

HUMANITARIAN IMPLICATION OF TERRORPRENEURSHIP: A CASE STUDY OF NORTH-WESTERN REGION OF NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study examines humanitarian implication of terrorpreneurship: A case study of North-western Region of Nigeria. It investigates the violent armed Conflict which has been a reoccurring phenomenon in the north western part of the country experiencing its own peculiar insecurity of armed banditry, Farmer/herders conflict and Kidnapping. The research problem is that the nature of the insecurity has metamorphosed, becoming lucrative, increasing in ferocity and acceptable to some section of the society cum humanitarian impact. Hence, assessing the humanitarian impact of terrorpreneurship which is commercialisation of violence and its economy in North-western region of Nigeria. The study adopts historical methodology through the use of primary and secondary data. findings reveal that Banditry, farmer/Herders crisis have been in existence in the north-western states of Kaduna, Katsina, Sokoto, Zamfara, Jigawa, and Kano, but the intensity of the terror acts perpetrated by the criminals have increased due to the lucrateness of these crimes as business ventures to make illegal money and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. The work also found out the role of collaborators and informants in the communities that give information to bandits and also acts as suppliers of necessities to the bandits in the forests. The paper concluded that this armed banditry, kidnappings and farmers/herders clashes has led to large scale displacement and poverty among members of communities who had to sell everything they had to secure released of their loved ones.

Keyword: *Humantarian Crisis, Terrorpreneurship, Violent Conflict, Armed Banditry, Refugee, Internally Displace Persons (IDPs).*

Introduction

The issue of security, peace and development is at the center stage of local, national and international discourse, especially among developing countries in constant search for security. Security of lives and properties of citizens has and still is a constitutional mandate of every Country or Nation, whereby its citizens surrender their liberties to the government and Nigeria is not an exception. This is because Nigeria has been facing the challenges of extreme poverty, sectarian crises, economic and ethno-religious crises, kidnapping, armed banditry and the ongoing onslaught of the dreaded Boko Haram insurgency/terrorist, making it the responsibility

of the state security to ensure the safety of lives and properties of its citizens. However, current developments have shown a devastating change in these insecurities, north western part of Nigeria is currently facing a deeper and more profound level of insecurity. Armed banditry which is a new guerrilla style attacks and killings by armed herdsmen/militia in parts of Kaduna, Katsina, Zamfara, Kebbi and Sokoto states respectively. These groups of non-state actors are often refer to as armed groups. What are armed groups? Armed groups are armed organizations that challenge the State's monopoly of legitimate coercive force. These armed groups galvanized weapons and artillery and challenge the states in this region by imposing taxes and levies on farming communities and its rural people.

More so, the bandits realized low contribution from imposed taxes and levies for their continuous operations and also availability of small arms and light weapons in their possession to carried out led to the introduction of ransom payments in cash and kind as for instances motorcycles, phones too mentioned but a few. Thus, thereby commercializing this violence. For the purpose of this paper, the North-West geo-political zone of Nigeria is selected, which also has the frontline States in the region considered as the epicenter of banditry and kidnapping activities in the Country.

The study therefore like any other academic discourse on insecurity undertakes a thorough assessment of banditry activities in the North-West region with particular emphasis on the humanitarian impacts on the people and their communities. The period covers between 2016-2020. The paper is divided into six sub-thematic sections.

Literature Review

In addressing themes of insecurity as this study, there will always arise questions as to similarities and differences of major concepts and its usage cum application. This study carried out a review of similar concepts that relates to terrorpreneurship as to find gaps that this new emerging concept fill in academic discourse.

A war economy and conflict entrepreneurship are related to the business of conflict, but they operate at different levels – one is top-down state structure, while the other is bottom-up or niche activity that often thrives on the chaos of the former. A war economy is the entire economic system of a country reorganised to prioritize state survival and military success. According to David Baverez in his works *“welcome to the War Economy”* opined that war economy is system where a government been overwhelmed by crises turn war, redirects all economic resources (capital, industry, labour) towards the war effort for state survival and government. This is done by increased defence budget and spending. Baverez here states the interest of the state to maintain its government and to survive political turbulence first before any other interest.

AI Chukwuma Okoli & Mamuda Abubakar in their works *“Crimelordism: understanding a new phenomenon in armed banditry in Nigeria”* defined conflict entrepreneurship as the activities of individuals or groups who gain economic power by instigating, escalating or, sustaining violent conflict. They refer to conflict entrepreneurship as specific actors -often non-state, corrupt elites, or private companies-who exploit the chaos, scarcity, and violence for private profit. This they went further to enumerate that engage in illegal trading (arms smuggling, illegal mining) charging inflated prices for essential goods (food, fuel), and private

security contracting. They represent the dark side of the society such as war lords, arms dealers, corrupt officials and transnational organized crime networks. Al Chukwuma Okoli & Mamuda Abubakar described this category of people as being motivated by greed over societal grievance.

Thus, terrorism embodies the link between the bandits' activities on the one hand and the role of informants/collaborators who also benefit from the banditry activities on the other and the theatre of execution is the villages and communities. This armed banditry thrives in rural communities more and also victims are of rural dwellers or those unlucky to find themselves around such areas for kidnapping or abductions.

Theoretical Framework

The human security framework theory was adopted in this study to convey the central theme of the paper. The human security framework is a people-centred paradigm that shifts security focus from protecting the state to protecting individuals from widespread, cross-cutting threats. This theory became popularized in 1994 by UNDP, which emphasizes **freedom from fear** and **freedom from want** across dimensions-economic, food, health, environment, personal, community, and political, why this theory was adopted was the experiences from this area of study. Bandits became de facto authorities in many communities in north-western part of Nigeria. They gave orders on marriages, taxes, when to start farming, permissions on movements and other Islamic injunctions even though they are passive adherents. The absence of security of individuals, interconnected threats including violence, poverty, diseases and their communities' vulnerabilities portrays lack of state protection even though in a sovereign nation. These communities out of fear, initiated settlement for the bandits and offer the bandits mouth watering payments with the wrong assumption that it will be the end or the last one, but they will come to the realization that the bandits are at them continuously.

Methodology

This paper uses data collected from primary and secondary sources such as victims, journals, articles and published reports searched using online search engines such as Google. It utilizes other available online libraries and other sources in the search, such as Google Scholar to search on themes (as inclusion criteria) related to humanitarian crisis, internally displaced persons and displacements. The data were analyzed using a systematic review and qualitatively presented in the discussions.

Analysis/Discussion

The north-western part of Nigeria is undergoing one of the greatest humanitarian crisis or often referred to as humanitarian disaster in the history of the country. This crisis as defined is a singular event or a series of events that are threatening in terms of health, safety or well-being of a community or large group of people. It is an internal violent conflict and occurs in (5) out of the (7) states in the north western part of Nigeria. This humanitarian crisis is caused by armed conflicts or the phenomena of banditry and kidnapping. These violent armed conflicts happen with serious attendant consequences on lives, property, people and communities. This created serious problems for the communities under siege and their means of livelihood.

Nature of Armed Banditry in the North-Western part of Nigeria

This paper adopted the term "terrorism" to describe the banditry activities in the area of

study, two words were used 'terror' and "preneurship". The former is intense dread, fright, or fear or terribleness, while the latter connotes profit in business or enterprise. This is a new nomenclature that has embodied the entrepreneurship in criminality manifesting in kidnapping for ransom.

The important question is who are these bandits and how do they operate? They bandits are a group of self-styled, guerrilla-killer herdsmen, Fulani militias or Fulani armed bandits that introduce killing spree like no other in Nigeria comparable only to the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka. These killer groups *modus operandi* involves using motor cycle with three people on each storming community at night. They could attack communities in their hundreds or more on motor cycles ambushing their victims or communities in an inhuman manner, killing able bodied men and kidnapping treasures like humans which they consider as their gold mine for ransom. The activities of these killer herdsmen, Fulani militias or Fulani armed bandits started as rhetoric of farmers and herders clashes at the initial stage only to reach a height that not only do they revenge farmers maltreatment to them but taking over communities in Kaduna, Zamfara, Katsina, Kebbi and Sokoto States respectively that experience the hellish attacks of the armed group. These bandits Controlled many Local Government Areas in Kaduna, Katsina State and parts of Zamfara State. According to a report by BBC Hausa, these armed group display of terror has reached the heights that the Governments of Zamfara and Katsina States cannot use the state security apparatus any more to challenge them but rather appeal to these bandits to accept mouth-watering amnesty on the terms of the armed group to cease their destructive activities in these States. More so these new dreaded killer-squad patrol communities considered as front line in some Local Government Areas imposing levies and collecting same from farmers/vulnerable members of the communities and in some cases, farmers make payment of ransom to either avoid attacks or for permission to access their farmlands for harvest. Reports have it that these killer herdsmen, Fulani militias or Fulani armed bandits have extended their territorial reach outside North- West, North-Central Nigeria known as their theatre of operations down into the Southern part of the country mostly South-West and South-East with pockets of killings and abduction cum kidnappings.

This depicts how the bandit activities takes the form of invading villages or communities, hospitals, homes, educational centres, farms and highways to capture people and hold such victims until ransoms are paid either with cash (money) or with other specified items as dictated by the unscrupulous elements. The question to ask is that, is kidnapping new to our society? The answer is no, but the advent of arms proliferation has not only catapulted it but also laid foundation for smaller community or locality base criminals to partake in it. It has taken another form that bad elements within society give information about particular highly placed persons to be kidnapped, after the ransom for the victim is paid, the informants get their percentage. This is the reason why most localised kidnapping cannot be said to be carried out by the widely acclaimed armed bandits or Fulani militias, without some criminals within these community's assistance. Thus, this shows that crime begets crime. The inability of the government to arrest this ugly incident at its early stage has now accounted for why the menace has become attractive to many within the cycle of criminality. Another school of thought has not only seen terrorpreneurship on the part of criminal elements alone but also on the part of security personnel. They are of the view that because massive deployment of armed forces to theatre of crime scenes is widely visible, many security personnel don't want the current situation to end.

This, according to them implies that the security personnel return to their respective barracks and no more extra finances from special allowances related to such operations. There are many societal perceptions to this considering the pronounced ability of our gallant officers whose track records of quelling rebellions/insurgents/terrorists in the past is unprecedented both within or outside Nigeria but now helpless to a mere- unorganized armed groups within the states.

Another dimension to this study is locals have become suppliers of consumables and necessities to these bandits to either gain their favour or as payment in exchange of their loved ones kidnapped or abducted. According to Bulama Bukarti that the needs of these bandits ranges from fuel for their motorcycles, foods for them and their captors, drugs and other hard drugs, surveillance reports and armed forces movement and other service are provided by members of the society. This has created serious problems since members of the society now partake in this criminal venture and aid the bandits too.

Humanitarian Implications on Refugee and the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

There is no gainsaying the fact that conflicts in whatever form have no significant impact on the area that it is being experienced. The violent armed banditry and kidnapping in the north- western part of the Nigeria have serious implication on the people, the economy of the states that makes up the north western states of Zamfara, Katsina, Sokoto, Jigawa, Kano, Kebbi and Kaduna. The region makes for up one of the highest number of IDPs in the country. Fifty-eight per cent of IDPs (or 419,457 individuals) were located in the North West Zone while 42 per cent of IDPs (or 309,231 individuals) were located in the North Central Zone. The crises have resulted to situation in urgent need of humanitarian emergency.

The North Western part of Nigeria prior to the farmers-herders crisis and banditry that has metamorphosed into the kidnapping of humans for ransom as a means of sustenance was the poorest region in the country. All the States that made up the region have people living below the national poverty line of 40.1%. Sokoto State had 87.7%; Jigawa 87%; Zamfara had 74%, signaling that the humanitarian problem and need of the region is high. Along with millions in the region that lacked access to the basic health care, clean water, and immunization level was also very low in this very hot region. Despite the abundance of resources that is present in the region especially the epicenters of Zamfara, Sokoto and Katsina States, the trio conflict zones. The crises in the region have further worsened the conditions of the people with significant impact. This impact could be seen on:

Refugees

According to International Crisis Group, the violence in the North Western part of Nigeria that started since 2011, have displaced more than 60,000 people into the neighboring country of Niger. These people are from the Maradi area that is a border town to Niger from the North Western part of Nigeria. Apart from Nigerian fleeing the crisis in the north western part, there are refugees fleeing from the north eastern part of Nigeria into Niger. The implication on refugees and Niger cannot be over emphasized. Niger Republic as a country is already battling a demon on the other end of it from the Boko Haram, and in-flow of refugees from its border in Tillaberi region to Mali and Burkina Faso, escaping armed conflicts and instability in both countries. In addition, the country is also battling its internal disorder due to the lack of contentment of its people on the government fulfilling its role to the citizens in the country on the

one hand.

Niger is ranked 189th out of 189 countries on the Human Development Index (HDI), having the highest number of people living below the one dollar index per day. The continuous inflow of refugee will only exacerbate the responsibility of the country and its inability to meet up with these responsibilities. According to the Danish Refugee Council, Niger provides safety to over 163,000 refugees from Nigeria, 58,000 from Mali and 3,500 from Burkina Faso. This will only make the country expend resources that is not enough to cater for its own citizens. Despite, the refugees finding a safe haven from their countries and crisis, their needs will not be met pushing them into further suffering, which by right they deserve not to suffer. The implication for the Niger government is to continue to harbor these refugees irrespective of their national challenges. Also, this is to a large extent due to their commitment to adhering to the United Nations Convention on the Status of Refugee Protection adopted and with effect from 22nd April 1951.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

According to international Organization for Migration, IDP is “a person who has been forced or obliged to flee or to leave his or her home or place of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who has not crossed an internationally recognized State border”.

Similarly, IDPs in the North-Western part of Nigeria are people or persons that have been forced to leave their area of domicile due to insecurity as they cannot control or avoid the violence and effects of the banditry, kidnapping, cattle rustling, terror acts that has constituted insecurity. In this case, IDPs are the people who are leaving in the North-western States that have flee their homes within the States, to other areas in the same states or to another, consider more secured than the former as an alternative to ensure their survival. These people or persons are fleeing to avoid not just the insecurity but its resultant implication that entails in most cases human rights violations as well as the psychological effect of the experiences they have had.

Consequently, the crisis in the North-western region of Nigeria has significant implication on the people that were living in the village that these bandits, kidnappers and rustlers operate. The International Crisis Organization states that since 2011 that the crisis started, it has led to the displacement of over 200,000 people that are living within the conflict areas, to leave their homes in search of better areas they feel is secured and safe. This, apart from the over 8,000, that have been killed in the course of the crisis within the region which is still on the increase. In Zamfara State, more than thirteen of the fourteen Local Government Areas are places that these criminal elements operate. In Katsina State, ten out of the thirty four Local Government Areas have been under attacks from the criminal groups especially: Batsri, Danmusa, Faskari, Kankara and Safan and they are also the most affected in 2021. This is similar in Sokoto State where nine of the twenty three Local Government Areas have been under attacks from the criminal groups. They include: Gada, Sabon Birni, Goronyo, Isa (Sokoto North), Rabah and Tureta (Sokoto East). Attacks in Kaduna State have also affected areas like Birnin-Gwari, Igabi, Giwa, Kajuru and Chikun Local Government Areas. Niger State is not left out with ten out of its twenty five Local Government Areas experiencing attacks particularly

areas like Shiroro, Mariga and Rafi.

Table of IDPs in States across the North West Region of Nigeria

s/no	States	Number of IDPs
1	Katsina	121, 434
2	Zamfara State	112,316
3	Kano State	50,676
4	Sokoto State	45,402,
5	Kaduna State	59629

Source: Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) of International Organization for Migration (IOM), (September 2021)

The table above shows the number of IDPs in the North western states, with Katsina having the highest number of its citizens displaced within the states. This is followed by Zamafara, Kano, Sokoto and Kaduna States. Most of these displaced persons are living within the community they moved to, while others live in camps or camp-like locations provided by the states. More than 80% of these IDPs live with their host communities and less that 20% live in camp-like places. While in these IDP camps, they are expected to be available various necessities to ensure their stay in these locations like; security, food; shelter, non-food needs, medical needs, schools, etc. The IDPs are in need of food to ensure their survival which is the responsibility of the State Government to ensure in meeting the immediate need of these persons. However, this is not the case. According to the IOM DTM record, food is one of the major needs of those in IDPs camps in the North West and this need is increasing with the intensification of the conflict. Just within

the period of their study 41% of the camps put food as the urgent need. Non-food needs were put at 30% down from 33%, Shelter 17%, an increment from the 16% of previous data gotten from these IDPs. The increment in the need for more shelter is linked to the intensified battles between the criminal elements and the military personnel whose operations are ongoing in the villages. Hence, necessitating the villagers to flee to avoid either reprisal attacks from the criminals or be caught in the middle of the battle, becoming collateral damages. Medical attention from health sector was 5% which is also an increment from 4% from their previous data. The need for improvement in this aspect cannot be over-emphasised because of diseases that may arise and the COVID-19 Virus that is in its second phase. This is coupled with the need to treat the number of children that keep arriving at the camps. According to Medicins Sans Frontiers (MSF), in Zamfara State there has been increase in preventable diseases associated with inadequate food supplies, drinking water and shelter. The conditions of the camps are also not in good state with the IDPs living in host communities in dire need of building materials and those hosted in communities needing Blankets, Mosquito nets, Mattresses and kitchen sets.

One other implication of this crisis, is the further displacement of priority by the governors of the region. The North-western region is already impoverished, with more than half of its population living below the poverty line despite the allocations to their states. This crisis provides an avenue for the unaccounted resources to furthermore, not serve the purpose it is meant for; growth and development of the people and the state. This will have a cyclical effect on these states because one of the major reasons for the increase crime rate is poverty. By these state governors diverting attention to solving insecurity in their region, much attention is not given to the problem of the day, as seen in the condition in most of the IDPs centres. By implication making these IDPs tend to engage in begging and in some cases petty theft, which could metamorphoses into bigger crimes to ensure their survival and sustenance. Taking the state and communities back to where it all began, a continuous circle of failure to ensure the provision of the fundamental rights of their citizen.

Conclusion

Banditry, Kidnapping and Cattle rustling have been a re-occurring crime in most parts of Nigeria. The Northwestern part of Nigeria has seen an increase in the violence of these conflicts experienced especially in Kaduna, Katsina, Zamfara, Sokoto, Kano. Although, the nature of these crimes changed can be seen to be facilitated by the acceptance of the commercialization of crime by some elements of the society who acted as informants/collaborators or as suppliers. The implication of this deadly crisis is not only seen in the increase humanitarian crisis in the area but arresting it since they actors and victims are intertwined. The northwestern region is already suffering as one of the poorest in the country with farmers running away from their communities or those who stay are afraid to go to farm, hence the crisis has worsened the already suffering region, displacing thousands within and outside the states, with many more fleeing across the border into another country, especially Niger. This have not only caused the loss and displacement of people but also the displace priorities of the government in ensuring that the menace comes to end. This is because, resources meant to develop the already suffering region is diverted to security of the region, leaving every other sector to suffer.

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