vulnerable, displaced and affected citizens.

Impact of Corruption on the Counter-Insurgency Efforts

Critical key elements required for successful counter-insurgency operations globally irrespective of local context is well- equipped, trained and highly motivated military personnel, buttressed by robust intelligence to fight such unconventional warfare. Sadly, “Nigeria seemed ill-prepared for the counter-insurgency operations” (Mosindi, 2019, p.247). The deep-rooted corruption

already established in the military and the theatre of operation have continuously impinged and thwarted the efforts. Mosindi stressed that “the ill-trained, poorly-motivated troops with poor operational equipment and firepower translated into decimal performance by the military and its inability to protect the lives and properties of the innocent civilian populace and winning the fight against the insurgents”. He further argued that the inability to quash the Boko Haram insurgents from the on-set was due to high-level corruption and official sleaze in the defence establishment, sighting the Dasuki-gate saga. This is corroborated by Magrin and Montclos (2018, p. 144) that “the Army benefited handsomely from the increase in arms expenditure marred in secrecy with overcharged contracts”.

The impact of embezzlement of the allowances of the lower cadre of the military also results in demoralization, frustration and reduced capacity to effectively degrade the insurgents. Needless to say, there is also fatigue and feeling of apathy among soldiers due to lack of rotation in deployment processes, which has given the insurgents an edge in resistance and resilience over the army during combat operations. “Some soldiers have not been posted out for up to seven, three, four years since their deployment to remote posts, many have not seen their families for years, how do you expect them to perform maximally” (KII: Army officer, February 2020). Soldiers have also bitterly complained of lack of sufficient firepower and ammunition to effectively pursue the insurgents in their hideouts, including fuel to pursue and return to base after a field operation. This allows the insurgents to re-group and continually attack soft targets.

Poor strategy, robust intelligence and lack of synergy such as the introduction of “super camps” has exposed more remote communities, where insurgents continue to commit mayhem on defenceless population, which has created further internal displacement and population upsurge with consequent pressure on

the skeletal basic socio-economic services provided. The insurgents rely on people's vulnerability especially returnees, IDPs and corrupt officials, to co-opt and obtain information, silent recruiters from remote communities, including cross border recruitment and training, suppliers of goods and services direly needed by the constrained insurgents in their enclave. Insurgents, also establish parallel government along the borders, collect taxes and intensify abductions along the roads for ransom and to replenish their fighters, derail governments' efforts. This has sustained the insurgents, negatively impacted the counter-insurgency efforts, and certainly prolonged the fight. "Terrorism thrives when rule of law becomes weak or nonexistent" (Osakwe, 2017, p. 92).

The intervention component of the counter-insurgency has a lot of funding and material assistance channeled by the federal, state, international and non-governmental organizations, to cushion the effect of the insurgency. To this effect, many view humanitarian interventions as a convenient conveyer belt to prosperity. This mindset has made corruption a norm rather than a misnomer. Therefore illicit diversion, hoarding and sale of humanitarian materials has exacerbated the humanitarian crisis and perpetuated the vicious cycle of desperation to survive, largely because the vulnerable target population are denied access to these intervention materials. The problem of food insecurity, the outbreak of epidemics like cholera, social vices and criminal behaviours, sex for food, prostitution and unplanned pregnancies, sexually-transmitted diseases, illicit drug abuse and sale are rampant in designated camps as well as in host communities.

Similarly, there is also emerging derogatory scourge as a consequence of corruption in the intervention phase of the counter-insurgency operation; emergence and resurgence of gender-based and sexual violence in most IDP camps. Camps officials, security agents including CJTF and aid workers deliberately hoard intervention materials and subsequently used as

a bait to cajole vulnerable female IDPs into sexual relationships or sex for survival. Similarly, the diversion of intervention materials such as foods, drugs and other basic sources of livelihood have also resulted in a worsening humanitarian crisis in IDPs camps and host communities. “That is why many of the so-called rescued Boko Haram wives, have prepared to return, some have even returned to their captors, whom they claimed did not derogate nor maltreated them” (KII: Government official: 2019) for food and other basic human needs requirements. In fact, “frustrations from such corrupt practices have endeared many women to return and provide useful intelligence to the insurgents who use them to change tactics and relaunch further destruction against innocent population” (KII: local CSO, February 2020).

The counter-insurgency efforts have relied too much on the military approach to end the insurgency. This has neglected valid contributions from other security agents, particularly the Police, who decried that the prolonged detention of insurgents as suspects by the army without investigation infringes on their rights and also tent the image of the nation. It is also alleged that the release of suspected insurgents are also done without proper investigation, or handed over to relevant bodies for possible prosecution. “Unfortunately, governments rely too much on the military approach and ask for more resources and power to prosecute a war that has become shapeless, in which the exact identity of the opponent is difficult to discern” (Imobighe, 2006, p.179). Much of the resources often fall under the “security vote” which is not accounted for with transparency. Consequently, insurgents continue to operate with greater intensity, sophistication and audacity as recently witnessed in Auno village (about 24km from Maiduguri, Borno State capital) when, on 9th February 2020, “Boko Haram militants shot and burnt at least 30 motorists, abducted 22 people and burnt 18 vehicles and properties worth millions of naira” as reported by Sawab, Omirin & Olaniyi, (2020, p.1). Such resurgence of attacks has been occurring along the major

linking road to Maiduguri since December 2019 up to March 2020, and yet, threats are still eminent.

The military has concentrated its attack on the Boko Haram foot soldiers according to senior police personnel during an interview. He revealed that “unless and until the top spiritual leadership of the insurgents are dealt with, the fight will still rage on. The spiritual leaders' decisions are sacrosanct, they direct all operations, recovery, and pronounce death sentences, while the pool of commanders identify, recruit and train foot soldiers. Their commanders are professionals with vast knowledge in engineering for repairs and operations, medicine to deal with health issues, geography to read maps and locate weapons, who speak different languages with sound English, Arabic, and local languages for effective communication”. While “*corruptans*” or corruptors actively find greedy and vulnerable security agents, bank officials, court officials, informants, transporters, suppliers and all category of people they need to corrupt to sustain the insurgency, to remain on their payroll or one-off payment” (KII, Police, ACP, January 2020). Thus the military largely fight the foot soldiers “who are forced or indoctrinated to kill, abduct, destroy and carry out all missions directed by the commanders, as victims, some of whom witnessed the death of their loved ones, and now forced to fight. They form the largest number often paraded as repentant or arrested during military operations. This category can hardly provide vital information needed to confront the insurgents since they do not even know the spiritual leaders, high-level commanders nor the strategy of the insurgents” he lamented. “Trained investigators, however, are equipped with intelligence at international, national and local levels which could be utilized to cut-off their major source of support”, the ACP concluded. Failure to actively involve other specialized security agencies is largely due to personal interests, negatively impact on the counter-insurgency efforts.

The introduction of the Operation Safe Corridor, setting up of the

Kainji Courts and de-radicalization handled by the Correctional Services is in the realization of a non-military approach to counter-insurgency. However, there are grievances from community members interviewed on the manner government is treating the so-called repentant terrorists. Even policymakers seem not too comfortable with the approach. Senator Ali Ndume, Borno South, responded on Channels Television regarding the Start-up for repentant terrorists, while victims are left to wallow in their various abode and IDPs camps. He believed that providing repentant insurgents with training, empowerment, and reintegration into communities seem unfair for millions of displaced victims, whose loss cannot be quantified. There seem to be a clear disconnect in this aspect of the counter-insurgency effort between the government and community members, who even if involved, cannot influence any decision.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the counter-insurgency in North-East Nigeria is complex and peculiar to the region. Boko Haram insurgency has inflicted serious disruptions as well as human and material damages. It has affected socio-economic activities, social cohesion and all aspects of lives. The counter-insurgency efforts have relied more on the military approach, which exposed fundamental weakness and ill-preparedness of the Nigerian state and security architecture in-terms of equipment, military training and troop motivation in the counter-insurgency operation. The corruption-laden military operations and personnel, as well as other actors in the counter-insurgency operations, has certainly denied beneficiaries of the counter-insurgency efforts, which has prolonged the fight against the insurgency.

The consequential impact of the lacklustre performance by the armed forces to end the insurgency is largely due to poor operational equipment and ammunition, poor coordination and

synergy among all the security sectors leading to inter-agency rivalry and lack of cooperation. Frustration, demoralization, apathy and fatigue among security forces are due to corruption in terms of lack of motivation; prompt payment of allowances, promotions and deployment of personnel. The impact is under-utilization of military capacity to end the insurgency that has prolonged the period of the crisis. The dismal performance borne out of corruption gives the insurgents an edge in resistance and resilience overall counter-insurgency efforts to end the crisis. The impact has overstretched the ability of security forces to tackle the insurgency and also entrenched corrupt practices among other actors. It has also exposed the impact of corruption and the seeming lack of commitment by the government to deal decisively with an internal rebellion that affected many Nigerians. This has enabled the emergence of various security challenges bedeviling all the regions in Nigeria at this point.

Corruption in the humanitarian intervention component of the counter-insurgency operation has a serious impact on the commitment, trust, quantity and quality of social services and livelihood support which further plunge people to acute desperation that encouraged connivance of some citizens with the insurgents for material gains. Therefore, the impact of corruption on the counter-insurgency efforts remains a daunting challenge to the government and the whole process.

Recommendations

Considering the quantum of the negative impact of corruption on the counter-insurgency efforts in the North East, some strategic recommendations are made.

1. Transparency in the process: There is the need for transparency in all processes of the counter-insurgency efforts in order not to shield any corrupt practice, including

corruption in the anti-corruption agencies. It is imperative to investigate and prosecute all corrupt cases to regain citizens' trust and reduce excesses.

2. Prompt payment of entitlements of security operatives: Prompt payment of remuneration and allowances, deployment processes and manpower motivation is critical to boost morale and ensure maximum performance of security personnel on the frontline. A special welfare package to support wounded personnel, endowment fund and scholarship scheme for the children of fallen heroes for instance is equally recommended.
3. Prompt response to information by community members: There should be a prompt and strategic response to information on suspected cases linked to activities of the terrorists by community members. Majority of communities give intelligence on the activities of the insurgent without corresponding response, and that is discouraging to the community members. This calls for more involvement of the police force to substantiate the intelligence received for a prompt and proactive response.
4. Lastly, an integrated conflict management approach is highly recommended as suggested in various forums, to reduce the strategy of meeting "violence with violence" and explore dialogue and reconciliation for a sustainable end to the crisis.

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CHAPTER FOUR

THE ETHICAL DILEMMA OF THE NIGERIAN MEDIA IN REPORTING THE BOKO HARAM INSURGENCY

By

Tunde Akanni, PhD

Introduction

According to Taylor (1998), the Gulf War recorded the most visible media reckoning in recent time. From the two sides of the coalition and Iraq, journalists and media organizations committed huge efforts to cover the war. In the case of the Nigerian Civil war, Achebe (2012) argued that the elaborate coverage accorded the conflict that raged between 1967 and 1970 was unprecedented as the television relayed bloody scenes to living rooms. But these two extreme cases preceded the inception of the internet with its all-pervading social media. All previous media coverage of conflicts would probably pale into insignificance with the exponential expansion in sources for stories, no matter how gory.

Perhaps, more than any other major conflicts in Nigeria, be it communal, resource-related or ethno-religious or terrorism driven, activities of the rampaging and murderous Boko Haram have received the most robust media coverage. Taking advantage of contemporary communication technology, the dreaded insurgents have managed to let out information in addition to the scanty quantum deriving from the efforts of different journalists and other interested individuals. Other dimensions of the coverage range from routine atrocities of bloody attacks on communities, reactions as well as the official pronouncement of the army as well as ceaseless

abductions which peaked in the mass abduction of the 276 Chibok girls April 14, 2014. The media's coverage of the Chibok girls' abduction has duly extended to the reportage of the resultant campaign known as Bring Back Our Girls, #BBOG.

More significant perhaps than the afore-stated dimensions of the Boko Haram insurgency induced incidents were the activities of the military including issues of excesses and abuse of office by senior officers. Whereas the coverage of general issues and those of victims has hardly attracted any criticism or posed a daunting challenge, reporting the activities or deficiencies of the army has not been the same. This hit a head in December 2016, when the Nigerian Army wrote to *Premium Times* to officially complain against its reports on the army and the chief of army staff, Lt. Gen. T. Y. Buratai. The Army argued that certain reports of *Premium Times* were not only untrue but betrayed lack of patriotism on the part of the medium and therefore capable of disincentivising the troops. It further stated that it took exception to the medium's reports on illegal acquisition of property by the Lt. Gen Buratai claiming the Code of Conduct Bureau had cleared him. In the same communication, it demanded an apology from the publishers of *Premium Times* giving the deadline of December 1, 2016. Apparently, after a long wait without any compliance from *Premium Times*, the Nigerian Army mobilized the police to intervene. On January 19, 2017, suspected security operatives swooped on the premises of the news organization and arrested the publisher, Dapo Olorunyomi as well as the judicial correspondent, Evelyn Okakwu. Rather than apologise after that harassment, the editor-in-chief of *Premium Times*, Musikilu Mojeed insisted that they would prefer to lose their liberties to retracting the truth. The *Premium Times* lawyer, Jiti Ogunye, further described it as an unfounded and grievous offensive against the organization and the concerned persons. He condemned the raid as an unfashionable Gestapo style that could only characterize military regime. The Nigerian Army neither went to court nor took any other action such as reporting the medium to any regulatory authority since then.

This offensive against the *Premium Times* by the Army was as needless as disappointing given the centrality and the pride of place of media and communication in the nine tracks of multi-track diplomacy. Propounded by Diamond, McDonald and McDonald multi-track diplomacy is a conceptual way to view the process of international peacemaking as a living system. It is a combination of connected activities, individuals and institutions as well as communities that function together for the sake of peace. It began as a two-element affair namely, government official diplomacy, on one hand, complemented by a cluster of non-state actors. The additional components, apart from media and communication, particularly key to this study, are religion, activism, education, research, training and philanthropy. The new additions to the initial two have been added due to the unprecedented escalation in the number of intra-state conflicts in the 1990s. Ideally, therefore, the army as an institution of the government on one hand and the media on the other cohabiting within the orbit of multi-track diplomacy should rather seek to smoothen the understanding of each other for the sake of peace in the society.

This study is, therefore, primarily intended to bring out the indispensability of media and communication in conflict situations especially as they are supportive of the mitigation concern of the stakeholders. This study endeavoured to explicate the far-reaching use of the optimal functionality of the nine tracks of diplomacy in conflict situations with special focus on mass media with the ethical accompaniments which, perhaps unknown to institutions like the army, are far more invaluable than legal provisions with whatever punitive measures. Indeed, it has also been argued that it can be daunting and challenging reporting conflicts such as Boko Haram insurgency has generated. More interesting perhaps is the fact that the media have had to do their work although most journalists in the concerned north-eastern part of Nigeria were reporting conflicts for the first time. In another breath, Aliyu (2017) notes that media, as the fourth estate of the realm, are particularly significant

for the reportage of the insurgency complementing the efforts of the government to restore hope for the internally displaced people, IDP, in their bid to return them to their communities.

The choice of the *Premium Times* here was informed by its relentless, if not peerless, coverage of the activities related to Boko Haram insurgency as much as they cover other issues. For instance, this is the only Nigerian news medium outside of the traditional broadcast fold that undertakes live reporting of incidents that it considers worthy like football matches or matters of national importance like the screening of ministers. Founded in 2011 by a team of tested journalists led by multiple award winner Dapo Olorunyomi, the *Premium Times* emerged as a winner of the Pulitzer Prize, as a partner organization with the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, (ICIJ) Not surprisingly, the team had, from the beginning, asserted that:

We are of the view that in terms of its formalistic processes, and its philosophy of content, the new media that will help spur the challenge of educational revolution, cultural rebirth, and economic development in Nigeria must be reflective, thoughtful, analytic and empathetic without a sense of entitlement and insularity. We have come to fill that lacuna in our press, and therefore raise the bar of journalism in our country.

The profound commitment from this medium as manifested above in the mission of the founders and globally validated by the most renowned journalism prize have combined to strongly recommend it for this study.

The Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria

The British Broadcasting Corporation, BBC, reports on its website that Boko Haram presents a strange strand of Islam which forbids virtually all things associated with the West. These include political

and social activities ranging from voting in elections, dressing style of wearing shirts and trousers to receiving secular education which seems to underlie it all. The rampaging group reckons with Nigeria as a country under the rulership of non-believers, regardless of whether the president professes Islam or some other faiths.

According to Matfessi (2013), what became Boko Haram (literally, Western education is forbidden) today started as Muhajirun Yusufiyah which transformed into Jama'atu Ahlul Sunna Lidda'awati Wal Jihad, meaning "People committed to the propagation of the teachings of Prophet Muhammad and Jihad". The sect often preached that western education is forbidden for Muslims, hence the Hausa appellation, Boko Haram, afterwards. The group became violent under Muhamad Yusuf who assumed its leadership in 2002. Yusuf was arrested and later killed while in police custody during an uprising by the group in July 2009. The resultant violence was tumultuous. The group has since extended its violent campaigns beyond the north-eastern state of Borno to the neighbouring ones of Yobe, Adamawa, Taraba, Bauchi, Gombe and Kano in the northwest. As at the last quarter of 2016, the Boko Haram group had killed as many as between 30,000 and 50,000 people. Also, as many as 14 million Nigerians have been directly affected by humanitarian crises with as many as 3,000 women missing.

The Nigerian Army's efforts to repel and defeat Boko Haram also led to the launch of series of operations including "Lafiya Dole" and "Forest Storm" in October 2016 aimed at crushing the relentless offensives of Boko Haram from Borno State southwards. The army's scheming continued and was particularly targeted at the most notorious base of Boko Haram, Sambisa Forest. This was, however, countered by the increased use of suicide bombers against vulnerable communities. While the army attributed the renewed attacks to the support given Boko Haram by certain individuals for unknown, selfish reasons, others argued that the soldiers' morale

was declining because the war had been unduly protracted (cddwestafrica.org).

Notwithstanding the very risky nature of the insurgency, particularly the brutality of the Boko Haram militants, journalists have remained committed to covering or reporting the insurgency. The cost of their dedication to duty has been huge. Pate and Idris (2017) recount that journalists and their organizations have been threatened and attacked while many lose their lives and several others suffer severe and permanent damages to their bodies, even as many of them never had insurance cover. According to the duo, between 2009 and 2015, for instance, the insurgents killed four Nigerian journalists. In October 2011, for instance, the terrorists again killed a cameraman of the government-owned Nigerian Television Authority, NTA, Maiduguri, Borno State of Nigeria, Zakari Isa. The sect had accused Isa of betrayal, alleging that he betrayed them to security officials with information on their activities.

Again in January 2012, Channels Television's cameraman, Enenche Akogwu was caught in the crossfire of the sect's attack on a police station in Kano. He died shortly afterwards following injuries sustained from gunshots. Beyond the killing and maiming of individual journalists, Boko Haram insurgents have equally attacked media establishments in the actualization of their repeated threats. In Abuja, they hauled bombs on *This day* in April 2012. This attack killed at least one staff of the organization in addition to three passersby and the suicide bomber. The intensity and spread of the attacks scared the surviving journalists in Maiduguri. The duo of Haruna Dauda Biu and Bilikisu Babangida, the correspondents of the Voice of America and BBC respectively had to suspend reporting for sometime following series of threats from Boko Haram. The terrorists had repeatedly accused journalists of spying on them to the advantage of state security agents.

Besides the Boko Haram insurgents, journalists were equally

exposed to the harm perpetrated by the state security agencies. The most visible case perhaps was that of two Aljazeera correspondents, Ahmed Idris and Mustafa Ali, who were detained by the military in Maiduguri on March 26, 2015. They were both accused of loitering around areas of military operations and other restricted areas without accreditation and proper clearance. This was promptly denied by Aljazeera stating they had all the relevant documents legitimizing the operations of their reporters. Several other journalists were subjected to a varying degree of harassment and coercion including having their telephone lines bugged in addition to denying them access to scenes of bomb blasts. No less discomfoting is the acclaimed authorised seizure, at different times, of copies of newspapers including *The Nation*, *Vanguard*, *Leadership*, *The Punch*, *The Guardian* and *The Daily Trust* (Pate and Idris, 2017).

Are the Media Keeping Faith?

As earlier noted, although the multiple sources of attacks on journalists undermined their operations, they seemed to have kept the faith. In addition to the fundamental qualities expected of journalists, such as being tenacious, having a good nose for news and being proactive and imaginative, the Nigerian Constitution and some international statutory instruments to which Nigeria subscribes robustly challenge the media to be consistently accountable. At the level of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is the treaty endorsed by all member states. Section 66 of the ECOWAS Treaty (1975) provides that governments of member states, among others, are:

- ❖ ...to maintain within their borders and between one another, freedom of access for professionals of the communication industry and information sources;
- ❖ To facilitate the exchange of information between their press organs;

- ❖ To promote and foster effective dissemination of information within the Community, and
- ❖ To ensure respect for the rights of journalists.

At the national level, Section 22 of Chapter II of the *Constitution of the Federal Republic (as Amended)* states clearly that “the press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in this Chapter and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the Government to the people”.

Beyond the constitutional provision above is the far-reaching conclusion on the importance of the media in conflict. It is the ninth in the multi-track diplomacy system central to the rest of Government, Funding Religion, Peace Activism, Research and Education, Private Citizen, Business as well as Professional Conflict Resolution. Media and Communication, as an entity, interfaces with the rest and largely provide the enablement for them to get activated, especially for purpose of mitigation of conflict. Diamond and McDonald argue that the media or press is however often confronted by some challenges such as the dilemma of being seen to be proactive or being reactive.

It is important to note that the appropriation of the central position to the media in the comity of tracks of diplomacy may not be far from the earlier reckoning it enjoyed back in the 19th century as the fourth estate of the realm. That was when the clergy, the nobility and the commoners constituted the first, the second and the third estates of government respectively. Governments across Europe then used to provide regular space for the press on account of what they considered as their importance. In the United States of America, the Media are referred to as the "Fourth Estate" because access to information is considered vital to democracy for at least two reasons. First, it ensures that citizens make responsible, informed choices rather than acting out of ignorance or

misinformation. Second, information serves a "checking function" by ensuring that elected representatives uphold their oaths of office and carry out the wishes of those who elected them.

Beyond the efforts of individuals such as have given rise to the multi-track diplomacy, UNESCO has also been concerned by the fate of journalists and media organizations in time of violent conflicts. "In today's increasingly changed environment of conflict, more and more journalists find themselves ill-equipped to address the issue which demands so much of their attention and is devastating their community" (Howard, 2009:3).

Inspired by UNESCO, Trainer Howard thus came up with a groundbreaking intervention with additional support from the Institute for Media, Policy, and Civil Society, IMPACS, and the International Media Support. Titled *Conflict Sensitive Journalism: A Handbook* by Ross Howard, the book is a five-section publication intended for those familiar with the subject and the uninitiated alike. It seeks to reinforce the theoretical refinement and practical realization of conflict conscious journalism as a tool for usage by reporters and editors particularly those in conflict-affected locations. The first section of the book is essentially an elaborate explanation of the concept of conflict and allied issues like violence. It presents the various causes of conflicts and makes it clear that not all conflicts are violent.

The second section sub-titled "Journalism and Conflict" builds on the first to show the relationship between the media and conflict. In eleven, well-sequenced parts, it sheds ample light on the power of the media and what he calls journalism's unconscious roles in a conflict. In line with the argument of the proponents of the multi-track diplomacy concept, a fundamental function in these are those of channelling communication, education, confidence building and correcting misperceptions for the parties to the conflict as well as making them human. In what appears to be a very strong endorsement for part of the objectives of this chapter, the media,

according to Howard also help to identify and establish the underlying or bottom-line interest of parties to the conflict such that the information transmitted to the world transcends the interest of the leaders alone. A further endorsement of another objective of this study in the publication is the framing of the conflict. Howard rightly asserts that: "In good journalism, editors and reporters are always looking for a different angle, an alternative view, a new insight which will still attract an audience to the same story. Good journalism can help reframe conflicts for the two sides.". Other related functions included are an emotional outlet, consensus-building, solution-building as well as encouraging a balance of power.

In "Good Journalism, around the world" the third chapter, the book emphasizes on the need for media environment to reflect society's diversity constantly to enable it to earn the confidence of as many segments of the society as possible. It promptly adds that the media are supposed to be reliable and independent. In particular, it focuses on journalism's fundamentals bothering on ethics as well as the ideal role for the media in any democracy. In what could be described as the conclusion section is presented a nine-point checklist for conflict-sensitive reporting complemented with examples. This recommends the publication very highly to practising and trainee journalists alike duly fulfilling its presented objective.

Ethical Foundation for Media's Faith

Most fundamental to conflict-sensitive reporting as being advocated by UNESCO perhaps are professional ethics. Thakurta (2012) identifies three ethical theories relevant to the media, namely, consequentialism, utilitarianism and deontology. When an action is rated or assessed based on its consequences, consequentialism applies. In other words, actions or series of actions bear no value but can only be appraised on account of their

consequences. This theory disregards any related process or means underlying actions but focuses only on the outcome of an action. In this context emerges two perspectives: ethical egoism and ethical altruism. The former implies that actions that may benefit the agent of the action may be said to be ethical. This may work for the operations of neither media establishments nor individual journalists. On the other hand, ethical altruism implies that actions that suit others can be said to be good. This will readily make audiences identify with media establishments and or individual journalists as the case may be.

Indeed, utilitarianism tends to align with the ethical altruism track of the consequentialist variant of ethics. Here, action should have positive consequences for a large number of people. However, a major issue that has been raised with regards to this is the fate of the minority concerning that of the majority. Also, because attitudes, goals and practices change over time, parameters for defining happiness may not remain the same at all times. Deriving from this scenario is the possibility that for many years after a particular event or action, some predicted outcome or consequence may not manifest and may, in the long run, turn out to be harmful rather than beneficial on account of the changing social standards. This utilitarian approach is supportive of cautious conduct in the course of taking professional decisions. This applies readily to decision-making in the newsrooms given the enduring effect that actions carried out there may register on the heterogeneous audiences in the society.

The third ethical theory, deontology, centres on a person's duty as a means to determine appropriate action. This relies heavily on what has come to be better reckoned with as goodwill. It is believed that actions motivated by goodwill have been largely conditioned by the respect for moral law as well as the sense of duty. Thakurta (2012:p.8) recalls that renowned philosopher Kant's categorical imperative on the will to act well out of duty has three important guidelines:

- 1) An agent should be motivated by a principle which he would be happy to see as a universal maxim;
- 2) Always treat people as an end in themselves and not just a means; and
- 3) Act as if you were a lawmaker in the kingdom of 'ends'.

This approach provides a principled foundational premise for the media to serve the public by availing it with impartial information supportive of knowledge and reason leaving judgment to the judiciary.

As is the case with their counterparts in the other parts of the world, Nigerian media players have always been enjoined to ensure that their practice is in line with global best standards. This researcher also believes that such is as envisioned by the ideals of the theories outlined above. In full support of this are all the relevant organizations that make up the Nigerian Press Organisation, NPO, as well as the Nigerian Press Council, NPC, which is a regulatory body. NPO is a three-member umbrella body comprising Nigerian Guild of Editors, NGE, Newspaper Proprietors Association of Nigeria, NPAN as well as the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ). In what has been referred to as the Ilorin Declaration of 1998, the Code of Ethics for Nigerian Journalists in its preamble states:

Journalism entails a high degree of public trust. To earn and maintain this trust, it is morally imperative for every journalist and every news medium to observe the highest professional and ethical standards. In the exercise of these duties, a journalist should always have a healthy regard for the public interest. Truth is the cornerstone of journalism and every journalist should strive diligently to ascertain the truth of every event. Conscious of the responsibilities and duties of journalists as purveyors of information, we, Nigerian journalists, give to ourselves this Code of Ethics.

It is the duty of every journalist to observe its provisions.

The 15-point *Code of Ethics* addresses, from the perspective of duty to the society or what could otherwise pass for utilitarianism, issues of editorial independence, accuracy and fairness, privacy, plagiarism, privilege/non-disclosure and decency. The rest issues focused are discrimination, reward and gratification; violence, children and minors; public interest; social responsibility, plagiarism, copyright, press freedom and responsibility as well as access to information. The highpoint of the Code of Ethics in this context is the second item which states:

Accuracy and Fairness

- i. The public has a right to know. Factual, accurate, balanced and fair reporting is the ultimate objective of good journalism and the basis of earning public trust and confidence.
- ii. A journalist should refrain from publishing inaccurate and misleading information. Where such information has been inadvertently published, prompt correction should be made. A journalist must hold the right of reply as a cardinal rule of practice.
- iii. In the course of his duties, a journalist should strive to separate facts from conjecture and comment.

Interestingly, Nigeria has continuously aspired to fulfil possible international standards over time even if haphazardly. This has helped to directly or indirectly give a strong boost to the media's ambition to surmount part of its ethical dilemma. Whereas the *Code of Ethics* for instance merely encourages journalists to use undefined "exceptional methods" to access any information in the interest of the public, the Freedom of Information Act of 2011 has given unprecedented legal backing to this. Among others, the Act provides in Section 3 that public institutions should provide for

public scrutiny a detailed description of their corporate profiles, programmes and functions of each division, lists of all classes of records under their control, and related manuals used in administering the institution's programmes.

It goes on to provide for the right of public access to government organisations' official information of varying classification. These include final opinions including concurring and dissenting ones and orders made in the adjudication of cases, and those covering policies, contracts, reports and studies conducted by the institutions, receipts or expenditure of public or other funds of the institutions.

Unlike reporting a war in which taking sides may not be inevitable and could be obvious such as between the Allied coalition army and the Iraqi Army during the Gulf War of 1991, reporting the Boko Haram insurgency in the north-east of Nigeria does not present such a situation. Indeed, the issues for which the Nigerian army have been critical of the media were not such that present the media as Boko Haram friendly beyond the army's allegation.

Methodology

This descriptive study used the duo of content analysis and in-depth interview as research methods. Regarding data collection, the researcher opted for purposive sampling. For content analysis, therefore, the study focused on all the 2017 publications of the *Premium Times* as the study population. In 2017, the online newspaper was awarded the globally renowned Pulitzer Prize in concert with ICIJ obviously for its outstanding performance since inception in 2011 through 2016. Incidentally, 2016 was the same year it suffered persecution from the police following the story of corruption it published on the Army Chief, Gen. Buratai, which it refused to retract despite threats. Did the *Premium Times* uphold the global distinction it attained afterwards? To what extent has it been doing that especially concerning the coverage of the Boko Haram

insurgency for which it suffered persecution? This study, therefore, chose as the study population all its publications on Boko Haram in the first post-assessment year (for the Pulitzer Prize). More specifically, the study focused on all publications related to Boko Haram in that year.

To gather the data for content analysis, the researcher surfed through to the online archive section of the Premium Times using the keywords “Stories on Boko Haram in 2017”. The archive thus put up on display, a huge quantum of publications across different years once Boko Haram features although with more of those in 2017. Thus began the meticulous process of sifting through the thickets to ascertain those specifically published in 2017 on Boko Haram.

Done with the sifting, the next thing was designing a coding sheet to prepare the extracted data for thorough processing with Version 22 of the Statistical Package for Social Scientists, SPSS. Each of the unit of analysis (article or publication) stands distinct with six categories listed on the coding sheet to make for proper classification or better still categorization. The six categories were carefully arrived at with the hindsight of the objectives of the study and to enable the processing with SPSS. The six categories are date, type of article, source, dateline, newsmaker and focus of the story. As for the type of article category, it has three sub-options namely news story, feature and opinion. Sub-options under source are statement/speech; publication/report/video; interview/public opinion poll; press conference, investigation and news agency.. Dateline sub-options are Maiduguri, Abuja, International and others. The six sub-options under newsmaker/speakers are federal/state government official; police, army; Boko Haram leader, NGOs and others. Finally, the sub-options under the focus of the story are escalating violence; corruption in the army/police; rescue operation; suggestion for resolution/move and others.

The applied software finally generated, with precision, the

frequency of each of the defined categories enabling the researcher to undertake quantitative analysis with illustrative tables and histograms as well as explicit qualitative analyses.

To complement the inferences from the processed selected publications, In-depth Interview was conducted with the editor-in-chief of the *Premium Times* on February 27, 2020. The interview focused on the quality control mechanism at the *Premium Times* especially the organisation's efforts at complying with professional ethics and how that has affected their output concerning their stories on Boko Haram.

Findings

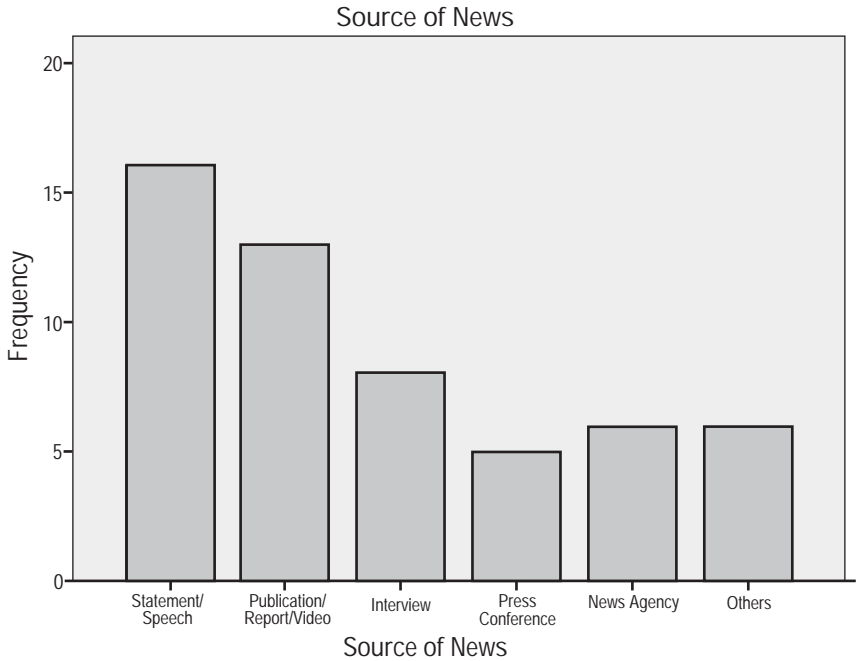
On the whole, a total of 51 articles were published throughout 2017. These were unevenly distributed through the 12 months with November recording the highest followed by August and June. More directly as a response to the first objective of the story regarding the types of articles published by the newspaper during the period in focus, all of them were news stories. Five of such stories, three published in a single day, are listed hereunder:

- 1) Boko Haram: Adamawa community threatens to relocate to Cameroon. Community leaders urge the government to beef up security in the area by Iro Dan Fulani November 23, 2017.
- 2) Hunters kill Boko Haram suspect, recover 154 animals. The army confirmed the incident in Borno by Agency Report November 24, 2017.
- 3) Three Nigerian soldiers killed as Boko Haram attacks army base, Borno village Official The army said six other soldiers were injured as the attackers were repelled by Idris Ibrahim November 26, 2017.
- 4) Boko Haram founders house to be turned to museum

Official“We want to document and archive all that had happened so that our future generation will be able to have first-hand information.” By Agency Report November 26, 2017.

- 5) Soldiers repel Boko Haram attack on Magumeri, Borno“No one can ascertain the level of casualties at this time.” By Agency Report November 26, 2017

As for the sources of the stories, the histogram below tagged Figure 1 presents the picture:



Conspicuously, here in Figure 1 above, 16 stories derived from prepared press statements or pronouncements tower above the rest accounting for 29.6 per cent followed by 13 from other published reports including videos constituting 24.1 per cent and the third, interviews, numbering eight being 14.8 per cent. Speakers or newsmakers in these stories are dominated by the Nigerian Army totalling 27 or 49.1 per cent followed by the federal and state

government officials numbering 10 or 18.2 per cent with the Nigerian Police coming third with six appearances accounting for 10.9 per cent. Meanwhile, thematically speaking, stories reflecting “escalating violence” were dominant numbering 38 or 74.5 per cent with “rescue operations” reports, eight in all, amounting to 15.7 per cent. The datelines for the reports were also dominated by Maiduguri numbering 32 or 62.7 per cent followed by Abuja with 14 or 27.5 per cent.

In-depth Interview

The editor-in-chief of the *Premium Times*, Musikilu Mojeed, told this researcher on February 27, 2020, that his organisation does not subscribe to armchair journalism as it treasures the sanctity of the truth a lot. He explained that the task of reporting terrorism is never a tea party anywhere in the world emphasizing the fact that humanity probably needs peace now more than any other time. According to him, his team always ensured that all loose ends in every story got tightened properly because they could not afford to embarrass themselves. He referred to their recruitment style which often emphasised proper ethical s- orientation for the staff. According to him, that is why “we recruit graduates of different disciplines who can demonstrate the passion for thorough reporting and will readily understand different spheres of life.”

He, however, noted that reporting the activities of the insurgents as well as those of the army and other security operatives has not been quite easy: “We reckon with the sensitivity of all stories but particularly with these insurgency-related ones because Nigeria never experienced anyone as protracted as this. We also do not like to take people's lives for granted” Mojeed added. According to him, it is customary for them to run thorough checks on all exclusive stories to avoid buying dummies and damaging the hard-earned reputation of this organization.

Discussion of Findings

It is worth noting that the data extracted from the archives section of the newspaper substantially helped to substantially address the first research question and to some extent the second. Newspapers are primarily duty-bound to deliver news reports. All of the publications on Boko Haram in the focused year, 2017, were news reports. These reports must have helped citizens and governments alike to plan properly concerning the region where Boko Haram insurgents were operating or may likely strike. This is also a fulfilment of not only a part of the Ilorin Declaration of the NUJ but also a foundational requirement for media professional practice as had been restated by concerned organizations, professionals and scholars including Thakurta (2012).

Indeed, such is the output of the *Premium Times* throughout the period in focus indicative of professionalism that with certain striking features. Whether the Nigerian Army agrees to it or not, the stories helped to give enhanced visibility to their activities with the Nigerian Army accounting for 49.1 percent of the speakers in all of the reports. Yet the reports bore Maiduguri datelines of 62.7 percent despite all the vicissitudes that the poor civilian reporters may have had to endure.

It is further worth noting that global bodies, assorted scholars including media scholars and professionals as well as diplomats have accorded proper reckoning to media's role in the coverage of conflicts over the years. This has manifested in such frames as ethics, conflict-sensitive reporting and multi-track diplomacy. The *Premium Times'* journalists have demonstrated a great deal of reverence, for instance, for ethics as articulated by Thukarta (2012) with obvious consciousness for duty and utilitarianism as well as consequentialism as explained by its editor-in-chief.

However, for the Nigerian army and the *Premium Times*, both sides appear strong on their respective biases implying different

perspectives of duty or patriotism for the other party as explained by the philosopher Kant cited by Thakurta (2012) above. Duty, for either of them, is supposed to mean selfless support for the people a particular society. While journalists owe the society the responsibility to report for people including the army to interpret, army's understanding seems to fall short of the need to cautiously interpret media's reporting for judicious use. Media's invaluableity to the functionality of every society can hardly be estimated. What with the label "fourth estate of the realm?" which, through generations, signals the indomitable presence and importance of the press after the usually legally recognized executive, legislature and judiciary in democratic governance setting. Incidentally, there appears to be a seeming underestimation of the relevance of some segments of the society as duly articulated by the proponents of the multi-track diplomacy by both the Nigerian Army and the *Premium Times*. This is evident in the way they have conducted themselves about the Boko Haram insurgency.

The internet, described as the world's most open technology and technology of freedom, avails online news media like the *Premium Times* the platform to mail their contents to individuals and groups. But they do so, to only those who signal interest by dropping their email addresses. not that they deliberately undertake any such thing as stakeholder mapping that will guarantee that their output gets to the rest eight tracks identified by the proponents of multi-track diplomacy. In other words, a lot of worthy information could get published and go unnoticed by the Nigerian Army, for instance. The Army on the other hand conspicuously displayed ignorance and or indifference to multi-track diplomacy. Otherwise, they should not have threatened the *Premium Times* and gone to the extent of getting the police to raid their office. But that show of force failed woefully as no apology ever came from the *Premium Times*, thus demystifying the supposed might of the army.

Conclusion

Both the media and the army are indispensable to security or safety and development of every organized state. They would therefore do better by complementing each other's efforts. Unfortunately, it has not played out like that in the case of the *Premium Times* and the Nigerian army with the latter, not only disregarding the invaluableity of the former but also constituting serious blockade and threat to it. But these can be resolved to the advantage of not only these two 'conflicting' parties but the society in general.

Recommendations

- 1) Authorities in charge of curricula at training institutions for journalists and the military officers should endeavour to organise refresher courses encompassing conflict-sensitive reporting and multi-track diplomacy details regularly to serving and trainee journalists as well as officers and other operatives of the army and other security agencies.
- 2) Media organizations like the *Premium Times* should endeavour to regularly identify and update the profiles of multi-track diplomacy community in Nigeria to keep them abreast of relevant information for the society's stability and development
- 3) The army and other security agencies need be constantly reminded via refresher programmes and interactive fora that should be institutionalised that the application of force in democracies can only deepen tension as it will only function at complete variance with the popular value of the people.

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CHAPTER FIVE

CORRUPTION AND THE CHALLENGES OF COMBATING KIDNAPPING AND BANDITRY IN NIGERIA'S NORTHWEST SUB-REGION

By

Aminu Hayatu Sanusi

Background

Nigeria has one of the most corrupt defense and security sectors in the world, indeed, this vicious circle of corruption proves so intricate that those agents of the Nigerian state whose responsibility it is to provide and ensure security to the people, remove or deter obstacles to it, are the ones who turn out initiating and abetting the corruption—Mathew Page (2018).

Considering the rise in the spate of criminal activities in geopolitical regions, insecurity in Nigeria has risen sharply in the last few years. In every almost all the states of the country, there is either one kind of crime or the other. Northern Nigeria and indeed the North West sub-region is one of the hottest crime zones now. Varin & Onuoha, (2020). For almost two decades now, various security situation reports Achumba, I. C., Ighomereho, & Akpor-Robaro, (2013) have corroborated on the fact that some states of Northern Nigeria—particularly Zamfara, Kaduna, Niger, Sokoto, Kebbi and Katsina have become hot zones of either kidnapping or banditry with enormous consequences of loss of thousands of lives and property. It has been estimated that about 21 million people living in these states have been exposed to

insecurity from banditry activities (ACAP). These threats have contributed to Nigeria's global ranking as the 7th in 2017, 6th in 2018 and 2019 most insecure nation in the globe (EVM, 2018), (EVM, 2018), (EVM, 2018).

This in addition to the existential threats of organized crimes; Nigeria's borders; climate change; communal and ethno-religious conflicts; pastoralists and farmers conflicts; governance issues; poverty; the proliferation of small arms and light weapons; illegal migration; and economic challenges. Etim, Duke, & Ogbinyi Jr, (2017), Muhammed, Salihu, & Alhassan, (2018), Akuul, & Shaibume, (2018), Nwangwu, & Enyiazu, (2019), Orkar, Shaminja, & Solomon, (2019), Nnam, Ugwuoke, Njemanze, & Akwara, (2020).

These existential threats have been viewed differently in terms of origin, causes, dynamics, or even consequences. Okoli, & Ugwu, (2019) have been made to show the dimension of corruption in the enduring problem. This study as it recognizes these endeavours and their limitations seek to focus on the role that corruption plays in the bid to combat kidnapping and banditry in Nigeria's North-West zone. This is especially because the analysis of corruption in Nigeria generally, Akindele, (2005) has constantly juxtaposed how all sectors of the Nigerian economy and state apparatus are bedevilled by corruption. Mohammed, U. (2013) Ogundiya, (2009). Gire, (1999), Ogbeidi, M. M. (2012), & (Lawal, & Victor, 2012).

The partial origin of the current insecurity bedevilling the North-western region of Nigeria has been alluded to by many) Ayegba, (2015), Adebayo, & Adepoju, (2018) as the interplay between farmers and herders in most of the rural areas of Northern Nigeria is believed to be the origin of banditry in Nigeria (Oshita, 2007). According to ACAP (2020), banditry violence and kidnapping in Nigeria is traceable to farmer/herder conflict in 2011 and intensified between 2017 and 2019, to include, cattle rustling, kidnapping for ransom, sexual violence, and killings. The violence

has affected about 35 out of 92 local government areas in the aforementioned four states. Since then, for almost a decade now, the spread of the phenomenon of existential threats mainly in terms of banditry and kidnapping leading to the loss of tens of thousands of lives and huge sums of money in Nigeria in the Northern part has been a source of concern for the citizenry (Quartz Africa, 2019).

The bandits traversing Benue, Plateau, Niger, Kwara, Nassarawa, Zamfara, Kaduna, Sokoto, Kebbi, and Kano are involved in crimes such as armed robbery and kidnapping (Kuna & Ibrahim 2015) and operate in such areas as Kamuku forest in Kaduna, Falgore forest in Kano, Dansadau forest in Zamfara and Dajin Rugu forest stretching through Kaduna, Katsina, Niger, and Zamfara states as well as other emerging fault lines along Kaduna-Abuja expressway 2020. (ACAP, 2020). Despite several security operations and dialogue efforts, durable peace remains elusive. It should, however, be understood that the bandits in Northern Nigeria have also at some time been involved in kidnapping besides attacking villagers and travellers or doing both at the same time. For kidnapping alone, Between June 2011 and the end of March 2020, at least \$18.34 million has been paid to kidnapers as a ransom (more than NGN 4 billion), (Morgen, 2020).

Specifically, Kidnapping for Ransom (KFR) in Nigeria is primarily credited as starting with the February 2006 kidnapping of oil workers by the Niger Delta militants. It quickly became prevalent in the Niger Delta area among competing militant groups by the Niger Delta militants as a show of protest against environmental degradation. KFR was first heard in Nigeria when expatriates working for multinational companies in the oil fields. Due to the payment of a huge amount of money by the post-2000 a total of 24 incidents, involving 118 hostages were documented in the Niger Delta. From that period kidnapping began to spread to some parts of Southern Nigeria, for example by 2014, 96 cases were recorded in Delta, Rivers 120, Bayelsa 85, Edo 55, Ondo 54 number of cases were recorded.

As security was tightened to prevent expatriates from being kidnapped to avoid diplomatic issues, the militants turned their attention on high net-worth Nigerian individuals leading to the hike of the KPR in 2015. The phenomenon of kidnapping piped down in the Niger Delta after the Amnesty Programme of the late President Umaru Musa Yar'adua, by which time the phenomenon had spread to the South Western and North-Eastern parts of the country (Ojaborotu, & Gilbert, 2010). By that same year 2009, the phenomenon of Boko Haram insurgency became prevalent with severe attacks in various parts of Northern Nigeria leading to the first major incidence of massive kidnapping of schoolgirls by Boko Haram In 2014 in Chibok town of Borno State.

Remarkably, since then, kidnapping became rampant in the entire Northern part of Nigeria especially along the major Kaduna-Abuja expressways where victims are abducted to the bush for ransom. Since then, as insecurity worsens generally in the Northern part of Nigeria, the phenomenon of KFR began to manifest with a steady rise in cases. The sudden uptick in fatalities per attempt coincides with the increase in attacks by bandits on villages especially in Zamfara and Katsina states, a situation which has gradually extended to Kaduna and Niger states (Morgen, 2020). By 2019, there were 489 cases in Borno, Kaduna 117, Zamfara 29, Kogi 59, Katsina 52, number cases, Taraba 47, Adamawa 35 (Morgen, 2020). It can be seen from the trend above that half ago where kidnapping attempts were mostly in the Niger Delta, before slowly spreading to the South-East and upwards the Northern part of Nigeria. In the North, particularly North West, over time there has been an observed radical departure from the targeted kidnapping of wealthy people poor villagers, sometimes kidnapped indiscriminately.

On the other hand, banditry which is in terms of cattle rustling and community raids continue to grow in scale and organization where large bandit groups, as well as kidnappers, operate with increasing audacity spanning the vast northern region. Due to insecurity in the areas, the hitherto vast and peaceful lands and communities have

rapidly turned into ungovernable chaotic spaces while farming, the major economic activities of these areas has been severely disrupted. Banditry, according to scholars and reports, began in the form of conflict between pastoralists and farmers over land has recently developed into rural banditry with a heavy human and economic cost, ranging from the sexual assault of women and girls, attacks on villages, to cattle rustling, amongst others (Lar, 2019).

The existence of largely unregulated and poor government-controlled forest areas in the region, some of which are situated within under-policed has provided a free theatre for the operation of criminality in the sub-region. Although ecological changes and climate-induced pressures have increased conflicts in the agro-pastoral sector, the phenomenon also has linkages to banditry and governance challenges, it is however believed that illicit artisanal gold mining, the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), youth unemployment, inequality and poverty, cattle rustling, indicates weak governance and security capacities across the States are the main driving factors that pose serious security threats to the region (Olaniyan, & Yahaya 2016). All this is in addition to the complex informal security sector in the region, such as armed local vigilante groups popularly known as *Yan Banga* usually established to protect communities against bandits (interview with Ali Kwara on Brothers TV on 26th February 2020).

Similarly, the ongoing reign of bandits in rural communities within northern Nigerian continues to heighten public insecurity. Also, activities of illegal miners competing for the control of gold reserves have served to further intensify the existence and activities of armed groups in the northwest. The death toll, property loss and displacements resulting from the activities of cattle rustlers, and the seemingly intractable conflict over limited resources between farmers and herdsmen, is alarming. By March 2020, more than 210,000 people have been internally displaced. More than 35,000 refugees have crossed communal borders to Maradi in the Niger Republic.

However, looking at the pervasiveness and alarming levels of the menace, many believe that the disparity between the huge annual budgets allocation and disbursements earmarked and the actual attainment of security to effectively curb the menace of kidnapping and banditry lies a growing and expanding role of corruption. Different studies have been conducted on other dimensions of insecurity in Nigeria. Most instances of corruption happen around government officials and security agencies which both have a direct or indirect formal duty to provide security service (Ojo, 2020).

The above assertion has, in practical terms, been explored by this study to establish that there are dynamics, variations, forms, and layers of corruption associated with the processes of addressing banditry and kidnapping in Northern Nigeria. Despite the fact of the existence and activities of such anti-corruption agencies and government policies like the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), Public Complaints Commission (PCC) and Servicom, whistle blowing practices yet, this corruption manifest either as a chain of interconnected or interdependent activities, as independent layers, directly or indirectly linked to the perpetrators are mainly, traditional rulers, security agencies border guards, judiciary, political actors, and legislators, thereby seriously undermining the efforts of addressing the lingering threats of kidnapping and banditry.

Methodology

The method used for data collection in this study is a combination of both primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected by way of Key Informants Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), while the secondary data was generated through desk reviews of some relevant literature from books, journals, published articles and reports. Choice of interviewees is based on knowledge, expertise, experience or participation.

Whereas some of the key informants were selected randomly from among the academia, security experts and agents all over Nigeria, some were purposely selected being natives or inhabitants of the study area (Northwest of Nigeria) who have experienced or participated in the problem under investigation. While Ali Kwara and Auwal Yakubu had granted their consent for the mention, all others had consented to grant the interview on the condition of anonymity due to the sensitive nature of the information they provide. Therefore, all anonymous respondents in this study are referred to by way the generic identity, their places and dates of the interviews.

Findings/Discussion

From data gathered in the course of fieldwork, it has been found that there are different practices of corruption that undermine the quest to address kidnapping and banditry in Nigeria. Although it's a security issue, the acts of corruption that fuel the insecurity menace are not limited to the security sector alone, rather they cut across different sectors of the polity. Among other factors, the source of frustration for the (formerly law-abiding) bandits is the extortion and injustice perpetrated against them by the traditional rulers followed by the judiciary, the security agencies, and political actors.

Traditional Rulers

Any endeavour to trace the genesis of the problem of kidnapping and banditry would not be successful without conducting anatomy of the oppressive role of traditional rulers against their subjects in terms of *bribe-taking*, *extortions*, and *unjust judgments over disputes*. This is aside from the fact that some of these traditional rulers harbour kidnapers and connive with them by providing them with hide-outs or shielding them from arrest (Interview with Doguwa village member on the 27th of January, 2020).

Traditional rulers in persons of emirs (*Sarakuna*) district heads (*Dagatai*), ward heads (*Masu-Unguwanni*), or who are appointed by emirs in persons of the Hakimai, who reside in the rural peripheries of most of Zamfara, Katsina, Sokoto and some part of Kaduna and Niger states, have in various instances been found wanting for frustrating farmers and Fulani herdsmen by way of extortions and collection of bribery. In an FGD held with 6 members of Doguwa community on 6th February 2020, it was reported that many Fulani herdsmen are suffering serious extortion in the hands of these traditional rulers. In some cases, the extortion happens when there is a dispute between the herdsmen and farmers or even among existing bandits involved in raids, rustling or reprisal attacks. Apart from the fact that these rural dwellers in most part the aforementioned states of North-western geopolitical zone are suffering from the effect of poor governance, their only link with the authorities is when these traditional leaders, the police or judiciary exploit them whenever they turn to them for intervention or justice. According to a security expert and scholar in an interview in held in Kano on 12th and 13th February 2020, this eventually pushes them and serves as a harbinger for their involvement in banditry or kidnapping out of frustration. Those who have lost their cattle resort to reprisal attacks to make up for their losses, or, in the alternative, venture into the business of kidnapping to make easy money like their friends, peers or community members.

The different effects of corruption are so pervasive that it has forcibly impoverished countless rural dwellers who have lost properties they hitherto relied upon, without any countering socio-economic development program in the affected areas that are best described as ungoverned spaces or better still ungovernable chaotic peripheries.

Judicial Workers

Generally speaking, judicial systems of developing countries and

particularly African have challenges in several areas: public service delivery, insufficient checks and balances, high levels of corruption and inequality. Additionally, the governance reform programmes often suffer from ineffective coordination, an inability to sustain political will, and a lack of focus on monitoring and evaluation. In Nigeria, since the return of democracy in 1999, there is a growing concern over issues concerning judicial integrity {Maduagwu, (2019), Bartels, & Kramon, (2020), Schoeberlein, (2020)}.

From the literature and interviews conducted, there is evidence that due to both high and low-level corruption as well as deliberate neglect of the rural area courts and compromise of some in the urban areas, there is a general rot leading to the compromise of justice delivery which in turn negatively affects the security of the area-North western Nigeria. This, however, is not to say that there are no exceptional cases, but the general trend from cases and literature, for example, Ojo, & Ojewale, (2019), Ugbudu, (2020), etc and indeed some interviews conducted during this study, there is an obvious contribution of the Nigerian judiciary in the corrupt practices that contribute to undercut the combat against kidnapping in North-western Nigeria. The first meeting of the First Federal Integrity meeting on Strengthening Judicial Integrity and Capacity in Nigeria held in October 2001, at Abuja and replicated in all other states of the federation (Langseth, 2001) and indeed subsequent for example is a response to the growing calls on the fact that the Nigerian judiciary is confronted with a myriad of problems chief among which is corruption concerning matters of Access to justice, Quality of Justice, Public Confidence in the Courts, and questions of efficiency and effectiveness in responding to public complaints about the judicial process all of which have in various times been the issues of concern for the judiciary in Nigeria. In fact from the daily issues that arise, things have only worsened since then (Nwabuzor, 2005), (Salihu, &Gholami, 2018).

In agreement with the U.N Office on Drugs and Crime Vienna, interviews held with a serving Court of Appeal registrar on 21st July.

2019 at Abuja, revealed that especially at lower levels, injustice in the judiciary undermines the country's already anaemic accountability mechanisms inevitably fuels corruption across the spectrum. The law enforcement and the criminal justice system are becoming more compromised than ever before in Nigeria in terms of justice delivery, lawyering judges, court workers and lawyers.

Although fewer people come into contact with judiciary officials than with police officers over the course of the year, when they do, the risk of bribery is considerable: at 33 per cent, the prevalence of bribery in relation to prosecutors is the second highest, closely followed by judges and magistrates, at 31.5 per cent. The experience of corruption in encounters with public officials whose duty it is to uphold the rule of law can lead to the erosion of trust in public authority (U.N 2017), the Nigerian situation is worse.

In various instances, judges and magistrates, court administrators and lawyers have been found to compromise their duty by collecting bribes from clients or their relatives to frustrate case or rule unjustly etc. this apart from the fact that cases are influenced and manipulated in favour of some private interests (Azuh, & Duruji, 2015).

There are different reasons usually advanced by analysts as responsible for corrupt practices in the Nigerian judiciary. In FGD interview held with five registry staff drawn from the Nigeria Judicial Service Commission (NJC), the Court of Appeal & Court of Tribunal on 14th of February, 2020 at Abuja, they opined that in the first place there in general poor working condition which emanates from grave under-financing and poor welfare of the lower courts of the Nigerian judiciary contribute immensely to the corruption that is impeding the delivering justice, especially in customary and the Sharia courts coupled with dilapidated courtroom buildings, rickety furniture, filthy courtroom and compound, non-availability of working materials for courts and lack welfare provisions for the judges-which give room for all kinds

of compromises like the collection of bribes by judges and other court administrators, accepting interventions from politicians, low morale and confidence in the administration of justice all of which interfere with effectiveness and efficiency of justice delivery. This assertion was later confirmed in an interview with the senior administrative officer on 15th February 2020 at Abuja.

At another level, against the provision of section 121, section 62 sub-section 9 of 1999 constitution, which stipulates the independence of the judiciary there is unreasonable laxity of the government, subsequent sabotage by the Judicial Service Commission and indeed other superior stakeholders of the judiciary to release the adequate fund to the lower courts so that they can effectively remain susceptible to interference, manipulation and influence for private interests (Folami & Timothy 2019). This assertion is confirmed by a retired judge of Abuja appeal court and a retired director in the NJC in an interview granted on the 15th and 18th February 2020 respectively at Abuja.

At the lower levels, there are some judges of customary and the Sharia courts in some rural communities who, by jurisdiction, mostly initially handle cases of banditry, do connive with either corrupt lawyers on behalf of the bandits to collect bribes which culminate into to influencing of judgments. Interview with two Assistant Inspectors of Police (ASPs) has confirmed that their interrogation of arrested bandits and kidnappers in more than thirty-two different instances has revealed that there is an expression of dissatisfaction with justice delivery-in terms of bribery collection by lawyers and judicial officers. Manipulation of cases in favour of the highest bidder; unnecessary and illegal charges and other related corrupt practices are what partly pushed them into the crimes they were caught in. In an interview with one ex-kidnapper in Rijana, on 12th February 2020 and an exiled ex-bandit in Dansadau on 21st February 2020, they both corroborated that they resorted to joining their friends in the kidnapping and banditry crime because they could not get justice from the courts against

cattle rustlers who carted away their cows despite several appeals. Although it is not what justice meant, one complain is common among most of the interviewees-that is-of obvious and rampant extortion by the local area judges through some lawyers or even directly, and political influence on judicial processes in courts of both rural and urban areas.

In certain other cases, as Salihu, & Gholami (2018) would confirm, the judges' justice processes have been interfered with either by interdiction or some unofficial "signals" from superior judicial managers on how they should handle certain cases. These corruption practices in the judiciary have perpetually undermined the judicial integrity in such a way that conflicting parties who do not get justice in most cases seek to settle their grievances, dissatisfaction, grudges, suspicion and mistrust on the part of rural dwellers and individuals or groups who out of sheer disappointment and loss of confidence in the judiciary they know of, and too well, get resolve to take laws into their hands because they have nowhere else to go or resort to interpersonal or intergroup clashes, kidnapping or banditry, village/community raids, theft, rape etc., which culminates to insecurity in these rural areas and by extension the larger areas of the North-western sub-region (interview with ex-Dogon Daji bandit at Kano on the 10th of February 2020).

That is to say, institutions such as the judiciary, the police, and other law enforcement agencies that should confront corruption are themselves mired in corruption. In this context, corruption has been normalized and institutionalized. Therefore, as exemplified, these compromising tendencies and circumstances have in various instances undermined the combat against corruption given the continuous flourishing of the kidnapping and banditry crimes thereby contributing to the general insecurity in Northwestern Nigeria.

Security Agents

The internal security agencies in Nigeria being the Nigerian Police Force (NPF), the Nigerian Army (NA), the Nigerian Security Civil Defence Corps (NSDC), the Nigerian Customs Service (NCS), and the Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS). These security agencies whose job is to mainly ensure the security of lives and property of citizens have in different instances being accused of entrenching corruption in the course of discharging their duty either by initiating it, participating in it, or contributing to it. It is certainly not the case that there are no exceptional cases and instances where these agencies act to, discourage, fight or quell corruption attempts, but increasingly there are more cases experienced and recorded of the former against the latter (Abdulrauf, 2020), (Onyia, 2020), (Muheeb, 2020).

In his effort to explain the dilemma of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), Osayande (2008) in what he termed as “organized corruption”, corroborates the findings of this research that the NPF and indeed other internal security agencies' and the Nigerian Army have been variously caught in serious corruption scandals of all sorts.

It is further observed that corruption has deeply damaged the image of police work. Police corruption is encountered every day, and takes various forms from administrative to daily operations: extortion, intimidation, bribery, gifts and hustling for a favour, gratification, falsification of records, stealing, embezzlement, and hoarding, but concluded that the root of this alarming rate of corruption in the state security outfit is traceable to the dismal remuneration package which has been neglected, undermined, and compromised by the joint attitude of the political and administrative class of Nigeria.

For example in a TV Chat with Hajiya Naja'atu Mohammed on a Hausa programme called *Chanji Leka Gidan Kowa* held on 1st August 2018 and 16th February 2018 respectively, she opined that:

This notion is substantiated by the fact for police training, for example, the fee for food is N300, and the hostels where they live do not have adequate windows, toilets and other facilities fit for human habitation. The daily budget for DPOs that are in charge of police stations is N3000, so case reporters are the ones who buy paper and pen with money from their pockets; they have few weapons, poor training and poor salary; no insurance and station conditions are poor to the extent that there are cases whereby policemen sleep alongside cell occupants.

Similarly, in terms of unfair and unjust recruitment based on favouritism, underfunding and siphoning of fund meant for running the affairs of the police have resulted in equipment shortfalls and low morale resulting from an uptick in corruption among security leaders. That is to say, policing culture is weakened by corruption by way of subjecting effective policing to the culture of bribery and extortion (Onyeozili, 2005). Operational cost for security agencies especially the police is truncated as it filters down from the ministry through MDAs, to sectors, area commands, police divisions and staff on duty. The monthly take-home of a DPO, for example, is nowhere closely comparable to the weekly or sometimes even daily gratifications and bribes he collects as bribe from corrupt politicians, government officials at all levels, criminals such as armed robbers, thieves, kidnappers, bandits and other criminals.

Due to the culture of corruption in its various manifestations involving both officers and men of the Nigeria Police, the police have been described as simply dysfunctional (Adebayo, & Ojo, (2009). This is because when the police are involved in this type of criminal behaviour (i.e. corruption), it undermines effective policing as professional work and creates obstacles to effective policing.

In an interview with a security expert in Rigasa, Igabi Local Government Area of Kaduna State, he explained that the civil

defence corps and the police who are responsible for internal security and who have the relevant intelligence needed to engage kidnappers and bandits are not given the weapons that they need for effective operations, leaving them at the mercy of the well-armed criminals. “The federally-controlled Nigeria Police Force (NPF) and the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) are thinly deployed in rural areas and often lack early warning mechanisms”.

In the defence of most rural communities in Nigeria and Northwest, in particular, corruption has been identified as the greatest obstacle destabilizing factor (Page, 2018). The role of security agents rather than undermining the fight against banditry and kidnapping, it ends up somewhat promoting it, due to the various corrupt practices that they engage in.

Ali Kwara (a renown self-appointed combatant of thieves, armed robbers, kidnappers and bandits) in separate interviews with Azurfa TV, Arewanmu TV and Brothers TV, on 12th January 2020, 10th January 2020, and 26th February 2020 respectively, expressed that many police officers both ordinary and administrative cadre have connived with some kidnappers; he went ahead to say that even when under pressure the police arrest these criminals, they release them soon afterwards. He added that locally recruited vigilantes are even the worse because they are the ones who meted injustice on Fulani herdsmen, through unlawful extortions and raping of their wives and children. Ali Kwara further revealed that currently, some of them are the ones who, after engaging in dirty deals with the bandits, kidnappers and the police, transform to become either bandits or kidnappers.

Security agencies (mostly the police and the army) extort passengers on highway and checkpoints as well as collect bribery from motorists and other road commuters have become rampant beyond imagination. The security agencies' inability to subject commuters to checks and scrutiny “has accorded us the hitch-free

weapons freely between points of purchase, distribution and target destinations anywhere” (interview with ex-bandit at Dansadau village on 2nd February 2020). He added that there is usually connivance to keep off for criminal operation; bandits and kidnappers offer higher pay to security agents than their salaries and allowances, thereby causing loyalty to the criminals rather than to the state as they furnish criminals with confidential information to sabotage securitization efforts:

...from time to time our gang leaders mandate us to contribute money called “return” which they bribe security agents that are in charge of our areas of operation or those on duty or assignment; the security agents when they take the bribe do normally allow us to undertake our criminal activities freely. However, if we fail to offer them this so-called “return” they resume hunting us in our homes, market places, or anywhere we may be found; they arrest us and detain us in police station, the condition of our release rather than bail is normally paid to DPO and his boys huge amount of money even more than what we could have earlier bribed them with as “return”.

It has been found in many instances that police on patrol would arrest innocent herders and confiscate their cows by accusing them of rustling. And in other instances, when the police get to trace stolen cows due to information available to them, they end up carting some or all of the recovered cows at the expense of the real owners. In either case, mostly, the result of such frustration on the part of the herders or cattle rustlers would be to end up picking up arms to join the banditry and/or kidnapping business, as the case may be. These activities contribute to sustaining corruption.

Another ex-kidnapper in an interview held with him on 23rd February 2020, admits that:

We do get on regular basis information of targets with their full description and whereabouts, we either pay them off as when they furnish us with information, or they wait until when the operation is successful then we give them their share or percentage based on the prevailing agreement... sometimes our informants are people who live in agents who are aggrieved with their employment conditions or bosses under whom they serve townships, sometimes our fellow community men who do most of their activities and shuttle between the town and our rural communities, and on rare cases some security.

Although this assertion does not indict all security forces, part of the reasons advanced by the internal security agencies, including the military, for involvement in corruption and poor commitment, lack of dedication and sacrifice for the nation, poor condition of service, low work package, compensation, insurance and pensions are not at all worth the risk to confront killer kidnapers and bandits, An ex-Army sergeant who voluntarily resigned lamented in an interview held on 14th February 2020 that:

My experience was that we are not free from the fear of want, job, and life security. When we get wounded in the battlefield we are certain that our agencies will not mind to take us to the hospital, the so-called NHIS will not cover comprehensively for our injuries and our agencies would not intervene to cover the gap; if we get killed, in less than one month, our salaries will be stopped because of corruption, thereby abandoning our families in despair, the only ones whose families may scale through are those who have worked in places where they have acquired illegal money when they were alive, all this is happening before our own eyes while billions of dollars are being claimed to be earmarked in budgets and supplementary budgets and released to those who matter. Of course, we want the menace to end, but our superiors who pocket the

money would always compound the problem so that they can continue to enjoy the illegal proceeds from that.

Another dimension of security corruption is what Mathew Page (2018) described as a *protection racket*. This is a situation whereby security agents, whether senior or junior, compromise their mandate in favour of the kidnappers and bandits. An important and too glaring case in point that shook many Nigerians at the time is that of Wadume, a notorious kidnapper and weapon supplier who enjoyed not only the support and protection of community members but also that of the security agents whom he often bribed and connived with (Onifade, 2020).

On the part of the Department of Security Service (SSS), it is a well-established organization that carries out its secret coverage function throughout Nigeria. Over time, the organization uses its complex structural processes to secretly monitor activities and happenings in the country. It has been opined that on daily basis, the SSS through their primary agents generate and submit sensitive and non-sensitive information at the local government level which is then forwarded to the state coordinator for onward transmission to the national level or as the case may be. This daily routine through the state director, the Director-General of the SSS and national security adviser keeps the state governors and the president abreast of the daily open and undercover activities for national security concerns.

That is to say, through this daily routine, no activity should escape being noted, therefore, the plans, activities, sources, connections, strength, networks and any other information about bandits and kidnappers are tracked and monitored on daily basis. How come then that such activities have not been deterred, averted, aborted, subdued, suppressed or tamed? One of the most resonating answers to this is not often connivance with the criminals but what is usually referred to as *political considerations*. Political considerations partly mean deliberate refusal to take action which will expose some influential people called *Politically Exposed Persons (PEPs)* or

untouchables who either support the criminals in some way or even finance them for their selfish interests. (Innocent et al 2017).

By way of this, kidnapping and banditry have grown into the dreaded monster that it now is, partly because the government deliberately refuses to act on credible information about the perpetrators and their masterminds. Although the government investigates the allegations or follows up on the development, it refuses or fails to expose and deal with the masquerades behind banditry and kidnapping to avoid exposing the indicted personalities.

Another dimension of the problem is that of border guards. The Nigeria Immigration Service is a paramilitary organization established to control the entry and exit of all persons in Nigeria and as such is meant to police the country's vast porous borders through its officers posted to such locations. As would argue that among other factors, the porosity of borderline and cross-border security challenges and crime are the greatest challenges facing Nigeria today. Indeed, apart from the existence of porous borders and cross-border and frontier activities in Nigeria which has always aided crimes and security challenges across Nigerian borders for long without any specific solutions Babatola, (2015), there is a persistent outcry against the Nigerian immigration service (NIS) on the of compromise of duty from their highest ranking to the lowest.

This is coupled with inconsistent border patrolling due to limited patrolling vehicles In separate interviews conducted with a local trader whose business was arms smuggle, an ex-kidnapper sponsor at Kaduna and a retired policeman at Katsina on 17th and 22nd of August, 2019 respectively, they corroborated that the vast Northern Nigerian area borders (Nigeria- Chad Borders involving local areas of Monguno, Ngala, Bama and Gwoza in the Chad Republic; the Lake Chad region that borders Nigeria and her neighbours; Nigeria- Cameroun Borders involving Mandara, the Hingi, Michika, Mubi, Fufori, Ganya, Wukari and others in Taraba State

and neighbouring local communities in Cameroun; Traditional communities of Kwande in Benue State and neighbouring local communities in Cameroun etc, are among the most prominent border areas through which weapons are smuggled into Nigeria. They have been found in many instances to compromise their primary duty of checking and screening of what goes in and out of the country at border checkpoints. According to Mark, & Iwebi (2019):

Border points in Nigeria have over the years, been characterized by its porous nature, weak control and a dearth of security personnel. Consequently, the development has led to the influx of smuggled arms and ammunitions on daily basis into the country, resulting in a gruesome phenomenon of violent conflicts, terrorism, war etc, which poses a great challenge to national security.

Already, the Nigerian borders are porous and adding to that, unfortunately, is the lackadaisical attitude of the border guards on duty and their officers-in-charge and as a result, the porosity of these borders aid cross-border criminality. An immigration officer, when interviewed on why they are found wanting in their duties, replied that patrol vehicles, motorcycles, arms and ammunitions needed for effective security policing are unfortunately not made available to them when asked why they are not made available he admitted that most of the money earmarked for such reasons are normally diverted for personal interests of their superior officers.

On the one hand, the customs officers on duty are fond of allowing travellers to cross the Nigerian borders without subjecting them and their belongings to proper scrutiny mostly on the condition that they offer them a bribe. The customs officers on duty are (as in the same case as policemen), put under severe pressure by their officers-in-charge to bring *returns* (Kickback money collected as bribe by custom officers on duty posts to be given to their bosses). Officers on duty who do not take *returns* to their bosses stand the risk

of being transferred to duty posts where there is no “opportunity” (means of collecting bribery or extortion) for extortion or bribery. These kinds of areas are, by the terminology of the corrupt, called *dry posts*.

Considering all of these factors of bribery collection, minimal patrol, inadequate gadgets, tools and equipment, as well as the diversion of funds mentioned as acts by the Nigerian border guard officials in different organizations and at different levels, allows for availability and ease of access to hence proliferation of arms, culminating in the persistence of kidnapping and banditry in Nigeria is partly fuelled by the in the North-western region of Nigeria. From this, it can be prognosticated that the continued existence of kidnapping and banditry is largely due to the failure of the government of the day to unmask the forces behind the crimes, the collaborators, sponsors, and connivers. And until these forces are identified and exposed, the end of the killing spree and violence going on, particularly in the North and other parts of Nigeria is certainly not in sight.

In the final analysis, it can be said that the circle of corruption is perpetuated and reproduced with negative multiplier effects across different places resulting in the sustenance and spread and infection of new places, thereby undermining any effort to deal with it. This implies that rather than these security agencies doing their constitutional responsibility of protecting lives and property, the illegal acts of corruption which they engage in as exposed above has proven to, unfortunately, fuel the criminal activities of banditry and kidnapping thereby causing a more devastating effect than it would ordinarily be on the general security of lives and property in North-western Nigeria.

Political Actors

By political actors here, it is meant individuals who have obtained at least some measure of political power and/or authority in a

particular society who engage in activities that can have a significant influence on decisions, policies, media coverage, and outcomes. Fröhlich (2018). In the context of this study, therefore, these political actors are federal, state and local government elected or appointed persons as well federal and state elected legislatures.

The rural peripheries where these bandits and kidnappers reside are such remote areas that have for long suffered from lack of social amenities and infrastructure like hospitals, dispensaries, clinics, schools, roads, etc. Political corruption is so pervasive in Nigeria that it has turned public service for many into a kind of criminal enterprise. Graft has fuelled political violence, denied millions of Nigerians access to even the most basic health and education services while reinforcing security abuses (Epron, 2019). When such corrupt activities take long, it is natural that there is a collapse of authority leading to peoples' disenchantment and disillusionment. This automatically deflates people's dependence and submission to authority and respect for the rule of law; hence banditry and kidnapping become their ultimate occupations.

Another form of corruption that is prevalent is the connivance that takes place between political office holders, especially at state and local government levels, and the principal officers and heads of security agencies assigned to those areas that are bedevilled by kidnapping and banditry. To justify the release of the fund called *intervention*, the security agencies would falsely raise alarm to the chief executives of either the local government or state government over a security problem which requires urgent attention, the principal officers would then as a matter of urgency facilitate the quick release of money to the security agencies, after which the money is shared between the conniving parties.

In other instances, it was found that politicians make use of gang of thugs by equipping them with arms and money for election hooliganism to intimidate political opponents and rivals; they also exploit the rivalry between the bandit groups which usually

provokes a bloody cycle of retaliatory attacks to further exploit them for their selfish ends. The example of Buharin Daji and Dogo Gide is a clear case in point because there were allegations that Buharin Daji before he was killed had survived in the banditry business because he was used by the politicians for various selfish reasons.

Rather than identifying and dealing with the masterminds, sponsors, collaborators, and connivers of the bandits and kidnappers, the former and current governments have concentrated their efforts on fighting the foot soldiers while their paymasters (who are mostly known by the SSS) are walking the streets freely. The general implication of all these forms of corruption is that the fight against kidnapping and banditry is frustrating, and the crimes continue to thrive at the expense of the nation.

On their part, the legislative arm of government whose responsibilities are constituency representation, lawmaking, and oversight, have been empowered by sections 88, 89, 128 and 129 of 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria through the oversight functions to monitor, scrutinize, review and evaluate the performance of the executive arms of government or its agencies continuously to ensure effectiveness, efficiency and good performance, ex-ante during the design and implementation of a program or policy, as well as ex-post, after its implementation (Böckenförde, 2011).

But different reports have shown that over time, in fact since the return of democracy in Nigeria in 1999, the issue of the oversight function of the national and state houses of Assembly is more in theory than in practice because the houses at both federal and state levels in many cases, through their standing committees, do very little in terms of conducting investigations into the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) operation and performance as well as the effective monitoring of the performance of these MDAs that are under the entire Nigerian security sector. This is because of

the usual high level of connivance between the oversight committees and the MDAs by way of *quid pro quo* and budget padding.

Corruption takes place at different levels and instances; sometimes when these standing committees arrange for a public hearing, the heads of the MDAs would bribe the committee members with a huge amount of money, either through the committee leadership to be shared or individually as it may be most convenient for both parties. Other instances are that the standing committee members or some other legislators would, during the process of budget formulation, contact the MDAs on the need to pad into their budget items on the pretext that they (legislators) would serve their constituencies. The trick is that when the budget gets approved and the fund subsequently released to the MDAs, then the legislators would go-ahead to claim their share which mostly does not, in the end, go to their so-called constituencies.

In other cases, the MDAs and the legislators would connive to inflate the budget proposal of the MDAs so that when eventually approved and fund released, they share among themselves the expected surplus based on supposed earlier agreed formula. All these alongside other selfish reasons like self-jumbo pay of welcome package, basic salary, bonuses, sitting allowance, purchase of luxury cars, make some Nigerians mock the legislators as *Legisloters* (meaning that rather than performing their legislative functions effectively, they are merely using their positions to loot public fund in their hypocritical styles).

Conclusion

Drawing from the above, it is clear that the quest to address kidnapping and banditry in Nigeria is greatly undermined by all forms of compromise, connivance and conspiracy perpetuated at different levels and degrees by either by traditional rulers, judicial workers, security agencies, political actors, or administrative/civil

servants across political and administrative spheres of the Nigerian state. Specifically, it has been seen how from the beginning, injustice, unfairness, and extortion by the traditional rulers have sparked the earliest, mutual distrust and rivalry, and eventual frustration among the rural dwellers has resulted in undermining efforts and exacerbation of the criminal activities of kidnappers and bandits in the Northwest of Nigeria.

The third category of corruption is the mismanagement of the security agencies by the government and the misconduct of the ground forces including border guards in terms of extortion, bribery collection, the result of which is the exacerbation of the security problem rather than containing it.

Fourthly, political actors' siphoning of public fund which is partly meant to address security issues either in the false name of security vote or direct theft from public purse across all the three levels of government often in connivance with the relevant security agencies, the implication of which is government's abandonment of rural areas in terms of provision of social amenities, infrastructure, and other social services which has made these rural dwellers lose hope, confidence, and respect for constituted authorities, thereby engaging and perpetuating the kidnapping and banditry crimes. Fifth, legislators often connive with MDAs to scandalize budget formulation, defence and execution processes for their selfish financial gains.

Recommendations

To start with, when observed all these problems of corruption in addressing kidnapping and banditry can be broadly categorized into two: attitudinal and systemic. And over the years numerous approaches have been tried but the little result is still the outcome it can be said that corruption is still on the increase despite all the previous efforts to curb it:

1. The process of the appointment of traditional rulers should cease to be the discretion of the emirs. Requirements for credibility and qualifications should be introduced; this will go a long way in having in place traditional rulers with an unquestionable character that would assist their subjects, guide and educate them rather than collaborate with criminals to abet the fight against them.
2. In Nigeria's security affairs, citizen involvement is still at its lowest ebb; contemporary security is not just about use of force, rather grand strategy which entails the aggregation of the security interest of all individuals, communities, etc. In the absence of highly skilful, intelligent and well-equipped security officials, the fight against kidnapping is only surely going to continue to be a mirage. The working condition of internal security agencies need to be upgraded to make them capacitated to handle our dynamic national security challenges; their remunerations, job security, and working condition must be improved to cater reasonably for all their needs so that they do not demand bribery, engage in extortion and can be capable of resisting any kind of temptation. Specifically, it means, geographical, environmental, societal, community, group, economic and cultural peculiarities and needs of Northwestern part of Nigeria must be taken into consideration in the design and implementation of Nigerian national security strategy. This way, it will help a long way in uplifting the living standard of those rural dwellers.
3. As it is, there is no holistic approach for curbing corruption in Nigeria, it is taken to be the sole business of government, however, the fight against corruption especially in a society like Nigeria-where it is entrenched and has eaten deep into the fabric of the society, one of the most effective strategies is to be holistic about the fight; a situation where government agencies responsible for fighting corruption will operate in synergy other security outfits, as well as non-governmental

organizations and other civil society and private individuals and organizations, thereby culminating into a full-blown and comprehensive National Anti-Corruption Strategy.

4. Due to gaps created by different acts of corruption at different levels, currently, there is no doubt to say that Nigeria has a Strategic Security and Development Plan, however, as a matter of reality, this study recommends a more comprehensive blueprint Strategy Document that will take into consideration peculiarities of our nation and development needs of states and geopolitical zones so that local resources can be mobilized and harnessed to cater for human development and eventual security; that is to say, there must be no second thought on the need for the federal, state and local governments of Nigeria to collaborate and chart out modalities on prioritizing developmental activities and programs especially in the so-called ungoverned peripheries of Nigeria. These peripheries have become fertile grounds for kidnapping and banditry because of the unequal treatment they have suffered comparatively to their urban counterparts for many years. The government should as a matter of urgency take development to their doorsteps of course with stricter measures to check corruption; hence the necessity of introducing small and medium scale businesses that these rural dwellers can be engaged in. This means of soft strategy is a promising and sure way of converting any kind of criminal to a productive citizen.
5. There is a need for the provision of clear and comprehensive linkage between educational curriculum and policy with entrepreneurial skills within the framework of national strategy and development plan in such a way that more rural dwellers who would as illiterates have resorted to criminal activities, get opportunities to be educated and skillfully empowered thereby preventing them from being vulnerable and deterring them from being exploited to partake at any level of corruption.

6. Since it is obvious judges and other judicial officers as well the police the poor condition of the judicial workers are partly responsible for their vulnerability-which results in their frustration and eventual participation in the corruption circle alongside lawyers and Judicial workers, good remuneration, integrity management, checks and anti-corruption mechanisms, effective oversight, as well as serious punitive measures for non-compliance, should be put in place or reinforced to deter the tendencies of attraction and temptation for corruption. By extension, this means there is a need for inculcating a transparent and fair recruitment process into the Nigerian security agencies as sensitive as they are. This will help check-mate the foul plays by ensuring the engagement of competent security personnel who will be fit to do the job without compromise, connivance or complicity to corrupt practices. This is because, in the absence of highly skilful, intelligent and well-equipped security officials, the fight against kidnapping is only surely going to continue to be a mirage. Police and other security agencies need to be upgraded to make them capacitated to handle our amoebic national security challenges; their remunerations, job security, and working condition must be improved to cater reasonably for all their needs so that they do not demand bribery, engage in extortion and can be capable of resisting any kind of temptation.
7. Assistance, loan and funding partners for security and development of the Nigerian state need to be stricter and more strategic through their conditionalities in such a way that public officials of the state that are found wanting of corruption are adequately sanctioned with strict penalties such as travel bans. This will help a long way in curbing corruption in Nigeria generally.
8. The government needs to promote alternative means of checks and balances against all arms and levels of government;

this is by way of utilizing and taking advantage of civil society organizations that are independent of government so that political actors and public servants can effectively be held accountable without any fear of victimization or undue punishment. This is because all arms and levels of government have for too long fallen short of the expected level of success, making things progressively worse at all times. This is because no matter how serious the Nigerian government is in its bid to curb corruption, it is not achievable if institutional measures are not put in place to control the behaviour of political actors. These institutional measures are strict compliance with due process in government business, deterrence and punishment against crime, capacity enhancement, and reward for excellence, conducive working environment, and motivation. Enforcement of these at all times is an assurance for institutional capacity building and zero tolerance for corruption.

9. Rather than make it secretive, confirmed corrupt practices and scandals need to be constantly published, publicized and punished. And to do this effectively, the press and courts of the land must be supported, encouraged and given protection to discharge their duties without fear or favour. Such measures will help to inculcate the culture of exposing corruption without fear and also serve as deterrence to others.
10. Rather than the federal government's exclusive role, the fight against corruption should be a collective one between the federal, states and local levels. That is to say the trickling and replicating the fight against corruption in the states and their local governments will make the states establish their independent anti-corruption agencies which will work in collaboration and synergy with the federal government's agencies like EFCC and ICPC to make the fight holistic hence effective.

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CHAPTER SIX

CORRUPTION AND COMPLICITY: COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND THE ZAMFARA CONFLICT

By

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Introduction

Over the last 15 years, Zamfara State in the northwest of Nigeria, one of the poorest states in the country, has been the site of one of the most vicious and atrocious “banditry” that has lasted this long. The crisis has led to the killing of thousands of people. According to the Inspector General Police, between June 2011 and May 2019, 6,319 people were killed in the state as a result of the conflict (WANEP, 2020). It also led to the destruction of many communities and the displacement of thousands of people. It is difficult to estimate the worth of property that has been lost as a result, consisting of houses, farm products, social infrastructure such as markets, schools, mosques, etc., herds of cattle, goats, mine deposits, etc. Although the conflict has received some measure of media reportage, it has not been deeply studied. There are very few field-based exploratory studies such as the International Crisis Group (2017, 2020), Anka (2017), Nagarajan (2020), Mohammed and Alimba (2015), Momale (2015) and Muhammad-Baba and Tukur (2015) into the conflict. This is why it has remained one of the most poorly understood conflicts in the country.

Although its citizens live wretched existence with poor development indices such as high maternal and child mortality

rates, low school enrolment, etc, the state is highly endowed with natural resources such as forest reserves, rich agricultural lands, huge mineral deposits, especially gold, large stocks of animals of different types, etc. It would seem that the state is not only unable to convert these endowments into wealth for its citizens but has also not been able to prevent conflicts over these resources.

On the surface, the conflict is often simply referred to as one of either farmers-versus herders or miners versus communities. There are elements of both, but the conflict is much more than the sum of these. There are two trajectories through which the conflict grew to become a complex one, which has proven resilient to all efforts at its resolution. The first was the disaster, which resulted from the indiscriminate artisanal mining that led to the contamination of communities and the death of many children from lead poisoning (Ya'u, 2012). The second started as conflict over land use between farmers and herders, which turned into politically motivated gang violence that the political class lost control of. These two different trajectories at a later stage merged and degenerated into loss of law and order and expanded to engulf not only the whole of the state but also spilt into neighbouring states such as Katsina, Sokoto, Kebbi and Kaduna. It also degenerated into kidnapping, with the kidnappers using the forest areas of the state to hide their victims while they negotiate for ransom in other parts of the state. At the high of the conflict, no road into or out of the state was safe as travellers could easily be stopped and abducted or killed. Also, no market, big or small was spared as the bandits freely operated, day and night, setting places on fire and firing indiscriminately as they kill hapless citizens.

The conflict raises many interesting questions. For instance, from the perspective of community resilience, would it be right to argue that the communities demonstrated weak community resilience? Or could it be that the state administration has a low capacity for conflict management and resolution? The contention is that three key elements made the conflict intractable, which undermined

community resilience across the states. These are corruption, failure of state oversight role and complicity of the elite that has been benefiting from the conflict. The research attempts to unpack these elements.

Problem Statement and Research Questions

The Zamfara crisis is typical of a conflict over land use, whether we are talking about farmers versus herders or miners versus others. It is a contestation as to who has the right to the land and what use it can be employed for. But the state is also experiencing climate-induced changes. The movement of the desert has resulted in the loss of arable land, by forcing farmers to seek to bring more land under cultivation. Despite the various efforts, both military and non-military, to bring the conflict to an end, the violence has continued unabated. Why is this so? It is argued that the conflict is poorly understood in a static sense of a typical farmer-herder conflict, thus unable to come to terms with the reality of the conflict. While at the beginning of the conflict, it had these elements, it has been transformed qualitatively.

The conflicts have expanded to providing cover for criminals who now engage in many criminal activities such as kidnapping, cattle rustling, rural banditry, etc. While there have been efforts by both governments and other non-state actors to bring these pockets of conflicts to closure, they tend to exhibit a high level of resilience. Although some of the protagonists and criminals have lost their lives and many were in detention, their number seems to swell up, with no shortage of new hands willing and ready to replace those who have either been killed or detained, which continued to sustain the conflict.

This project aims to provide a more grounded and nuanced understanding of the conflict in Zamfara State to examine its complexity in both static and dynamic senses. Specifically, some of the key research questions are:

1. What is the role of corruption in the conflict?
2. How can the instances of corruption within the conflict be substantiated?
3. Why has the conflict defied all efforts to bring it to an end?
4. What are the other underlying factors for the prolongation of the conflict?

The research views the conflict through the prism of community resilience and therefore, attempt to explain how the conflict undermines the collective community resilience in Zamfara, thus making them unable to withstand and bounce back from the shock it induces on them. It is argued that effort at addressing the conflict without enhancing community resilience contributed to its elongation. Central to the objective of the research was to examine how corruption works as a key mechanism through which community resilience was weakened in the state.

Methodology

This work deployed four complementary research tools. The first was desk review both primary and secondary sources of newspapers reports, online publications and other published materials about the conflict to provide a deeper background understanding of the conflict. Secondly, focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with various groups of people in the state. Six FGDs were conducted with miners, youth, community leaders, women and vigilantes. The focus groups discussions were in Anka and Gusau local governments of the state. Anka was critical in three senses. First, it is a major mining area. Second, it is also a major site of the banditry. Even before the conflict became generalized and engulfed the whole state, Anka experienced it much earlier (Ya'u, 2012: 83). Anka is also the headquarters of the traditional system in the state as the Chairman of the State Council of Emirs is the Emir

of Anka. Gusau, which also has several mines is not only the capital of the state but also suffered a number of the attacks in its rural communities.

Thirdly, this followed up with the interviewing of key informants. Twenty such interviews were conducted, consisting of representatives of different groups such as community leaders, elders, leaders of miners' associations, teachers, members of vigilante groups, youth leaders, women, victims of banditry, etc. A few more KIIs were conducted in Birnin Magaji, Shinkafi, Maru and Tsafe. These other local governments, like Anka and Gusau, have been part of the wider theatre of violence in the state. For example, on April 7, 2014, 112 victims of the violence were buried in Yar Galadima village of Maru Local Government. On Friday 27 July 2018, 18 villages in the Mashema, Kwashabawa and Birane districts of Zurmi local government area of Zamfara State were attacked, leaving at least 42 people dead. Birnin Magaji has been repeatedly attacked with a large number of deaths. The fourth was to fall back on earlier fieldwork done in June/July 2019 by the researcher in connection with the conflict in mining in both Zamfara and Kebbi States. We were unable to interview former bandits as all efforts to do so were thwarted by the police. We also were not able to interview the dismissed traditional leaders. The police also were not willing to speak on the issues.

Transformation and Changing Phases of the Conflict

One of the common mistakes that observers make is to give the conflict a static nature, that its basic characteristics have remained the same from the beginning till this moment. This is far from reality; the conflict has undergone four phases. Exact dates for the different phases are difficult to set because these phases often overlapped in different communities. For example, farmer-herder clashes still take place in some communities. Also, cattle rustling, which is the chief characteristic of the third phase still occurs in the current phase.

The first phase was farmer-herder conflict, which started as a localized conflict between local herders and farmers over access to and use of land. The farmers wanted the land to farm and the herders the land to graze their cattle. This conflict was neither new nor peculiar to Zamfara. It had occurred for over fifteen years and has been a moving conflict in recent years as it had moved from Bauchi to Yobe, then to Katsina, then to Kaduna and Zamfara (Ya'u, 2019). There are three factors involved in this initial/first phase. The first is the continuing movement of the desert southwards from the North, which is making a lot of land unproductive agriculturally. The second is the growing human population, which has spurred land hunger among farming communities. The third is mining as an alternative to both farming and grazing. Added to these is also the decline in productivity of the soil resulting from over-farming. All these have made farmers want to bring out any available “unused” land into cultivation, and the only most readily available land was grazing lands and grazing paths. These were demarcated many years ago by the colonial government. The colonial authorities had an incentive for keeping these tracks because they used them as checkpoints for collecting cattle tax (jangali) from the herders. With the abolition of jangali, the government lost this incentive and became uncommitted to enforcing protective measures for these grazing areas.

It was in this context that a rapid encroachment of these lands ensued. According to a government report, over 60% of all the grazing reserves in parts of the state had been encroached by 2014. This is shown in Table 1. As can be seen from the table, the loss of grazing reserves was massive. Some of the reserves such as Dan Bici in Gummi and Bagega U/K Udaku in Anka LG have been completely converted into farms with nothing left for animal grazing. Overall, out of a total 934547ha of grazing reserves, 626401ha had been takeover through encroachment, leaving just about 300000ha for grazing.

Indeed, as observed by Muhammad-Baba and Tukur (2015) concerning the Zamfara Grazing Reserve, the oldest in the country, having been established in 1919, became degraded and its “most livestock friendly areas have been almost taken over by crop cultivators to the detriment of hapless pastoralists who have begun to move out of the area.” It was in this context that the initial conflict took off. Muhammad-Baba and Tukur (2015) further buttressed this point as they record respondents to interview talking about Gidan Jaja reserve, another major grazing reserve in the state that “there is a very high level of encroachment along all the borders of the grazing reserve. Indeed, nearly half of the grazing reserve is now under cultivation. Some of the farms have been established particularly along the boundaries of the reserve in the last 15 years.” When this occurred, it was occupational conflict, not ethnic one between Fulani herders and Hausa farmers, because, in many of the communities, the farmers were also Fulanis, even though there were hardly Hausa herders.

Table 1: Selected Cases of Grazing Reserves Encroachment in Zamfara State

N	NAMES OF G/R	LOCATION	TOTAL AREA (HA)	EST. ENCROACHED AREA (HA)	PERCENTAGE ENCROACHMENT
	Gulbin Ka	Anka-Bukkuyum	150,000	107682	71%
	Indumbula	Anka	857,000	55570	53%
	Zuzzurfia	Anka	5567	5010	90%
	Bagega T/K Udaku	Anka	2149	2149	100%
	Malankara/Gamo	Gummi	1495	1345	90%
	Dan Bici	Gummi	2040	2040	100%
	Arsullah (Gazetted)	Gummi	4129	2477	60%
	BakinDutse (Gazetted)	Gummi	5432	5432	100%
	Pas (Gazetted)	Gummi	3335	2334	65%
	Dan Gurunfa	Bukkuyum	13500	12150	90%
	Rayau	Bukkuyum	14900	13410	90%
	Adabka	Bukkuyum	13000	8950	68%
	Nannarki	Bukkuyum	12000	7851	65%
	TOTAL		934547	626401	67.8%

Source: *Report of the Reconciliation Committee between Fulani Cattle Rearers and Farmers Submitted To Zamfara State Government, March 2014*

As part of the political mobilization for the 2011 election, politicians had created networks of thugs (Anka, 2017). It was these thugs who were deployed to curtail what was seen as the excesses of the Herders. This set a process of targeted killings to the extent that herder's identity was a marker to be killed. As reported by Momale (2015), in Zamfara State, pastoralists believe that the vigilantes also participated in cattle rustling” and there were “allegations of extra-judicial killing of pastoralists, confiscation of livestock, burning and looting of pastoral households, and force evictions perpetrated by vigilantes”. As the herders were attacked, the attackers found that they could make money from stealing their cattle. So, we entered the second phase of the conflict, which was that of cattle rustling. In addition to being killed, the herders lost their cattle.

Without cattle, which are their chief means of livelihood, they had nothing to live on. This created a group of desperate people who were ready to kill others and die. It was in this context that the third phase of the conflict commenced, which is the phase of a systematic attack on communities and markets, killing the people and taking their property. The response of the communities was to counter violence with violence, leading to a spiral of violence that got out of hand.

The fourth phase was that of kidnapping and banditry. Here, the victims were both farmers and herders or indeed any person who happened to be at the wrong place in the state. Roads, markets, even places of worships such as mosques, become unsafe. Because kidnappers needed safe places to keep their victims while negotiation takes place, it was at this stage they moved into the forest areas, which also happened to be where mining was taking place. The result of the movement of the bandits to the forest and mining areas disrupted mining, making it dangerous for miners to operate.

By this phase, the conflict has united three occupational categories that are the herders, farmers and miners as victims of the conflict. At this stage, the conflict has lost the characteristics of farmer/herder conflict and became full-blown banditry. As one Ardo argues, there was “*conflict between farmers and herders previous years back but to be sincere with you, what is happening now is different form of violence in Zamfara State,*”

Banditry is the deployment of weapons by large groups of gangs to dispose of communities of their property. It has been defined as “the use of threat or force to intimidate targets, with intent to kill or rob the victims (Okoli and Okpaleke, 2014). But this specific banditry is not the typical rural banditry of criminals in marginal spaces. It is, as Mohammed and Alimba (2015) put it “now a sophisticated enterprise with the capacity to challenge the authorities of weak and failing states”. Crevelde (1991: 195-197) makes a similar point when he writes “that bandits can attain a level of violence that is not easily stoppable by governments as regular armies visibly lose the initiative and monopoly of policing the society”. Both at the national and sub-national levels, the state is institutionally weak with eroded legitimacy and credibility. While nationally the Nigerian state is weakened by having to spread itself across many fronts, confronting different violent conflicts, locally the sub-national state, the Zamfara State government has not been able to use resources at its disposal to address the problems of the citizens. Instead, it hanged on to power through co-optation, inducement and settlements.

Who are these bandits? No sociological study of them has so far been made. This is understandable as information about them appears scanty. Only a few of them are either captured and detained or repented on their own. But they are not just an insignificant number. When they operate, they usually do so in large numbers (numbering over 100 in some cases). In the absence of detailed study what we could glean from talking to community members and vigilantes, the bandits are young (90 percent of those

committing the violence in the state are the youth), mostly male (though this point could be dismissed when it is taken that there may be gender division of labour with the banditry structure). It is assumed they are of Fulani ethnic extraction, though many are of other ethnic extractions too. The fact that the Rugu forest up north runs through Katsina and Zamfara States only to join the Kamaku Forest which itself traverses Kebbi, Zamfara, Kaduna and Niger States means that there would be people from different states in the banditry architecture (CITAD, 2015: 3). There are in fact foreigners, from Niger, Togo, etc. Some of the leaders of the bandits are well known. For instance, Buharin Daji, who held sway as the leader of the bandits for long until he was killed, was well known. Others are known within different communities. The bandits however do not work within a centralized structure. Rather they operate as small bands or units, but often cooperating across groups, though they could also have turf wars. They can work both horizontally and vertically but are not able to create a coherent structure.

Why is the conflict particularly violent? First, this violence is not the violent extremism associated with radicalization. Violent extremism arising from radicalization as pointed out by Onuoha (2018) is ideologically driven, that means it is rooting for something. In the case of the banditry in Zamfara, it is not driven by any ideological consideration. It has no project beyond the hedonism of the moment. Unlike some banditry, which tends to be the responses of the weak to political and economic marginalization (Mburu, 1990), the banditry in Zamfara sees violence both as a means and end in itself. Secondly unlike the social bandits that scholars like White (1981) wrote about, who steal from the rich to give to the poor, in this case, the poor are the main target of the bandits. This means they have no connection to the wellbeing of the community. In this sense, they are also a ready-made target of mob action by members of the communities. This logic makes them relish violence because for them and their connivers within the

community, discovery means they would lose everything. Death is what awaits a bandit should he be caught. For their contacts, should they be discovered and exposed, they would lose everything including the benefits they had acquired through conniving and supporting the bandits. For this reason, both fear the possibility of exposure, which makes the deployment of maximum violence as proactive means against discovery and exposure.

How do the bandits get their weapons and ammunition? Respondents of both the KIIs and FDGs are not sure about this. A woman who was a victim of the banditry summed up the general feeling among members of the community: *“I don't know where they are getting their weapon from but all I know is that someone somewhere is supplying them with arms.* They point out four lines of thought. The first is that some of the weapons are supplied by law enforcement agents (some form of collusion and corruption). Some think that security personnel 'rent' out their rifles to the bandits. A respondent from Maru was even more emphatic when he asserted that “they hire/purchase weapons from the security personnel”. A second, more plausible source is that bandits attack and dispossess small units of law enforcement agents such as rural or isolated police stations during which they take away their weapons. The third, which appears to be the most significant, is that the bandits source their weapons from the burgeoning illegal trade in small and light weapons which are circulating in the country. The problem of illegal weapons in the country became more pronounced with the Libyan crisis but such weapons also get into Nigeria across different borders of the country (Nagarajan, 2020: 11). A fourth line (which is difficult to establish) is a link between some of the bandits and Boko Haram fighters. Some people think that some of the bandits operate on the franchise from the insurgency as a means to get resources for the insurgency (International Crisis Group, 2020: 11-14).

Whichever is true or which is the most significant in contributing to

the armament of the bandits, the fact is that they have weapons and ammunition in large quantities and of sophisticated form.

The Manufacture of Illegal Mining

Establishing the link between mining and violence in Zamfara starts from looking at the geography of the violence. The violence is concentrated in Anka, Gummi, Bukuyam, Maru, Tsafe and Gusau local government areas. These are also the local governments where mining takes place. In other words, there is overlap in the areas where violence takes place and mining is done. The second level is accepting as possible government interpretation that mining was implicated in the violence. Both the President and the Inspector General of Police made this point, the later subsequently announcing a ban in mining across the state. If the reading was correct, then stopping mining could bring down the conflict or at least reduce it. This did not happen. This means that mining, as the cause is just a straw. It is not the cause of the conflict, even as it has now become an element in the conflict matrix. A teacher in Anka gives a more nuanced understanding of the connection between violence and mining in the state when answered *“Yes but not the way we are looking at, mining was used as an excuse to take people's mind away”*.

What is legal and illegal are the results of power discourse and state affirmation of those outcomes. The discourse around mining in Nigeria has come to inflexibly accept the terms of illegal mining and illegal miners as given. Yet illegal mining is what the state decides to label as such. Like in other parts of the country, mining in Zamfara state is dominated by artisanal miners. However, since the early 2000s, there have been efforts to criminalize or over control it in favour of big miners. There have been two different impetuses to this. The first was the lead poisoning, which led to the death of many citizens in the state but was blamed on artisanal miners who do not work with modern equipment, rather than on the failure of the state to discharge its regulatory responsibility, which was the

cause of lead poisoning (Ya'u, 2012). The result of this was to push for tighter regulation over artisanal mining. The second was the desire of government in its efforts to diversify the economy, to maximize revenue from the mining sector. This set the context for the mining reform of 2007/2008.

In this reform, government created six forms of mining licenses including artisanal (small), large (mining lease) and others. While large-scale miners are given huge tracks of land (50KM²) to mine, artisanal miners are just granted a small piece of land, typically 3KM². While artisanal license which can only be given to a cooperative society of no less than 10 members, lasts for 5years only (renewable every 5 years), mine lease is for 25 years and renewable every 20 years (Tchsenet *al*, 2011). The process of getting licenses is not only costly and cumbersome but also distanced from the poor artisanal miners as this has to be done in Abuja as mining is under the exclusive list of 1999 Constitution of Nigeria (as amended). As no alternative is provided, the bulk of artisanal miners are unable to register in Abuja even as they register formally with their state agencies and pay fees and taxes. However, in the eyes of the government, these are illegal miners and must be treated as criminals. The state then invariably brings its weapon of violence to evict them out of mining fields. The result is that in the absence of alternative means of livelihood, such miners also fight back (Ya'u, 2020). As they fight back, the police elevate their ammunition level, destroying the equipment, dwellings, etc of the miners and arresting them. They are now forced to fight for not only their means of livelihood but also for their freedom. This then spirals into an orgy of violence. The localized conflict is taken as part of this generalized conflict in the state. It is this dimension that a vigilante pointed to which is that locals are responding to take over the mines by big interests: "mining has for a very long time a source of livelihood of so many people especially the youth and taking it away from them has contributed greatly to the violence." A politician pointed out that "mining has contributed to the violence because it

is a source of immense wealth and people with power will kill anyone who stands in their way from getting”. Supporting this view, a religious leader averred, “When you take away the major source of income of the people, they tend to look elsewhere for survival which is a major problem.”

The reality is that linking the mining with the violence is speculation. It is not suggested by fact. What has happened is that bandits have chased away miners and use the forests as their den of operation. As Suleiman (2019) observes, “The Rugu, Kamara, Kunduma, and Sububu forests have become major hideouts for criminals”. This was buttressed by the Chairman of the Miners Association when he submitted that “*No, there is no link between mining and the current violence in Zamfara State. We have been mining for more than 20years and none of us have been found guilty of conniving with the bandits or the cattle rustlers or kidnappers, we are after what we will get to take care of ourselves and our family.*” Government has opted to promote this narrative because it fits into a simple narrative of bad guys who needed to be ruined in. This was further expressed in the FGD when participants argued that: “*we the local miners have nothing to benefit from the attacks but rather is a lost to us, we can no longer mine and we don't have other business or work to do, we are currently facing a lot of challenges with regards to our daily needs.*” A youth added that “*we use to have a mining site called Dan Company, before now, we use to have no less than 500 miners at the site but as of today the miners at the site are not more than 50 because of the consistent attacks by the bandits who attack the site with the sole intention of collecting everything they have, more importantly, the precious stones at their disposal*”.

The ruse in the ban on mining is exposed thus “*Government has banned everyone from mining but in reality, the non-indigenous companies are still mining free.*” In effect, there are two issues, which are confused as the arguments for the mining as causing the conflict. One indeed is a consequence, not the cause, which is that bandits have, as a result of their activities, chased away the miners. The second is that

there are concerted efforts by corporate mining interest to take over the mines from the artisanal miners. In this, the government itself has been supporting the corporate world. Resistance by artisanal miners to this is then sited as part of the generalized banditry.

A Tapestry of Corruption

While corruption cannot be said to be the cause of the conflict, it surely is the cause for prolonging it as well as for the failure of government and communities to bring the conflict to an end. A respondent who is a politician says “corruption is the bedrock which has led us to the current situation we are now faced with, the violence should have been brought to a definitive conclusion as soon as it all started, but because some see it as an avenue to further enrich themselves, they decided against bringing an end to it.” Unearthing corruption in this largely informal terrain is difficult if the conception of corruption is limited to transactional activity. For this reason, corruption is seen here as conceptually broader, encompassing both transactional and non-transactional typologies. Corruption is defined here in the same sense that Defiem (1995) defines it as “the sidestepping of legally prescribed procedures, which regulate social action.” We agree with Asobie (2012) that for corruption to occur, “the litmus test of corrupt practice is not whether or not some private individuals or groups benefit from the act. It is whether a rule or code of conduct was violated and whether the end served in so doing was illegitimate or unethical.”

Following this, the rule or code of conduct violated in the conflict in Zamfara consists of two sets of expectations: on the hand one, law enforcement agents were expected to promptly arrest and prosecute criminals; on the other hand, elites are to live by an accepted social role expected of them. For instance, traditional rulers are to be the guardians of their communities and where they fail to do this, whether they gain personally or not, is corruption. Similarly, if the political class for any reason obstruct or cover-up criminals that is

corruption. A religious leader who was interviewed reasoned along this line when he averred that “religiously speaking, if our leaders did what is expected of them what is happening today will never have happened, but because of their selfish interest, this is where we are today.” Community members see corruption as central to the continuation of the crisis. As a youth leader asserted in an interview, “corruption has contributed greatly to the violence because most of the people committing this act are people well placed in high places.”

Corruption can be studied in five different spheres relating to the conflict. These include politics, land appropriation/expropriation, security operations, mining operation and complicity by elites in the state. Concerning land, the government stood by farmers were encroaching into the grazing reserve and closing water points, etc. The government did not act to ensure that this encroachment was regulated. Instead, the governors parcelled out tracks of forest reserves to themselves and their cronies. Indeed, it was former Governor Ahmad Sani Yerima initiated the converting of Forest Reserve to farmlands and sharing the plots among cronies. Not surprising one of the major decision that the current Governor has done was to “evoked all farmland titles and allocations that were made along cattle grazing reserves in the state from 1999 to date”,

Furthermore, large appropriation/expropriation of grazing reserves was done with the consent of the state government and beneficiaries were often government officials, civil servants and influential individuals within the communities. A traditional leader while agreeing that corruption has played a role asserts that “Corruption as we know it, it is everywhere, and in terms of land expropriation, corruption has played a major role and thinks that the beneficiaries are herders are given the expropriated lands of the farmers. Land grabbing is facilitated by two different but related structures in the state. At the lower level, this involves the local government administration and traditional rulers who often expropriate grazing lands to themselves and their patrons. At the

higher-level, land expropriation is done by the Ministry of Land in conjunction with the Office of the Governor in whose hands the land is vested by the constitution. In both cases, the process is corruption-prone. It is reported that the “Former Governor Ahmad Sani Yerima of Zamfara State was said to have given out a lot of the land to big farmers thereby squeezing out the pastoralists” (Ibrahim, 2019: 1). A community leader in Yargaladima of Dansadau area, Maru LG complains “*Government has allocated those land to high profile people that are into farming activities, also the community has taken over most of the areas reserved for grazing hereby making the herdsmen face numerous challenges on where to pass with their cattle's and other animals without eating or destroying peoples farm product*”.

The second sphere is the institution of traditional leadership. Traditional rulers are important community structures for conflict management and peace building. Although in the current dispensation, they have no constitutional role, they are well respected and are a major part of the security architecture at the community level. In particular, they are expected to provide a formal security structure with intelligence and information on how to keep the peace and/or restore peace. Community members also provide information about threats to peace to this layer of the security architecture than to the formal institution of peace such as the Police. Given their positioning, traditional leaders are exposed to wide networks of conflicting interests in the communities. They are likely and do often know who are the key criminals and troublemakers in the community because they have access to this information from members of the communities. What has happened in many communities was that rather than traditional rulers use this information to resolve community problem, they used it to gain personal benefits. It was the Minister of Defence, Mansur Dan-Ali, who raised the voice louder beyond suspicion when he said that some influential traditional rulers in the state were responsible for the killings and kidnappings going on relentlessly in Zamfara State in recent months. When the Minister

accused the traditional rulers, they rose in unison to condemn him and the Chairman of the Traditional Council demanded that the Minister of Defence should be sacked. Not long after however, the state government announced the suspension of four traditional rulers. These were heads of Gora in Talata-Mafara Local Government Area and Musa Bariki, the district head of Barikin Daji as well as the village heads of Gyado and Tungan Dutsi both in Bukkuyum Local Government Area of the state. Explaining later, the Governor said those sacked were “some of the traditional rulers who were in the habit of collecting money from bandits and paying lip service to security within their domains.”

But since then, more cases have come to public knowledge. In July 2019, the new Governor, Bello Muhammad Matawalle sacked more traditional rulers found to have been colluding with the bandits. They included: The Emir of Maru, Alhaji Abubakar Chika Ibrahim and the District head of Kanoma, Alhaji Ahmed Lawal who were removed for allegedly being part of armed banditry based on the various complaints from the community members. An unreleased government report has indicted “another 5 Emirs, 33 District Heads, over 100 Village Heads.”

In October 2019, the Committee submitted its report to the Governor and although it has not been made public, in a recorded letter of resignation circulated August, the Chairman of the Committee said that they found many traditional rulers as well as police and military officers as conniving with the bandits and kidnapers and that there was no political will on the part of the Governor to implement the recommendations of their committee.

The third arena of corruption relating to the conflict is the security architecture in the state, comprising of a layer of different stakeholders. The Police and Department of State Security (DSS) have overall responsibility for peacekeeping. While the DSS is involved in intelligence gathering and investigation, the Police are to ensure that it uses intelligence gathered both by itself and other

sister agencies to maintain that law and order. Both the function of intelligence gathering and maintenance of law and order is shared by the community. Traditional rulers are expected to process information, pass it to security agencies with which they can proactively help to maintain law and order. Citizens, led by organized vigilante groups, do act to maintain peace and order and even apprehend criminals before the Police know about the breach or in some cases when the Police are unable to respond to such threats. Citizens overwhelmingly perceive security agencies as highly compromised. A respondent argues that security was undermined through “*insubordination as well as those that leak out information to the attackers.*” He further listed “*diversion of fund made for equipment and welfare of the personals*” as other ways that make the security operation to be ineffective. Another interviewee puts it “they are available for cash.” They explained that security officers are conniving in several ways.

During an FGD with community leaders, the consensus was that they blame the violence on the “failure by the law enforcement agencies in making use of information shared with them by community members.” This was further corroborated by members of the Vigilantes in their FGD, giving details as “sometimes they fail to act on such information even after sharing it with them, because we could remember, there was a time the bandits were seen moving in huge number about 110 bikes trying to cross a river and the only commercial boat at the river can only transport 10 Motorbikes at a given time, but the Army never showed up, after an hour they all crossed and left, and that was it”. The perception of security as failing is not just within ordinary people. During a town hall meeting organized by the State Government in April 2019, the Emir of Anka spoke in the same vein when he “blamed security personnel in the state for not doing enough to end banditry and kidnapping in the state.” Additionally, there is the perception that there “are informants within the security” who undermined operations by letting the bandits know of any planned action by the police” Like

the case of traditional rulers, this remained at the level of suspicion until the recent submission of the report of the former Inspector General of Police, Muhammad D. Abubakar led Committee, which also indicted many military and police officers for conniving with the bandits. A respondent also thinks that “because traditional leaders benefit from humanitarian aid materials and intervention they would prefer the conflict to linger”.

Two specific charges of collusion with the bandits were raised by the communities. The first is the accusation that when the military decided to mob up illegal weapons, vigilante submitted their own while the bandits did not. In this connection, a vigilante respondent argued that this action widened the gap between the totality of the weapons in the hands of the bandits and the community in favour of the bandits: “collecting the arms of the vigilantes and leaving that of the bandits, and negotiating with the bandits to a point of giving them incentives, the bandits now drive into communities without the fear of being caught and ravage the entire community because they know they are being backed.” Even closer to conventional corruption was the price tag on the weapons of the bandits. It was alleged that the military was paying up to a Million Naira per AK45 rifle collected from the bandits. There were no mechanisms put in place to ensure that these rifles were genuinely those of the bandits and were duly submitted and how many were recovered and from which bandits? A journalist quoted Comrade Munnir Haidara, Chairman Northern Youth Assembly, Zamfara State chapter charging: “the whole thing is a complete conspiracy, how would you offer one million Naira to a criminal who just spent N400, 000 to N500,000 to acquire an AK-47 rifle” (Salisu, 2019: 1).

The fourth arena is at the level of mining. Although there are many large-scale mining licenses in the state, the bulk of mining activities is by artisanal miners. There are reports of foreign interests mining in the state. When people talk about illegal mining, they always associate it with artisanal mining. The reality, however, is that illegal mining is largely by foreign miners who do not have valid licenses

but often work as facilitators of local business people who have inactive licenses. In this sense, they carry out illegal mining but they are not visible. Corrupt practices in the mining sector occur besides the other two levels. The first is that by the Mining Act, there is supposed to be regular inspection of mining operations by the Mines Inspectorate Department of the Ministry of Development (FMMSD, 2007). If these were taking place, it could have been easy to find and prosecute illegal miners. Since nobody has been prosecuted, it is safe to say either the inspection is not being done or that those involved simply decide to close their eyes to what they see in the field. Either way, this is corruption. The second is at the level of disposing of mine products. Often the gold from this mine operation is illegally smuggled out of the country. Smuggling involves collusion with customs. Again, this is another shade of corruption.

The fifth area relates to cattle rustling. Rustling cattle is not an easy task and does not turn into money instantaneously. It involves the actual physical taking possession of the cattle, transporting them (often on foot to safe houses/holding places where they are kept before they are disposed of. As the cattle rustled at a time are not small in numbers, often running to hundreds, this requires logistics and takes some time before reaching the hiding safe house/holding places. For Zamfara, often the forests in the state provide a natural safekeeping and holding places and the specific places are known to both the members of the communities and the Police. The cattle are kept here until all arrangements for their sales and disposal are made. Once these are made, they are evacuated, often with vehicles. Within this trade, two elements of corruption feature. These are connivance and neglect/refusal by relevant law enforcement agencies to enforce the laws/take action, both falling into our broad definition of corruption. First, when cattle are rustled, they are transported away, often not in vehicles but on foot, meaning that patrol vehicles could easily track them before they get to the safekeeping/holding houses. Again, when they are to be evacuated

to either the market or to be taken over by people who bought them, they would still require transporting. In both cases, there is either the case of negligence or outright lack of interest to apprehend rustling rings. This is why they are never caught and the only times rustled cattle are recovered were when governors decided to lead teams of army/police to confront the rustlers, that way so many were recovered. This case meant that the security agents know the holding places where rustled cattle are kept know the routes and could have either apprehended them while going or evacuating the cattle.

The second is that these large numbers of cattle cannot be easily disposed of without a network of undertakers who provide market access and networks of buyers. These undertakers and market-matching makers are within the community and often it is the role that some traditional rulers and even some law enforcement officers have played. Without these, the cattle cannot be turned into money.

Finally, there is corruption within the political and judicial systems. This is not unique to Zamfara but there are three specific ways in which this impacts the conflict. First is that corruption in the judiciary disincentived those seeking for justice in favour of revenge. Besides, the system is fraud with long delays and technicalities that ordinary folks hardly understand. Both farmers and herders, and indeed all victims, do not want to take their cases to the courts. This is because one will hardly get justice but will be required to pay for it. Truth does not matter if one cannot pay. For this reason, any aggrieved party will simply bid their time, planning revenge and launch an attack the moment the other is unsuspecting. This has a way of multiplying the conflict as one revenge begets another with no possibility for closure. Second is that the state government does not care about addressing the problems of the poor who are the victims of the conflicts. This is why it has consistently failed to use the resources of the state to address key problems such as youth unemployment so that all those who see

vigilante work as some form of employment could find more productive jobs to do. As one respondent puts it, “The youths are once carrying most of the attacks. This is because they have nothing to keep them engaged and most of them are jobless.” Resources of the state have not produced positive results. And these resources are enormous. According to Abdulaziz Yari, a former Governor, the state government alone “spent over ₦17 billion funding military and security operations in the state” (Mahmoud, 2019: 11). Despite this, poverty and inequalities keep expanding, undermining social cohesion and community resilience in the state. A KII respondent believes that there is a direct connection between the failure of governance and the banditry, as he argues that: “Because the past and present governments have failed to bring an end to the violence even though they have all it takes to see to it that all those conniving with the bandits are brought to justice”. The Chairman of the Miners Association was even more direct about the linkage “*we have been hearing that a lot of fund has been budgeted and released to curtail the menace of this current violence but all in vain because the bandits are still attacking communities*”.

Finally, there is a direct link between violence and elites in the state. Most leaders of the gangs have Godfathers in government or the upper echelons of the society. This shields them from justice and they could do things with impunity because they would not be brought to justice to account for their deeds.

How does corruption make it difficult to resolve the conflict?

Corruption has a very important role in the prolonging of the crisis. As a youth respondent in a KII, “*Yes because corruption contributed greatly to the violence and that is why up till this moment, people are being killed, property taken away, kidnapping*” A war-like economy has evolved with people benefiting from it. They have an interest in the prolonging and continuation of the conflict.

Corruption has played very significant roles in making the conflict intractable. It, in particular, undermines the resilience of the communities to bounce back and absorb the shock of the conflict and restore normalcy. We find community resilience useful as it indicates the capacity of communities to adapt when faced with hazards by taking the necessary actions to maintain an acceptable level of function and structure. The United Nations defines community resilience as 'the ability of a system to reduce, prevent, anticipate, absorb and adapt or recover from the effects of a hazardous event in a timely and efficient manner' (the United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience, 2013). Some of the key elements involved in assessing community resilience include Community Capacity, Community Strength, Social cohesion, Social capital, Social Connectedness and sense of belonging, Community participation, Social Exclusion and Trust and safety (Costello et al 2006).

Corruption undermined community resilience through at least six specific ways in the case of the crisis in Zamfara. First, corruption led to a loss of trust. People do not trust their neighbours. Each suspects the other as either security informant or more seriously, as an informant to the bandits. In such a situation, the community cannot come together and collectively fight the bandits. The fear of the bandits was such that nobody was willing to volunteer any information to anybody. There is a sense of people ringed by informants. A KII respondent opened up to the issue of information when asked about connivance with the elites: "I don't know about the elites except for informants who are also community members." The fear of informants is so pervading in the communities that everyone lamented about them: "the bandits have informants within the communities who provide them with information". With this lack of trust, no one is willing to risk his or her life to file a report about the bandits. This means that the capacity of the community to process and use the information for the early warning system, a key ingredient of community resilience

has been undermined. And with no capacity for early warning, a community cannot anticipate and collectively prepare for adversity.

The second way was that despite the destruction of the economy of the state in general, some layer of the society was benefiting and profiteering. This thus widened social inequality in the communities, As has been reported in several studies of community resilience such as Ibrahim *et al* (2017), wide social inequality rather than poverty leads to the collapse of social cohesion and hence the inability of the community to cohere and confront a common problem. Wide inequality creates walls of separation with the community, and the community becomes divided against itself, unable to confront a common enemy.

The third way was the collapse of traditional leadership as a credible and respected institution for community mobilization. Because some of the traditional rulers were benefiting from the conflicts, they were no longer interested in resolving the conflict and therefore, could not mobilize their communities to stand against the banditry. On the other hand, while not proven at the time, many of the members of the communities suspected that some of the traditional rulers were conniving with the bandits. For this reason, there was a loss of respect and credibility for the traditional rulers. This loss of respect and credibility meant that the communities are leaderless as they confront very vicious banditry.

Fourthly, there is corruption within the law enforcement agencies. Informants who had information about police or even army plans were willing and did trade these for benefits from the bandits. On the other hand, some of the law enforcement agencies accepted bribes to allow bandits and criminals to escape, with such a porous structure, no intelligent strategy of confronting the bandits could work. As an institution, it cannot rely on the support of the communities. As a security officer affirms, “There is the (also) unwillingness of community member to provide relevant information that will guide the operation of the enforcement

agencies” To this extent, its ability to anticipate and plan has been undermined and itself has lost its internal resilience to be effective.

Fifthly, corruption undermines resilience by making it difficult if not impossible for the community to mobilize their resources for their needs. In the context of the conflict, it became difficult for the people to engage in economic activities such as farming, rearing animals, commercial engagements, etc. This therefore further pushes the communities to deeper levels of poverty. And as Lewis (2017: 14) observes, “If famished villagers who have not achieved a minimum of nutrition and physical strength, cannot work towards change to the system by which they are oppressed, then externally applied programmes for purposes of creating resilience are unlikely to succeed in any longer-term”. This hits at the failure of external interventions such as the military operations directed from Abuja.

Finally, corruption in institutions of governance makes uncommitted in addressing the conflict. Instead, it was more interested in fitting one faction against the other so that for long, the official narrative about the conflict was not focusing on the bandits but rather that the conflict was between farmers and herders. This led to endless peace engagements by the government between the supposed representatives of the two warring parties, while the real villains were outside these peace efforts. Indeed, as summarized by WANEP (2020:9), “While the security forces have successfully pushed back bandit attacks, destroyed several hideouts with hundreds of bandits killed or arrested, banditry related killings and kidnapping have continued in States such as Zamfara, Katsina.”

Conclusion

One can now make a series of concluding statements. The first emphatic statement to be made is that that this research has shown that mining is not the cause or even amplifier or escalator of the conflict. Mining is a parasitic element with or without which the

conflict would have occurred and interests identified would still have found a way to prolong it. The second statement is that it is not a classical climate-induced conflict. Zamfara itself is neither a classical resource-poor environment nor the classical resource-rich environment. It is both, in that it suffers desertification and loss of soil productivity, which are associated with climate change. But it is also resource-rich in the sense of having forest resources, with rich mineral deposits and relatively fertile arable land. It is this dual nature that makes it both a case of internal and external migration but the conflict is more of within than without. The third is that there is a coalition of interests that have found the conflict profitable and acting in ways that undermine the resilience of the community to re-bounce and are not able to restore normalcy. What we see here is a community whose resilience has been weakened and that all efforts aimed at addressing the conflict have not averred their logic to rebuild the resilience of the communities without which they cannot contribute to the restoration of normalcy. Military action could counter the bandits but is undermined since it is inserted in conditions of lack of trust. The collapse of community resilience in the state is the result of how corruption has become the key driver of the conflict.

As shown, in this research, corruption undermines community resilience in several ways. It is wrong as has been shown to continue to regard and refer to the conflict as that between farmers and herders. While elements of this featured at an early stage of the conflict, it had long transformed beyond farmer-herder conflict. Indeed, in the current stage of the conflict, both farmers and herders are victims as they are both kidnapped and killed. It is also wrong to see the conflict in ethnic terms that is between Hausa and Fulani because both are victims. While primarily farmers are victims of banditry and kidnapping, the herders suffered kidnappings, cattle rustling and banditry. There is so far no authoritative study of the profiling of the bandits has been done. In our consultations, and given the profiles of some of the repentant

bandits, they are both Hausa and Fulani and probably many other ethnic groups from outside the state and the country.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

UNPACKING CORRUPTION-HUMAN RIGHTS NEXUS: IMPLICATIONS FOR GOVERNANCE, SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

By

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Corruption deepens poverty; it debases human rights; it degrades the environment; it derails development, including private sector development; it can drive conflict in and between nations, and it destroys confidence in democracy and the legitimacy of governments. It debases human dignity and is universally condemned by the world's major faiths.

“Corruption hurts the poor disproportionately and promotes inequality” – Kofi Annan

Background

Is there a relationship between corruption and human rights? In what ways does corruption manifest and impact on human rights in Nigeria? What measures should be taken to address the devastating impact of corruption in the Nigerian society? These three questions provide insights into the focus of this research paper, which seeks to examine the extent to which corruption as both an “official and unofficial normal” represents a major threat to the enjoyment of human rights in all aspects of people's lives. The

reference to official and unofficial as used above is based on the simple assumption that no aspect of the societal life is insulated from corruption. While it is true that there are several policy-level and institutional responses to corruption in the country, EFCC, NHRC, CCB/T, ICPC, PCC, SERVICOM among others, the effectiveness of these institutions have also been subjects of debates, generating mixed results. In launching the Human Rights Call to Action, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres, drew attention to the fact that “human rights expand hope, enlarge possibilities and unleash the best of ourselves and our world. But they are under assault”. The pervasive and endemic nature of corruption in Nigeria underscores the point made by the UN Secretary-General, which represents a call to action for both academics, policymakers and practitioners to engage on a global scale.

The establishment of the ICPC and EFCC, in particular, was in response to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption, which called on all state parties to create special institutions specifically for the prevention of corruption and illicit enrichment. For instances, article 6 of the convention provided that “each state party shall, in accordance with the fundamental principles of its legal system, ensure the existence of a body or bodies, as appropriate, that prevent corruption by means as”:

- (a) Implementing the policies referred to in article 5 of this Convention and, where appropriate, overseeing and coordinating the implementation of these policies; and
- (b) Increasing and disseminating knowledge about the prevention of corruption.

Though the ICPC and EFCC have been active visible and active in their attempt to fight corruption, particularly at the official level, little is known about how their anti-corruption campaigns have been able to integrate human rights. In essence, the extent to which

they view corruption as a human right issue should better explain how the fight against corruption amounts to safeguarding the rights of the people (Human Rights Watch, 2011), because of how corruption robs the people of their rights; particularly, from individuals and groups that continue to deny them the enjoyment of the basic needs of life – water, roads, health care, education among others due to the diversion of public resources for private use.

In the context of Nigeria, more specifically, there are documented literature on corruption and human rights (Page, 2018; Peter, 2018; Falana, 2015). Many of the attempts made towards documenting these phenomena discuss them as stand-alone, with little efforts made to show their linkages and causal-effects. In a sense, corruption affects all aspects of human rights – socio/economic and political. While corruption related to socio/economic rights targets how citizens are denied the right to access basic social services such as health, education, food among others, the denial of their political rights manifests more in the form of their inability to access justice, as well as other forms of discriminations due to their gender, religious, ethnic and political affiliations (Ojo, 2019; Kwaja, 2019). Today, there are rampant cases of people forced to offer bribe before they are given employments or admissions in schools, which shrinks their opportunity for social mobility in the country. As a young man observed:

Recruitments are made without adverts. Even the legislators that are supposed to speak against such practices on our behalf, end up getting their share of the employment letters and they keep quite. Recruitment without advert in public agencies has become a normal practice and there is nothing the poor people can do about it. If you want to act during elections by changing them, they rig the elections and also bribe the judges to give verdict in their favour.

Closely associated with the phenomenon of corruption in the country is the issue of impunity, which is the inability, weakness or refusal of the state to effectively deal with individuals and groups involved in acts of corruption. This is largely due to the politicised way and manner the fight against corruption has been undertaken, to the extent that the cross carpeting from one political party to another is viewed more as an attempt by the political class to shield themselves from prosecution rather than about an ideological conviction. Both from the perspective of citizens and civil society, the relationship between corruption and human rights is one in which the frequency and pervasiveness of corruption in the country amount to the violation of the rights of citizens, with little or no efforts by the state to punish persons involved in such acts. By allowing such acts of corruption to persist with little or no sanctions, the rule of law is undermined. In the words of Peters (2015:9):

Because corruption is the antithesis to the rule of law, and because the rule of law, in turn, is a necessary condition for the respect of human rights, then corruption – in a very general sense – constitutes the negation of the idea of human rights.

In this paper, the notion of corruption is viewed as one that is associated with abuse of processes or entrusted authority for personal and selfish purposes, which occurs at both the public and private spheres of human societies. It also involves actions that circumvent or undermine due processes that create situations and conditions whereby individual or group interests are pursued at the expense of the public good. In the case of human rights, they are a set of protection that accrues to people by their humanity. In this sense, the dignity of the human person in terms of life, speech, movement, belief and faith, sex and race among others. These sets of rights are inherent in all human beings because each person was born with them and they must be respected and protected by both

state and non-state entities as part of a universal human community (Alan, 1980).

Though more emphasis was placed on documented literature, the researcher relied on the use of Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) to elicit insights and perspectives from some respondents concerning the relationship between corruption and human rights in Nigeria. For the respondents, they were able to bring their insights to bear in terms of their experiences with acts of corruption and its associated impact on governance, security and development in the country (Kwaja, 2019; Ofoegbu, 2013). The logic here is that since the state exists to govern and protect the citizens, then, one of the key indicators for development should be the extent to which, acts of corruption can be effectively curtailed as a basis for promoting the rights of citizens. The sample size for the interview was not meant to be used as a basis for making any generalized conclusion based on representativeness. It merely sought to the views of individuals whose understanding of the issues, order to strengthen some of the assumptions captured through the desk review.

How Corruption Impact on Social Provisioning in Nigeria

Kirya (n.d.) views corruption as the “the abuse of entrusted power for private gain”, which in large pertains to the “embezzlement or diversion of school funds” that restrict and deprive schools of the necessary resources and in turn teach incorporate corruption as normalcy at “all levels of society”. Further, the regularity of corruption in schools and universities is dangerous as it produces acceptance of this behaviour at an early age (Kirya, n.d.). Campbell suggests that the long period of military rule “blighted education” between 1967 to 1998 as many government officials “viewed educators, especially at universities, as potential opposition” and universities faced lack of funding during the “restoration of civilian government in 1999” (Campbell, 2018). Following the civil war, the government closed missionary and church-based schools to

nationalize them (Campbell, 2018). Consequently, at present, Nigeria has the “highest percentage in the world of children not enrolled in school, and it is much higher in the north of the country than in the south” and is ranked 152nd out of 188 countries on the UN Human Development Index as its education stands largely underfunded with only 7.1 percent of the national budget devoted to education systems (Campbell, 2018).

Social protection is a key factor in societies that aim to remove “financial barriers preventing access to health care services” and further protect “poor and vulnerable populations from the impoverishing effects of medical expenditures.” This is crucial to assist and ensure access to quality health cases even if they suffer financial hardships (Aregbeshola, 2019). Unfortunately, in Nigeria, the lack of “social and financial risk protection leads to high levels of poverty, vulnerability and inequality in health” (Aregbeshola, 2019). According to the constitution in Nigeria, the health care and educational responsibilities fall under the division of the 774 local governments rather than the federal government, but local politicians have been found to steal, misallocate, and use these budgets for their benefit in place of directing the budget to the expected projects (Nigeria, 2017). Although critics have pointed out the gross misuse of funds for personal gain, many local governments such as in the Rivers state refuse to “publish its budgets and conceals basic information”, making it difficult to find concrete evidence against this corruption (Nigeria, 2017). Instead of investing in the basic health and education services for the Nigerian citizens, many local government officials are accused of squandering revenues and larger governments do not hold the local governments accountable for their corruptions and obligations to the citizens (Nigeria, 2017). As a result, “mismanagement and theft have left basic health and education services in a terrible state of decay”, even with the suggested increase in state and local budgets (Nigeria, 2017).

Nigeria had been pointed out for the continued abuse of human rights and national corruption during periods such as Daura's three-year leadership and his violation of human rights through “carrying out unlawful arrests, prolonged detention without trial, and torture of detainees” and the country fluctuated as it passed between rulers after its independence (Roth, 2019). With President Olusegun Obasanjo's term as president and the end of the military rule, a so-called “war on corruption” began for the federal government to “combat corruption and improve the transparency of its own finances” (Nigeria, 2017). Although a noble started to the fight against corruption, it “failed to address rampant corruption at the state and local levels” and still rewarded “politicians who use corruption and violence to subvert the democratic process, especially at the state and local levels” (Nigeria, 2017). In recent time, President Muhammadu Buhari also claimed an anti-corruption goal throughout his term starting in 2015 (Orjiakor, 2020).

Nigeria faces a long chain of politicians using the promise of free health care services in their campaign promises, but falling short and continuing the pattern of hurting the vulnerable populations in need of the critical service (Aregbeshola, 2019). Orjiakor (2020) states that both the federal and state governments allocate only a small portion of the budget towards the health section. Further, in the 2020 budget, the health sector accounts for “4.5% of the total federal budget, about N427.3 billion”, which is much less than the “15% agreed in the 2001 Abuja Declaration” (Orjiakor, 2020). The government continues the struggle with government leaders fairly and justly assisting the citizens, which is shown by Usman Yusuf, the former Executive Secretary for the National Health Insurance Scheme, who was “suspended indefinitely due to allegations of fraud” and accused of “mismanagement and misappropriation of N919 million and nepotism” (Owoseye, 2018). Additionally, eight other management staff members were accused and suspended for corruption allegations as well (Owoseye, 2018).

Vulnerable Nigerian populations include “children, pregnant women, people living with disabilities, elderly, displaced, unemployed, retirees and the sick” who all suffer from paying for health care services and an “over-reliance on out of pocket payments” to cover medical costs (Aregbeshola, 2019). Nigeria has not provided social protection for its citizens largely since its independence in 1960, and up to 70 percent of the population qualifies as poor and ninety percent are without health insurance coverage (Aregbeshola, 2019). Poor working conditions in the health care system brought on by the lack of funding have also led to “clinics so under-equipped that their demoralized staff could offer almost no services”, “incessant strikes, poor working conditions and environment, lack of equipment, poor remuneration and difficulty in acquiring training” (Owoseye, 2018). This in turns has led to a mass exodus of medics and doctors from Nigeria, and according to Mike Ogirima, the President of the Nigeria Medical Association, “no fewer than 300 doctors left the county in 2017”, leading to a shortage of medics, especially in rural areas (Owoseye, 2018).

Some of the biggest corruptions in policies in the Nigerian health care system pertain to “absenteeism, procurement-related corruption, under-the-counter payments, health financing-related corruption, and employment-related corruption”, which has led to a large lack of trust in the government and a lack of proper materials and resources for health care workers (Orjiakor, 2020). Consequently, the rate of persistent poverty and ineffective health care system is perpetuated by the “political instability, corruption, limited institutional capacity and an unstable economy” (Aregbeshola, 2019). Lack of resources and funding brought on by the corruption has also led to extreme mortality rates, including “One in five Nigerian children dies before the age of five”, which means that there are “more than 1 million child deaths per year” caused by the lack of “basic health infrastructure” (Nigeria, 2017). The rates vary across the country and generally the states in “ the

northern region of Nigeria experience a much higher rate of under-five mortality (100-250 per 1000 live births) compared with those in the southern region (50-100 per 1000 live births)” (Aregbeshola, 2019). Although the government promised in 2005 for free healthcare for pregnant women and children under the age of five, the mortality rate remains high with 814 deaths per 100000 live births according to 2016 World Health Statistics (Aregbeshola, 2019).

Although some attempts have been proposed since the independence in the 1960s, the NHIS was launched in 2005 and strived to “ensure access to quality health care services, provide financial risk protection, reduce rising costs of healthcare services, ensure efficiency in health care through programmes”, and provide a “provision of health care services for children under 5 years, prison inmates, disabled persons, retirees and the elderly (Aregbeshola, 2019). Following suit, the Minister of Health, Professor Isaac Adewole, announced a plan to provide “free health services to 100 million Nigerians” starting in 2016 for the following two years, which would impact mostly pregnant woman by providing “free maternal and delivery services at the primary health care (PHC) level” (Aregbeshola, 2019). As the pattern continued, the 2018 national budget reported that the health sector only received “N340.45 billion representing 3.9 per cent of the total budget”, and promises to assist citizens were not actualized (Owoseye, 2018).

With a lack of infrastructure and established health care, some of the epidemics that struck Nigeria caused serious outbreaks and a lack of resources to assist. An example is the meningitis outbreak in 2017 that killed 1,166 people and 24 of the states in Nigeria lacked the vaccine as it spread through the country, and five government areas reported 1,558 people impacted by cholera (Owoseye, 2018). Borno State was especially impacted as cholera spread to Muna Garage, “a camp hosting about 20,000 internally displaced persons on the outskirts of Maiduguri, the state capital” and spread quickly

among the camp (Owoseye, 2018). Some of the other diseases that plagued the country without resources to treat or vaccinate against included Lassa fever, yellow fever, and measles (Owoseye, 2018).

Manifestations of Corruption and its Correlate with Human Rights Violations

In a study on combating corruption, Shah and Schacter (2004) observed that corruption manifests in three forms – grand, petty and state capture. Grand corruption is linked to embezzlement of public funds, political patronage and clientelist among others as evident in some of the high-profile cases of corruption involving state governors, ministers, legislators, military and security officers, as well as other public office holders in the country. The use of N500 million for the cutting of grass by the former Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SFG), Babachir Lawal, represents some of the specific examples of grand corruption witnessed in the country. The monies in questions were meant to address the security and humanitarian crises faced by the citizens in the northeast region. In the case of petty corruption, it is associated with the use of public office for private gains as evident in the everyday encounter between citizens and state officials. For instance, across the country, police personnel under the guise of stop and check often extort citizens and search operations at checkpoints (*Premium Times*, 2019).

Typically, where a citizen is stopped at a checkpoint, his or her conversation with the police is one of “show me your car particulars and drivers' license”, although the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) has the primary mandate for such. The hijack of state institutions for personal gains by kleptocratic elites is another form of corruption in which the capacity of state institutions to regulate and ensure compliance with rules and regulations are compromised, weakened or undermined due to interest that runs contrary to the public interest. In most cases, state

officials connive with individuals or the private sector to evade tax, under-declare turnovers and launder funds among others. The popular “Abacha loot”, represents one vivid example of how state capture led to illicit financial flow or capital flight of millions of United States dollars out of Nigeria, a situation that was made possible due to the hijack and undermining of the institutions of the state for their vested interests. As vested interests hold sway, institutions of governance and social provisioning are weakened in ways that make them only serve the interest of a few rather than the overall interest of the people.

Though acts of corruption and its associated impact on human rights abuse is rampant in Nigeria, its intensity is more on the poor, a category of persons who live on the margins of society where corruption is very high as captured in the 2019 corruption index in which Nigeria was ranked 146 out of the 180 countries surveyed. A common feature of these persons is the fact that they struggle to survive in terms of access to the basic requirements of life – food, clothing, housing and health among others. For instance, for many citizens who had a direct encounter with the police and the judiciary, they were reported to have bribed an officer, thereby making these two institutions the most corrupt in the country (Lukman, 2019). Lukman (2019: 122) argued further that the institutional weakness associated with the inability of the EFCC and the ICPC to effectively address the challenge of corruption in the country is largely because the institutions mirror the police and judiciary to the extent that since their establishment, the EFCC has been led by police officers while judicial officers led the ICPC.

The institutional character of the Nigerian state manifests largely in the way and manner corruption defines the attitude of the officials. Over time, such character has been defined more pointedly by actions linked to the pursuit of vested interests that conflicts with the overall interest of the state. Concerning the Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy, Section 15(5) of the 1999 Constitution provides that “the State shall abolish all

corrupt practices and abuse of power”. Unfortunately, the pervasiveness of corruption among state officials has created a huge public perception. – (both nationally and internationally) that they serve their interests as against the public interest. In this sense, the institutions of the state are unable to effectively fight corruption because they have been hijacked or captured. Knack (2007:282) viewed acts of bribery as practices undertaken to influence the content of rules and laws, as well as their implementation as one of the key indicators of state capture. Where such acts of state capture exist, corruption becomes a huge challenge to deal with as evident in the scale of grand and petty acts of corruption witnessed in Nigeria. As a consequence, the legitimacy of the Nigerian state in terms of its ability to serve, protect and provide for all became suspect, which reinforces a point earlier made by Rose-Ackerman (1999:618) about the correlates between the legitimacy of the state and the spread of the culture of corruption.

In the context of official or grand corruption, which involved persons with a mandate to exercise authority on behalf of the state, the fact that they violated the oath of office they took as agents of the state is enough to trigger state responsibility for the resulting human rights violation (Peters 2015). The point to note here is that their ability to access public resources is hinged on the fact that they occupy offices that gives them access to the instrumentality of the state to exercise authority on its behalf. Such actions by officials of the state continue to rob the citizens of their rights, particularly on issues relating to social provisioning that constitute the psychological needs of the people. By criminalizing acts of corruption as contained in the acts establishing institutions such as the EFCC and ICPC, the Nigerian state seeks to instil public trust and confidence in the institutions of governance.

Though in principle, there is an established relationship between good governance and the fight against corruption, the reality is that the perpetration of acts of corruption has contributed to the weakening of governance in Nigeria. In 1997, the United Nations

Development Programme (UNDP) developed key principles of good governance, which was comprehensive in ways that captured the correlates between good governance, corruption and the respect for human rights. The rule of law was identified as the first pillar that underscores the role of the state in the protection of human rights. Where the rule of law is administered fairly and equitably, the citizens are guaranteed of the effective and efficient delivery of services in a transparent, accountable and responsive manner. Despite the enactment of the Freedom of Information (FoI) Act, public disclosure of information, particularly public expenditure remains a major challenge in the country. The right of citizens to access information from the state and its officials constitutes one of the fundamental rights to be enjoyed by the citizens. As rightly observed by Justice Mohammed Idris of the Federal High Court in Lagos State, “the FOI Act is intended to promote transparency and prevent corruption, therefore all public institutions must ensure that they *comply with the FOI Act in the interest of transparency, justice and development*”. Despite calls by civil society such as SERAP for the federal government to publish the names of persons accuses of looting the country's treasury, nothing was done to that effect (Ojo, 2019:111).

Increasingly, the refusal of a state official to disclosure classified expenditure under what is referred to as “security vote”. As an undisclosed 'security' funding mechanism used by the state at the federal, state and local levels, it represents one of the most common examples of how corruption impedes on the rights of citizens to be fully informed about how public funds and other matters that affect the citizens are managed. In a report that examined how security votes fuel corruption in Nigeria, it was observed that “security vote spending is not subject to legislative oversight or independent audit because of its ostensibly sensitive nature. Although officials often spend some of these funds on security, they also channel them into political activities or embezzle them outright” (Page, 2018:4). The report also revealed that up to the sum of N241.2 billion is spent by state officials across the country under the guise of security vote,

which represents over 70 percent of the police budget; higher than the budget of the Nigerian army; twelve times the counterterrorism support of the United Kingdom to Nigeria for 2016-2020; as well as nine times the size of the security assistance of the United States to Nigeria since 2012 (Page, 2018:6).

In a country that is confronted with huge challenges that borders on violent conflicts, insurgency and criminality, the diversion of monies meant for security provisioning to private hands, has impacted negatively on the rights of citizens to life. The “Dasuki gate’ involving the alleged diversion of \$2.1 billion by the former National Security Adviser (NSA), Colonel Sambo Dasuki (Ojo, 2019: 59), illustrates the extent to which public officials can go in undermining the right to life of the citizens. The rising insecurity, which is now linked more to acts of corruption rather than the absence of resources has created a security dilemma in which the disillusioned citizens disengage themselves from the state (Azarya and Chazan, 1998) and resort to self-help measures for their protection rather than rely on the institutions of the state (Kwaja, 2019). Under such circumstance of state failure to deliver on its mandate of security provisioning, which allows for non-state security actors to emerge, several forms of abuses, including extortion from citizens has become their defining feature (Nagarajan, 2018).

At the centre of the discourse on the link between corruption and human rights is the issue of impunity and compromised justice system, which manifests largely in the form of the inability of state institutions to hold people accountable for perpetrating acts of corruption. Though there have been some attempts at prosecuting people involved in corruption, not much as been achieved in that light due to the slowness of the process, coupled with the fact that the image of the judiciary, which is supposed to be the pillar of the rule of law has been tainted as judicial officers (both within the bar and the bench), were linked to allegations of giving or receiving bribes. For instance, it took more than twelve years for these three

former governors - Jolly Nyame, Joshua Dariye, Orji Kalu to be jailed for corruption due to frivolous delays in the dispensation of justice. This culture of deeply entrenched impunity in the country, which has made it difficult for justice to be dispensed speedily, has remained one of the sources of human rights violation. A respondent was of the view that:

The law is very effective when it comes to dealing with the poor. As for the rich, they are able to prolong cases to a point that they do not account for their deeds. Many ministers and governors were taken to court for corruption-related issues. These cases have been on for over a decade, with nothing to show for it. They steal our money; the EFCC and ICPC also spend so much money to prosecute them. All these efforts do not yield tangible results.

Though the Nigerian state must checkmate acts of corruption or ensure the effective and efficient dispensation of justice regardless of who is involved, public confidence remains a major issue. In the light of the fact that the fight against corruption has been politicised, particularly among the political class, the 'ruling party syndrome' is linked to the perception that each ruling party only target members of the opposition parties for prosecution. According to a respondent, "during the 2015 elections, both the PDP and APC used public funds for campaigns, but when the APC won, only members of the PDP were taken to court to account for the monies they spent during the elections". For another respondent, he observed that during the 2019 elections, two bullion vans were driven to the house of a chieftain of the APC – Senator Bola Tinubu, nothing was done by any of the anti-corruption agencies to investigate such an act during elections. For several electorates, the monies were used for vote-buying, which amounted to a violation of the electoral process in ways that undermines the ability of citizens to freely vote for their leaders without inducements, which

has made cash-for-votes to become one of the most worrying developments in Nigerian politics (Ojo, 2019).

There is also a sense in which poverty, inequality and unemployment represent some of the key manifestations of corruption and violation of human rights. By diverting or plundering state resources that are supposed to be channelled for governance and development, the opportunities for citizens to have access to their basic needs such as health, education, shelter and food are denied. From the perspective of state responsibility to protect, the Nigerian state has the primary duty of fighting corruption in ways that protect the rights of its citizens, unfortunately, the lack of effective responses to acts of corruption, particularly at the community level where the poor reside and corruption has a more damaging impact, has not been well addressed. Despite the much talked about and celebrated efforts at fighting corruption at the national level, the state is still viewed as not living up to public expectation in discharging its responsibility of either preventing corruption from taking place or sanctioning those engaged in it. A respondent was of the view that “people at the community level are more concerned with those petty acts of corruption that deprive them of their hard-earned resources that are meagre, than the big monies that public officials steal”.

One issue that is common to victims of natural and human-induced disasters such as flood, conflicts and insurgency lies in the fact that resources meant for addressing their plights are diverted. There are documented evidence of cases of diversion of monies and relief materials meant to address the immediate needs of people. Unfortunately, they are diverted for private use. In the words of a respondent, “apart from development partners and other non-governmental organisations, we have not seen concrete support from governments. The government officials see the predicaments of people as opportunities to make money”, which constitute a denial of their rights to basic services. In recent times, acts of corruption by legislatures have been linked to cases of about N1

trillion alleged to have been wasted under the guise of constituency projects by the legislature in the country. In response, the ICPC instituted a constituency project tracking in a bid to ensure transparency and accountability by the legislators over the monies they receive for constituency projects on behalf of their constituents. Unfortunately, not much has been in the area of sensitization of the citizens towards strengthening their capacities to monitor, document and report cases of non-implementation of constituency projects by their representatives, within a system that is increasingly becoming deficient in human rights protection for the poor, (Peters, 2015).

Human Rights-Based Approaches to Fighting Corruption

What constitute human rights? The United Nations Universal Declaration on Human Rights, African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, as well as the Nigerian Constitution, represent key normative frameworks for understanding human rights in term of what it connotes and justifications for its observance. Generally, it has to do with those basic rights and freedoms or liberty that people are entitled to, which must be respected, protected and promoted. This relates fundamentally to the issue of freedom, equality and dignity of the human person (Lattimer, 2018), to the extent that where people are denied access to these basic rights, it amounts to an infringement. Where such a case of infringement occurs, people are entitled to seek redress as evident in the pro-democracy struggle for political rights in the 1990s, as well as the mass protest against the removal of oil subsidy in 2012 by Nigerians.

Though there are institutional mechanisms put in place by the government to fight corruption in the form of the establishment of the CCB/T, EFCC, ICPC, the Presidential Advisory Committee Against Corruption (PACAC) among others, there are specific human rights-based approaches to the fight against corruption in the country, which deserves mention in this study. These

approaches represent varied forms of citizens' and organisational responses that have contributed to the fight against corruption in the country. Though one of the limitations of these approaches lies in the fact that they mostly target official corruption, the amount of money involved is quite huge.

Firstly, the enactment of the FOI act represented one of the most proactive attempts by the Nigerian state to promote the rights of citizens, particularly as it relates to access to information from the state and its institutions. By taking advantage of the FOI act, citizens through organized civil society groups such as Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP), the Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC), the Media Rights Agenda among others, were able to get the state to provide details of finances (income and expenditure), as well as the financial dealings of public officers.

Secondly, the entrenchment of whistle blowing represents one of the most important decisions taken by the Muhammadu Buhari led administration in its fight against corruption. In his report on the successes recorded so far under the whistle blowing policy, the Chairman of the PACAC, Professor Itsey Sagay drew attention to the fact that within three years, 791 cases were reported and the sum of N594.09 billion was recovered. The call by civil society for the entrenchment of whistle blowing within the regulatory and revenue-generating agencies of government was informed by the important role that whistleblowers are playing in the fight against corruption. In what can be described as one of the biggest efforts by whistleblowers in fighting corruption, a whistleblower exposed the former Group Managing Director of the NNPC, Mr Andrew Yakubu for hiding the sum of \$9.8million in his house in Kaduna State. Under the whistle blowing policy, the whistleblowers are entitled to 5% of the recovered monies as part of the incentive for citizens involved in the whistle blowing work. The value addition of the whistle blowing policy is hinged on the simple logic that if the monies stolen belong to the people, they have the right to trace such

monies and speak out, to ensure the rule of law takes its full weight on such individuals and groups.

Thirdly, from a civil society standpoint, initiatives such as Follow the Money Project of Connected Development (CODE) was reported to have saved the federal government the sum of N15 billion through its tracking, as well as tracked \$113 million across 25 states of the federation; Bounce Corruption of YIAGA Africa, which support school and community level efforts in fighting corruption; The Publish What You Pay initiative represents a major campaign by a group of civil society organisations working for transparent and accountable extractive industry in the country. It played a critical role in the pushing for the enactment of the Nigeria Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI) Act, with specific attention given to tax avoidance or evasion, offshore secrecy, diversion of extractive related revenues among others. The support for the anti-corruption campaign to a cluster of civil society activists by the MacArthur Foundation, which is currently managed by the Centre for Information Technology and Development (CITAD), also underscores one of the importance attached to the role of the civil society in monitoring and documenting acts of corruption that continue to impede on the rights of citizens to quality services from the state. The launch of the Buhari Metre and the Strengthening Citizen's Resistance Against Prevalence of Corruption (SCRAP-C) projects of the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) as a tool for measuring the extent to which the much talked about anti-corruption agenda of the Buhari administration can deliver on its promises of governing with integrity and accountability.

Conclusion

One of the most important take-away from this study is the fact that the pervasiveness of corruption in Nigeria has had a devastating impact on the human rights of citizens in the country. The weakness associated with the inability of the Nigerian state to

effectively deal with the threats posed by corruption also undermines the legitimacy and credibility of its institutions in the face of the citizens. In all, the biggest victims of corruption in the country are the poor families that live on the margins of society – rural areas, where the people rarely feel the positive impact of governance, security and development. The fact that they have limited opportunities to participate in the decision making processes increases the chances of their marginalization. In this sense, both the state and its citizens should be at the centre of the fight against corruption in ways that place the human rights entitlements of the citizens and the corresponding responsibility of the state to protect the citizens. Above all, the legitimacy of the Nigerian state is largely dependent on the extent to which it protects the rights of its citizens and for the citizens, the protection of these rights resonates more with the fight against corruption.

Recommendations

Build and Strengthen the Social Audit Capacities of Communities:

The fact that citizens are not properly informed about government policies and programmes makes it difficult for them to monitor how public monies are spent by the state. Both state and non-state actors such as the media and civil society should design and implement concrete programmes that target communities to empower them and give them voices to undertake social audit through the monitoring of budgets to ensure that monies proposed for service delivery are devoted for such services. In specific terms, legislators at both the local, state and federal levels should use their constituency offices as key arenas for public sensitization on the budget processes to ensure the citizens are fully informed about the plans of government, what the financial implications of such plans are, as well as their role in tracking and monitoring the implementations of such plans.

Entrench Whistle Blowing Policies at the Community Level: There

is a sense in which whistle blowing has been successful at the national level, while the state and community levels still confront huge corruption-related challenges. For most citizens, majority of whom are resident at the state and local levels, petty corruption affects them directly in their engagements with service providers and agencies of the state such as power, water, health, police and the courts among others. There is a need for government and civil societies to strengthen the capacity of citizens with the requisite training that will position them to better monitor and speak out about acts of corruption. By so doing and with the necessary sanctions in place, they will get better services and will not be made to pay a bribe in exchange for services that they are entitled to receive from the state.

Strengthen the Capacities of Constituents to Monitor Constituency

Projects: Citizens have the right to monitor how monies appropriated on their behalf are spent by their representatives. In this sense, they need to be properly educated and trained on how they can ensure their representatives utilize such monies in a transparent and accountable manner. The pathway here is for civil society to design training modules on human rights-based approaches to budget monitoring for constituents, which will provide them with the requisite knowledge on how to monitor the activities of their representatives, as well as mechanisms for seeking redress when there is a breach of trust associated with the diversion of monies appropriated for them.

Strengthen the Capacity of National Human Rights Commission to Monitor Acts of Corruption:

There is a strong sense that corruption represents a violation of human rights since acts of corruption deny people their basic needs, which are to be provided by the resources generated by the state. In light of this reality, the NHRC should be supported through training and other forms of capacity building to effectively monitor and track how public resources are utilised. By so doing, human rights can be effectively mainstreamed in the fight against corruption by the state.

Strengthen Citizens' Activism in Governance: By strengthening citizens' activism in governance using a bottom-up approach, through support by civil society and development partners, they will be better positioned to participate in politics and demand for good governance. The starting point here is to ensure focus more on political education as against the current practice of voter education that is restrictive. If the citizens are politically conscious, they will be able to effectively elect leaders, monitor the way and manner such leaders govern, as well as re-elect or change such leaders as the case may be, which can only be achieved through civic consciousness of the electorates from whom the power to govern emanates from.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

THE CONFLICT-CORRUPTION NEXUS

By
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Introduction

The central objective of this research was to understand the nexus between corruption and conflict, understand how corruption intersects these conflicts and makes it difficult for the conflicts to be successfully addressed. Drawing from this understanding, it is to provide ideas, propositions, and recommendations, among others, which will not only help in curbing corruption in a conflict situation in general but also help in the addressing of the impact of conflict. To draw from empirical evidence and make analytical inferences, in addition to theoretical understanding, the research focused on four specific instances of conflicts. These are the conflicts in Zamfara State that has been ranging for over 15 years, the kidnapping and banditry in Kaduna State, which has made travel in and around Kaduna State quite risky, the wider Boko Haram insurgency in the North-east of the county as well as the more specific instances of the government programme of reconstruction and rebuilding of the area which has seen a huge amount of resources expended but with very few people resettled or communities rebuilt.

This concluding chapter draws from the findings of the reports

another atrocious aspect that ordinary citizens under occupation tend to suffer human rights abuse and denigrating treatment by those who are there to protect them. Apart from the fact that this treatment is both illegal and dehumanizing, it also has a way of making citizens not trust the forces who are there supposedly to protect them. Without trust, they cannot provide information to them and cannot cooperate with them. The result is to undermine the capacity of the forces to address the problem, as well as undermine the community resilience of the communities.

Key Findings

Central to all the instances is that corruption is heavily embedded in the conflicts, creating a situation in which some of the people, key actors and protagonists of the conflict are benefiting from the conflict and therefore interested in the continuation of the conflicts. The most significant culprits are those with either a duty to solve the conflicts or whose responsibility positioned them to play a positive role in ensuring the resolution of the conflict situation in the communities. This later group of people can be identified as follows:

1. Law enforcement agents sent to address the conflict but become involved in prolonging it. In the context of the Zamfara crisis, a state investigation committee had found many police and army officers complicit in the continuing crisis, yet there have been no follow-ups by the federal government on prosecuting and punishing those established to be complicit. This has also been reported in other conflicts such as in the North-east, in Kaduna and Katsina States, etc.
2. Traditional and community leaders who by tradition have responsibility for leveraging intelligence from their communities and passing it to law enforcement agencies as

well as have the moral authority and standing to mobilize their communities to collectively confront adversity but who have opted to profit from these leverages.

3. Government actors who are deployed to address the humanitarian crisis of people living under conflicts have too often found the funds they are to use for that purposes too irresistible to steal. There are many such instances documented and in public knowledge especially in respect of the reconstruction and rebuilding for the Northeast. For instance, there is the 5.8 billion Naira meant for the procurement of food for the IDPs in the North East, N1.5 billion meant for the purchase of rice by state government officials. In Gombe, the SEMA boss, Dr Dallami Arab Rukuje and Isa Garba were convicted recently for conspiracy, criminal misappropriation, aiding and abetting that borders on the carting away of some building materials meant for the IDPs.
4. The judicial system which no longer delivers justice but sells judgments for those capable and willing to buy (Falana, 2018). In this context, perpetrators of violence or injustice go scot-free while their victims are left humiliated and frustrated. As reported especially by Hayatu in this volume, “judges and magistrates, court administrators and lawyers have been found to compromise their duty by collecting bribes from clients or their relatives to frustrate case or rule unjustly etc”. Apart from the perception of selling judgments rather than making justice accessible to citizens, there is also the fact that the judiciary is deliberately extremely slow in deciding corruption cases as has been observed in a report by a panel of jurists and lawyers set up by former Chief Justice of Nigeria (Corruption Cases Digest, 2018: 23). Such feeling creates the psychology of revenge or even create new

rationalism for the victims to also join bandit groups. Either way, the violence is multiplying rather than reducing.

5. Abuse of office in which ordinary people are forced to pay their way to get access to basic healthcare, bail from illegal detention, etc. This, of course, is a widespread problem, not limited to the context of conflicts but it is of greater concern for people living under conflict because being denied of these services may be the difference between saving lives and seeing people dying.
6. The illegal use of security vote to steal public resources in the name of fighting conflicts has been well documented by Page (2018).

Mechanisms for Corruption

At least five key mechanisms for corrupt acts and practices could be identified from the studies. These include:

1. Direct Misappropriation of Public Funds by Duty Bearers: Here funds are voted to help address the conflicts but misappropriated by the officials for their gain. These could be for procurement of arms, logistics, feeding of IDPs, etc. This practice is more prominent in cases of efforts to combat the insurgency in the North-east and the reconstruction and rebuilding efforts in the region. However, it is also prevalent in cases linked to fighting banditry in Kaduna and Zamfara States. This is much shrouded in secrecy as military procurement and spending are not in the public domain. The most well-known case has been the money meant to purchase weapons that was shared among politicians for which many were detained but no successful prosecution has been concluded even as many of them admitted collecting the money. There have also been repeated demonstrations by

IDPs who have accused officials for diverting and selling relief material.

2. **Dereliction of Responsibilities:** In this instance, those with responsibility simply decide not to do what is expected of them or their offices. This could happen in the form of failure of law enforcement agents to respond to citizens' calls in distress, failure to apprehend criminals and allowing the movement of and sale of rustled cattle and other goods over large distances.
3. **Collusion with Criminals and Bandits:** Some officials collude with criminals and bandits to either help them evade the long arms of the law or even subvert efforts by communities to protect themselves. Many cases have come to the fore especially in Zamfara and Kaduna States where many traditional rulers were either caught or have been indicted by committees or panels set up to investigate such malfeasance. Some of them have been removed from their positions.
4. **The subversion of justice:** Here criminals are able to buy their freedoms through bribing law enforcement agents as well as the legal system. The failure of the justice system to provide justice has been the cause of a spiral of retaliatory attacks that keeps conflicts intractable.
5. **The extortion of ordinary citizens:** This is taking place especially in the north-east but also often where security personnel are posted. This includes forcing citizens to do things for the personnel, taking over their economic activities as has happened in the north-east where the army has taken over the fishing business and Cattle trading from the hands of the community members, seizing their farms, etc. But in the case of IDPs, there have been many instances of rape of IDPs,

sex for relief materials etc. Ordinary citizens around Baga complained that the military not only drilled them and beat them but also forced them to work for them, a situation in which they found it preferable to live under the control of the insurgents who not only offer support for them in the form of digging boreholes but also protect them from the high handedness of law enforcement agents. Citizens are routinely tortured and even killed by security agents sent to restore peace in communities living in conflicts (Galadima and Aluaigba, 2015).

6. Abuse of the rights of citizens by security agencies such as the DSS, SARS and refusal of public officers to discharge their responsibilities such as health officials who do so only when they receive gratification from patients. In relation to the health sector, Kwaja in this volume reports as common practice in Nigeria's health sector, “absenteeism, procurement-related corruption, under-the-counter payments, health financing-related corruption, and employment-related corruption”. The hijack of state institutions for personal gains by kleptocratic elites as he observes is “another form of corruption in which the capacity of state institutions to regulate and ensure compliance with rules and regulations are compromised, weakened or undermined due to interests that run contrary to the public interest”. Many Nigerians are routinely denied their rights unless they make payment to law officers. The roads with its checkpoints are havens for extortion in the country just as the markets and the streets are fearful locations where traders meet with the criminal side of the state.

Gaps and Opportunities

Across the states, one visible gap in the fight against corruption is that it is seen as more of a federal issue and that state governments

do not have the responsibility to assist. Thus, all cases from these states are thrust to federal anti-corruption agencies to address. Except for Kano State, none of the state governments has a formal anti-corruption agency to deal with cases within their jurisdiction. This makes the effort to report corruption much more difficult for ordinary citizens.

A second gap is that across the states and generally, nationally, the anti-corruption focus seems to be directed more at federal government institutions than those at the grassroots level where it is easier to observe and generate evidence of corruption because of the proximity factor.

Third, there is the sense of understanding by governments that the anti-corruption fight is not that of the people but the responsibility of the federal government for which citizens could support the government if it so needs their support. Unfortunately, even in this, there is no synergy between the different anti-corruption agencies and citizens to channel energy against corruption.

Fourth, despite vigorous anti-corruption advocacy in the country, there is very little focus devoted to monitoring and exposing corruption in the context of conflict. This has made corruption to feel secure and to feast in the situation as it remains invisible to the anti-corruption agencies as well as other actors in the country.

Another obvious gap is the palpable absence and silence of state assemblies either in terms of actual engagement to bring the conflicts to resolution or in their attempt of addressing corruption in their respective states. Yet state legislators have enormous constitutional responsibility to ensure accountability. In particular, their oversight function requires that all government agencies and officials be accountable. The failure of

state assemblies to act is largely due to the lack of independence and financial autonomy. They are too dependent on the executives for their needs and functioning.

Nigeria has had experience from the Amnesty Programme in the Niger Delta and now running the de-radicalization and integration (Operation Safe Corridor) in the north-east. What institutional lessons have the country garnered in terms of establishing the accountability dimension of these programmes? What can be leveraged into the context of other conflicts and what should be jettisoned?

From the scandals about arms procurement, there is the case of the former Secretary to the Federal Government who purportedly spent millions of Naira in “cutting grass” in place of addressing the plight of IDPs in the Northeast. The case is still in court. There have also been many demonstrations and protests by IDPs and others in relation to the diversion of relief materials meant for IDPs but which are returned to the market for profits by the relief officials. Government has not shown pro-activeness in addressing this institutional weakness and lack of accountability. There is a need to rethink the structuring of the management of relief materials and relief operations by including in the structure, representatives of the affected population so that they not only serve to represent their communities but that through them, relief operation could be accountable to the communities that they are supposed to serve.

Like the legislative arms of governments, local governments as distinct tiers of governance are also visibly missing in the efforts to address conflicts in their domains. By virtue of their being closer to the people, they would have a better quality of information and be more prompt in responding to a local conflict situation. However, as the situations in both Zamfara and Northeast have shown, local government officials are often the

first to flee their domains in the context of conflicts and crisis. This is not unconnected with the fact that local governments are rendered powerless both in terms of resources and command of security agencies. They have no capacity to summon and mobilize local police officers to respond to emergency situation, as such orders can only come from the Office of the Commissioner of Police of the State, who in turn would only take instruction from the Governor of the State who is the Chief Executive Officer of the State or in the alternative, from the Inspector General of Police at the top of the Police Command. The touted reform of local governments aimed at providing them with sufficient autonomy and financial independence is a most welcome idea. The proposed autonomy should be broadened to make the local government chairmen be the Chief Security Officers of their local government areas and the appropriate head of police at the local government level should be answerable to the local government chairman.

There is evidence across the states of weak or poor capacity of civil society to engage with anti-corruption more closely and sustainably. This weakness manifests in various forms, including lack of experience, lack of resources and poor media support. Paradoxically, it is much harder to work on corruption issues at these levels. Activists are routinely intimidated, harassed and detained. For instance, a journalist Musa Azare and anti-corruption activist Jibrin Yakubu were arrested and detained for many days in 2017 Bauchi State for exposing corruption by the State Governor. In the same vein, Muhammad Mahdi Shehu, who exposed a N52bn security votes fraud in Katsina State was detained by the DSS. Similarly, the Manager of Albarka Radio was sacked for airing a programme about N3.6billion contract awarded by the Bauchi State Government to a company in which the Governor was a shareholder and director. There is a need for development partners and capacity building organizations to pay

attention to facilitating the building of a critical mass of civil society organizations that can engage with anti-corruption and transparency issues sustainable and on a routine basis in their states.

Leveraging the Opportunities

In the context of conflict as observed above, some opportunities can be leveraged to deepen the anti-corruption efforts. One of these is to develop tools and mechanisms to monitor the conduct of law enforcement agencies and the military both in terms of their conduct and their spending.

Second, civil society can take the lead in sensitizing communities living under conflict to understand the role that corruption is playing in prolonging the conflicts. The battle against anti-corruption can only be successful if it is grassroots routed.

Traditional rulers do not have any constitutionally defined role; however, they have enormous influences in their communities. As products of a non-elective system, they appear to be accountable only to the state Governors who appoint them. Ordinary citizens, except in extreme cases, cannot hold them accountable when they abuse their office. Yet, as we have seen, in many cases, such traditional rulers have abused their offices and the trust their communities have repose on them. This abuse of office has played an important role in undermining community resilience for such communities to rise and respond to challenges collectively. While no constitutional role is being envisaged here, there must be reform of the traditional chieftaincy institutions to make them accountable to both their constituencies and the government. This may require, for instance, providing an overnight mechanism for monitoring the conduct of traditional rulers that could be either domiciled in a state anti-corruption or

public complaints commission or even within the legislative arm of government.

Both at national and state as well as at local government levels, there is a clear perception that corruption is deeply embedded in the judicial system. There are already on-going reforms about the administration of justice in the country. It should provide an opportunity to leverage these processes to bring proposals that could not only rid the judiciary of corrupt practices but also streamline the legal practices system in such ways that technicalities are not used to prevent the punishing of corrupt people. At the local level, there is a need to ensure only trained persons are appointed areas judges and alikis. In addition to training, there should be a clear code of conduct and an effective means of enforcement of the code of conduct.

The federal government has announced its commitment to community policing. We have seen that in both the cases of the banditry and kidnapping in Kaduna State as well as the killings in Zamfara State, there is clear evidence of a failure of policing. Such failure can be seen at three levels. At one level is that citizens are suspicious of police and do not want to share intelligence reports with them. This was borne out of the fact that some people who had volunteered such intelligence reports have ended up falling to be victims of criminals. The second level is the fact that often police are deliberately slow in arriving at the scene of violence, giving enough time for the perpetrators to run away. The third level is that is evidence of collusion and collaboration between law enforcement officers and violence ring leaders. For instance, the movement of large herds of rustled cattle and their disposal at markets can only be possible with the connivance of security personnel who turn a blind eye for these animals to be transported to markets and to be sold. While community policing in itself may not address all of these

different levels of non-functioning of the law enforcement agencies, it will certainly create a better relationship between the community and the police. This better relationship will enhance the confidence of the citizens to pass intelligence information to the police. This confidence will feed into enhancing community resilience. Also, community policing will provide some measures of oversight on the function of the law enforcement agents by members of the communities. This oversight role will enhance the capacity of communities to demand and obtain accountability from the police. Anti-corruption activists should therefore support the mainstreaming and institutionalization of community policing across the country. Besides, the various strands of reform initiatives of the police (CSO Panel, 2012) should make it more accountable and its operation more transparent to the public.

Addressing the Gaps

As discussed above, many gaps need to be taken into consideration in firming up the anti-corruption efforts. One of the gaps is to raise the voice and lead the advocacy on the need that states governments must also set up their state anti-corruption agencies, similar to the one in Kano State. The objective is to bring these anti-corruption agencies closer to the people and make reporting much simple, requiring less efforts and resources.

A key reason for the inability of state houses of assembly to play an active role in the anti-corruption efforts is their lack of autonomy from the state governors. Governors have an enormous influence on the legislature such that they decide who become the principal officers, what resources the legislature as an institution should get and how they would do their duties. In this respect, the demand for autonomy and financial independence

of the legislature must be a key point of demand that civil society and all those who are concerned about curbing corruption should be pursued.

There is much focus about anti-corruption and demand for accountability at the federal level without a corresponding similar effort at state and local government levels. Yet, it is at these lower levels that corruption is much closer to the people, where they daily feel its negative consequences and where their ability to influence things are slightly better than at the federal government level. Most civil society organizations, even when they are tracking expenditure in their states tend to focus more on those by federal agencies than those by state's institutions. Part of the challenge is that there is much more opacity at the state level compared to the federal government level. In addition, many states do not care to respect the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, arguing that it is a federal law and not that of their states houses of assembly, yet they are doing nothing to get these similar laws passed for their states. In fact, with the exception of five states, all others have failed to act on it.

There is a clear gap to be addressed both in terms of the operation of the law as well in getting state houses of assembly to enact state-owned versions of the law. Civil society organizations need to take up the advocacy and pursue it to a logical conclusion.

There is also the perception that both law enforcement agents and the courts routinely collude to discharge suspected criminals and bandits or other criminals. When community members take their cases to the court, they found they are frustrated and never get justice. This makes communities to ignore the judiciary and deploy self-help strategies which often spiral into more violence.

Another gap is the lack of follow-ups by governments to investigate and prosecute/punish military and law enforcement

officers who are found to have either guilty of dereliction of their responsibilities or have colluded with bandits and criminals in a way that has aided these bandits to continue to attack communities with more violence. Such trials should be done openly, with the opportunity for community members to give evidence rather than in closed rooms occupied by only officers of the relevant agencies.

Despite the official closure of Nigeria's borders just before and reinforced during the COVID 19 lockdown, both weapons and people are crossing the borders across many points. While on one hand, it may illustrate the lack of capacity to police the borders and enforce the closure, there are also elements of corruption implied here. Two issues are pertinent here. First, it is common knowledge to Nigerians that Nigeria's borders are extremely porous for those with money. Yet, there is no much advocacy and action to monitor and police what transactions that take across the borders. The government itself seems not to acknowledge that corruption takes place at the border points. The second issue relates to the problem of recovering and mopping up illegal weapons both in places of conflicts and other parts of the country. To whom do they account to and what are the transparency mechanisms so that citizens can be assured that these weapons are not either re-traded or otherwise find their way back into the hands of criminals and bandits who then deploy them against communities? We can leverage the work that Transparency International has pioneered around arm trafficking with some model indicators to be used for monitoring (Transparency International, 2018: 54-58).

One of the most atrocious aspects of unaccountable conduct by law enforcement agents is that ordinary citizens repeatedly complained that if they divulge or report about bandits and criminals to either the police or soldiers, they end up either being

harassed and intimidated by the soldiers and police or even end up as victims of the bandits.

Recommendations

Civil Society: Arising from the findings, an analysis of gaps and opportunities, civil society might well do to leverage the opportunities while pushing for strategies for addressing the gaps. In particular, the current effort at constitutional amendment should be used to drive the advocacy for the institutional autonomy and financial independence of state houses of assembly as well as the protection of local governments from the overbearing misuse of this level of governance by state governors. Even without reform, civil society should insist that legislatures, at both state and national level need to perform their oversight responsibility effectively as they would help in checking some forms of corruption. Similarly, the current spotlight on the activities and operations of EFCC should be used to drive for a thorough reform of the anti-corruption strategy of the country. It is clear that while citizens are losing confidence on the law enforcement and security agents, and consider their stay in their communities as unbearable, they do not yet make the connection between their conditions and the hidden corruption that is embedded in such function as peacekeeping. There is, therefore, a need to create awareness through robust sensitization programmes that will let citizens understand that they directly bear the cost of the conflicts, not just as victims of the conflicts but also as victims of corruption. The Whistle Blowers Bill is still an unfinished business, yet it is critical to not just fighting corruption in the context of conflicts but also corruption under every context. That is why civil society should devote energy and attention to get the bill passed and accented by the President.

Governments: State governments should establish state anti-corruption agencies such as Kano State has done. These state anti-corruption agencies should have adequate and sufficient autonomy and independence as well be well resourced to enable them to investigate and prosecute corruption in their states. The state and federal anti-corruption agencies should develop a framework for cooperation and coordination so that they don't end up working across purposes or duplicating efforts. Already, even within the federal government system, there is too much duplication with too many agencies with similar responsibilities and have no clear condition framework (Kwaja, 2019: 3).

State houses of assembly should be more proactive in terms of their oversight functions. As funding conflict resolution or restoration of peace involves spending public funds by their executives, they should ensure that this spending is done within the remit of the laws and budgets and that officials are able to account for their acts of omission and commission. State assembly should hasten to domesticate the Freedom of Information Act by enacting state-level versions.

The federal government should commission an investigation into the role of corruption in conflicts and conflict spending. It should investigate the solid structure of a war economy of interest that have evolved alongside many of the conflicts in the country and find effective ways to dislodge them. Investigating corruption in this content should not be limited to transactional corruption only but also should include collusion, these who exhort civilians and those who find profits from conflicts. The federal government and especially the National Assembly should speed up legislative action on the Whistle-Blowers Bill which has been long in the Chambers to see to the realization of the goals of the Bill. As it is now, we have only a policy whose implementation has not been very successful. While there have

been many reports as documented by the African Centre for Media and Information Literacy (AFRIMIL) (2018), investigation and prosecution on these cases have been very low. On the other hand, we witnessed many whistleblowers being victimized (Afrimil, 2019: 17-21).

Operations of law enforcement agencies: the conduct of the police and army has largely been outside the oversight of civilian agencies. This has made them unaccountable to the public and often tend to hold executives' hostages as they are also the gate keepers for intelligence to the executives. Apart from the misuse of the security votes by governors (Page, 2018), the fact that their conduct is not subject to civilian oversight leave much to their conduct. There is too much secrecy not only in the context of spending by these organizations but also in the ways they operate. Even the national assembly which has direct responsibility for the oversight of the military and police have found it frustrating as service chiefs' loyalty and respect are only to the president who alone appoints them and can dismiss or recall them. There is a need to address this lacuna to make them accountable to civilian authority. The security vote should be abolished. The efforts to enhance and mainstream Police compliant response unit, as well as community policing, should be deepened and make meaningful in terms of creating a confidence-building methodology that will ease the antagonism that is prevalent between police and members of the community in a conflict environment. While the poor condition of service is no excuse for the police to compromise their responsibility but it is a causative factor that predisposes them to be corrupted. In this respect, the Police Trust Fund Bill which was assented to by the President in June 2019 must be operationalized and used to address some of the poor conditions of service of police in the country.

The work that the Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) is doing around “Defence Integrity, Transparency and Accountability” needs to be expanded and given prominence to achieve the objectives of promoting transparency and accountability in defence procurement and spending. This is against the backdrop of the high level of secrecy associated with security and defence-related budgeting and spending, which are not subjected to public scrutiny, despite the existence of the Freedom of Information (FoI) law. Similarly, efforts attention should be given to the efforts to deepened and consolidate the open government partnership which has many initiatives that will not only promote transparency but also directly impact on fighting corruption such as the setting up of the Beneficial Ownership Register, promoting access to public information, etc. (Olugbuo and Okoye, 2018).

Media: media reporting of conflicts as Akanni in this volume analyses is focused on the drama and not the underlining factors that make the conflicts to be resistant to efforts at resolving them. This is largely because media reportage is driven by current happenings, and not informed by a long-term investigation. There are of course a few of such investigations coming out especially from the online media such as the *Premium Times* and the *Cable*, but these are few and far between. Media gaze on conflict needs to expand beyond looking at the drama but also looking at the deals taking place, what sort of transactions are being fuelled by conflicts and what new institutions and mechanisms (at informal levels) are arising that have interest in the continuation of specific interest. Bringing this to the public view will make the mobilization for the demand for the quick resolution of these conflicts easier but also mainstreamed accountability demand and give voice to community voices that see corruption daily as they live under conflict. Media efforts at

reporting accountability and anti-corruption efforts at the national level should also be done at the state level.

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