2016 Strategic Conflict Assessment of Nigeria

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Consolidated and Zonal Reports

IPCR

Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution
Abuja

Contents

Foreword

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Since her independence in 1960, Nigeria has experienced different types of violent conflicts that have negatively impacted on the country's population across the six geopolitical zones. As expected, peace and security have been badly undermined by the episodic, yet recurring conflict disorders causing harm, displacement and even death. Apart from violent community conflicts, the insurgency caused by the Boko Haram extremist islamic sect in northern Nigeria; the militancy in the Niger Delta region; the increasing incidences of farmers-herders' violent clashes; the spate of kidnappings and violent robberies, there are also incidences of cultism and separatist agitations that have often turned violent. These conflicts, no doubt, portend harmful consequences for the country's cultural and social values; ethnic cohesion; social integration, stability and sustainable development.

It is against this backdrop that a number of measures are adopted by the government to understand and deal with the phenomenon of dysfunctional conflicts in Nigeria. One of these is the Strategic Conflict Assessment (SCA). This edition, being the fourth since the 2002 assessment, provides accurate and updated data on the violent conflicts in Nigeria. This SCA contains field data and analyses, including conflict prevention and management strategies for government, institutions and communities at various levels. In order to link research to policy and action, the 2016 SCA is accompanied by a National Action Plan (NAP), which focuses on multi-actor partnerships for peacebuilding and conflict regulation in Nigeria.

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I am convinced that government, development partners, civil society groups and communities will find the 2016 SCA and the accompanying NAP useful in responding to the palpable challenges that violent conflict and insecurity pose in Nigeria today. The National Action Plan (NAP) which is an addendum document to this report draws attention to the need for specific actions by all stakeholders in strengthening early warning and conflict prevention infrastructure in the country. IPCR will continue to lead research and practice that will ultimately see Nigeria become a more peaceful and secure country for everyone irrespective of geography, creed or ethnicity.

List of Acronyms

ANSA   Armed Non-State Actors
BCDA   Border Communities Development Agency
CVE   Countering Violent Extremism
DSS   Department of State Services
EWERS   Early Warning and Early Response System
EWS   Early Warning System
FCT   Federal Capital Territory
FGD   Focus Group Discussion
FGN   Federal Government of Nigeria
FOI   Freedom of Information
GDP   Gross Domestic Product
HR   Human Resource
IDP   Internally Displaced Person
IMF   International Monetary Fund
IPCR   Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution
IPOB   Indigenous People of Biafra
J/ACI   Judicial/Administrative Commission of Inquiry
JCI   Judicial Commission of Inquiry
KII   Key Informant Interview
MA   Market Associations
MASSOB   Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra
MNJTF   Multinational Joint Task Force
MOCs   Multinational Oil Companies
NAP   National Action Plan
NBS   National Bureau of Statistics
NDDC   Niger Delta Development Commission
NDLEA   National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency
NEMA   National Emergency Management Agency
NGO   Non-Governmental Organisation
NOA   National Orientation Agency
NSCDC   Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps
NSRP   Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme
NURTW   National Union of Road Transport Workers
OBCs   Oil Bearing Communities
OPC   O'dua People's Congress
PCNI   Presidential Committee on North East Initiative
PDP   People's Democratic Party
PIC   Presidential Implementation Committee
PINE   Presidential Initiative on the North-East
PMS   Premium Motor Spirit
SALWs   Small Arms and Light Weapons
SAP   Structural Adjustment Program
SCA   Strategic Conflict Assessment
SEA   Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SMSE   Small and Medium-Scale Enterprises
TDU   Tanker Drivers' Union
UNDP   United Nations Development Programme

Table

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Executive Summary

1. Introduction

Since 2002, the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) had periodically undertaken strategic conflict assessments (SCAs) of Nigeria for the purpose of providing the Government and other stakeholders with informed and unbiased analysis of conflicts and their implications for the peace and security of the country. In carrying out this exercise, focal attention has often been paid to conflict contexts; trends of violent conflicts, stakeholders (visible and hidden), impacts and implications of conflicts for inter-group relations, state-society relations, and all spheres of human security. The 2016 SCA was conceived to develop an overview of the conflict contexts and trends of violent conflicts in specific and generic terms, identify the visible and shadow parties in conflicts, their interests, capacities, agenda and incentives as well as identify constituencies that can be mobilised for peacebuilding, covering the period from 2013 to 2016.

2. Methods of Study

In generating primary data for the assessment, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted. The respondents and participants were purposively identified representative stakeholders. Others included actors in the conflicts, the victims, formal and informal interveners. Also, ethnographic observations were carried out in the conflict settings studied. The secondary data came largely from academic publications, reports and news sources.

In conception, funding and implementation, the 2016 SCA leveraged on the existing partnership between the Governance and Peacebuilding Unit of UNDP in Nigeria and IPCR. This whole process began with the careful selection of twelve consultants and a team of thirty-six researchers from IPCR to states across the six geo-political zones of the country. Preliminary meetings were held where the instrument to be used for data generation was developed and jointly approved by UNDP, IPCR and the consultants. Towards ensuring that the 2016 edition also compares qualitatively and favourably with similar global documents, and in order to further enrich the zonal reports, three other consultants were subsequently appointed to harmonise and consolidate the output of the six zonal SCA reports.

3. General Findings

In general terms, it is noted from the summary accounts of this consolidated report of the 2016 SCA that occurrences of conflicts in the six geo-political zones of Nigeria have known no territorial or geo-political bounds; variously, from insurgency and militancy as well as a variety of other cross-cutting, forms of inter-group and communal conflicts, including conflicts borne out of youth restiveness, sundry crimes against humanity, political

conflicts, ethno-religious and inter-faith, intra-faith conflicts, conflicts across the North-Central, North-East, North-West, South-East, and South-West, to occurrences of pure, oil-based insurgency, militancy, and inter-identity or sub-identity conflicts in the South-South, including the virtually ubiquitous, and often violent conflict between herders and farmers – as further manifested across the country.

Compared with findings from the formative 2002 SCA, 2016 SCA, the current assessment update reveals far-reaching changes in actors, conflict entrepreneurs, and victims locally, nationally and internationally. Also, a significant shift has occurred in the composition, movement and capacity of actors in conflicts generally across the country, owing to an unprecedented proliferation and flow of small arms and light weapons (SALW) as a result of instability in the sub-region and globally. While the regulation of the main media restrains its involvement in stoking conflicts albeit with occasional failings, the use of the social media has sometimes tended to misinform and send out conflict-generating messages on some occasions in ways inimical to peace and stability. From being seen as the cause of conflicts in the 2002 report, this report found that the military and other security personnel have improved in the discharge of their statutory responsibilities.

Across the country, especially in the rural areas, the nexus of scarcity and conflict complicated by environmental changes undergirds the frequent clashes between the farmers and the herders. Contrary to the common reading of a clash of identity between 'indigenes' (farmers) and 'settlers' (herders), the violent clashes often stemmed from an intense struggle for economic survival of the two occupational groups; that is, the farmers and the herders, worsened by the fragility of inter-group relations. The link between criminality and conflict manifests in the form of rural banditry and cattle-rustling, with dire implications for sustainable food security. Also, across the country, political violence manifesting in pre-election, election and post-election phases were found; although with differing dimensions in tenor and drivers.

Another major shift that has occurred is the increasing challenge to religious, traditional and political authorities, especially by youth groups that hitherto held such institutions and their leaderships in awe and deserving deference. This phenomenon was most pronounced in the urban centres across the country. In some places, it manifested in the seizure of certain parts of the city and enthroning other forms of tolling and governance by armed non-state actors (ANSAs) operating as neighbourhood gangs, ethno-national cults, self-determination groups, land-grabbers (*Omo-Onile* in the South West), militants and insurgents.

The conflict between constituted authorities and the new generation of violent youths has established the relationship between criminality and conflict across the country, although in peculiar contexts across the geo-political zones. Violence between such groups on one hand and clashes between them and security agents has emerged as threats

to public peace, safety and security across the country. Also, found across the country was the resistance of commercial motorcycle operators, otherwise known as the *Okada* riders, against what they consider as insensitive proscription or reduction in the number of routes plied in the quest for urbanisation by many state governments, plus the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja.

The official government responses have been largely militaristic and administrative. Militaristically, security men are typically often deployed to settings of conflicts; while administratively, commissions of inquiry are set up to look into the remote and immediate causes of such conflicts and to make recommendations towards preventing reoccurrence. Also, humanitarian gestures towards cushioning the effects of such man-made disasters are provided by a range of actors including government, local and international donors. In the period covered by the scope of this study, the IPCR-aided by and sometimes working with (inter)national organisations – has often intervened in some of the conflicts, sometimes before and after the escalation of violence, by providing early warning signs and technical support towards exploring paths to peace and recovery.

The victims of conflicts within the geo-political zones of Nigeria have been largely the vulnerable groups; that is, women, children, the physically challenged, and the aged. However, women, children and the physically challenged were also found to be active and willing participants in some cases. Conflicts across the country have placed strains on hitherto peaceful inter-group relations, while worsening state-society relations in many other cases.

4.   Specific Findings

In the North-Central geo-political zone, the herders-farmers incessant conflicts have remained dominant and features in all the states located in the zone. Land remains a scarce resource in this zone, worsened by increasing demand resulting in frequent clashes between the herders and the host communities – most of whom are farmers. Also, rural-banditry and cattle rustling are rife in this zone, characterised by armed assaults, rape, kidnapping, organised attacks and reprisals on the villages and communities. In addition, protracted disputes over supremacy and the right to chieftaincy stools are also historically-prevalent in this geo-political zone; often degenerating into indigene-settler conflicts. Furthermore, urban gangsterism and frequent clashes between these gangs over territories and illegal tolling were found in all the states of this zone. Land, boundary and chieftaincy conflicts involving communities in some states in the zone, and extending to communities within the neighbouring geo-political zones, were also found. Responses have been largely through the deployment of armed security personnel, commissions of inquiry and humanitarian assistance to those affected by the conflicts. Attempts at prosecuting culprits have often not yielded much dividend. Some states in the zone have also initiated amnesty programmes, akin to Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) programmes, as forms of political pardons for warlords.

In the North-East, the impact of insurgency on all aspects of human security, that is, economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, social and political security, are apparent in this zone. This has created an atmosphere of fear, despair and material lack for the displaced and those still in the states in the zone. The state of human insecurity in the zone has not been helped by allegations of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) leveled against the managers of the camps of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). The visible and invisible actors in the landscape of conflict and insurgency have cut across local and international spheres – which have made an outright defeat of terrorism quite challenging for the government.

However, the gains made in the twilight of the erstwhile administration of President Goodluck Jonathan and the consolidation of the gains by President Muhammadu Buhari administration are worthy of note. Although a plan of recovery – Presidential Initiative on the North East (PINE), and a Committee to drive the recovery plan of the North-East has been constituted. These and other initiatives should be more pragmatically fine-tuned to cater for the dynamics of the war against terror and its impact. The Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) intervention, put together by Nigeria, Cameroun, the Republic of Niger, and Chad, is making good progress in curtailing the transnational forays of *Boko Haram*, just as Nigeria's *Operation Lafiya Dole* has recorded unprecedented success. Equally contributing to the success in the war against terror is the support from the international community and the sub-regional national government authorities. However, acknowledging and consolidating the gains should not be oblivious of an emergent phenomenon of female suicide bombers and the use of land mines by the insurgents.

The North-East is not without inter-group conflicts which have become muted by insurgency. Nevertheless, fault-line conflicts in the contexts of faith, ethno-linguistic identities and inter-communal tensions over resources and power subsist in the zone; but not attracting media and academic attention as much as insurgency.

The North-West geo-political zone has its own tapestry of conflicts; some of which are peculiar while some are not. The herders and farmers conflict is one of the conflicts that are not peculiar to the zone. Others are: indigene-settler conflicts; inter-faith tensions between Muslims and Christians; and intra-faith tension between mainstream Islam and the Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN). Intra-faith conflicts also persist amongst Islamic sects in states in the zone. As the immediate neighbour of the North-East geo-political zone, the North-West perhaps comes next as the most terror-affected zone in Nigeria, after the North-East.

The existence of big forests that extend across the states of the zone has facilitated the perpetration of violent acts of rural banditry by criminal gangs who use the expansive and dense forests to terrorise rural areas and commuters on the highways. The situation is further compounded by the proliferation and easy access to sophisticated light arms and ammunitions, which are easily smuggled across the porous borders of the country

as well as the fall-out of the degradation of *Boko Haram* insurgents in the North-East region. Many of such insurgents had escaped into the scattered dense forests of the North-West states. Another manifestation of conflict between youths and constituted authorities in the zone – which fuels insecurity in the North-West zone – is the easy access to, and the use of hard drugs by young people comprising male and female. As in the other geo-political zones, most responses from the government have been to contain or deter the actors by deploying the military and the use of administrative cum judicial option of setting up commissions of inquiry. Conflicts and resultant insecurity in the zone have had destructive effects on trade and commerce, inter- and intra-group relations, state-society relations and human security.

The South-East geo-political zone experiences vertical and horizontal forms of violent conflicts. At the vertical level, inter-communal conflicts exist in the zone within and between communities over land, boundaries and chieftaincy. The zone also experiences violent conflicts between communities in the geo-political zone and others from neighbouring states. The affront to constituted authorities in the zone and nationally in recent times has come first from the Movement for Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) – which are laying claim to a sovereign state of Biafra. Therefore, the South-East suffers separatist agitations and inter-group conflicts. The conflict between farmers and herders in this zone has also been persistent, bearing all the scars of such conflicts. Thus, the existence of self-determination groups (MASSOB and IPOB) in the zone has created a kind of generational conflict in the zone between the old and the young. The impact of conflicts in the zone is broad – resulting in loss of lives and property, displacement and the disruption of economic and communal life.

The South-South geopolitical zone, besides being the hotbed of oil-induced militancy in Nigeria, is also afflicted by inter- and intra-group conflict. Manifestations of conflict between youth groups and constituted authorities therein are evident in instances of youth restiveness. Chieftaincy tussles, land disputes, gangsterism and cultism, political and economic conflicts are equally common in the zone.

As the main source of national earnings, militancy in the zone has had debilitating effects on the socio-economics of the zone and the country. The destruction of critical state installations and that of the multinational oil companies (MOCs) has worsened the degree of environmental degradation in the zone – with harsh implications for food and environmental security. Every sphere of life has been badly affected by the militancy in the zone. At the base of instability and militancy in the zone are injustice, criminality, underdevelopment, ethno-nationalism and the perceived criminal short-changing of the people by the élite of this zone. In the main, the report from this zone has also confirmed the nexus between oil extractive activities and the loss of subsistence survival in the South-South.

Of all the responses and interventions in this zone, the amnesty programme – dating

back to 2009/2010 – has been the most sustained in recent times. It is also observable that successive governments have combined dialogue and force in responding to the conflicts in the zone.

While not having any pitched theatre of conflict, the South-West geo-political zone is not completely free of conflicts and tension, variously resulting from recurrent clashes between the farmers and herders. Indigene-settler conflicts, resistance against the proscription of *Okada* motorcycle operators by state governments, sundry labour disputes, and the *hijab* crisis constituted some of the recent incidences of conflicts in the zone. Increasing wave of gang and cult violent clashes – which imperil the lives of innocent by-standers and residents – was observed in urban centres across the zone. Also, clashes between commercial bus drivers and law-enforcement agents were observed as an urban phenomenon; sometimes leading to wanton destruction of government properties and loss of lives. Land, boundary and chieftaincy-related conflicts – often with long histories – are also common in the zone, and with many of such subject-matter cases pending in the civil law courts. Conflicts between organised labour and state governments over the non-payment of backlog of salaries being owed workers were found virtually across the South-West zone, with the exception of Lagos state.

In general and comparative terms, perhaps the South-West is the geo-political zone with the lowest accounted incidences of violent conflicts in recent times; although, from the state-wide reports on the zone, there are several communities therein seemingly containing conflicts that have become protracted. However, unlike what was found in previous SCAs (2002, 2008 and 2012), 2016 SCA found out that there has been a decline in the frequency of violent conflicts in the South-West zone. It remains to be seen if the relative infrequency of violent conflicts in the zone has been due to improved governance, conflict weariness on the part of the actors, the loss/lack of incentives for violence, or the presence of peace-supporting structures. The latter are some issues for further probative investigation in the future rounds of the post-2016 SCA follow-up scientific fact-finding agenda.

5.   Conclusions

The overall conclusions are the following:

(1)   Compared with the previous SCA editions, changes have definitely occurred in the tenor, weaponry, actors, protraction, spontaneity, geographical scope and victims of conflicts around the country. For instance, armed non-state actors (ANSAs) from within the country and trans-nationally, have emerged in many communities – often led by communal warlords; just as community armouries are proliferating in many conflict and insurgency-affected communities.

(2)   There is also a transnational and global dimension to the sources of rage and grievances, weapons and conflict entrepreneurs in making the analysis of the

landscape of conflict and insecurity deserving of consistent multi-dimensional analysis. Apparently, the existence of militias and community armouries in many communities has rendered policing and the enforcement of law and order much more complex than it was before now. Transnationally, the permeability of borders and the easy access of non-Nigerians with kith and kin into the country have combined to make rural banditry and insurgency both complex and slippery issues of conflict as well as security to handle.

(3)   While the utility value of the notion of "prebendalism" as an analytical framework was probably indisputable within the framework of the original 2002 SCA, the demise or waned influence of notable political patrons and the 'strongmen of politics' across Nigeria's national political spectrum, or what in popular parlance is described as "prebendal politics" (Animasawun, 2016), has definitely altered the socio-political equations and barometer of conflicts in all the geo-political zones of the country. In the place of centralised patron-client systems controlled by these acknowledged 'strongmen', bulk and retail vote-buying and selling are now being used to generally secure or elicit electoral votes in a manner that might be described as unethical, but relatively less violent. Moreover, today, popular sayings like "stomach infrastructure" and "*Edibo, ke sebe*", i.e. "vote and cook"; in other words, "sell your votes and get money to cook a pot of soup", have made winning elections more monetised with vote-buying less centralised and less violent in many places where political patrons held sway. However, while there seems to have been a reduction in the 'strongmen' syndrome in Nigeria's national politics and its effects on "prebendalism", or patron-client relations as an analytical framework for explaining the frequency of violent conflicts in the period covered in this study, the rate of political violence across the states and the geo-political regions has not witnessed a similar appreciable reduction.

(4)   From an amnesty programme embroiled in allegations of corruption and a failed or failing dialogue process with militants in the Niger Delta, the country's main source of foreign exchange earnings – crude oil – has literally been held by the jugular by militants in the region. Of course, the current administration (President Muhammadu Buhari) leaves no one in doubt about its commitment to the restoration of security and order in the Niger Delta region (or the South-South geopolitical zone); and this has been amply demonstrated with the latest political initiatives and endeavours to clean-up the polluted waters of *Ogoniland*. However, there is far more to be done in continuously assuaging the fears of the militants; who are in conflict with the Nigerian state.

(5)   The fault-lines of ethnicity and religion have proven to be very divisive and destructive in Nigeria as they provide narratives of mutual hatred, suspicion and animosity – which unfortunately constitute the basis of making civic choices by the electorate. This occurs at the individual and group levels as a denominator of conflicts.

(6)   Ethnic and religious minorities have become more resistant and sometimes violent in contesting what they consider to be exclusionary policies of the government and repressive conduct of security agencies. This explains the violent clashes between such religious and ethnic groups and security agencies turning ordinarily free and neutral spaces like the streets and schools into theatres of violent confrontations.

(7)   Efforts at disarming, demobilising and reintegrating former combatants and war-lords through amnesty programmes in some states were not devoid of partiality which provided basis for allegations of political patronage, witch-hunting and selective justice in the affected states by critics.

(8)   Having used militias as enforcers in winning elections, many state governments face the risk of such ANSAs becoming threats to peace and security of their states which explains why some of the amnesty programmes look hastily contrived to serve narrow interests.

(9)   Due to paucity of funds, there has been very little that the civil society could achieve beyond advocacy. Remarkably too, they have also engaged on research and local peacemaking, according to the extent of availability of donor funds.

(10)   The media still operate under the yoke of ownership and limited resources in carrying out in-depth investigative research before going to the press – which sometimes brings about inadvertent misrepresentation not taken lightly by parties in conflict. Despite the existence of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act, the access needed to carry out in-depth investigative journalism is still denied. Also, the lack of insurance for many journalists reduces their motivations to go into certain theatres of conflicts in the country – which denies their access to primary sources and visuals from scenes of conflicts. It is also insightful that the media were not spared at the height of the *Boko Haram* insurgency in the country.

(11)   The business community constitutes one of the victims of conflicts and insurgency across Nigeria. However, they are also stakeholders who must be given important roles to play in peacebuilding and security, especially through their pursuit and fulfillment of corporate social responsibilities.

(12)   Women and children amongst the vulnerable groups were fast becoming active participants in some of the conflicts and suicide-bombings. Similarly, women were at the fore-front of protests against raids on their communities and high-handedness of some security personnel deployed to the conflict-ridden zones.

SECTION ONE

Introduction and Methods of Study

1.1 General Introduction

Indeed, peace is imperative for the development, stability and security of nations and individuals. Cognizant of critical centrality within the context of state-society and inter-group relations especially in a big and plural country like Nigeria, measures and processes must constantly be undertaken towards sustaining peace in the country. As a maturing democracy with huge socio-cultural and religious diversity, peace is *sine-qua-non* for democratic consolidation, effective security management and development. This need is not lost on IPCR and that is why with the partnership and unflinching support of UNDP and NSRP, it has regularly embarked on the systematic assessment of conflicts across the country. This is done towards providing holistic and evidence-based recommendations to Government and other critical stakeholders for the sustenance of peace, security and cohesion in the country.

Sequel to the previous editions of the SCAs, the 2016 SCA was particularly aimed at empirically aggregating an overview of the conflict contexts and the associated trends of violent conflicts, analysing the key stakeholders, and mapping-out conflict-related risks and peacebuilding opportunities; with a view to outlining a number of options, covering the intervening period of 2013 to 2016. The 2002 SCA published in 2003 was carried out with the primary objective of having a better understanding of the underlying causes of conflict in Nigeria. But, subsequent to that initial research outing, a number of intervening developments have since taken place, culminating ito the 2016 SCA and Zonal Consolidated Report.

Thus, this 2016 SCA report is an incremental update on the previous series. It is worthy of note that IPCR has continued to improve on every periodic output of the SCA series, utilising innovative methodologies as well as leveraging on appropriate intellectual human capital towards keeping pace with the trajectories and dimensions of the manifestations of conflicts in all contexts across the country. Hence, for all intents and purposes, all of the inclusive zonal SCA reports, from which this consolidated report has evolved, had initially and purposively situated the highlights of the respective geographies, social structures, ecologies and the micro-economies of the six geopolitical zones. The utility value of this kind of baseline data and information-generation, therefore, lies in the field appraiser's ability to perceive the wider nexus between a deeper understanding of such background scenarios and information as well as the necessary comprehension of the inherent or embedded linkages with the real and/or perceived triggers, occurrences, and general social, cultural, political, and economic correlates of conflicts in Nigeria.

For example, in the North-Central, the zone is described as being well-endowed by

nature, with very rich vegetation and providing a lot of attraction to the transhumance herders from the northern states of the country as well as from neighbouring countries in the adjoining sub-regions of West Africa and Central Africa - including the Cameroon, Niger, Chad, Mali, Senegal, and the Central African Republic, among others. This zone is adjudged to be well endowed with irrigated and arable land, rich pasture, forest reserve, and water bodies. The zone has marked ecological diversity and climatic contrasts along with diverse biophysical characteristics, agro-ecological zones and socio-economic conditions. It is indeed the food basket of the country, where about 80 percent of the population of that zone derives their subsistence income from agriculture. Further still, this zone is also endowed with various mineral resources that offer potential for economically-viable industrial and agricultural development projects which include: tin, marble, coal, semi-precious stones, barites and aqua marine; also with vast untapped energy resources.

The conflicts therein have been mainly resource-based and identity-driven in nature. These conflicts become violently expressed in contexts of religious, ethno-religious, indigene-settler, chieftaincy, land and boundary struggles. The latest occurrences of intense herders-farmers conflicts and the associated problem of cattle-rustling and other forms of criminality driven by informal networks (Kwaja, 2013) signify the economically-induced nature of conflicts in the zone.

The current adversarial relationship between farmers and herders can be described as a departure from what used to be a cooperative and peaceful relationship which obtained between the two. As at early 20th Century, herders in Northern Nigeria have had access to vast areas of grassland. However, over time, and with the effect of climate change, urbanisation, population explosion and the practice of irrigated farming, among others, less pasture has become available to the herders (Olayoku, 2014). Hence, this reality and occupational predicament has often necessitated the southward movement of the herders to the coastal zones (i.e. the South-East, South-South and South-West of Nigeria) in search of critical pasture and water – where the rainy season has also tended to be longer.

Thus, significantly, climate change, southward migration, the expansion of farming on pastures and the invasion of crop farmlands by cattle, have been collectively identified as some of the major causes of perennial conflicts in the North-Central. Other identifiable causes of conflicts arising from the context are: assaults and allegations of rape of the non-herders women by the herders; blockage of water points – leading to freshwater scarcities; burning of rangelands; cattle theft; inadequate animal healthcare and disease control; overgrazing of fallow lands; defecation on roads and streams by the cattle; and ethnic stereotyping (*see also* Olayoku, 2014). All of these can be situated within the wider ecological context of struggle for the control and ownership of land as a scarce resource which the pastoralists and farmers depend upon for economic survival.

As a recent country-wide occurrence, the cases of farmers-herders' conflicts were confirmed in all the zonal reports. Fasona, et al (2016), reported that conflicts resulting

from cattle-grazing actually accounted for 35 percent of all reported cases between 1991 and 2005. Also, more recently, Amaza (2016) has reported that, out of a total of 389 incidents of herders and farmers conflicts that spanned 1997 to 2015, a significant chunk of 371 had occurred in the Middle-Belt region alone, also known as the North-Central geopolitical zone of the country. The North-Central states of Benue, the Federal Capital Territory, Kogi, Nasarawa, Niger, Kwara and Plateau, are reportedly the most affected areas in the country. However, there has been no hard statistically-based field evidence or consensus as to whether the farmers or the herders are comparatively worse-hit in the frequent conflict encounters.

Nevertheless, the protraction and impact of the conflict on agricultural production should be seen as a source of research and policy concern by scholars and policy makers. This is underscored by the wider security implications of the incessant clashes between the two and the recent classification of some herders as "*Boko Haram* collaborators" which should be treated as part of Nigeria's contemporary national security challenge (Amaza, 2016).

Similarly, in the North-East zone, politically, the region has been described in the field report as very active, and sometimes out rightly restive – even before the escalation of the *Boko Haram* crises – whose roots cannot be completely divorced from the patron-client nature of politics in the geopolitical zone (Animasawun and Saka, 2013). States in the zone were found to be parts of the major flash-points of post-election violence in 2011 that greeted the victory of the erstwhile administration of President Goodluck Jonathan. Government has had to declare a state of emergency in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa, in May 2013; and earlier in January 2012 in many local government areas of Borno and Yobe states.

In addition, the report of this zone has clearly situated the wider political economy of the entire region. Socio-economically, the North-East geopolitical zone is comprised of states that are leading amongst the dismally-performing state economies. The zone records the highest level of mortality rate; has the highest number of males with no formal education; and the second with the highest number of females with practically no educational attainment. Bauchi and Yobe states within this zone have also individually ranked among the five states of Nigeria that are characterised by absolute poverty rates as observed by Kale (2016). He further submits that 90 percent of households in the zone rely on wood fuel for cooking; desertification is serious in the zone; and 5 out of its 6 states are among the one-third of states with the highest number of under-weight children in the country. Also, despite being in the Lake Chad Basin, access to water is generally low across the entire zone (Kale, 2016).

The report of the South-East zone captures the pertinent scenarios and circumstances of human settlements therein. One of these is the effect of the accentuation of internal migration since the post-civil war period, making the zone to be increasingly multi-ethnic and multi-cultural, especially in the major urban centres, such as Aba, Enugu, Owerri, Onitsha, Abakaliki, Awka, Umuahia, Nnewi and Nsukka. The zone's

endowments and opportunities in agriculture, trade and commerce, have also been major attractions for people of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds from across the country. Necessarily, the growing urbanisation and multiculturalism have further had impacts on the conflict climate in the various states within the zone. In addition, rapid urbanisation and high population density in major cities and towns in the zone have also thrown up the challenges of inadequate infrastructure and social services, leading to a whole range of social, political, security and conflict-inducing issues, including: congestion, inter-communal and inter-ethnic competition, unemployment, cultism, criminality, etc.

The South-South zone was carved out from the former Eastern and the Mid-West regions in 1967. This was a fallout of the Nigerian Civil War and the agitations by the southern Minorities for their own separate identities from the major ethnic groups. The South-South zone began to take its present political shape through subsequent exercises in states creation that were engineered by the Babangida and the Abacha military régimes. Five of the six states in this South-South zone: Akwa Ibom, Rivers, Delta, Bayelsa and Edo states contribute about ninety percent of oil production in the country. These five states therefore represent the core of the oil-producing states in Nigeria and contribute between 85 and 90 per cent of Nigeria's total earnings from oil, as represented in plate 2 of the zone-specific South-South report (South-South zonal report). Incidentally, the 2016 SCA exercise took place in the midst of uncertainties and concerns as oil production plummeted to about 900,000 of barrels per day from its high figure of 2 million production level before the advent of the current administration of President Muhammadu Buhari in 2015 and the renewed hostilities in the South-South zone (Reuters, 2016; Amaize, et. al, 2016).

The report of the South-West zone presents the types, causes, dimensions, victims and the manifestation of the relationship between criminality and conflicts in the period covered. This was done by taking into cognisance the framework of the demands of the region's economic system and the human settlement patterns. For example, also in this zone, the reported frictions and clashes between herders and the farmers were generally highlighted as the result of contemporary security and economic/developmental challenges, like the proliferation of small arms and light weapons as well as the compulsion by the herders to progressively push inland, due to desertification and general ecological emergencies in the Northern parts of Nigeria. In addition, the SCA account of this zone had included rampant increases in the incidents and the illegal activities of oil-bunkering, pipelines vandalism, kidnapping, militancy, and the activities of the "*omo-oniles*" (or, violent land-grabbers) as criminal activities generating inter-group conflicts.

1.2 Methods of Study

The 2016 SCA had been generally anchored on the following core objectives, namely: identification of types of conflicts that are prevalent in the different parts of the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria; establishing the actors involved in the different conflicts across the geopolitical zones; determining the root (that is, historical as well as immediate)

causes of conflicts within these zones; interrogating the ways in which the local populace experience such conflicts; determining the extent to which local efforts and attempts have tended to be made to resolve such conflicts; and, interrogating the success, or otherwise, of such efforts and attempts at resolution of these conflicts.

In order to effectively utilise and optimise the available limited time, the selection of research participants for the intended assessment purposes in the inclusive geopolitical zones was guided by two basic principles. The first was to identify communities, individuals or groups that could be regarded as peaceful. The objective here was to visit, interact and interrogate indexes and indicators that could have made such locations, communities, individuals or groups to be peaceful. In other words, from that onset, there was the need to identify the indicators that tended to generate inter-group peace and peaceful co-existence. The second guiding principle was meant to aid the selection and location of individuals, groups located in violent communities and areas that are prone to incidents of militancy, violent conflicts, pipeline vandalism, oil-bunkering, general criminality, kidnapping, rape and other forms of violence in the six geopolitical zones. The objective of that second principle was to identify and interrogate indicators that tended to generate intergroup conflict and disharmony amongst groups and people in the entire geopolitical zones of Nigeria.

Beyond the foregoing conceptual, organisational and planning phases of the 2016 SCA, the specific and appropriate fieldwork methods that were adopted had basically comprised standard, composite techniques (essentially, a multi-method approach). This involved the deployment of a combination of unobtrusive methods with standard survey technique and embedded questionnaire administration; the conduct of in-depth interviews and focus group discussions in all communities visited. This was preceded by a review of relevant literature and available situation reports on the conflict situations in the communities where the studies were carried out. Formal and informal interviewees and participants at the zonal validation workshops and focus group discussions held included conflict actors, victims, critical and representative stakeholders including religious, traditional, social, political, and economic and security actors.

Thereafter, Zonal Validation Workshops were held in the designated city locations across the six geopolitical zones – with the exception of the South-South zone, where a validation workshop could not be convened as required due to unforeseen challenges. In all, the validation workshops were successfully convened and they provided avenues for feedbacks and corroboration of findings from the fieldwork. Thus, in overview, the overall thrusts and foci of data-generation for the 2016 national SCA, as enunciated in the foregoing, was guided by recognition of the very sensitive and emotive nature of conflicts and security-related matters.

Analyses of the multivariate data, aggregated from the entire SCA fields, were done by carefully taking into focal consideration the structures, actors and dynamics of each conflict type which informed the formulation of the concluding suggestions and recommendations.

1.3 Limitations and Constraints

Given the wider constraints of official logistics, planning, and organisation at the outset, the overall time available and allowable for the complete instrumentation of the 2016 SCA field research was extremely limited. This made the taking of some required general operational decisions about the exact fieldwork strategy, including the selection of locations, sites, communities and individuals and groups for general participation in the SCA somehow difficult and initially challenging. One such effect of the constricted timeframe for the fieldwork was the relative inability to engage in extensive field corroboration through meta-analysis of data and information. These isolated issues were fully addressed in the zonal reports. And, the avenue of a validation workshop, where it was actually convened, had particularly provided a solid methodological buffer for the affirmation of the totality of evidence aggregated from the research field. Overall, the fulfillment of the fieldwork agenda had been pursued with the deployment of standard and best possible approaches of fieldwork administration in the circumstances, and in ways that the primary objectives of the SCA were largely ultimately achieved.

SECTION TWO

The Background to Conflicts in Nigeria

2.1 History

Athough Nigeria fought no physical war to gain political independence from the colonialists. However, in less than a decade after independence, the country was involved in a civil war from 1967 to 1970 which ended on a note of "No Victor, No Vanquished" and followed by the pursuit of three Rs of Reconciliation, Rehabilitation and Reintegration which can be likened to a postconflict peacebuilding initiative. As the most populous country on the African continent, understanding conflicts in Nigeria offers a reliable window at examining a significant proportion of the continent. According to the *Time* Magazine (New York), quoted in Adebanwi and Obadare (2010: 380) '. . . in the long run, the most important and enduring face of Africa might well prove to be that presented by Nigeria.' This underscores the hope and expectation of the rest of the world from Nigeria. Therefore, events in Nigeria, not the least conflicts in any part of Nigeria, cannot but be of interest to the global audience. However, despite its huge potentialities evident in the endowment of vast human and natural resources that are enough to make a global super-power and the predicted giant, conflicts and insurgency are part of the actualities torpedoing the realisation of its destiny.

Contentions and resistance have been part of inter-group relations, on the one hand, and state-society relations, on the other hand. Despite pessimistic and terse descriptions, like the 'mistake of 1914', Nigeria remains one entity, although troubled in a way that proves many local and foreign analyses wrong. Therefore, it is important not to ignore actualities that are torpedoing its potentialities, such as endemic conflicts. To date, the widely-reported words of Sir Ahmadu Bello which called for the understanding of our differences rather than forgetting them, remains valid as a way of transcending being a mere geographical expression as described by the late sage, Chief Obafemi Awolowo.

Respective governments, especially since the end of the civil war have been making efforts at ensuring the sustainability of the country as one through different programmes, policies and actions. Given the size and disparity of socio-linguistic identities and religious differences, the results of such efforts, albeit gargantuan, towards nationhood continue to beg for more innovative ways of addressing the national and social question of being and belonging to Nigeria. Towards nationhood, Nigeria continues to experience, and has experimented with, different political systems, ideologies and economic policies.

Each of these successive administrations has or had maintained commitment to the preservation of Nigeria as an indivisible entity, even in the face of daunting challenges. Worthy of mention amongst some of the challenges to Nigeria's unity, which have been

surmounted since the civil war, was the 12 June, 1993 crisis which arose after the annulment of the presidential election believed to be the freest and fairest in the history of the country. It was a direct threat to the unity of the country which entailed the intervention of the international community in finding a political solution out of the logjam that arose. In the aftermath, lives and belongings whose estimate cannot be precisely determined were lost. Since then, a series of industrial actions which led to social protests and unrests have been witnessed, especially anytime the government increased the pump price of the Premium Motor Spirit (PMS), or petrol. That of January 2012 remains the most involving as it brought together Nigerians, irrespective of ethnic and/or religious differences in a setting akin to the government versus the people of the country.

Table 1: Chronology of Political Regimes in Nigeria since 1 October, 1960

Name of Head of Government	Period	Regime Type
Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa	October 1, 1960-January 15, 1966	Elected Civilian
General Aguiyi J.T. Ironsi	January 15, 1966-July 29, 1966	Military
General Yakubu Gowon	July 29, 1966-July 29, 1975	Military
General Murtala Muhammed	July 29, 1975-February 13, 1976	Military
General Olusegun Obasanjo	February 13, 1976-October 1, 1979	Military
Alhaji Shehu Usman Aliyu Shagari	October 1, 1979-December 31, 1983	Elected Civilian
General Muhammadu Buhari	December 31, 1983-August 27, 1985	Military
General Ibrahim Babangida	August 27, 1985-August 27, 1993	Military
Chief Ernest Oladeinde Shonekan	August 27, 1993-November 17, 1993	Interim National Government
General Sani Abacha	November 17, 1993-June 8, 1998	Military
General Abdulsalam Abubakar	June 8, 1998-May 29, 1999	Military
Chief Olusegun Obasanjo	May 29, 1999 to May 29, 2007	Elected Civilian
Umaru Musa Yar'Adua	May 29, 2007-May 5, 2010	Elected Civilian
Dr Goodluck Ebele Jonathan	May 5, 2010-May 29, 2015	Elected Civilian
President Muhammadu Buhari	May 29, 2015-	Elected Civilian

Source: Adapted from Adebanwi and Obadare (2010:382).

Since 1999, election-related violence and assassinations have been common in the polity such as the one that greeted the election of former President Goodluck Jonathan in the northern parts of the country in 2011. However, anxieties generated by the analyses of many bookmakers that the 2015 elections might push Nigeria off the brink did not materialise.

While still standing and surviving as a political entity after about six continuous decades, the country, nevertheless, continues to grapple with the challenges of citizenship, belonging and being otherwise referred to as the national question – which can be described as the denominator of many of the inter-group conflicts across the country. Also, while certain academic conclusions, such as 'the politics of the belly' (Bayart, 1993), the 'disorder as political instrument' (Chabal and Daloz, 1999), 'the criminalisation of the state' (Bayart, Ellis, and Hibou, 1999), 'prebendalism' (Joseph, 1987), 'predation' (Lewis, 1996), 'the politics of suffering and smiling' (Chabal, 2009), 'resource curse' (Humphreys, Sachs and Stiglitz, 2007), 'the perils of belonging' (Geschiere, 2009), might not be applicable in analysing the Nigerian situation in a sweeping manner, they mirror some of the challenges confronting the country at the structural or political (governmental) level.

In the context of inter-group relations, struggles and resistance against political and economic inequality have given rise to different notions and mobilisations of "we" versus "them" violence. In many instances, such conflicts speak to the framework of grievance and greed popularised by Collier and Hoeffler (2004). In many instances, what begins as real grievances over time become means of nurturing greed, leading to the emergence of many warlords posturing as defenders of their respective communities but actually bargaining for more of what the state has to offer in terms of pecuniary gains and relevance. While this may or may not be known to their foot soldiers, such violent conflicts pursued with veiled selfish interests have posed dire challenges to the peace and stability of Nigeria.

Intense struggle for natural resources tied to the survival of man (people) and animal have also made communities restive in recent times across the country, leading to rural banditry across the country in the context of pastoralists and farmers engulfed in protracted and intermittent violence. This is characterised by raids and cattle-rustling with transnational and sub-regional dimensions that make it tasking for the authorities and security agencies to contain. It sometimes conflates with indigene-settler and inter-faith conflicts in some communities; and this makes it slippery for a generic analysis, despite the similarities in the patterns of occurrence.

The Niger Delta militants and the *Boko Haram* insurgents have become the leading actors amongst ANSAs violently engaging the Nigerian state. In addition, there are other dangerous, although lesser known ANSAs across the country, operating sometimes as defenders of community rights or raging against their respective communities.

2.2 Geographical Spread and Categorisation of Conflicts

The North-Central Zone

2.2.1 Types, Actors, Contexts, Causes, Impacts and Drivers of Conflicts

2.2.1.1 Farmers-Herders Conflict

The North-Central zone, as the most ethno-nationally and religiously diverse geopolitical zone in the country, has its own tapestry of conflicts. In the context of resource-based conflicts, the geopolitical zone experiences conflicts between farmers and herders, while cattle-rustling are a conflict-generating crime in the zone. The main cause is the environmental resource scarcity-induced movement of herders from the northern part of the country southward. Other identifiable causes of conflicts between the herders and the farmers are the blockage of water points leading to freshwater scarcity, burning of rangelands, cattle theft, inadequate animal health care and disease control, overgrazing of fallow lands, defecation on roads and streams by cattle, extensive sedentarisation, and ethnic stereotyping.

The main trigger is the widespread encroachment of farmlands, destruction of farm produce and alleged raping of non-*Herders* women by the herders. The debate on grazing reserves versus ranching continues, while, informally, the top hierarchy of the umbrella body of the herders regularly intervenes to pay compensation in established cases of encroachment and destruction of produce. But in mismanaged instances, attacks and reprisal attacks have been common. All of these can be situated into the context of access to and control of land as a scarce resource and economic survival of the pastoralists and farmers.

Analysis, Impacts and Gaps in Responses

Cases of farmers-herders conflicts have been widespread in Nigeria in recent times. Conflicts resulting from cattle-grazing actually accounted for 35 percent of all reported cases between 1991 and 2005. Out of reported 389 incidents of herders and farmers conflicts from 1997 to 2015, 371 had occurred in the Middle-Belt, otherwise known as the *North-Central*. The *North-Central* states of Benue, the Federal Capital Territory, Kogi, Nasarawa, Niger, Kwara and Plateau, are the most affected areas in the country. There is no clear consensus on whether the farmers or the herders are worse hit.

However, the effect on arable crops, which constitutes the substantial part of Nigeria's agricultural production, has been a source of serious research and academic debate and a source of concern for the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN). The security of the state and human security implications have escalated to unprecedented proportions with the recent classification by foreign and local observers of some herders as *Boko Haram* collaborators, or the next security challenge. Food and economic security have been the worst-hit, while the collateral damage to, or the adverse impact caused on, the women have become another externality of the conflict; given the extent of allegations of rape of women in virtually all communities where the conflict has occurred. Also, personal

and communal security has been adversely affected – given the increasing wave of kidnappings for ransom that have been added to the profile of the conflict. Till date, there has been no firm policy or programmed response in place in the North-Central zone to pointedly address the question.

Recommendations

Responses from security agents in proffering solution to the crises has been limited and it is suggested in this consolidated report that, rather than treating such matters enunciated in the foregoing as a crime, they should be viewed as conflicts affecting all parties involved, and for which joint-problem solving should be applicable. Cognizant of the fact that resource-based conflicts are more amenable because there is a tangible lot to be shared, managed or reallocated to all concerned; while creative joint problem-solving approaches, effective and conflict-sensitive legislations will go a long way in reconciling the neighbours turned foes.

Another conflict context in this zone is the unresolved question of belonging, framed as indigene-settler conflicts. Conflicts have been mainly resource-based and identity-related in nature. Such conflicts have been characterised by religious violence, ethno-religious conflicts, intense indigene-settler clashes/brushes as well as those directly driven by the natural human cravings for access to land and socio-economic livelihoods. This runs across the entire states in this zone, often pitching ethnic and sometimes religious majorities against the minorities within the context of rabid struggles for political and economic advantages over the "ethnic/religious others". This is often mostly triggered during elections or when political appointments are to be made and gladiators whip up such narratives to exclude or resist, as the case may be.

2.2.1.2 Indigene-Settler Crisis

Analysis, Impacts and Gaps in Responses

Indigene-settler conflicts often oscillate between the resource and value-based contexts of conflicts. Therefore, in responding to them, approaches must take note of their peculiarities. They constitute resource-based conflicts because divisive narratives of indigene-settler dichotomies have often translated to favorite campaign rhymes used by politicians in many cases of seeking for votes or when mobilising for specific selfish interests for which no rational or logical arguments can be adduced. In another vein, the value-based nature of this category of conflicts has also tended to manifest through the continuous thickening of enemy-images of ethnic and religious others, by the extended usage of folklores, music and other forms of arts to reinforce the sometimes-perceived feelings of superiority of one group over the other.

While the constitution makes no preference for so-called indigenes over the so-called settlers, social practices have remained exclusionary; using the binaries of indigeneship and settler status in accessing often scarce public resources and enhancing socio-economic and political mobility. Unfortunately, security responses and the use of Judicial Commissions of Inquiries (JCIs) have done little to resolve the crisis as their

recommendations are hardly implemented and found satisfactory by parties in such conflicts. Therefore, each episode seems like a sequel to the next one.

Recommendations

Managing and transforming a conflict that is essentially value-based and resource-driven, such as the indigene-settler type, requires ethno-national consensus for peace, mobilised and shared by the peace constituency on both sides of the conflict. Deliberate studies into each case of such conflicts will yield peculiar findings that will constitute the basis for making far-reaching interventions that may encompass a range of activities, including but not limited to legislation, the partitioning of communities, provision of shared amenities, fair/re-distribution of economic and political opportunities, amongst others. It is further instructive to state that the state/government has a pivotal role to play in managing or transforming such conflicts.

2.2.1.3 Land, Boundary and Chieftaincy Conflicts

Land and boundary conflicts within and between states are also common in the North-Central zone. Within states, many communities have been embroiled in protracted conflicts, some of which have defied litigation even by the highest court of the land. In such cases, there is a conflation of three issues; land, boundary, and chieftaincy. Owing to these contestations in such contexts, it often slows down progress at the communal level and sometimes frustrates the provision of social amenities to such communities. This is so because, sometimes, governments prefer not to trigger conflicts or create a feeling that it favours one community against or over the other.

Analysis, Impacts and Gaps in Responses

This becomes delicate to handle because, in many instances, solving one of the questions may not bring about a resolution of the other two. This is made more difficult by the fact that many local government areas were pronounced as such without any border delineation; therefore, the choice of the location of the headquarters of such emergent local government areas might mean encroachment into the territory of another local government. Due to the fact that there are many split-border communities in Nigeria, the elevation of a traditional ruler, whose people are found in two local government areas, often puts pressure on the state government to promote traditional rulers or create/approve new chiefdoms/emirates which most governments are not always favourably disposed to.

Some of the parties in such conflicts rely on the court process which takes a long time to be determined and when such cases are determined at the lower court, parties explore the options of appealing against ruling – which tends to create a circus show in many cases. The anatomy of this kind of conflicts can be challenging because they are sustained by a self-justifying sense of correctness which portrays the other parties in conflict as the wrong party. The conflict also promotes a sense of communal victimhood shared by parties, whether rightly or wrongly.

Recommendations

Again, the government has a major role to play in mitigating the tension associated with such conflicts, while encouraging parties to be more creative in managing such conflicts. It is important to consider the exploration of using shared development as a means of creating a new thinking amongst such communities by considering the use of such disputes boundaries as zones of shared development and prosperity. The governments should be conflict-sensitive in its conduct so as not to create an impression that it is favouring any of the sides in the conflict.

2.2.1.4 Inter-Gang Violence

Analysis, Impacts and Gaps in Responses

Due to the phenomenon of urban gangsterism, many streets and neighbourhoods have become unsafe; as inter-gang violence breaks out at will and in the processes both the gang members and bystanders often lose their lives. Therefore, its impact on personal and communal security stares all in the face. While the *okada* crisis seems to have subsided, without coming up with a clear-cut replacement or the provision of alternative sources of livelihoods, such conflicts might erupt again and perhaps in wider ramifications because of their implications for security.

A relationship can be drawn in the non-provision of alternative sources of livelihoods for young men, whose *okada* have been taken away or seized by government officials; and the existence of neighbourhood gangs. This is because, over time, joblessness might serve as a "push" factor, pushing the dispossessed to join such criminal gangs, also thereby worsening public peace and security circumstances.

Recommendations

Similarly, governments must evolve inclusive mitigating strategies in view of the gangsterism that has become phenomenal in the cities, threatening public peace at will and getting away with it because of their alleged relationships with many top government functionaries and politicians; as well as proactive measures to combat banditry and the conflict-generating factor in the cities, the proscription of *Okada* riders and the attendant public disturbances it, i.e. the proscription, may create by their reactions.

The North-East Zone

2.2.2   Types, Actors, Contexts, Causes, Impacts and Drivers of Conflicts

2.2.2.1 Insurgency

Analysis, Impacts and Gaps in Responses

While the causes of insurgency have continued to receive the attention of scholars and policymakers, the impact of insurgency on all aspects of human security, that is,

economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, social and political security, are apparent in this zone. This has created an atmosphere of fear, despair and material lack for the displaced and those still in the states in the zone.

The state of human insecurity in the zone is not helped by allegations of Sexual Expoitation and Abuses (SEA) leveled against managers of the camps of the IDPs. The visible and invisible actors in the landscape of conflict and insurgency have cut across local and international spheres which have made an outright defeat of terrorism quite challenging for the government.

However, the gains made in the twilight of the erstwhile administration of President Goodluck Jonathan and the consolidation of the gains by President Muhammadu Buhari are worthy of note. Although a plan of recovery – named the *Buhari Plan* – and the Presidential Committee on North East Initiative (PCNI) to drive the recovery plan are in place, these and other initiatives should be pragmatically fine-tuned to cater for the changes in the war against terror and its impact.

The MNJTF intervention put together by Nigeria, Cameroun, the Republic of Niger, and Chad, has made good progress in curtailing the transnational forays of *Boko Haram*, just as Nigeria's Operation *Lafiya Dole* has recorded unprecedented success. Equally contributing to the success in the war against terror is the support from the international community and the sub-regional government authorities.

Recommendations

(1) Governments at all tiers, local and international, not-for-profit organisations, and the international community, must sustain on-going humanitarian, technical and strategic supports being given to Nigeria; while the country sustains the exploration of more of such collaborations. However, it must be realised that Nigeria is entering a new phase in its war against terrorism, rather than approaching an end to it.

(2) There must be inclusive commitment to skillful handling of inter-group conflicts and tension, especially; indigene-settler-related, intra and inter-faith-based, and herders-farmers-induced in order not to aggravate insurgency or create another round of emergencies.

(3) In responding to public protests, the security agencies should move from a repressive approach to a negotiated approach; by jointly agreeing with such protesting groups on the terms of such protests. This will bring about a balance in the maintenance of order and protection of the human rights of protesters as citizens of the state.

(4) The criminalisation of dissents by groups in the state should be discouraged as a state response, because, rather than being imposed, order might have to be negotiated in some situations.

(5) While the military and intelligence-gathering, processing and response must be sustained, it is important to fully deploy development as a means of discouraging attractions to anti-social trappings, like terrorism.

(6)   The vastness of the zone and permeability of its borders have combined in creating many ungoverned spaces in the area – which calls for a more novel approach to border-policing and effective state presence in all areas within its territory.

(7)   Peace education targeted towards enthroning a culture of peace and empowerment, based on human security needs of the people and the environment, must be given adequate attention in ensuring sustainable peace, and cordial, state-society relations must be tapped into. Recovery and peacebuilding must be women-sensitive, participatory and inclusive.

(8)   The political and religious elites in this zone must change from using divisive rhetoric and fault lines of faith, ethnicity or other forms of primordial belonging for winning elections, or forging political alliances – a change in socio-political behaviour towards a more constructive, accommodating and inclusive society.

(9)   A vision of inclusive, coherent and participatory postconflict peace process – that does not breed any form of violence – will tend to erase unjust, repressive and oppressive socio-cultural, political and religious structures through the use of peace education.

Therefore, peace education should be used to drive peacebuilding in a way that is attentive to the socio-religious and cultural plurality and peculiarities of each locale in the North-East. This form of education should aim at restoring sources of livelihoods of the IDPs towards re-establishing prosperity.

(1)   Peace-education – which emphasises new ways of teaching memories, history, narratives, and ideals of social justice, belonging and human rights (Oshita et al 2016) – should be promoted in both formal and informal spaces of learning.

(2)   The capacity of the worst-affected segment of the population, especially women, children and adolescents, should be tapped into; to facilitate peace and reconciliation in the context of people-to-people relations and state-society relations within the *North-East*, by using education. This is because educating this category of people can bring about a shared memory of the ugly past, which can play a major role in the process of postconflict/insurgency reconstruction, re-integration and rehabilitation to set the zone free from the conflict trap.

(3)   A new mode of engagement with the controllers and shapers of opinions, comprising religious, social, political and economic notables in the geopolitical zone – based on a shared vision of post-insurgency peace, should be led by the government at all levels.

(4)   Inclusive and participatory operationalisation of empowerment, situated within the context of *North-Eastern* socio-cultural and religious values – rather than imported or imposed – should be engendered.

(5) The "push" effects of poverty, hopelessness and ignorance can be neutralised by peace-education; driven by local actors, empowered by the government, and other stakeholders.

(6) The MNJTF – which comprises Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria – should be sustained to prevent the regeneration of *Boko Haram*.

(7) Improvements in the early warning and early response systems (EWERS) as well as intelligence sharing to enhance interaction with the locals for the provision of appropriate responses.

(8) Government and communities should continue to welcome, accept, de-radicalise, rehabilitate and reintegrate members of *Boko Haram* who surrender.

(9) The sustenance and broadening of de-radicalisation and counter-radicalisation, or countering violent extremism (CVE), are additionally of critical essence.

(10) There is the need to pay more attention to the physical and psycho-social needs of victims of insurgency including IDPs.

(11) Government must pay attention to the global and regional currents/ undercurrents of violent extremism and how they connect with the local or Nigerian context.

2.2.2.2 Inter-Group Conflicts

The existence of other conflicts in the geopolitical zone cannot be ignored. These conflicts are in the contexts of indigene-settler claims, farmers and herders conflicts, IDPs-community conflicts, ethno-religious conflicts, land and boundary disputes, election and post-election violence, inter and intra-faith conflicts, and general youth restiveness.

Analysis, Impacts and Gaps in Responses

It is important to note that some of the conflicts have arisen because of the terrorist activities of *Boko Haram*, especially the ones between IDPs and host communities; while some had always existed prior to the escalation of insurgency. It is important to clarify that most of these conflicts occur, or have occurred, largely over clashing values and contests for access to and the control of limited resources, such as land and political power. This is because of the unrestricted access to public coffers which winning elections and holding political offices tend to offer. Thus, the denominators of most of the conflicts are access and exclusive control of resources. While insurgency might have muted or frozen some conflicts, especially inter-group types, the unity of purpose against evil – demonstrated by the people of the zone against terrorism – provides a window of opportunity which can be explored to build sustainable peace in the context of inter-group relations.

Recommendations

The recovery plan should be driven in an inclusive way that alienates practically no

group in the zone. As the underlying factors of inter-group animosity hardly go away, government will do well to address these in a very transparent and convincing way.

The North-West Zone

2.2.3   Types, Actors, Contexts, Causes, Impacts and Drivers of Conflicts

2.2.3.1 Farmers-Herders Conflict

This has also been a major and common form of conflict occurrence and regularity in the North-West zone in general, as a function of the enormous pressure on the land resource, also attributed to a combination of factors. The entire populace of the states within this zone is predominantly made up of farmers, but with a large segment of that total population also engaged in commerce and animal husbandry.

Analysis, Impacts and Gaps in Responses

A combination of factors, ranging from rising settler population within the geo-political zone, increased ethnic nationalism; increased pressure on the available land - which make access to farming and grazing much more difficult; cases of land speculating; the wider effects of climate change; to decreased socio-economic opportunities and the direct activities of herders; have resulted in the emergence and perpetuation of this endemic conflict. This conflict has recurrently led to frequent clashes between herders and farmers in the states within the zone, often resulting in heavy losses of lives and the destruction of property as well as the killing of livestock.

Recommendations

More fundamentally, government must generally promote peace and general development as a sustainable antidote, most particularly, against undesirable but incessant occurrences of this form of conflict.

Besides, pastoralist communities should also be trained in specialised ways, so they could begin to accept sedentary livelihoods and peacefully cohabit/coexist with local communities. Moreover, the individual governments across this zone should implement carefully thought-out grazing policies and provision of social infrastructure to minimise the continuous movement of pastoralists within the zone.

Multilateral actors, including government and the non-governmental/civil society organisations, must continue to be active and purposively work together to promote the absolutely necessary enterprise of good governance, for the absolute reduction of conflicts and possible total elimination of this form of conflict that often causes incredible devastation of lives and property across the zone, whenever it occurs. It is noteworthy that, in states, like Kaduna and Kano, within the zone, civil society organisations have

traditionally been involved in numerous conflict resolution and peacebuilding initiatives in collaboration with governments.

It is necessary for the government to urgently initiate the process of registering pastoralists that enter Nigerian territory; as is the case in The Gambia, Chad, Niger, Cameroon, and other Francophone West African countries. This will help in ensuring that only legitimately-established economic migrants enter into the Nigerian territory. Besides, there is also a need to improve border management strategies to check the proliferation of SALWs as well as to track and ward-off criminals.

2.2.3.2 Politically-motivated conflicts

The manifested scenarios of conflict occurrences in the North-West zone, including the reported politically motivated conflicts, are also generally explainable within the context of the enduring wider social structure, the historical trajectory and political economy of the Northern region of Nigeria.

Analysis, Impacts and Gaps in Responses

The occurrence and frequency of this type of conflict – often propagated by politicians; political thugs and hired spokespersons (men/women) – has been attributed to the fight for supremacy by politicians, and the perceived marginalisation, social exclusion of some groups and sections of the populace within the zone.

Recommendations

The political class should play politics by the rules in order to engender confidence among the people and ensure the upholding of the rule of law at all times. Also, political authorities should respect the sanctity of traditional institutions. This may likely reduce conflicts that emanate from political interference.

Similarly, as this type of conflict occurrence is a further challenge to governance process, the government should strengthen and provide institutional support for the civil society sector to play deserving and increasing roles in conflict prevention, management and development-oriented initiatives. Furthermore, the national and state governments should particularly reinvigorate the local government system and allied institutions to play their roles more effectively.

2.2.3.3 Ethno-religious conflicts

The states within this geo-political zone have large numbers of Muslims and Christians especially in Kaduna and, to a lesser extent, Kebbi, Zamfara, and Katsina states. Two of the states, Kano and Kaduna, also particularly in their capital cities host large numbers of non-indigene population of different ethnic and religious backgrounds that have settled for generations; and, notably with many of them now fully 'indigenised'' and claiming citizenship of these states.

Analysis, Impacts and Gaps in Responses

The accounting factors for this type of conflict occurrence include the fight for supremacy by religious leaders; and the bane of provocative preaching, fanaticism, the perpetration of hate speeches on radio stations and the social media inter- and intra-sect leadership tussles, etc. The circumstances of this zone have been further compounded by the effects of population pressure, through rural-urban migration and uncontrolled immigration from the neighbouring countries.

Recommendations

The existing facility of an active civil society sector within this zone should be further enhanced and leveraged to promote peace education and security awareness as well as the continuing involvement of the civil society alongside government in the primary promotion of good governance, towards necessary reduction of conflicts and wider propagation of the culture of peace as well as symmetrical human development of the zone.

The South-East Zone

2.2.4 Types, Actors, Contexts, Causes, Impacts and Drivers of Conflicts

Overall, the SCA findings from this geo-political zone have suggested that the trajectories and pervasiveness of the generality of the following and other listed conflicts in the specific zonal report have often depended largely on the availability of, and the capacity for, effective conflict management structures, and the deployment of potent resolution measures that could ideally be jointly taken by government, non-governmental organisations, and other grassroots stakeholders. Also, in generic terms, practically all of the conflict cases recorded in the study communities across this zone have had one or combinations of specific adverse impacts on the affected people, institutions and communities.

2.2.4.1 Farmers-Herders Conflict

The recurrence of farmers-herders clashes in the South-East zone, especially in Enugu state, is an affirmation of the seemingly ubiquitous nature of this type of conflict across the six geo-political zones of Nigeria.

Analysis, Impacts and Gaps in Responses

The conflict between herders and farmers is borne out of land encroachments of the herders over farmlands. This conflict has been exacerbated by other factors such as the proliferation of SALWs, climate change and urbanisation. They have often resulted in the destruction of farmlands, crops and livestock, pollution of drinking water among other factors. Consequently, there have been injuries, loss of lives, other human and

physical impacts; damages to and loss of property; social displacement and disruption of communal life; and incidences of rape and other attendant crimes.

Recommendations

There is need for the following:

(1) Strengthen capacity for conflict prevention and peacebuilding at community and institutional levels.

(2) Multilateral action to manage and effectively reduce the adverse impact of violent conflict through synergies between communities, government, non-governmental organisations and international organisations.

(3) Create, develop and strengthen relevant government agencies for effective prevention and management of conflicts.

(4) Efficient and effective conflict-response and intervention mechanisms, especially at the local and state levels.

2.2.4.2 Intra- and Inter-State Land Disputes

This category of social disputes is another manifestation of the widespread struggle for political, social and economic leverage by the populace of this zone as exemplified by Umuode and Orukwu communities in Enugu state; Ikwuano and Osisioma in Abia state which also have boundary issues with Akwa Ibom and Ebonyi states; Ngbo (Enugu state) and Agila (Benue state) boundary dispute; and Ezza and Ezillo Communal Land Conflict in Ebonyi state which had lasted over five decades with the most recent escalation of hostilities occurring in 2014 and 2015.

Analysis, Impacts and Gaps in Responses

The remote causes of the conflict are boundary dispute, indigene-settler dichotomy, politics, culture, tradition and alleged distortions of historical facts. The immediate causes had included interpersonal conflict, abuse of power, boundary adjustment, position of the State Governments on the matters, and autonomy claims. Even though no violent conflict has been noticed in the recent time, the fundamental issues have not been sufficiently dealt with by the stakeholders. There is still high level of mistrust among the communities, and most people who were displaced during previous conflicts have not been reintegrated.

The gap noted is the lack of trust due to suspicions and allegations of partiality against governments in resolving the conflict as well as minimal involvement of civil society organisations in the peacebuilding processes.

Recommendations

(1) State Governments should establish and equip agencies and platforms to build peace and prevent violent conflicts.

(2) The Ministry of Border, Peace and Conflict Resolution in Ebonyi state and the Bureau for Peace and Conflict Resolution in Imo state should be strengthened through training and capacity building to make them more effective in peacebuilding processes.

2.2.4.3 Chieftaincy and Community Leadership Tussles

So long as chieftaincy (or *Eze-ship*) titles and leadership positions within human communities remain and/or are perceived as positions of enormous socio-political power, authority and influence, then, chieftaincy and general leadership titles and positions will be increasingly attractive; and people within communities and human societies will aggressively crave for the attainment or acquisition of these titles – as manifested in the zonal SCA report on the South-East. Hence, and expectedly, chieftaincy and community leadership tussles will continue to escalate and result in avoidable threats to enduring societal peace and security.

Analysis, Impacts and Gaps in Responses

Since the return of democratic governance in 1999, and in particular since 2011, there has been a gradual proliferation of conflicts arising from contestations for chieftaincy positions in communities across the South East zone. As at the end of 2016 when the survey was carried out, about 60 percent of Imo state communities were caught up in various tussles over chieftaincy (*Eze-ship*) as a result of carving out of more autonomous communities in the state by further breaking up of existing autonomous communities. For instance, from just over 100 autonomous communities that existed in 2011, the 2016 survey found that there is over 600 percentage increase in autonomous communities in the Zone. This trend has therefore led to multiple contestations over *Eze-ship* in the South-East zone.

Recommendations

(1) The Ministries and Agencies responsible for chieftaincy affairs should streamline the processes and procedures of establishing autonomous communities.

(2) Government should check the proliferation of autonomous communities by ensuring that they are not created for political patronage.

2.2.4.4 Youth Restiveness

Youth restiveness resulting from unemployment, frustration and exclusion which manifests through various anti-social acts, such as, thuggery, electoral violence, involvement in other acts of criminality. For example, youth involvement in communal land and boundary dispute, chieftaincy and leadership tussles, farmers-herders conflict, electoral violence, self-determination protests, environmental resource-related conflict, cultism and other anti-social activities have resulted in arrests and detention of the youths.

2.2.4.5 Self-Determination Agitations and Civil Protests

Effects of violent agitations and protests have typically impeded governance process and the delivery of public services; caused the disruption of school programmes, etc. In the same vein, self-determination agitations are also often products of unfavorable perceptions and the feelings of resentment against unpopular government policies and practices. Oftentimes, the objective circumstances of segments of the Nigerian population, including feelings of alienation, marginalisation and general development neglect are active triggers of self-determination agitations and endemic civil protests.

Analysis, Impacts and Gaps in Responses

Major towns and commercial centers (such as Onitsha, Aba, Nkpor) across the South-East zone have witnessed sporadic agitations and protests by people who identified themselves as members of the Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), since 2013/2014. These protests and demonstrations, which sometimes turned violent, have become more frequent and large-scale, following the arrest and detention of the leader of IPOB, Nnamdi Kanu, in 2015. Since then, several protests have turned violent. A number of casualties were reported across the states in the zone following clashes between the Pro-Biafran agitators and security agencies. Some of these protests occurred in Ukwa West and Aba South (Abia state), Nkpor and Onitsha (Anambra state) between January and May 2016.

Recommendations

(1) Government should consider dialogue and constructive engagement in resolving issues of self-determination and civil agitations within the zone.

(2) The deployment and conduct of security agencies to conflict situations should conform to international best practices.

(3) Government at all levels should strengthen inclusive and accountable governance to prevent feeling of alienation.

(4) Government should invest more in infrastructural development, human security and well-being.

(5) Practical measures should be taken to address the widespread erosion in the zone.

2.2.4.6 Oil-related Conflicts and Cultism

In addition to the conflict disorders afflicting the zone, the oil producing communities of Awara, Ochia, Obile, Umuapu, Obosima, Abacheke, Assa and Obiakpor (Imo state) and Osisioma (Abia state) are faced with the problem of cultism. Some of the cult groups include Debam-Niger Delta Red Squad and Dewell-Niger Delta Rescue Squad.

Analysis, Impacts and Gaps in Responses

The violent activities of these cult groups include raping, killing, destruction of property, closing down of schools and churches, and destruction of oil installations which made

majority of the people, including the traditional authorities (*Ezes*), religious priests, school teachers and oil workers to flee the communities. The communities are considered unsafe, as even the security agents are reluctant to venture into those communities because of the cultists who are reputed to have ample supply and control of sophisticated weapons. On the other hand, these cultists do not consider themselves to be such but rather as agitators against development neglect, unemployment and lack of infrastructure and social amenities within their communities.

Another dimension to the oil-related conflict is the reported struggle over what is called the "MOU" (Memorandum of Understanding) which is an agreement signed between oil companies and host communities but which terms are sometimes not respected by the parties.

Recommendations

(1)   The traditional authority should be empowered to exercise their traditional roles.

(2)   The law enforcement agencies and judiciary should live up to their responsibilities in sanctioning acts of criminality.

(3)   Government at all levels should create job opportunities to engage the youths in creative endeavours.

(4)   There should be strategic investment in the education and training of the youths towards self-reliance and entrepreneurship.

The South-South Zone

2.2.5   Types, Actors, Contexts, Causes, Impacts and Drivers of Conflicts

In general, conflicts within the South-South zone tend to take expressions in the form of protests, agitations, militancy, kidnapping, vandalisation of oil pipelines, piracy, trafficking of persons, oil theft, political violence, armed robbery, cultism, land and chieftaincy disputes.

This study is anchored on the premise that a long-term resolution of the conflicts can only be achieved through a proper contextual historical understanding of the issues. Foremost among which is the structural paradox of poverty in the midst of riches – which continues to fertilise objective conditions that induce youths in the Niger Delta region to subscribe to militancy and political violence as a way of expressing their discontent.

2.2.5.1 Manifestations of Conflict

In the Niger Delta communities, there are various forms of litigations bordering on

ownership of land, royalties, chieftaincy and environmental degradation. The major litigation in the zone is between the oil producing communities and the Multinational Oil Companies (MNOCs).

Some of the significant phases of conflict emerged in the early to mid-1980s and took the form of legal actions by the communities against the MNOCs for compensation due to environmental degradation. Another phase was characterised by peaceful demonstrations and occupation of flow stations to get the oil companies to pay compensation and fulfil their corporate social responsibility (CSR).

There was also the militant stage in the 1990s characterised by occupation of oil flow stations, kidnapping of oil workers, seizure of tug-boats and vessels belonging to MNOCs.

The overt agitation for resource control began in the early 2000s stretching to 2016 when it took the form of outright demand for an independent Niger Delta Republic.

Analysis, Impacts and Gaps in Responses

This research took place amidst uncertainties and concerns as oil production significantly plummeted from 2.2million barrels per day (mb/d) to 1.4-1.6 mb/d. This was due to renewed hostilities in the zone, by the Niger Delta Avengers, Niger Delta Reformed Avengers, Adaka Boro Avengers, Niger Delta Greenland Justice Mandate, Bakassi Strike Force, etc. Participants and informants agreed that the zone is 'boiling' because key recommendations in the Willinks Commission's Report of 1957 and other successive national palliatives have not resolved the peculiar problems of the zone.

Recommendations

(1) There should be dialogue and constructive engagement with all the stakeholders in the zone with the aim of finding lasting solution to myriad of development challenges in the region.

(2) Government at all levels should ensure that Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) established for the development of the region should be well-funded and monitored to deliver on their mandates.

(3) Government should ensure quick passage of the Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB) pending in the National Assembly.

(4) Education and training should be leveraged to develop the required human competences to facilitate full participation of the indigenous population in the oil and gas sector.

(5) All laws that alienate local people from the control of resources generated from their immediate environment such as the Land Use Act should be abrogated.

(6)   For communities whose environment have been degraded, adequate compensation and remediation mechanisms should be put in place.

(7)   Government should pursue the clean-up of Ogoniland and other oil-polluted areas.

(8)   There is a need to entrench the culture of transparency, accountability in governance.

Analysis, Impacts and Gaps in Responses

As was reported in the previous SCA studies, the typical response of MNOCs is the use of state security to secure their platforms, which often resulted in the extensive destruction of lives and property. The consequence is further alienation of the stakeholders.

Recommendations

(1)   The structural development neglect of the Niger Delta region resulting in environmental degradation and destruction of sources of livelihoods should be urgently addressed.

(2)   A long-term Marshal Plan should be put in place for the development of this volatile region.

2.2.5.5 Other types of conflicts

Other types of conflicts identified in the South-South which have impacted negatively on the socio-economic, political and well-being of the people of the region include youth restiveness, chieftaincy tussles, land disputes, gangsterism, cultism, thuggery, piracy and political violence.

Analysis, Impacts and Gaps in Responses

For rural economies in the South-South zone, whose major sources of livelihood are fishing and farming, the loss of subsistence and occupational means of survival has been at the root of incessant and endemic conflicts in the zone. With the occupational displacement comes rural-urban migration. And, worse still, in an economy in recession, the displaced persons who migrate to the urban centres are also not able to easily secure employment opportunities; thus, hopes of alternative sources of livelihood are dashed. This is the source of the phenomenon of '*Ijaw boys*' who migrate from the South-South region into other adjacent coastal states of Ondo, Lagos and Ogun (in the South-West) – but, within which these young migrants from the South-South readily resort to sheer banditry, oil bunkering, kidnapping, other criminality and anti-social activities in the coastal areas of the South-West Zone of Nigeria.

These challenges also further compound the economic and ecological circumstances of other adjoining zones of Nigeria.

Recommendations

(1) Government at all levels, particularly the state and the local governments, should take urgent measures to focus development action on the zone, including acting on the past official reports and recommendations on how to address the genuine agitations by oil-bearing communities.

(2) Responsive and reciprocal dialogue that will deepen understanding between the stakeholders in the zone and the government is recommended.

The South-West Zone

2.2.6   Types, Actors, Contexts, Causes, Impacts and Drivers of Conflicts

The taxonomy of conflicts in the South-West Zone includes the following broad types: violent conflicts between herders and the farmers; conflicts over boundary disputes, chieftaincy tussles, pockets of electoral violence, civil protests, conflicts related to cult-violence, gang-violence, transnational conflicts between miners and host communities; employment-related conflicts between organised labour and state governments across the zone; violent conflicts perpetrated by key operators and members of some industrial unions; inter-communal conflicts; and, inter-group conflicts manifesting in religious confrontation between Muslims and Christians.

2.2.6.1 Farmers-Herders Conflict

Analysis, Impacts and Gaps in Responses

As attributed in the mentions about several other zonal reports, the conflicts between herders and farmers captured in this report have also manifested as the most prominent, violent conflict incidents, by far, in several states of the zone. This type of conflict has been largely borne out of the problems of land encroachments by, and the transgressions of, itinerant herders, over the farmlands of sedentary farmers. The conflict is exacerbated by the availability, easy access, and the use of SALWs by herders in their compulsive movement in quest of pasture across the country. The causes of the south-ward movement of the herders are attributable to desertification and the associated ecological emergencies in the northern Nigeria and the Sahel region.

The consequences include over-grazing, reduction of arable land to the detriment of the sedentary farmers, and attendant destruction of human settlements and lives, including rape, burning of farmlands and houses.

Recommendations

(1) There is a need for awareness creation and sensitisation among the key occupational groups on sustainable ways of resource sharing.

(2) Farmers and herders should be further engaged, educated on conflict prevention, peaceful co-existence and security of lives and property.

(3) State Governments in the zone should establish Peace Committees at both state and community levels comprising key stakeholders to address the farmers-herders conflict and other conflicts; and where such exist, should be strengthened.

(4) State Government should put in place measures for an enduring engagement of the herders and farmers, including structural facilities to enhance joint use of resources.

(5) Development of well-resourced grazing reserves for animal production

(6) Communities, entrepreneurs should be encouraged to establish ranches for agro-business.

(7) Protection of small-holder/peasant farmers through the establishment of farm reserves.

(8) Promoting effective communication between the occupational groups in the zone.

2.2.6.2 Conflicts arising from militancy and criminality

There is a relationship between criminality and conflicts in the zone. In many instances and communities, participants reported that criminal activities such as: illegal oil bunkering, pipeline vandalism, kidnapping, rape, cultism often result into violence.

Analysis, Impacts and Gaps in Responses

The geographies of Lagos state, metropolitan Lagos and Ogun state, for example, within the South-West region, have typically contributed to the accentuation of the region's potential to generate anti-social activities and acts of economic sabotage – which include: militancy, pipeline vandalism, illegal oil-bunkering, kidnapping, cultism, rape, and other kinds of criminality and violence. Given that, on a daily basis, urban centres of Lagos and Ogun states, typically receive huge inflow of population both from within Nigeria and the outside world. This pluralism of ethnic nationalities often generates frictions and conflicts of interest – as people compete for scarce resources and space. This conflagration of people and competing demands make stretches of the South-West zone, most especially Lagos and Ogun states, including their metropolitan satellite cities and towns a hotbed of inter-group skirmishes. In particular, based on the geographical location of Lagos state, within the Gulf of Guinea – linking the volatile Niger Delta region, the Atlantic Ocean, Lagos state cluster of islands, creeks in locations (including Ikorodu, Ajah, Epe, and Badagry), the totality of the geographies of Lagos also actually provide fertilising grounds for the fueling of criminality and violence.

The zonal report on the South-West has further revealed that the economic recession is biting very hard and Nigerians are, generally, resorting to desperate strategies and actions as well as exploring various possible means to eke out livelihoods for survival – which

has further led some inhabitants to invest in various illicit and clearly uncharitable anti-social activities.

A related important finding in the South-West was the source of sophisticated SALWs used by militants. Participants were unanimous that the "*Omo-oniles*" (land grabbers) fight with literally anything – from charms to other dangerous ammunitions. It was the opinion of participants in the South-West FGDs, especially in Lagos state, that probably the only force that the "*Omo-oniles*" are afraid of is the Nigerian military, and the Mobile Police Force. Participants noted that militants, especially the "*Omo-oniles*" in Ajah and Ikorodu areas of Lagos state, get their weapons through their relationships with powerful elite in the society – who also doubles as the 'entrepreneurs of conflict'. The availability and easy access to these weapons by the militants as well as refusal on the part of security agents, especially the police, to be responsive to the citizenry was also blamed for the fuelling of activities of kidnappers in Lagos state, within the South-West.

Recommendations

(1)   Law enforcement should be strengthened.

(2)   Effective policing of land borders and water-ways.

(3)   The criminal justice system should constantly be reviewed to reflect the contemporary changes and dynamics in the society.

(4)   Quick determination of cases in the court to reinforce people's confidence in the administration of justice.

(5)   Creation of more employment opportunities for the unemployed, especially the teeming youth.

(6)   States and Local Governments should strengthen their governance structures to ensure inclusiveness.

2.2.6.3 Trans-Border Crimes

Criminal activities by elements from neighbouring countries and the Gulf of Guinea continue to generate tension and conflict. Some of these include smuggling, illicit oil bunkering, trans-border armed robbery, trafficking in persons, drug and arms.

Analysis, Impacts and Gaps in Responses

The proximity of portions of several states within the South-West zone (like Lagos, Ogun) to the western borders of Nigeria has made some stretches of this zone quite vulnerable to trans-border conflicts. For example, goods stolen from Nigeria are easily transported across the border to the neighbouring Republic of Benin, and vice versa resulting in confrontations with security agencies and local communities. The trans-border crimes that are prevalent in Lagos, Ogun and Oyo states have reportedly ranged from trafficking of products of illicit oil-bunkering business, drug-peddling, cross-border

armed-robbery activities, trafficking in small arms and ammunition, to human-trafficking and kidnapping. Smuggling of goods across Idi-Iroko and Seme borders is one crime taken for granted within the context of this region, as criminals have devised innumerable tactics of circumventing border security – thereby rendering the security agencies at the borders somehow ineffective.

Recommendations

(1) There is the need for better and more effective border policing and maritime management to deter smuggling and other trans-border crimes.

(2) The Border Communities Development Agency (BCDA) should be strengthened to effectively deliver on its mandate.

The Federal Government should resuscitate and empower the Border Guard Units (BGUs) of the relevant agencies.

2.2.6.4 Other Intergroup Conflicts

Similarities were found in the trends and patterns of conflicts in the zone with the exception of a few differences and variations that are depicted in the state-specific report.

Analysis, Impacts and Gaps in Responses

The variants of conflicts in the zone involve security personnel and communities, religious and communal conflicts. In Ibafo, Ogun state, for example, it was alleged that Police provided cover for oil bunkering, kidnapping, raping and forceful takeover of people's houses and homes. In Lagos and Osun states, the *hijab* issue created tension, distrust, street protests and litigation. In Ondo, Ekiti, Ogun and Oyo states the relatively more prevalent conflicts include political violence-driven conflicts, supremacy conflicts/ chieftaincy tussles and land disputes.

However, findings from the zone revealed the laudable governance efforts made in specific contexts to deliberately build peace and implement a governance policy of strategic inter-group dialogue, as in virtually all states within the South-West Zone.

Recommendations

(1) Re-orientation of the Nigeria Police to protect lives and property.

(2) Strengthen Police-Community partnership for effective law enforcement.

(3) The existing inter-religious platforms such as Nigeria Inter-religious Council (NIREC) and its state and local government equivalents should be more proactive in addressing inter-faith issues.

2.2.6.5 Labour and Employment Related Conflicts

Across the zone, inability to pay salaries and wages, with exception of Lagos state government, was found to have precipitated industrial conflict and civil unrest.

Despite the bailout and the refund of over-deduction of interest on loans by the Paris Club, these states were indebted to public sector workers for upwards of eight months. For example, the concentration of industries, companies and the huge working population often result in adversarial labour and employment relations that impact negatively on socio-economic life of the people due to picketing, strikes and public demonstrations.

Analysis, Impacts and Gaps in Responses

Labour and employment related conflicts were found across the zone, particularly in the public sector workforce in Ekiti, Ogun, Ondo, Osun and Oyo states.

Recommendations

State and Local Governments should ensure transparent, accountable, prudent and judicious use of public resources for the benefit of the people.

2.3   Emerging Forms of Conflict Dynamics

Compared with the findings in the previous editions of the SCA, the 2016 edition reveals some degree of changes in drivers, actors, dynamics, complexity and issues.

Furthermore, new insights have been gained in the dramatic transnational dimensions of conflicts, just as the media and social media have impacted on the tenor, language and mobilisation of rage and sentiments for violence. The flow of weapons used in conflicts has been affected by local and transnational events globally and in the sub-region. From being seen as the perpetrators of conflicts in the 2002 report, the security agencies have improved in the discharge of their statutory responsibilities.

Different from the phenomenon of political corruption, described as the outcome of inter-ethnic group elite rivalry in the 2002 SCA reports, the manifestation of political corruption, inadequate or compromised security during elections, retail vote buying and selling have become new modes of threats. Next to corruption is the reliance on primordial sentiments as basis for seeking electoral support rather than civic rhetoric. This has made elections in the country more divisive than uniting. This is promoting and sustaining the "*we*" versus "*them*" perception, thereby breeding negative reciprocities.

Another major shift that has occurred is the increasing challenge to religious, traditional and political authorities by groups, especially the youth groups that hitherto held such institutions and their leaderships in awe. This phenomenon was most pronounced in the urban centres across the country. In some places, it manifested in the taking over of certain parts of the city and enthroning other forms of tolling and governance by ANSAs in forms, ranging from gangsters, cultists to insurgents. Clashes between such groups and security agents or among them over territories and tolls have emerged as new threats to public peace, safety and security concerns across the country. The rage of the subalterns, led by the motorcycle riders – otherwise known as the *Okada* riders, has also become ubiquitous across the country.

The inability of several state governments (1999-2007), many of whom initially hinged their poverty alleviation programmes on a narrow-conception of poverty which did not take long-term, environmental, health, and public safety concerns into consideration, on the one hand, and the use of *Okadas* as vote-buying commodities, on the other hand, have now combined to make urban governance a source of conflict between this group of the marginalised and different state governments.

In parts of the country, the okada riders have become conveyor belts for various forms of criminality.

Similarly, the inability of many seekers of public office, who relied on the use of thugs and other groups of outlaws, whom they had armed to rig elections, have also contributed to the continued emergence of many gangs in several cities, as empirically revealed generally during the 2016 SCA fieldwork.

Insurgency in the *North-East* zone has also muted some conflicts that existed before it and in this context; be it indigene-settler conflicts, inter-faith conflicts between the religious majorities and the minorities in the zone, etc. that appeared to have taken the back-seat, or perhaps temporarily hushed down, due to the far-reaching effects of the *Boko Haram* insurgency. Nevertheless, it is important not to lose sight of such conflicts and the potential ones which exist in many parts of the country.

Conclusion

In this section, it is evident that drivers of conflicts in the six geo-political zones of Nigeria are context-specific, but also largely inter-connected and mutually reinforcing, irrespective of geographical spread.

SECTION THREE

The Structural Causes of Conflicts

Conflicts do not occur in a vacuum. Therefore, structure, agency, collective and individual actions and inactions can go a long way in determining whether a conflict will be violent or peaceful. A holistic analysis of conflict must pay detailed attention to the proximate and structural factors propelling it. Identifying the structures of a conflict entails a macro-micro analysis. Common to inter-group conflicts in many ill-defined federal states with plural identity groups is the skewed distribution of socio-economic and political resources which breeds inequalities amongst culturally and sometimes religiously different groups. Such practices constitute the structure within which certain groups perceive injustice and marginalisation leading to the construction of enemy images of the government and other groups who appear to be favored by it.

Without recognition of such structures which differ from place to place, responding to conflicts will only be like addressing the symptoms while neglecting the causes. This is why the structural analysis of the cause of conflict must cover the social, economic and political spheres towards identifying the grievances that might make taking to violence inevitable for groups that feel maligned. This helps to understand how socio-economic and political needs intersect with ethnic or/and religious identities in providing a shared narrative of exclusion and marginalisation that might provide self-justifying rationalisation for violence.

This has also informed the approach of analysis of the structures and actors in such conflict contexts, like the social, economic, political, and security dimensions, as categorised thematically.

3.0   Methodology Issues for Conflict Assessment

The present SCA focuses substantially on the structural causes of conflicts across the country using a multi-method approach. This entailed the extensive review of literatures, use of interview guide, questionnaires, Key Informant Interviews (KII), Observations and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). This took into account the historical and prevailing socio-economic and political turns that the country has taken and how it has contributed to the current manifestations of conflicts in the country (Matanmi 2016; Fashoyin, Matanmi and Tawose, 1994:1; Phillips and Ndekwu, 1987; Fashoyin, 1989: 168-170; Matanmi, 1996: 17-30).

The need for a broader understanding of the factors and actors in the immediate and larger conflict settings, and how these interact has influenced the adoption of the approach used in analysing the structure of conflicts in the 2016 SCA.

3.1 Security-related Manifestations of Conflict

3.1.1 Armed Non-State Actors (ANSAs)

Across the zones, one of the conspicuous drivers of violent conflicts is the presence of militias many of whom enjoy the covert and in some cases the overt support of their communities.

They thrive on sentiments of representing the interests of their communities by providing similitude of what the state is not able to provide such as police functions, defending the community against external attacks, and serving as guards during communal activities. They constitute a threat to the stability of such communities as well by forcefully extorting the residents and jeopardising public and personal safety anytime they are on a collision course with the security agents or rival militias.

Their presence and activities serve as market for narcotics and means of disorienting the youths in such communities. They continue to be relevant in many communities because they also serve as thugs for politicians who sustain them as enforcers of their wishes especially during elections. In some communities, vote seekers are compelled to patronise them because of the popularity and influence they wield in such communities as a way of endearing themselves to voters. Also, they are linked to community manufacturers of arms, charms and ammunition in creating an illegal/parallel defence industry in many communities. With this kind of setting, the combustibility of conflicts or degeneration of minor disagreements or altercations into violent exchanges becomes spontaneous. This explains why in many cases they are able to melt into communities in evading arrests by security agents; although in some cases they eventually become a source of security threat to such communities. For example, the *Ombatse* in Nasarawa state in the North-Central zone, the *Boko Haram* in the North-East, the *Niger Delta Avengers* in the South South, and *IPOB* in the South East, among others.

The import of the findings is that the identified actors have latched on to the seeming lacuna in the governance space.

3.1.2 Neighbourhood Gangs

Unlike militias most of which are in the rural areas, gangs have become an urban phenomenon across the country. Operating clearly against all laws and norms of social behavior, they have become perpetual and acquired territories in different cities constituting threats to neighbours, residents and the security agents. While in cities, they are products of such communities, in many others they migrate from other parts of the country and even sometimes outside the country. In Niger state, membership of the notorious *'Yandaba'* was traced to Kano state. In an account, respondents revealed that many of them usually come to Minna, the capital city, from Kano and other core northern states anytime the farming season ends but over time many of them stayed back in the city and only go back to Kano when there is need to initiate new members.

In many other cities, they start first as neighbourhood cults or youth groups and after a while they start appropriating territories or making their residential areas inaccessible for youths from other neighbourhoods. Subsequently, they acquire codes/symbols of identification, become armed and go into forcefully extorting residents and traders. In many cities, they have become threats and nuisances to residents. The security agents often storm their dens to carry out arrests but it does not take long before they regroup. Although, they are rarely in direct conflicts with communities, however, due to their persistent involvement in turf wars with rival gangs, they imperil the lives of residents and passerby.

Overtime they become the determinants and providers of safety because many have to abide by their unwritten codes in order to be safe in neighbourhoods where they operate. Like militias too, they are often courted by politicians especially at the peak of seeking votes and equally serve as enforcers given the violent nature of elections. They have remained permanent in many neighbourhoods and some since the inception of the Fourth Republic in 1999. Due to their presence many residents have been compelled to relocate while those who remain are bound to endure living under the yoke of their fearful presence.

3.1.3   Bandits and Cattle Rustlers

Although not completely new, the main actors are the nomadic pastoralists and the farmers across the country. The transhumance activities of the nomads upon which their economic survival and lives of their cattle depend serve as a push factor that has been worsened by effects of climate change leading to frequent violent clashes with the farmers especially from the North-Central southwards. Associated with these violent clashes are crimes, like kidnapping and rape, as reported in many parts of the country. A number of factors have accentuated the frequency of the clashes. Some of these are the absence of comprehensive policy on agriculture, the change in agrarian practices, environmental decline, and the inability to find common grounds of mutual dependence between the herders and the farmers.

3.2 Political Manifestations of Conflict

3.2.1   Election-Related Conflicts

In the period covered in this study (2013-2016), there was observed reduction in the rate of political assassinations. However, elections remained indicators of early warning of violence in many states in both rural and urban settings. The introduction of the Permanent Voters Card (PVC) and Card Reader brought about decrease in the frequency of electoral violence. The conduct of primaries for the selection of candidates was also another source of conflicts but in most cases aggrieved candidates ended up moving to another party.

The relationship between the legislature and the executive in some states also heated up the polity in these states and sometimes, resulted into violence. There was also a reduction

in the tension between governors serving their second term and those seeking to take over from them, especially their deputies. Remarkably too, the demise and weakening influence of political 'strongmen' in parts of the country brought a reduction in tension and violence which had defined the polity in their respective states. However, the reluctance of many state governors to conduct elections into local government councils in their states was further seen by many opposition members as stiffening of the democratic space; which is not conducive for peace and security, especially at the third-tier.

3.2.2 Inter- and Intra-Party Conflicts

Across the six geo-political zones, political parties jostled for power and those struggles bred violence in many instances.

At the inter-party level, political parties made scapegoats out of the election management body and the security agencies in trading blames and allegations. In such cases the judiciary also gets implicated during such exchanges.

Another common cause of conflicts is the absence of internal democracy in the process of selecting candidates by political parties.

3.2.3 Politico-Religious Conflict

The *Boko Haram* and its agenda to establish a so-called Islamic Caliphate defines Nigeria's war against terrorism and it represents an eloquent example of a violent politico-religious conflict. On the other hand, the use of religious rhetoric for mobilising political support was also observed across the country.

Another example of politico-religious conflict was observed in Kaduna state between the Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN) and the Nigerian Government. The desire of the group to exist as a parallel 'state' in Nigeria and the government position to outlaw the group, as well as banning of its procession by some states in the North, reflects how religious groups can clash with secular authority.

3.2.4 Self-Determination Agitations

With the advent of the Fourth Republic in 1999, groups affiliated to ethnic nationalities have been agitating for self-determination. While the OPC in the South-West could be said to have acquiesced the agenda of self-determination, such assumption does not apply to an area like the South-East geo-political zone. This is evident in the fact that MASSOB and IPOB have sustained agitations for self-determination for a 'State of Biafra'.

3.3 Economic Manifestations of Conflict

3.3.1 Industrial and Organisational Conflicts

Given the inability of many state governments to pay the salaries of their workers, there was tension and infrequent conflicts that turned violent in some states between organised

labour and such state governments. With the exception of the January 2012 protests over the hike in the pump price of Premium Motor Spirit (PMS), there was no major government-labour feud from 2012-2016. However, a split occurred in the ranks of the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) leading to the emergence of factions.

3.3.2   Conflicts Over Natural Resources

The discovery of natural resources specifically crude oil in some split-border communities led to communal clashes between communities from neighbouring states. It drew the attention of the former President, Dr. Ebele Goodluck Jonathan before the violence that involved communities in Kogi and Anambra states could be brought under control. Violent conflicts arising from the struggle over the ownership of lands were found across the country including communities without natural resources.

3.3.3   Conflicts in Market Places

With the understanding that contention for resources provide motivation for engaging in conflicts, the place of economic benefits in sustaining violent conflicts cannot be ignored. Violent conflicts instigated by economic gains occurred in places like local commodity markets in a way that degenerates into indigene-settler conflicts that could have led to cycles of reprisals across the country. For instance, the leadership and space contests in Ladipo International Spare-parts Market in Lagos state degenerated into Igbo versus Yoruba ethnic conflict which is still ongoing as at the time of this study. Similar issues play out in markets across the country. The contentions in most of the markets were over perceived gains associated with headship and space between the traders who in most cases leveraged on their ethnic identity in seeking advantages.

Another round of violence common in the markets is caused by gang-leaders who often try to extort money from the owners of the stalls and when such is resisted, violence ensues. In Ibafo market, Ogun state, gang-related extortions were reported.

3.3.4   Conflicts between *Okada* Riders and State Governments

The presence and activities of *Okada* riders across the country generate tension between them and state governments. Over the years, there has been continued increase in the categories of *Okada* operators. Due to the economic downturn, disasters and influx of IDPs from insurgency-affected states, the profile of the *Okada* riders has expanded into these categories: The first are those who augment their meager income after close of work by using their personal motorcycles for commercial purposes; the next are those whose livelihood depends solely on it who work on full-time basis and the most recent are IDPs from disaster, conflict and insurgency-affected parts of the country (Animasawun, 2016).

By having a vibrant presence in each part of the country, the *Okada* riders have become critical actors in the socio-political and economic life of Nigeria to the extent that they cannot be ignored, thereby making decisions affecting them can generate violent conflicts.

3.4 Social Manifestations of Conflict

3.4.1 Conflicts originating from multi-ethnic and multi-religious diversity

Given the size, diversity and population of Nigeria, social conflicts cannot be wished away as people of different ethnic and religious inclination must live together. However, it must be stated that diversity, population and size are not sufficient to generate conflicts and instability if they are well managed. Nevertheless they constitute factors that cannot be neglected in taking a structural analysis of conflicts.

Nigeria has an estimated population of over 180 million making her the most populous country in Africa. The country is a federation of 36 states and FCT Abuja; about 250-521 different ethno-linguistic groups and huge numbers of Muslims, Christians and Traditionalists cutting across ethnic groups.

Nigeria also provides a context for the exploration of the concepts of equality and diversity, with its multi-ethnic and multi-religious identities.

3.4.2 Frontiers and Boundary-related Conflicts

Although not obviously presented as economically or resource-instigated, at the base of most of the ethnic, ethno-religious, religious and communal conflicts are resources. Most of these conflicts have long and sometimes contested histories that often make it to have a mono-causal explanation of their root causes. Also, some of them seem to have acquired a life cycle of their own as several efforts at resolving or transforming them have yielded very minimal results while some of such efforts have actually protracted.

Common to most of the ethnic conflicts are clashing claims of being the 'sons of the soil' in specific places and in such cases each side mobilises all resources to reinforce such claims. A peculiar pattern of frontier and boundary-related conflicts exist in some states where such conflicts involve communities from different states but sharing frontiers and borders as neighbours. States, like Kogi, Anambra, Benue, Enugu, Cross River and Ebonyi, are amongst the states with such communities. In many of such cases, hitherto friendly communities suddenly go up in arms against each other when natural resources are discovered over contestations on whose land such resources are found.

3.4.3 Religious Conflicts

As an ideology that offers adherents something to live and die for, the propensity of religion to lead to violent conflicts is established. Religious tension exists in most parts of Nigeria given the domineering nature of most religious majorities over the religious minorities. Similarly, there exist a number of sects in some parts of the country from both the Christian and Muslim intra-faith contexts.

Tussles between or within religious groups and state governments on the mode of dressing, ownership of schools and curricula were found to be common in the North-

Central and the South-West. Tension leading to violence exists at the intra-faith level over doctrinal correctness amongst the Muslims, mainly in the north.

3.4.4 Conflict between Youths and Constituted Authorities

This was found across the cities in the country. Youths have turned against the traditional ways and values in many cities. It was common to find pre-teens involving in frontal challenge to constituted authorities openly. Also, protests in hallowed places like the palaces and prayer ground occurred in Ilorin in the North Central in sharp contrast to what people and communities in such places like Ilorin were known for. While it appeared to have been curtailed, the occurrences of such events are pointers to the emergence of a generation of youths challenging orthodoxies.

3.4.5 Suicide Bombing

Suicide bombing has become a recurring feature of the Boko Haram insurgency. Contrary to generally held view that women are merely victims of conflicts and insurgency, recent reports showing that women carried out suicide bombing point to a new phenomenon. This is so in the light of increasing frequency of the activities of female suicide bombers on behalf of the *Boko Haram* insurgents.

3.4.6 Ungoverned Spaces

The proportion of security personnel vis-à-vis the size and population of Nigeria has inadvertently turned some areas in the country into insecure and unsafe spaces. Similarly, there are other areas even in urban centers when both the civilian public and security personnel are aware that non-state actors are the one governing such areas because they determine accessibility, they extort, they bear arms and narcotics. Sometimes they do this with the endorsement of conflict-affected communities where they present themselves as the ones protecting the communities especially where such communities feel that interventions of government in conflict have been biased against them.

Nigeria has vast difficult terrains (forests, mountains, water ways and caves) which are left unmanned by security agents across the country. In some parts of the country, such places have been turned into enclaves of criminal activities. The existence of such places provides hide-out for warlords, militants, insurgents and other criminals who might seek the protection of communities during conflict by claiming to be protecting the interests of the communities.

3.5 Conflict Actors

The following groups/individuals were identified as key actors in conflicts across the states and geo-political zones.

3.5.1 Security Operatives and ANSAs

(1) Security Operatives

(2)   Militias
(3)   Bandits
(4)   Cattle Rustlers
(5)   Neighbourhood Gangs

Actors in this category cut across the formal and the informal. In the formal category are officials of security agencies saddled with statutory responsibilities to protect lives and property, as enshrined in the constitution of Nigeria. However, ANSAs have also emerged as key actors in the security arena due to a number of factors and not the least the disenchantment of a large section of the population against the state which serves as the basis of attraction to the ANSAs; who unfortunately overtime turn around to hurt most communities. This has been the trend of many ANSAs ranging from bandits, insurgents, militias and neighbourhood gangs.

On the part of the constitutionally recognised security agents, inter-agency rivalry remains a bane to their optimum efficiency. It was observed that inter-agency rivalry and lack of cooperation amongst security agencies hampered the effectiveness of these agencies.

Also, the civil-military relations in many parts of the country presents a fundamental challenge given the fact that security agents must strike a balance between respect for human rights and ensuring that they are not found wanting in their duties. In addition, loss of confidence in the security agencies by communities was prevalent leading to disharmony between them.

The management of ex-warlords or militants in many states of the country deserves a focal attention. This is because many states have initiated what they termed 'Amnesty Programmes' but critics and commentators and respondents revealed that in actual fact many of such programmes were conceived and implemented towards serving the interests of specific groups and individuals while long-term security takes the back seat. Furthermore, respondents claimed that many of such programmes end up as means of siphoning funds out of the state coffers in the guise of security. Practices like that deny the state the trust and confidence of parties concerned.

3.5.2   Political Actors

(1)   Political Parties
(2)   Politicians
(3)   Thugs

Comprising those in public offices and politicians with influence as well as voters, the actions of political actors has always had direct impact on the stability, peace and otherwise of communities. As men of resources, power and influence, political actors at the macro-, meso-, and micro-levels are crucial in constructing societal consensus for peace and security and this stems from the way they express their differences and pursue their ambitions.

A critical look at the frequency of political assassinations and other negativities that defined elections since 1999 has pointed to a shift away from the 'do or die' mentality. However, that is not to say there has been a complete acculturation of sound democratic values and norms that are basically required for the consolidation of democratic tradition. Holding and exercising power without being monstrous is still a challenge which calls for a more humane or humanistic and responsible usage of political power. This is also critical in the deployment of security agencies during elections by many incumbents. In such situations, the security agents are torn between obeying lawful commands and upholding ethics of their respective professional codes. The reliance on political thugs flows from the fear by opposing politicians that impartiality on the part of security agents might reduce their chances of winning elections.

Across the states, a relationship was found between the emergence of neighbourhood gangs and periods of elections. Security agents expressed their frustrations arising from the relationship of political actors and such outlaws. The maintenance of such groups by political actors is the reason why most grievances and differences are expressed violently

3.5.3   Economic Actors

(1)   Labour Leaders
(2)   Traders
(3)   Okada Riders
(4)   Market Associations
(5)   Government Representatives

The actors in the economy comprise the formal and informal players. Perhaps more than any other category, they are the ones most desirous of peace and stability. While the organised labour seems to have found a less adversarial way of handling conflicts within its fold, the story is different in the informal sector. Whether in managing differences within its fold or with the government, issues of enforcement and collection of taxes and even extortion from operators in the informal economy usually degenerate to violence. The informal economy is also a site where Nigeria's fault lines get mobilised violently for economic gains. The organised private sector stands at a strategic position to mobilise for peace but its potentials in maximising this has not been fully activated.

3.5.4   Social Actors

(1)   Traditional Rulers
(2)   Ethnic/Opinion Leaders
(3)   Religious Elites
(4)   The Clergy
(5)   Youth
(6)   Women

The traditional rulers are custodians of tradition and culture, who command the respect of all. The huge social capital possessed by traditional rulers constitutes a source of threat and peace which can be deployed in equal measure. This is one of the factors that make communal conflicts intractable and protracted because the traditional rulers as the highest beneficiaries in some communal conflicts that are tied to issues of land, boundary, chieftaincy and contests over supremacy/seniority of stools. In many cases, they were/are victims of violent conflicts during which they lose belongings and lives. However, they were found to be very instrumental in the preservation of peace in many communities which calls for more support to them as the nearest source of influence to the people.

Religious Leaders

As people of influence and charisma, religious leaders are at a vantage position to influence the peace of their communities. Much more, given the additional roles they now play during election when seekers of votes throng their sanctuaries to seek endorsements and blessings, their conduct and utterances can be crucial in shaping the peace or otherwise of a community.

Across states in Nigeria, especially in the urban centers, clerics of the two dominant faiths in Nigeria were found to be active in setting the mood for peace or tension. A lot of faith-based not-for-profit organisations have consistently engaged in peace-promoting activities across the country resulting in the initiation of reconciliation and peacebuilding processes.

In parts of the country, where the relationship between the religious majorities and minorities has been tenuous, key religious actors and platforms provided room for the aggregation and articulation of grievances, demands and resolutions depending on the situations. Therefore, in initiating peace processes, religious actors at all levels are people of immense influence who can be mobilised for such initiatives.

Ethnic Leaders

These are influential people with substantial followership and sometimes serving as gatekeepers and conflict entrepreneurs across communities. As leaders of their respective ethno-linguistic groups, they occupy a strategic position to serve as promoters and guarantors of peace. However, in some instances they are not able to dissuade their followers from violence for fear of being seen as having sold out. This compels them to sometimes follow the popular opinion in some cases even when such do not conform to their own personal views; yet in such situations the rest of the society expects them to wield their influence in stemming the tide of violent conflicts.

The Youth

Constituting the most active part of Nigeria's population, this category is the most potent for bringing about a stable and peaceful society. Disturbingly, they have been portrayed more as agents of conflicts than agents of peace.

Not-for-Profit Organisations

These are the silent promoters of peace in many conflict-affected, postconflict and insurgency-affected communities in Nigeria. While the foreign-based ones have been more active due to having more funds, the local ones have been consistent in playing complementary roles in peace processes and advocacies for peace, early warning and non-violence.

The Main and Social Media

The media, particularly, the print and electronic are positioned to play influential roles in promoting peace or escalating tension into violence. As connectors, information churned out by the media sometimes connects parties in conflict as allies or adversaries. However, a less recognised fact is that they are also prone to being victims of violence as the case was when the *Boko Haram* insurgents attacked some media houses in the country. A related phenomenon, especially in the North-Central, Bauchi and Taraba states in the North-East, has been the existence of online platforms defending ethnic interests. Given the reach and spontaneity that accompanies the reports on the social media and other online platforms, several communities in conflict have opened Facebook and Twitter accounts to reinforce their positions, even when it is divisive.

3.6 Conflict Dynamics

3.6.1   Linking the Causes

Across the six geo-political zones, a typology of causes of conflicts can be drawn based on similarities in actors, terrain, history and outcome of responses. Certain commonalities in causes of conflicts were found in this study. Although for most conflicts, a mono-causal explanation would be inadequate, similarities were found in terms of grievances, motivations, drivers and actors across the six geo-political zones of Nigeria.

For example, stoking the fire of many conflicts across the country are the challenges posed by horizontal inequalities defined as inequalities between groups defined by fault lines such as culture, religion and language (Parr et al, 2013). Next to this is the flagrant or inadvertent display of conflict insensitivity by the state in most cases. The third and not the least stem from the crisis of fear and want summed up as the lack of human and environmental insecurity.

A type of conflict found in all the zones is the fractious relationship between those who define themselves as 'indigenes' and 'settlers'. Critical analysis of all these types of conflicts revealed the fact that such divisive consciousness gets promoted whenever a group feels marginalised in having access to power, state resources and patronage. As a country with disparate identity groups with manifest fault lines where politics and control of government resources have been the most assured source of economic prosperity, positions of power are sought largely by whipping up primordial sentiments. This is

done consciously because it perceived that having someone of your ethnic or religious stock in office assures you of access to state resources.

The findings in this study give credence to the concept of "prebendalism", a European feudal practice utilised in explaining the contradictions of affluence and underdevelopment in Nigeria as observed by Joseph (1977). Overtime, "prebendalism" as a form of dysfunctional governance, has promoted horizontal inequalities making governance and the allocation of state resources, conception and allocation of resources, to be done in a way that is conflict-insensitive. Consequently, it is advanced in this segment of the report that this constitutes the main structural context for most inter-group conflicts and insurgency as manifested or experienced in different parts of the country.

3.6.2   Triggers

Triggers are events or situations that serve as sparks which give vent to the violent expression of deep-seated animosities by groups. On many occasions, the immediate causes seem too far flung or not intelligibly linked to the spontaneous violence and the kind of weapons that are used during such conflicts.

For example, the disputations over space or stall in the market, would degenerate into indigene-settler or Christian-Muslim clash sometimes assuming ramifications beyond the imagination of those who are primarily involved in such altercations. For instance, clashes involving *Okada* riders around the Mile 12 market of Lagos spread into the market and adjoining neighbourhoods in March 2016 and subsequently degenerated into a clash between the Hausa and the Yoruba communities during which sophisticated weapons were used (Animasawun, 2016a; Animasawun 2016b). Instances like these were found in many parts of the country where the immediate causes appeared so trivial and negligible to have warranted the extent of destruction and violent mobilisations that accompany it. Elections, also serve as triggers of violence in communities with histories of protracted conflict. Irrespective of whether such elections are well managed or not, parties in conflict use such days of elections to avenge or initiate new attacks.

Responses to Conflict

4.0 Methodology

Responses to conflicts, based on local and international practices have informed the classification of responses into three main tracks of responses as follows: "Track One" – Government; "Track Two" – Non-government actors and civil society; and "Track Three" – International responses.

4.1 Track One: Government Response

As the institution, whose main responsibility is the protection of lives and property, the government at all levels bears the primary responsibility and take the lead in the preservation of peace, order and security of all within its sovereign territory.

However, this also comes with its own complications given the sense of alienation from the state expressed by many during interviews which provides the basis for many unconstitutional but community-approved self-help initiatives of self-provisioning of security.

4.1.1   Policy Response

The major Federal Government policy response at the return to democratic governance in 1999 was the creation of the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) in the year 2000, which represents the will and determination of government to respond to the myriads of conflict across the country.

4.1.2   Security Response

One of the first and immediate implications of violent conflicts is that it creates an atmosphere of insecurity which applies to both humans and the environment. Given the prevalence of low intensity conflicts in Nigeria, and the proliferation of SALWs the implications of these have heightened fear and insecurity arising from these conflicts irrespective of the remoteness of the location or the actors involved.

In the period under focus (2013-2016), similarities were found in patterns of response, effectiveness, gaps and implications which were considered useful for identifying lessons learnt. Given the size of Nigeria and preponderance of communal conflicts and rural banditry, the federal government has had to deploy the Mobile Police units and the Nigerian Army to such theatres of conflict. While the effectiveness of this will have to be measured in the contexts of immediate and long term implications, the practice is fraught with a number of operational, logistics, civil-military and human rights challenges.

First, as most of these have to be done as emergency responses, poor situational analysis arising from inaccurate mapping and intelligence often put the lives of the deployed

security personnel at great risk. Such was the case in the 2013 killing of security personnel by *Ombatse* militias in Nasarawa state. The deployment of security personnel to these communities also strains relations between communities and the security agencies at the official and informal levels. On many occasions, state governors and the commanding hierarchy of the security agencies found themselves working at cross-purposes or inadvertently undermining each other during operations. Allegations of biases are usually leveled against the deployed personnel by the communities and in response, such communities mobilise to resist rather than cooperate with the deployed personnel.

Lack of inter-agency cooperation also makes the security responses from Track 1 to communities experiencing violent conflicts stressful and under-achieving. For instance in Kpaidna, Legbe, Dagama, Bambe, Kopa and Lunku communities in Niger state in July/August 2016 in the aftermaths of a clash between the herders and Gbagyi, men of the Nigerian Army responded to a security alert in the community. The communities resisted this response alleging that Army were disguised herders militia. In a situation where first responders were the Army instead of the police, highlights the lack of synergy among the security agencies. This was corroborated by key informants and participants during the zonal validation. If there had been a more cooperative relationship in the security sector, such operations could have been tidier.

On some occasions, the deployed personnel are often constrained by language and poor knowledge of the terrain – which makes them vulnerable and putting such operations in jeopardy. However, in some communities with local security formations, they offer to complement the activities of the security personnel.

While the deployment of security personnel as a security response is always inevitable, the government at all tiers acting as Track 1 must begin to see human security issues as the drivers of conflicts and alienation between it and the people. This boils down to the need for a deliberate accent on human and environmental security by the state as a first step of reconciling the state with the citizens so that when the state deploys security personnel, they are seen as agents of a state that cares.

4.1.3   Relief Response

The North-East and the North-Central come readily to mind in fully appreciating the need for relief. In the two zones, a significant percentage of their rural and urban populations have been adversely affected by violence. Although they have also attracted international support, the extent of the destruction done by the violence on their minds and spaces point to the need for more.

4.1.4   Political Response

This becomes inevitable as one of the options of establishing, ascertaining and recommending appropriate actions or sanctions towards achieving sustainable peace. The most known of such political responses is the setting up of Judicial/Administrative

Commissions of Inquiry (J/ACIs). Another form of political response that is gradually emerging as an option is negotiation which governments at the federal and state levels are now exploring towards enthroning sustainable peace in different contexts. The federal and state governments have also implemented different context-specific amnesty programmes as part of alternative ways of resolving conflicts. Others include the creation of administrative units, creation of emirates and chiefdoms and making political appointments in order to create wider sense of belonging as may be needed in some cases.

4.1.5   Economic Response

Against the backdrop of the interrelatedness of development, conflict management and peacebuilding, economic responses to conflicts cannot but be appreciated as a veritable response to conflicts. This must be viewed in its macro-, meso- and micro-impacts on preventing, resolving and transforming conflicts as well as its impact on pre- and postconflict peacebuilding. Tied to economic responses is the availability of resources. Apart from apparent situations demanding reconstruction, rehabilitation and reintegration programmes all of which rely heavily on economic (development) inputs, economic response can also serve as a preventive response and ameliorating response to conflict. Conversely, such responses can aggravate a tensed situation if not handled with sensitivity which points to the need to ensure that, in conception and implementation such programmes must be participatory and inclusive (IPCR, 2006).

The North-East and the North-Central where insurgency and rural banditry have led to the destruction of many communities were found to have received varieties of such interventions from the government and international not-for-profit organisations. Also, economic responses are susceptible to be seen as partial if/when mismanaged.

Nigeria has acquired a track record of attempting to address conflict through development which has led to the creation of agencies, like the Oil Minerals Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC), Niger Delta Development Corporation (NDDC) and the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs amongst others. The process of establishing the North East Development Commission is also afoot.

4.1.6   Social Response

Social responses have been carried out on behalf of the government through its agencies such as the National Orientation Agency (NOA) and the government-owned media. These have been through campaigns and advocacies to discourage violence and to enlist support for government's efforts at promoting peace. However, for this to be effective, the social capital of notable and respected individuals can be tapped into especially from communities affected by conflicts and insurgency as it maybe.

4.1.7   Conclusion

The Nigerian state responds to conflict in different ways as enumerated above. However, the impact of such interventions on the conflicts reveals the need for more proactive

approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The gaps inherent in the design and implementation of most of the interventions by the government explains the recurrence of violence after initial deployment of troops to most communities affected by conflicts. This is why most conflict-affected communities in Nigeria suffer from postconflict protection and empowerment needs.

When these two are missing, the hope of sustainable peace dims as the people are not likely to have a sense of belonging and trust in any peace process put in place.

After recognising these interventions, further attention can be paid to each one to identify the gaps in conception, implementation/deployment, duration/span, financing/budget line and other variables. How such interventions impact in reducing/stabilising/increasing the spate of violence, reconciliation and peaceful co-existence can offer useful basis upon which to draw an informed conclusion. This is where the IPCR comes in as a think and 'do' tank focused on thinking, planning, advising and working on peace.

4.2 Track Two: Non-Government Response

Globally, not-for-profit institutions, generically known as Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), have increasingly become relevant such that they have taken some responsibilities of the state. Akin to promoting democracy and good governance, their peace-promoting activities come next as their main area of engagement.

Despite not being partisan in conduct and outlook, the civil society in Nigeria has had to engage governments and political class in ensuring that the peace and stability of the societies wherein they work and that of the country at large is not jeopardised. This has been done on a sustained note as many of the respondents recalled instances of such. Worthy of note in facilitating some of these interactions are the roles played by the IPCR and UNDP through workshops which serve as venues for unrestricted interactions between the political class and the civil society.

4.3 Track Three: International Organisations

In the period under focus (2013-2016), the international not-for-profit-organisations were found to be very active in Nigeria's conflicts and insurgency-affected states through local/community based organisations in different communities across the country. These international organisations have provided necessary funding support, capacity building and advocacy towards peacebuilding and conflict resolution in Nigeria.

In this regard, UNDP, NSRP, UNHCR, UNICEF, DfID/UKAid, USAID, EU, ECOWAS, AFDB, World Bank and others come into reckoning.

4.4 General Conclusion

In retrospect, the findings of the 2016 SCA have particularly confirmed that the landscape of conflict and insecurity in Nigeria has actually changed, in various respects, from what

it used to be as at the timing and coverage of the 2002 SCA. For instance, ANSAs in several forms have emerged just as community armories and militias have become actors on the scene. There is also a transnational and global dimension to the sources of rage and grievances, weapons and conflict entrepreneurs in making the analysis of the landscape of conflict and insecurity deserving of consistent multi-dimensional analysis. The existence of militias and community armories in many communities now make Law and Order enforcement more complex than it was before. Trans-nationally, the permeability of borders and the easy access of non-Nigerians with kith and kin in the country combine to make rural banditry and insurgency very complex and delicate conflict and security issues to handle.

While the utility value of "prebendalism" as an analytical framework was probably indisputable within the framework of the 2002 SCA, however, the demise or waned influence of notable political patrons and 'strongmen of politics' across Nigeria's national political spectrum; or what in popular parlance is described as "prebendal politics", (Animasawun, 2016) have definitely altered the socio-political equations and barometer of conflicts in all the geo-political zones of the country. In the place of centralised patron-client systems controlled by 'strongmen', bulk and retail vote-buying and selling are now being used to secure or elicit electoral votes in a manner that might be described as unethical, but less violent. Moreover, today, popular political slogans like 'stomach infrastructure' and '*E dibo, ke se'bẹ*, that is, 'vote and cook'; in other words, literally, 'sell your votes and get money to cook a pot of soup!', have made winning elections more monetised with vote buying less centralised and less violent in many places where political patrons held sway. While there seems to have been a reduction in the 'strongmen' syndrome in Nigeria's national politics and its effects on "prebendalism", or patron-client relations, as an analytical framework for explaining the frequency of violent conflicts in the period covered in this study, the rate of political violence across the states has not witnessed a similar appreciable reduction.

From an amnesty program embroiled in allegations of corruption and a failed or failing dialogue process with militants in the Niger Delta, the country's main source of foreign exchange earnings – crude oil – has literally been held by 'the jugular' by militants in the region. There is far more to be done in continuously assuaging the fears of the militants; who are still at daggers-drawn with their communities and the Nigerian State.

Fault lines of ethnicity and religion have proven to be very divisive and destructive in Nigeria as they provide narratives of mutual hatred, suspicion and animosity which unfortunately constitute the basis of making civic choices by the electorate.

Civil society could play a major role in addressing the challenges of peace and conflict in Nigeria, however, due to paucity of funds, there has been very little that they could achieve beyond advocacy, research and mediation.

Despite the passage of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Bill, the access needed to carry out in-depth investigative journalism is still denied. The media still operate under the yoke of ownership and limited resources in carrying out in-depth investigative search before going to the press which sometimes brings about inadvertent misrepresentation not taken lightly by parties in conflict. This is because the media is generally perceived to be subjective because it still operates under the yoke of ownership and limited resources in carrying out indepth and objective investigation before going to the press. This brings about inadvertent misrepresentation not taken lightly by parties in conflict. The lack of life insurance for many journalists reduces their motivations to go into certain theatres of conflicts in the country which denies them access to primary sources and visuals from scenes of conflicts. The media is also implicated in some instances of conflict escalation through conflict-insensitive reportage. In the period under study, the social media, especially Facebook and Twitter became avenues for communities in conflict to promote hate narratives and self-justifying account of the conflict.

The business community constitutes one of the victims of conflicts and insurgency across Nigeria. However, they are also stakeholders who must be given important roles to play in peacebuilding and security especially through their corporate social responsibilities.

SECTION FIVE

Recommendations

5.1 Achieving Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

As the 16th goal of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions are central to the pursuit and attainment of sustainable peace. The SDGs, especially the 16th goal, provides strategic guidance for identifying means and ends towards having sustainable peace and development that is people-oriented.

Going by findings from the six geo-political zones, it has become imperative to generate specific recommendations for each Track of Response.

In the final analysis, while all of the six zonal SCA reports have embodied more comprehensive recommendations for the tackling of the multifaceted challenge of managing conflict occurrences and their overriding impacts, the following recommendations are hereby made.

5.1.1   Recommendations for Track One: Government

Strengthening the Capacity of the IPCR

(1)   As the apex agency of government with the statutory mandate of analysing, preventing, managing, resolving/transforming conflicts and promoting peace, the IPCR should be strengthened in all ramifications towards effectively delivering on its mandate.

(2)   Establish the Peace Fund as contained in the National Peace Policy and IPCR Act 34 of 2007.

(3)   **Promoting sustainable human development:** Government should mainstream human development and people-oriented strategies in implementing all policies and actions.

(4)   **Reducing Poverty:** Sustainable policies and programmes targeted at reducing poverty should be pursued by all tiers of government in order to discourage people from anti-social behaviours such as violent conflicts.

(5)   **Equitable Distribution of National Wealth:** Government at all levels should ensureequal access to opportunities that will enhance people's prosperity/well-being in order to discourage the narratives of exclusion. **Women Sensitivity and Inclusion:** in due recognisance of the UNSC Resolution 1325 translated into Nigeria's National Action Plan 2012 on strategies for implementing the UNSCR 1325 in Nigeria should be implemented.

(6)   **Sustainable Environmental Development:** Government should domesticate international treaties and resolutions tailored towards meeting peculiar environmental challenges and impact of climate change.

(7) **Effective Management of Humanitarian Assistance:** The administration of humanitarian assistance should uphold the tenets of the 'Do No Harm' principles.

(8) **Good Governance and Human Security:** Institutions and structures of governance should strengthened to serve the people.

(9) **Civic Participation:** Government should support citizens' empowering initiatives.

(10) **Youth-Sensitive Policies:** Deliberate youth-sensitive policies should be mainstreamed into all government initiatives.

(11) **Tackling the menace of drugs and narcotic**s: Special interventions should be designed to address the menace of availability and abuse of narcotic substances in ungoverned spaces.

(12) **Effective Transhumance Policies:** Government should ensure that in domesticating the ECOWAS Transhumance Protocol of 1998 and the ECOWAS Protocol of free movement of persons in West Africa, human security is not compromised.

(13) **Enhanced border management:** Innovative and cooperative approaches aimed at enhancing the security of borders should be explored towards changing borders from barriers to bridges.

(14) **Promoting Conflict-Sensitive Preaching:** The activities of preachers across the religions should be monitored in order to check provocative and dangerous preaching.

(15) **Separating State from Religion:** Conscious efforts should be made to separate the Nigerian state from religion in the conduct of all state affairs.

Inclusive Approach in Managing the Herders and Farmers Conflict

(1) The practice of ranching should be encouraged.

(2) Government should review the Land Use Act 1978 to encourage agricultural activities and ensure the protection of local communities.

(3) Protection of small-holder/peasant farmers through the establishment of farm reserves.

(4) Special interventions to protect women farmers.

Constructive response to agitations for restructuring

(1) Government should consider dialogue and constructive engagement in resolving issues of self-determination and civil agitations in the South-East zone.

(2) Increasing agitations for the restructuring of the country should be given constructive engagements rather than utter dismissal.

(3) **Reconstruction and Rehabilitation of blighted communities:** Communities ravaged by conflicts and insurgency should be reconstructed to facilitate the return to normal life. This should be complemented with the provision of social amenities and life-enhancing gestures like scholarships for the youths, the provision of quality schools, housing, healthcare and social services including psycho-social

intervention and support geared toward addressing the effects of trauma associated with violent conflict.

State Level Conflict Management Structures

(1)   Respective state governments should institutionalise conflict management and peacebuilding structures that will proactively respond to early warning signs of conflicts.

(2)   Identify the 'peace constituency' in each community towards enhancing and mobilising their capacities for peace.

(3)   **Peace-education and Strategic Communication**: Peace-education and Strategic Communication should be encouraged at both formal and informal learning spaces.

Capacity Building on Conflict Sensitivity for Security Agents

Security personnel should be trained adequately in conflict sensitivity and management techniques.

Track Two: Recommendations: Civil Society Organisations

Institutional support for the civil society

(1)   The civil society should form stronger coalitions around specific issues to maximise their resources.

(2)   **Civic Participation:** The civil society should support citizens' empowering initiatives

(3)   **Transparency and accountability:** The civil society should intensify their role as watchdog in ensuring transparency and accountability in governance. Equally, civil society should demonstrate leadership in being transparent accountable.

(4)   **Stimulating Public-Private Partnership for Peace and Development:** Increased means of collaboration should be explored towards impactful initiatives to sustain peace, reconciliation and development.

(5)   **Corporate Social Responsibility Interventions for Peace:** Local and transnational players in the corporate space should support peace-promoting initiatives as a cardinal point of their corporate social responsibility.

(6)   **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Civil society actors should be more alive to their responsibilities in monitoring and evaluating all initiatives, programmes, funds and activities related to conflict management and peacebuilding.

Track-Three Recommendations for International Organisations

(1)   International development partners and agenciesshould be conflict-sensitive in their activities and focally support peacebuilding initiatives and institutions.

(2)   Supporting capacity building for peace and conflict resolution.

(3)   Ensure standardisation and best practices in peacebuilding and conflict management through knowledge sharing.

(4)   Supporting norms around peace, security and human rights through advocacy.

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ZONAL REPORTS

North-Central Geo-Political Zone

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List of Acronyms

AMAC   Abuja Municipal Council
ASUU   Academic Staff Union of Universities
BENGONET   Benue NGO Network
BSPC   Benue State Planning Commission
ECOWAS   Economic Community of West Africa
EDF   Elohim Development Foundation
FCT   Federal Capital Territory
FGN   Federal Government of Nigeria
GERI   Gender and Environmental Risk Reduction Initiative
HDWs   Hand-Dug Wells
IPCR   Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution
IDPs   Internally Displaced Persons
JCIs   Judicial Commissions of Inquiry
JRI   Justice and Rights Initiative
JDPC   Justice Development and Peace Commission
LGAs   Local Government Areas
MACBAN   Miyetti-Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria
NBC   National Boundary Commission
NDLEA   National Drug Law Enforcement Agency
NEMA   National Emergency Management Agency
NOA   National Orientation Agency
NSCDC   Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps
NBA   Nigerian Bar Association
NPF   Nigeria Police Force
NGOs   Non-Governmental-Organisations
OPEC   Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries
ODU   Oro-Ago Descendants Union
STDs   Sexually-Transmitted Diseases
STF   Special Task Force
SCA   Strategic Conflict Assessment
UMBC   United Middle Belt Congress
UN   United Nations
UNICEF   United Nations Children's Fund
UNDP   United Nations Development Program

List of Table/Maps

Executive Summary

The states in the North Central zone of Nigeria are Benue, Nasarawa, Niger, Kogi, Kwara, Plateau states and the Federal Capital Territory. The area has a high socio-political and religious plurality and a large percentage of ethnic minorities in Nigeria which makes it a melting pot of identities and fault lines.

In line with the objectives of the 2016 SCA, this study generated data towards having an up to date analysis of the causes, actors, impacts, dynamics, responses and gaps in the literature on the conflicts in the North-Central zone of Nigeria. This is deepened by situating them within the contexts of security, political, economic and social causations, ramifications and implications using the framework of human security.

Data generation was largely qualitative given the sensitive and emotive nature of conflict and security matters and such data were corroborated and queried by comparison with secondary sources. Thus observations, interviews and Focus Group discussions were held in each of the conflict-affected settings in each state of the zone. Participants and respondents included actors in conflicts, victims, religious and political stakeholders and security agents many of whom later came to participate in the validation exercise held as climax of the field work.

Indeed, the ripeness of the North-Central for a study of this nature cannot be ignored with a sleight of hand as this zone comes next to the terrorised spaces of North-Eastern Nigeria in the number of internally-displaced persons. While some findings, especially causes of the conflicts, could be described as generic in the zone comprising the six states of the North-Central zone, responses to conflicts, attendant tension and humanitarian crises generated by some of these conflicts are peculiar.

The farmers-herders conflict has remained a dominant feature in all the states in the North-Central. Land remains a scare resource in the zone, worsened by increasing demand resulting in frequent clashes between herders and host communities; most of whom are farmers. Rural-banditry and cattle-rustling are rife in the zone, characterised by armed assaults, rape, kidnapping, organised attacks and reprisals on villages and communities. Protracted disputes over supremacy and rights to chieftaincy stools are also rife in the geo-political zone; often degenerating into indigene-settler conflicts. Urban gangsterism and frequent clashes between these gangs over territories and illegal tolling were found in all the capital cities of the six states. In Abuja, resistance of the motor cycle riders popularly called 'okada riders' against attempts to enforce laws restricting and proscribing them from certain areas often degenerate into violence.

With the exception of Kwara and Nasarawa states, all other states including Abuja, the FCT, suffered attacks by the Boko Haram terrorist organisation – akin to a spillover of the conflict between the sect and the government from the North-East. The

mismanagement of civil-military relations and inter-faith relations worsened the already fragile relations between the Gbagyi and the Herders and the Muslims and Christians in different places in Niger state; generating clashes that claimed lives and belongings. Militaristic and humanitarian responses were found to be common in all the states, including Judicial Commissions of Inquiry (JCIs) – some of which went further to recommend the initiation of peace and reconciliation processes, such as the one chaired by Justice Sikirulai Oyinloye, in the aftermath of the Erin-Ile and Offa clash in 2013.

Kogi state has the lowest record of government interventions in reconciling communities in conflict because the conflicts in the state have had trans-border dimensions involving communities in the state and neighbouring communities from other states, like Anambra and Enugu. Despite the frequency of conflicts resulting in insecurity and humanitarian crises, only Plateau state has an institutionalised conflict management mechanism; while others respond on *ad hoc* basis. Interventions from the civil society have not been sustained in the geo-political zone, except in Plateau; while the religious and traditional institutions have sustained their advocacy as well.

Towards improving inter-group relations and establishing sustainable peace, it is recommended that state governments should take cognisance of the inevitability of differences and struggles that could easily degenerate into violence and put in place pro-active structures that are firm, sincere and transparent to build confidence and trust of parties in conflict. Therefore, respective state governments should institutionalise conflict management and peacebuilding structures that will proactively, civilly and effectively collate and respond to early-warning signs of potential and impending conflicts, in line with extant laws, while enacting new ones where none exists. This should not preclude the need to identify and isolate "spoilers and conflict entrepreneurs" in each conflict setting and relating with them as the issues and settings dictate. Equally important is the need to identify the "peace constituency" in each conflict setting as well, towards enhancing and mobilising their capacities for peace. This reinforces the need for closer working relationships between state governments, security agencies, the socio-political and economic notables, the civil society and the IPCR – the latter being the appropriate agency of government; towards providing informed analysis and pragmatic suggestions.

SECTION ONE

Introduction and Historical Background

The North Central zone is composed of six states: Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau, along with the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The FCT has been assigned the status of a state by the Constitution. The zone is strategically situated in the middle of the country between the north and the south and has a large concentration of minority ethnic groups in the country. Like the confluence of the River Niger and the River Benue, it provides attraction to all ethnic nationalities in the country thereby making it the most ethnically heterogeneous and culturally diverse geo-political zone in the country. It provides a converging point for western and eastern civilisations, which often result in violent religious conflicts.

The zone is well endowed by nature with very rich vegetation and provides a lot of attraction to the transhumance herders from Northern states of the country as well as from Mali, Senegal, Central African Republic, Cameroon, Niger, Chad among others. It is well bestowed with irrigated and arable land, rich pasture, forest reserve, and water bodies. The zone has marked ecological diversity and climatic contrasts along with diverse biophysical characteristics, agro-ecological zones and socio-economic conditions. It is indeed the food basket of the country. About 80 percent of the population derives its income from agriculture. The zone is also endowed with various mineral resources that offer potential for economically viable industrial and agricultural development projects which include: tin and columbite, marble, coal, semi-precious stones, barites, iron ore and aqua marine. There are also plenty of untapped energy resources.

The North Central zone given its plurality has numerous conflicts that have become intractable. The conflicts have been mainly resource based and identity in nature. It has been characterised by religious violence, ethnoreligious conflicts, 'indigeneity' and 'settlement,' as well as access to land and livelihoods. The latest being the herders-farmers conflicts and cattle-rustling defined as an economically based form of criminality driven by informal networks (Kwaja, 2013).

The production potentials of grassland and livestock in the arid and semi-arid region is constrained by low and variable rainfall (Ifatimehin, 2008). In the early 20th century, cattle herders in Northern Nigeria had access to vast areas of grassland. Over time, and with the introduction of irrigated farming in the savannah belt, less pasture was available to herders (Olayoku, 2014). This necessitated southwards movement of the herdsmen to the coastal zone where the rainy season is longer, in search of pasture and water.

Climate change, southern migration, the expansion of farming on pastures and invasion of farmlands by cattle has been identified as some of the causes of conflicts. Others are assaults and allegations of rape of non-herders women by herders, blockage of water

points leading to freshwater scarcity, burning of rangelands, cattle theft, inadequate animal health care and disease control.

Over-grazing of fallow lands, defecation on roads and streams by cattle, extensive sedentarisation and ethnic stereotyping (Olayoku, 2014). All of these can be situated into the context of access to and control of land as a scarce resource and economic survival of the pastoralists and farmers.

Cases of farmers-herders' conflicts have been widespread in Nigeria in recent times. According to Fasona et al (2016), conflicts resulting from cattle grazing actually accounted for 35 percent of all reported cases between 1991 and 2005. More recently, Amaza (2016) reports that out of reported 389 incidents of herdsmen and farmers conflicts from 1997 to 2015, 371 occurred in the Middle Belt otherwise known as the North-Central. The North-Central states of Benue, the Federal Capital Territory, Kogi, Nasarawa, Niger, Kwara and Plateau, are the most affected areas in the country. There is no clear consensus on whether the farmers or the herdsmen are worse hit. However, the effect on arable crops, which constitutes the substantial part of Nigeria's agricultural production, has been a source of serious research and academic debate and a source of concern for the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN). The security implications have escalated to unprecedented proportions with the recent classification of some Herders herdsmen as Boko Haram collaborators or the next security challenge by foreign and local observers (Amaza, 2016).

The North-Central states emerged from the old Northern Region, which was an autonomous center of power within Nigeria, distinctly different from the southern part of the country. It had independent customs, foreign relations and security structures were slightly different from the south. On 27 May, 1967 the regions were dissolved and 12 states created instead. Benue-Plateau state and Kwara state were created along with North-Western state, North-Eastern state, Kano state, North-Central state. In 1976, North Western state was divided into Sokoto and Niger, while Abuja (FCT) was carved out of Niger, Kwara and Plateau states. North Eastern state was divided into Borno, Gongola and Bauchi. Benue-Plateau was separated into Benue and Plateau. In 1987 Katsina was carved out of Kaduna. Kogi was carved out of Kwara in 1991 and Nasarawa was created from Plateau state in 1996.

Other than the Tiv riots of 1960 and 1964, the Northern Region was largely peaceful. The crisis actually began to brew in 1959 during the build up to elections. The United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) had actively mobilised popular support in the length and breadth of Tivland. As a result of this popular support from the people, the opposition UMBC won 85 percent of Tiv votes cast while the Northern People's Congress (NPC) won only 10 percent. Unfortunately for the UMBC, their votes could not push forth their aspirations as they had no influence upon the nature of the government that prevailed at the local level.

As new states emerged, new fault-lines also appeared on the horizon to create violent conflicts in each of the states that constitute the North-Central states. Cognisant of the centrality of peace in the context of state-society and inter-group relations for democratic consolidation, security and development on one hand and the inevitability of conflicts on the other hand, the Institute of Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) with the support of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Nigeria and other development partners, has been embarking on regular assessment of conflicts across the country towards providing a holistic and evidence-based suggestions to the government and other critical stakeholders to the peace, security and cohesion of the country.

As a sequel to previous editions, the SCA 2016 aimed to develop "an overview of the conflict context and trends of violent conflicts, analyse the key stakeholders, and map out conflict related risks and peace-building opportunities, with a view to outlining a number of options . . .", covering from 2013 to 2016. Dating back to 2002 when the first Strategic Conflict Assessment (SCA) of the country was undertaken. The IPCR continues to improve on every edition of the exercise utilising innovative methodologies towards keeping pace with the trajectories and dimensions of conflicts in all contexts across the country.

SECTION TWO

Methodology

The methodology adopted for the 2016 SCA was a combination of unobtrusive methods; which made room for the administration of questionnaire, conduct of in-depth interviews and focus group discussions in all communities visited. This was preceded by a review of relevant literature and situation reports on the conflict situations in the communities where the studies were carried out. This informed the design of the research instruments. Specifically, the instruments were tailored towards generating responses from actors, victims, formal and informal interveners. Analyses of the data were done by taking into focal considerations, the structure, actor and dynamics of each conflict which subsequently informed the suggestions. This is followed by a presentation of the impact, responses from tracks one, two and three and conclusions. This report also identifies gaps in literature, responses, general conclusion and recommendations.

Conflict/Peace Case Studies

This section provides a report of the multiple cases that were studied in the North Central, with each state treated as a single case. The North Central zone, given its nature, has numerous conflicts that have become intractable. The conflict cases have been mainly resource based and identity in nature. It has been characterised by religious violence, ethno-religious conflicts, 'indigeneity' and 'settlement,' as well as access to land and livelihoods. The latest being the herders-farmers conflicts and cattle rustling. Competition-driven conflicts between arable crop farmers and cattle herdsmen have become common occurrences in many parts of North Central. Cases of farmers-herders' conflicts have been widespread in the zone in recent times. Benue, Kogi, Nasarawa, Niger, Kwara, Plateau and the Federal Capital Territory have been identified as the most affected areas in the country. A detailed contextual analysis of specific conflict types and episodes in each state are presented and each case conclusions are used as information contributing to the whole study, but each case remains a single case.

FCT Abuja (Centre of Unity)

Modern Abuja's root can be traced to the Abuja Emirate formed in 1825 partially as a result of the Herders Jihad (Adebanwi, 2006). The initial residents then, were ethnic nationalities of the Habe (Hausa), Gwari, Koro, Gade and Ganagana. Also, there were the Gwandara, Bassa and Herders but the aborigines (the Gwari, Gade, Gwandara) and settlers (Hausa, Herders, etc.) were to be properly resettled in adjoining areas of the FCT as part of compensations for their dislocation, but was haphazardly done (Adebanwi, 2006).

According to Adebanwi (2006), a 'virgin land' was acquired in the center of Nigeria in 1976 in the geographical centre of Nigeria with the intention of building a new Federal Capital Territory (FCT) because of the need to create a center of unity as publicly articulated. There was also a moral dimension to idea of a center of unity in that it was intended to be a symbol that will transcend Nigeria's disparate and contending primordial identities and to project a national essence that all will be implored to subscribe to (Adebanwi, 2006). So, on 3 February, 1976, late head of state General Murtala Muhammed announced in a broadcast to the country the decision to relocate the capital of Nigeria from Lagos to Abuja and 48 hours after, Decree No. 6, of 1976 (Federal Capital Act) was enacted thereby giving birth to a new city from the lands of Niger, Plateau and Kwara states. A Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) was one of the first institutions created to monitor the preparation of a comprehensive master plan for the city which stands on 8,000 sq. km. of land approximately two and a half times the size of Lagos (Adebanwi, 2006).

It is bordered in the north by Kaduna state, the west by Niger state, the east and South-East by Nasarawa state and the southwest by Kogi state. The FCT's natural endowments such as; its rolling hills, isolated highlands and other endearing features make it a delight. The savannah grassland of the north and the Middle Belt, the richness of the tropical rain forest of the south and an equable climate all combined to make the FCT a soil-rich agricultural haven.

Since it officially became the capital of Nigeria in 1991, successive regimes have been making conscious efforts to ensure that it lives up to its intended vision of a 'centre of unity.' The physical landscape of the city reflects the diversity of Nigeria as it has the National Mosque and the Nigerian National Christian Center amongst other features bearing testimonies to Nigeria's unity. As a means of preserving memories and creating memories (Adebanwi, 2012), the naming of streets in Abuja reflect the past and present heroes and notables of the country. Despite its allure, the city has its own poorly developed areas mostly on its outskirt. The influx of Nigerians from all parts of the country has also led to the emergence of towns like Karu Urban Area, Suleja Urban Area and the growth, Gwagwalada, Lugbe, Karchi, Jukwuyi, Kuje and other hitherto smaller settlements. Metropolitan Abuja is made up of Apo, Garki, and Wuse, etc.

Insurgency in the FCT

Abuja as the seat of power and Nigeria's centre of unity has been deliberately targeted on a number of occasions by the *Boko Haram*. Some of these have both national and global significance. The attack on the United Nations (UN) headquarters and other symbols of state power, authority and national security in the city just as the insurgents did not spare other soft targets like public mass gatherings such as markets and bus terminals. Below is a reflection of the trends in the attacks carried out by the insurgents in the city.

Farmer-Herder Conflict in the FCT

Just as other states and communities in the North Central suffer from herdsmen attacks, communities outside the Abuja municipal also suffer violent confrontations between herdsmen and Gbagyi farmers. Most of these attacks are initiated by the encroachment of the Herders into the Gbagyi's farm with their flocks eating up the farm and destroying their crops.

In one of such confrontations between the Gbagyi people and Herders in December 2012, 27 communities were sacked and there was the displacement of over 1500 persons in Gwako, Gwagwalada LGA (*PM News*, 2012). A similar conflict occurred on 7 June, 2014 which led to the death of 5 people while 21 people sustained injuries in a clash between Gbagyi farmers and herdsmen in Paiko, Gwagwalada Area Council, in the Federal Capital Territory (ICIR Nigeria, 2014).

Table 1: Distribution of Attacks by Boko Haram in Abuja as at February 2016

States	Dates	Types of Attacks	Monthly Attacks	Soft Targets	Hard Targets	Injured	Civilian Deaths	Security Agents Deaths	BH Deaths
Abuja	Dec 2010	Bomb attacks	2	Soft			15		
	May 2011	Bomb attack	1	Soft			3		
	June 2011	Suicide Attacks	1		Hard		8		
	Aug 2011	Bomb Attack	1		Hard				
	Mar 2012	Death in prison	1						9
	Apr 2012	Suicide Attacks	1	Soft			4		
	May 2012	Bomb attack	1		Hard	80	23		
	June 2012	Bomb attack	1						
	July 2012	Bomb attack	1	Soft					
	April 2014	Bomb/ Suicide Attacks	1	Soft		200	75		
	May 2014	Bomb attacks	1	Soft	Hard	60			
	June 2014	Bomb attacks	1	Soft		17	21		

Source: Animasawun, 2016

On 14 August, 2014, there was another clash between herdsmen and farmers in Gawu Ward, Abaji, which led to the loss of lives and property. Another clash was reported on March 2, 2015 still in the context of farmers and herders. An account has it that the conflict was reprisal after a farmer was attacked and killed in his compound by unknown herdsmen at Pegi village in Kuje. On 25 March, 2016, there was another clash between herdsmen and farmers where it was alleged that the herdsmen intruded into the farmland of a Sukuku farmer destroying his crops with their cattle and when the farmer questioned the herdsmen, they became violent and threatened to kill the farmer who was with his son in the farm. In the cause of the hot exchanges, one of the herdsmen fired a gunshot into the air which made the farmer and his son run away out of fear. The herdsmen did not stop there. They chased them into their village (Sukuku) and started shooting sporadically at the residents; as a result 7 people were hacked to death and 3 missing. The incident happened in Yangoji ward of Kwali Area Council. On 25 April, 2016 there was a clash between the herdsmen and farmers. A Gbagyi farmer had a clash with a herdsman and he died. His brother went after the herdsman. In the process the herdsman was killed. This took place in Shazi village, a suburb of Kuje Area Council.

Indigene-Settler Conflict

Kaida-Tsoho community in Gwagwalada Area Council is a community populated by both Bassa and Gbagyi indigenes. Paradoxically, members of the ethnic groups pay allegiance to two contending traditional authorities, a situation which has polarised the community into two (Arinze, 2014). Gbagyi natives claimed their ancestors were the first to discover and settle on Kaida-Tsoho, having migrated from Zaria. According to the Sarkin Gbagyi, Mallam Mohammed Alabara "Hausa people in Zaria did not like us so my ancestors had to leave. Being farmers, when they came to this land and discovered a river, they decided to settle here".

Gbagyi people in the community rely on the history of the land in making their claims that the land belongs to them, arguing that Bassa people came and met them after several years.

They said Bassa people deceived them because "They were well known for fishing and sometimes when they caught fish they brought some to us. We, on the other hand, we were known for farming. However, they do a little bit of farming," explained the Sarkin Gbagyi. The community used to be under the rule of the chief of Zuba, but crisis started when he appointed Alabara the village head of Kaida-Tsoho. Bassa people were not comfortable with the appointment, kicked against it and refused to pay allegiance to Alabara. They asked for the appointment of their own leader and got one from the ruler of Zuba.

The secretary of Bassa indigenes in the community, confirmed the leadership tussle, describing it as "an age-long conflict." "We have two chiefs in this community because everyone wants to be represented since there are two different tribes. That's the main reason there are two chiefs in the community". He confirmed that the members of the two ethnic groups were not living in peace.

Findings revealed that Bassa people laid claim to the ownership of the land due to traces of 'ganuwa' in the community, that is, war trenches common among Bassa communities used as a protection during invasions by enemies. Such thinking is reinforced by the following mention by a field participant: "Ganuwa is the heritage of Bassa people. We have it in this community and that was where our ancestors hid during wars in the past. This is our community and nobody can claim it." However, it is worth noting that students from both Gbagyi and Bassa homes attend the same schools, use the same Primary Healthcare Centre (PHC) and drink from the same source of water, but this does not signify communality for the people as their houses are distinctively separated and one can easily discern the demarcation between Gbagyi and Bassa homes (Arinze, 2014).

Ethnic Conflicts

On 11 June, 2014, the body of a Gbagyi youth was found at notorious spot which the youths converted into a venue for consumption of alcohol and illicit drugs. The youths

suspected the Herders community who live around the vicinity to have murdered him. In anger, one of the youth got a machete and attacked two Herders men ridding on a motorcycle. One of them died and the other was taken to the hospital by an onlooker, thereby creatggn inter-ethnic tensions.

Other Criminality Induced Conflict

In addition to the interviews conducted, two sessions of FGD were held. The first FGD was done at the Nyanya Federal Housing Authority (FHA) junction just opposite St. Mary's Catholic Church Karu/Nanya. The session generated data on the types of conflicts in the town which do not get reported by the media. FGD found out that on 4 August, 2013 an altercation between a commercial motorcycle rider popularly known as *Okada* rider and a soldier, over obstructive manner of parking by the *Okada* rider which the soldier allegedly drew his attention to. The soldier was said to have insisted that the *Okada* be properly parked but further told the *Okada* rider to lie down inside drainage! This attracted the attention of fellow *Okada* riders who demonstrated their usual 'team spirit' (Animasawun, 2017) by collectively haranguing the soldier and other motorists around. The soldier escaped from the scene and retuned with soldiers who overpowered the *Okada* riders and took them away in military vehicles although some of them escaped with injuries.

The second FGD was held at Gbazango pipeline area in Kubwa and this was informed by the observed propensity of the rate of crimes that have led to inter-group skirmishes and sometimes violent confrontations. One of such conflict-generating crimes was the killing on 9 July, 2016 of late Mrs. Eunice Olawale whose daughter said 'they just killed her like a chicken and left her there' (Omonobi, et al 2016).

Impact of Conflicts and Insurgency on Human Security

Insurgency in Abuja really manifested as a conflict that pitched the Boko Haram insurgents as one side against the Nigerian state, her people and the residents of the city and global interests present in the city. Within the period under focus, this has had more telling effects on physical and psychological security of the people in the city. Next to insurgency, inter-group conflicts also exist in the city in ways that mirror deeper fissures along class and identity fault lines. The frequent and violent demonstration of team spirit by the *Okada* riders reflect the impression held of those they consider better off and oppressive in the city. Also, the clashes between the farmers and herders speak to the ubiquity of the crisis and struggle over access and control of natural resources.

Conflict Actors' Interests, Peace Agenda, Capacities and Incentives

The conflict and security landscape of the city has a number of actors ranging from formal and informal players. However, due to the absence of any protracted conflict in the FCT, the clashing interests of the actors can be mediated and reconciled through fair, accessible and transparent governance.

Intervention/Responses

Track 1

The government of the FCT has consistently cooperated with security agents in ensuring that anything that portents ill for the peace and stability is nipped in the bud. Nevertheless more can still be done in this direction.

Track 2

Despite the visibility of local and international not-for-profit organisations in the FCT, not many of them are working or funding activities on peace perhaps due to the infrequency of conflicts.

Conclusion

The FCT is not immune from insurgency just like many other parts of northern Nigeria. Also, the farmers-herders conflict rears its ugly head in the suburbs as well as the intermittent disturbances of public peace by the conduct of *Okada* riders. While the suicide attacks are signpost of established threats, the farmers-herders conflict and the spontaneous mobilisation of group violence by *Okada* riders deserve attention by the government and relevant stakeholders in the city. Criminal acts that could be read as attacks are potential sources of inter-group conflagrations. The murder of Mrs Eunice Oyewale a Christian who was on early morning neighbourhood evangelism could have degenerated into an inter-faith and inter-ethnic crisis for which the women's ethnic and religious identities could have been mobilised to set the city on fire.

While attacks by the Boko Haram insurgents in Abuja have waned, the city must not play down the potential of space, identity and uneven distribution of wealth in the city amidst a growing number of marginal population to giving vent to violent expressions. The impacts of the terrorists attack in the FCT are loss of lives and properties, Insecurity and distrust amongst everyone. It also succeeded in creating road blocks and barrier on so many roads and organisations in FCT as well as increase religious intolerance. The impact of this on women was the loss of their means of livelihood, lives and loved ones.

Gaps in Literature, Policy and Responses

While events and happenings in capital cities and especially Abuja are often top of news items, detailed studies into how such cities contend with conflicts and tensions arising from its complex and plural nature have not been greatly investigated. As a centre of unity, the management of Abuja can greatly impact positively or negatively on inter-group relations and peaceful co-existence because it houses all identity groups in the country. Therefore policies and programmes to enhance this must be explored and promoted.

Recommendations

Given the peculiar inter-relatedness of criminality and conflict in the FCT, government, stakeholders and security agents must creatively explore novel ways of first keeping every space safe and free of criminal elements whose activities might be read as ethnic attacks when they are actually criminal. Proper, fair and just handling of the farmers-herders conflict in the city is crucial.

Benue State (Food Basket of the Nation)

Capital: Makurdi
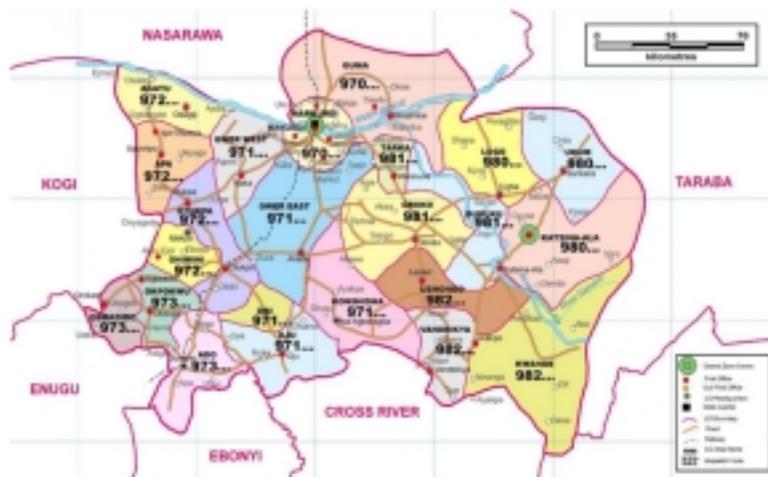
Introduction and Historical Background

This section is based on information gleaned from the official website of the Benue state government. The history of Benue state dates back to when it was carved out of the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria at the start of the 20th century. It was first known as Munshi Province until 1918 when it was named after its most geographical feature, the River Benue. On 3 February, 1976, Benue state was part of the states created by the administration of General Murtala Mohammed as one of the states that swelled the number of states in Nigeria from 13 to 19. Further alteration was done to its boundaries in 1991 with the creation of Kogi state. Presently the state has 23 local government areas.

The state lies within the lower river Benue trough in the Middle Belt region of Nigeria. Benue state shares boundaries with five other states, namely: Nassarawa to the north, Taraba to the east, Cross-River to the south, Enugu to the south-west and Kogi to the west. The state also shares a common boundary with the Republic of Cameroun on the south-east. Benue has a population of 4,780,389 (2006 census) and occupies a landmass of 32,518 sq. km.

Benue state is ethno-nationally plural and some of the main ethnic groups are the Tiv, Idoma, Igede, Etulo, Abakpa, Jukun, Hausa, Akweya and Nyifon. The Tiv are the

dominant ethnic group, occupying 14 local government areas, while the Idoma, Igede and others occupy the remaining nine local government areas. Christians make up the religious majority with a sprinkle population of Muslims and traditionalists.

Occupationally, most of the people are farmers while the inhabitants of the riverine areas engage in fishing as their primary or important secondary occupation. Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy, engaging over 75 percent of the state farming population. The state also boasts of one of the longest stretches of river systems in the country with great potential for a viable fishing industry, dry season farming through irrigation and for an inland water highway. The vegetation of the southern parts of the state is characterised by forests, which yield trees for timber and provide a suitable habitat for rare animals. The state thus possesses potential for the development of viable forest and wildlife reserves.

The state is blessed with both mineral and natural resources across the Local Government Areas of the state. Of these mineral resources, only limestone at Tse-Kucha near Gboko and kaolin at Otukpo are being commercially explored. In terms of natural resources, it is acclaimed as the food basket of the country because of its rich agricultural produce which includes yams, rice, beans, cassava, potatoes, maize, soya beans, sorghum, millet and cocoyam. The state also accounts for over 70 percent of Nigeria's soya bean production.

Conflict in Benue State

Cattle rustling are common in Agatu, Apa, Gwer and Guma Local Government Areas of Benue state. These are executed with sophisticated weaponry. The Tivs are also in bloody battles with Hausa communities in Azara in Nasarawa state over land ownership. The herdsmen and Tiv militia extended their confrontations by turning Kadarko, Kwara and other villages in Giza Development Area of Keana Local Government (Nasarawa state) and other villages on the Benue side into a conflict zone.

Arising from the armed violence in 2010, between the herdsmen and Tiv farmers in Guma Local Government Area of Benue state, the displaced herdsmen moved from Benue state and took refuge in Akpanaja, Rukubi and Doka in Doma Local Government Area of Nasarawa state, on the fringes of the boundary with Benue state. Shortly afterwards, the Tiv militia attacked the Akpanaja, Rukubi and Doka communities, while in pursuit of the herdsmen. The herdsmen waged a ferocious attack on a number of Tiv communities that destroyed many lives and property. The armed confrontation involved the use of SALWs, including sophisticated assault rifles, such as AK47.

Impacts of Conflict on Human Security

The peace and stability of Benue state has, in the last one decade, been threatened by violent and volatile clashes between farmers and herdsmen. The resultant effects on human security, economic well-being and socio-cultural practices of the people of the

state have been devastating. For instance, between 2010 and 2013, it was estimated that 3,000 people were killed in violent conflicts between Tiv farmers and herdsmen, while over 5,000 residents were displaced in the affected communities (HRW, 2014). Also, in 2013, about 30 farmers were killed in armed clashes that occurred between herdsmen and Tiv farmers in Guma LGA Benue state. The herdsmen severally attacked the Agatu communities killing over 111 people in retaliation for the killing of 112 cows by the communities within the Agatu LGA of Benue state.

Between January and April 2014, Herders herdsmen attacks led to the death of five (5) soldiers and seven civilians in Agatu LGA, 35 people in Gwer West LGA, 8 people in Tiv community along Makurdi, 28 people in Ukpam village of Mbabaai. Also, the Former Governor of the state, Suswan, narrowly escaped from herdsmen attacks on his convoy on March 10, at Umenger. Other clashes between the herdsmen and the communities in Benue state led to the dead of 50 people in Agatu LGA, 15 people in Gwer LGA and 16 in Logo LGA where herdsmen always put up a surprise attacks on the unexpecting villages who were able to put up little or no resistant (*National Accord*, 2016).

Between January and March 2015, over 100 herdsmen in several attacks stormed Abugbe, Okoklo, Ogwule, Ocholoyan villages all in Agatu LGA and killed over 95 people including women and children. Other attacks on smaller villages and refugee camps at Ukura, Gafa, Per and Tse-Gusa, Logo LGA left over 100 of dead persons, while 13 others were killed in Bururku LGA and Kwande LGA (National Accord, 2016).

In 2016, violent conflict between residents of Adagbo, Akwu, Alla, Oduegbebo Ogboju, and Okokolo communities of Agatu Local Government and herdsmen resulted in the death of 500 people, displacement of about 20,000 individuals and the destruction of properties worth millions of Naira (Financial Nigeria, 2016).

Thirteen (13) Local Government Areas (LGAs) out of the 23 LGAs of Benue state have experienced various types of conflicts and conflict-related crimes as groups battle themselves over land, border, access and control of natural resources like the case of the herders and farmers conflict which has remained a reoccurring conflict with the scope expanding and widening on yearly basis (BENGONET, 2016).

The conflicts that occurred during this period had both positive and negative outcomes. Therefore some of them qualify as functional conflicts because of the long term positive changes that arose out of the way they were managed by the communities involved, the security agencies and the government. However, the fact that inter-gang violence still breaks out with adverse implications for the public and bystanders in such areas portends negativity for the handling conflict and security issues in the state.

In Benue state, across Agatu, Buruku, Logo and Tarka LGAs, the violent conflicts between herders and farmers have affected access to education and violated educational rights of school age boys and girls. School enrolment figures of Local Government

Education Authorities of selected LGAs believe that prior to the full escalation of violence in the communities, an average of 1 out of every 3 boys; and 1 out of every 5 girls of school age were not in school due to extreme poverty and other socio-cultural inhibitions in Agatu. The enrolment level in Buruku and Logo LGAs prior to the conflict was 1 out of every 4 boys; and 1 out of every 6 girls while that of Tarka was 1 out of every 6 boys; and 1 out of every 8 girls.

In Logo LGA, the conflicts inhibited access to education in four council wards namely Mbagber, Nenzev, Tombo, Turan and Ukemberagya/Tswarev Council Wards. It is believed that these wards were targeted for attacks because they border River Benue which is used as entry point for transhumance and grazing herders immigrating from North-East and North West Nigeria to the Benue valley. In Mbagber council ward, Mbawar kindred was worst-hit with Tseke village as biggest theatre of violence. The council ward has about 16 public primary schools. However, the high level of violence has resulted in a shut-down of 8 of these public primary schools. These affected schools are located in *Ushalegh, Kwaghneer, Goosu, Kinekaa,* Ordi, Abinki, Sev-av and Demelu *(*otherwise called Vue) communities. The Mbawar Community Secondary School which was built through 100 percent community effort was completely burnt down and demolished forcing long term closure of the only affordable closely located post-primary school in the ward. Insecurity was still high as children, women and men were observed to be living in perpetual fear and suspicion of every movement.

In Nenzev Council Ward, public primary schools are located in Gbon, Tse-Aluor, Shakume, Anyibe, Tyokyaa, Boikpa, Utuhaikyegh and Jiji. There are also private nursery and primary schools in Kyor, Tsuwega and Diba communities; as well as a Universal Basic Education Junior Secondary School in Kyor. The violence however resulted in closure of all schools in the communities above. It was observed that no school was functional in the council ward. In addition, primary school structures and instructional materials in Tse-Aluor, Anyibe and Gbon communities were vandalised.

The conflict had the biggest impacts on Tombo Council Ward,w here 67 women, men and children were killed and dumped in Hand-Dug Wells (HDWs) to pollute water sources. The Ward has about 103 primary schools though some of the schools were not in areas affected by violence. All the schools located in each of Ikyumen, Puuravure, Anyibe (also called Aman), Tse-Ibor, Azege, Uzer, Ikyungwa, Gbeleve, Tse-Mku, Mbazar, Genyi Angura, Anungwa, Tyogbihi, Mbakighir, Tizaand Audu communities where violence was recorded were partially burnt down, destroyed and school materials vandalised. No school in the above mentioned conflict-prone areas is functional.

There are 14 public primary schools and a community secondary school in Turan Council Ward**.** None of these schools is functional as children from the community have been displaced as a result of the insecurity. In most of these schools, desks and blackboards were destroyed and teaching aids exposed to rains. The primary school in Pav which was built through 100 percent community effort was razed down and demolished.

A total of three council wards were affected by the conflict in Buruku LGA. These are Binev, Mbaapen and Mbayar. In Maapen Council Ward, there is a public primary school in each of Kegh, Udwer, Batur, Sev-av, Tyoambiir, Agyo, Gbanyam, Nyor, Gbor, Yarkwan and Shom communities. There are also nursery and primary schools in Deke and Agwabi communities as well as three secondary schools, two of which are located in Agwabi and one in Tyoambiir. Although none of these schools were burnt or demolished, it was observed that doors were burgled and teaching and learning materials destroyed, stolen or vandalised. All the schools have shut down as a result of insecurity such that both pupils and teachers have left the communities. The community was still recording triggers to the extent that respondents were tensed up during FGDs for fear of being attacked in the course of their engagement with our team.

A documented Report[1] of the impacts of the conflict in Mbaapen and Mbaya Council Wards, jointly prepared by stakeholders of the two LGAs under the auspices of Mbatie Community Development Association, was received for desk review. The report shows that all public primary schools (over 12 in total) in Mbatsaase, Mbaagir, Mbajor, Mbaatindi and Kendev communities of Mbaapen council ward were shut down as pupils and teachers fled in fear. Similarly, violence resulted in a shutdown of schools located in Mbakundu/ Mbaju, Mbagbagh, Mbatsuwa.

A total of four council wards were affected by violence. Severe cases of violence were recorded in Mbanyagbe, Mbaayo and Mbakwakem wards while houses, schools and other infrastructure were vandalised following massive displacement of inhabitants of Mbakyaa council ward. There are over 58 Adult literacy centres and 73 public primary schools in the LGA. Out of this number, adult literacy centres in Akende-Ikyo, Kontyen, Tinekyura and Manger communities as well as public primary schools in Usombo, Mbaali, Tse-Tia, Kpev, Aboho, Mbakyura, Tindikyura, Avande were affected. It was observed that the Primary school in Avande was used as a camp for military officers deployed for internal security operations (ISO) in the area.

It was gathered that children who were displaced from the schools are living with family relations in safer parts of the LGA and other LGAs like Gboko and Makurdi; while very few were in cities with relations and guardians. In Tombo ward, classes were organised in safe spots of the ward under trees to provide continuous education. However, only few pupils attended these make-shift classes as majority of them were displaced from the communities.

The situation in the communities presents an enigma of challenges in achieving educational development in affected LGAs. There are worrisome evolving trends such as early marriage and prostitution of adolescent girls in nearby towns like Gboko, Katsina-

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1   Mbatie Development Association (2016). Summary Report on the Ongoing Herders Invasion of Mbatie Community. A Printed analytical report on impacts of the conflict on Mbaapen and Mbaya council wards of Buruku LGA.

Ala and Makurdi which portend to increase school drop-out cases. Community members suggested that government should increase security presence and action in affected wards for proper governance of spaces exploited for violence. They further solicited the support of government, private sector and international organisations to rebuild the community secondary school destroyed as communities were impoverished by the conflict and cannot be able to finance reconstruction of the post-primary school. Local Government Education Authorities advocated for expansion of primary schools in safer neighbouring towns through construction of additional classrooms and increased supply of teaching and learning materials so that in times of violence, displaced boys and girls can be transferred to the schools and teachers displaced from the schools in violence hit areas reposted to provide continuous education for the pupils. Furthermore, they solicited emergency and relief agencies to integrate learning and teaching materials into their procurement chains as these are hugely deficit in current relief assistance of state and non-state actors.

Generally, violent conflicts create imbalances in psychological attitudes, cultural practices and traditional coping mechanisms. These in turn affect resilience building and sometimes a veritable source of second generational conflicts. As part of the Strategic Conflict Assessment (SCA), the state of psychological stability was assessed. In Logo local government, most respondents agreed that the violence recorded in the community has resulted in psychological disorders. Women and children were associated with anxiety and fear while youth, the aged and women were associated with depression. Participatory observation of reactive behaviour of children and women affirmed this submission. In Ukemberagya-Tswarev, Tombo, Nenzev and Mbagber council wards, there were cases of anxiety, depression, and fear of unusual sounds especially among women and children. In all the council wards visited, young persons also displayed apprehensive behaviour to strangers and strange vehicles. Children speedily ran for cover upon sighting vehicles for fear it might be another set of disguised attackers. Cases of heart attack and stark madness as a result of the conflict were reported amongst youth and men in Tombo and Turan council wards but none was recorded in Mbagber and Nenzev council wards.

Cases of depression, anxiety and extreme fear were equally reported in the three council wards visited in Buruku local government area. The manifestations of these psychological disorders were similar to those in Logo local government area. In Binev ward, cases of mental disorders were reported. However, in Maapen and Mbaya council wards, no such case was reported. It was discovered that more women were living with mental illness than men in Buruku than in Logo where the ratio was balanced.

Across conflict-hit wards of Tarka local government area, anxiety, fears and depression was equally widely reported although only one case of mental illness was recorded in Mbanyagber Council Ward. In Mbaayo Council Ward, two women were reported to be living with depression which had started manifesting in their social behaviour. This was the same with another woman in Mbanyagber Council Ward; and another in Mbakwakem Council Ward.

In Agatu local government, too, several cases of depression, hypertension and anxiety were recorded in Agbugbe, Okokolo, Akwu, Adagbo and Aila Council Wards where violence occurred. Although in Akwu and Adagbo Wards, no case of mental illness was reported, two men from Agbugbe and Aila Council Wards were identified to have cases of mental illness. More of such cases were recorded in Okokolo Council Ward.

The inhabitants of local communities that recorded violent conflicts between herders and farmers in Agatu, Buruku, Logo and Tarka LGAs depend on crop farming, fishing and petty trading for livelihood. Women and youth constitute the most productive age groups. However, many of them lack skills in multiple income generating activities. This partially explains the reasons for trauma, depression and the difficulty faced by communities in coping, recovery and resilience building. The loss of livelihoods has resulted in emerging dynamics such as increased participation of girls and young women in commercial sex in neighbouring towns, early marriages, child labour in female-headed homes and rise in criminal activities.

In Logo local government, income generating activities of inhabitants of Tombo, Mbagber, Nenzev and Ukemberagya/Tswarev Council Wards includes, farming of yam, cassava, rice, guinea corn, sesame seed. These crops were largely destroyed on-farm by cattle, and in-stock by herders who vandalised, burnt or demolished houses where stocks were kept as well as barns. Though the exact value of farms destroyed could not be ascertained, focus groups stated that an estimated total cultivated area of 257,000 hectares; crop and animal stock valued at 242 million were destroyed across the four Council Wards. During the conflicts the Abeda, Ayilamo, Iorja, and Wende local markets were burnt down and destroyed, sparing only Anyiin and Gondozua markets in Ukemberagya/Tswarev Ward. Although Anyiin and Gondozua markets were not burnt or destroyed, it was observed that very minimal transactions were on-going in the markets due to desertion and displacements for fear of attack.

In Tombo council ward, beans and millet are produced in large quantities in addition to those produced in Ukemberagya Tswarev. In Tombo Council Ward too, Anyebe, Azege, Tomatar, Iwuendyer and Uzer markets were burnt and destroyed. It was observed that all buying and selling activities had ceased in Tomatar while minimal activities were recorded in other markets. The crops produced in Ukemberagya/Tswarev and Tombo Council Wards are also produced in Mbagber Council, in addition to Melon. There are 4 local markets in the Council Ward; namely Iorza, Ayilamo, Azege and Jortar. Among these, Jortar Market was burnt and destroyed while the others were spared. However, buying and selling activities in the markets were significantly low due to fear of attack and mass displacement from the communities in the Ward. Dusa and Dooshima are the only markets in Turan Council Ward of Logo LGA. During the conflicts, these markets were razed down and destroyed. All activities in the markets have ceased. In Nenzev Council Ward, the only market – Ikyor, was destroyed and transactions were just beginning to pick up. The profiles of markets destroyed were affirmed by the Head of Revenue

Department of the local government, as follows:

> Ayilamo, Iorza, Chembe, Jootar, Azege, Anyibe, Tsekuungu, and Tse Getim markets representing over 90% of markets in the Gambe Tiev area covering the affected communities were destroyed [KII, HOD Revenue, Logo LGA].

Economic rights were also violated during the conflict in Buruku local government area. Leaders of the communities stated that the communities were unable to stop encroachment on their farms by herders due to the arms they were carrying resulting to total destruction of farms and stock barns of 189 households in Mbaapen Council Ward and 51 households in Mbaya, in addition to partial destruction on-farm and in-storage of crops. It was also noted that larger proportion of the people store yields in residential houses.

In Binev, Mbaapen and Mbaya council wards of the LGA, there were market infrastructures in Adogo, Usen, Ortese Mbaatsua, Agwabi, Ortese Mbatsaase, Tsighe, Tafi, Jingir, Abuku, Ikyume. However, the conflict has led to destruction of Adogo, Usen, Ortese Mbaatsua, Agwabi, Ortese Mbatsaase, Tsighe, Tafi markets thus reducing access to buying and selling services by over 72 percent.[2]

Tarka local government area is renowned for production of vegetables, tomatoes, pepper and other spices. They also produce rice, groundnuts, cassava, and yam in significant quantities. The supply chain of these agro products in the state has suffered setbacks as a result of the conflict which affected rural communities. Aboho market which is the only point for commercial activities in Mbaayo Council Ward was burnt. In Mbakwakem Council Ward, all the four markets in the community namely Ijor Imenger, Kontyen, Tomatar and Uavande were destroyed. Also, two of the four markets in Mbanyagber Council Ward were partially destroyed. They include Oravander and Angbaaye. Tiotu and Tarhembe markets were spared because of their location by the busy Makurdi-Gboko highway and continued to operate normal commercial activities. The Wannune, Uchi, Gwarche, Wergba, Karmem, Asukuya and Tomatar markets were also spared due to their location along federal highway.

In Agatu local government area, fishing and farming are the major income generating activities. The LGA is located by the bank of River Benue with tributaries that are rich in marine protein and resources. The uplands of Agatu are fertile and suitable for crop farming and grazing. The people sell their products through local markets within communities as access roads are in deplorable state and inaccessible during rainy season. It is noteworthy that markets were targeted mostly in Agatu LGA comparatively with Buruku, Logo and Tarka LGAs. This may be as a result of the social system of Agatu people which recognises central markets for entire council ward. Other community

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2   KII with Head of Revenue Department, Buruku LGA.

members believe that the targeting of markets was to increase collateral damage in the conflict as markets accommodated mass of unarmed vulnerable persons at a time.

The head of revenue department of the LGA said internal revenue that Agatu local government generated collapsed in May by over 85 per cent due to the conflict. Agbugbe Council Ward was one of the wards attacked. The conflict led to destruction of farms of over 342 households. Apart from personal properties and livelihoods, the Agbugbe market which is the only market in the Ward was razed down. It was observed that commercial activities were yet to pick up in the market following the destruction. Several farms estimated to be 10,000 hectares were destroyed in Okokolo in addition to Ochononya and Okokolo markets which are the only points for buying and selling in the Council Ward. Similar situation was recorded in Akwu council ward where fish and crops stored in houses as well as those in the farm were destroyed. The Akwu market which is the only market in the council ward was razed down. In Adagbo council ward, the magnitude of destruction was equally big. In addition to over 12 million Naira worth of loss in property and stock, the Adagbo market, which is the only market in Adagbo Council Ward as well as Aila main market and Aila Night market which are the only markets in Aila Council Ward, were destroyed. The revenue department of the LGA noted that only Obagaji, Oshigbudu, Okpagabi markets were spared in recent attacks but noted that Oshigbudu and Okpagabi markets had witnessed attacks in previous years and are only recovering. Obagaji is the local government headquarters with security formations of the military, police and other para-military institutions which may be the reason why it was spared in the attack.

Due to the desertion of several settlements and consequent abandoning of economic activities across the four LGAs, the conflict has left impacts and introduced dynamics that will likely affect the income generating activities for a long time, as fear exist among the people. Poverty level is soaring towards disturbing dimensions as marriages were being broken in households where men were unable to finance household needs as expected of them in the social systems. There is an increase in the number of women and girls from affected LGAs who are commercial sex workers in the brothels located in Gboko, Katsina-Ala, Makurdi, Naka and Otukpo while some of the girls hang around in motor parks and drinking joints in above mentioned towns to provide commercial sex services for travelers who do not know locations of brothels or do not want to patronise organised sex-selling places. The girls are extremely poor and lack bargaining power; thus increasing their vulnerability to risks associated with commercial sex, e.g. Sexually-Transmitted Diseases (STDs) and unplanned parenthood.

Focus groups reported resurging cases of rape, crime, forced marriages, child trafficking and child labour amongst women, girls, boys and youth in displaced communities. This was affirmed in Tombo ward where focus groups noted that the slogan: *"Gber-ayem, gber-tyo!, Atem tyô Atem-tyô"* – meaning *'sex in return for protection enjoyed'* has become popular amongst youth and men in communities hosting internally displaced girls and women.

The herders reported huge loss of cattle as a result of the conflict. Though the exact number of cattle lost could not be ascertained, officials of MACBAN Benue state Chapter stated that they had received reports of over 4,000 cattle lost in Agatu LGA, Buruku, Logo and Tarka LGAs altogether. Currently, over 40 families who owned cattle for livelihoods across Agatu, Buruku, Logo and Tarka LGAs have been thrown out of business.

Some of the people who owned cattle and the youths that used to herd them no longer have a single cow. They have to rely on their relations and friends for food. The youth custodians also keep roaming without anything to do. This is a major way we have suffered from the violence [KII, Cattle Owner Makurdi].

They clarified however that majority of the cattle in Agatu were lost to rustlers who were not only the local farmers but also other herders who took advantage of the instability to steal from other herders. The cattle lost in Buruku, Logo and Tarka were reported to have been killed by local farmers.

Conflict Actors' Interests, Peace Agenda, Capacities and Incentives

The actors in the conflict and security landscape of Benue state can be described as visible and invisible conflict entrepreneurs or shadow parties. The fertility of the land provides a transnational scope to be explored in identifying who the entire gamut of actors in the conflict and insecurity landscape. Indeed the peace agenda of all parties in Benue state is informed by a zero-sum attitude that must change towards mutual respect and accommodation through the use of joint-problem solving approaches. The capacities of the parties for violence has been well manifested however, it is time to turn the use of such capacities away from its violent deployment towards exploring the means and avenues for peaceful co-existence and mutual respect.

Intervention/Responses

Track 1

Interventions by the state and federal government have been coming but their impacts on the landscape of conflict and insecurity leave so much to desire in terms of impacts as garnered during the field. Many of the villagers want the government to show more presence, firmness and fairness in handling the matter which points to the fact that achieving sustainable peace in Benue transcends the presence of military men. The state government seems to have a grasp of the interrelatedness of criminality and conflict and how the intersection of the two has been fuelling indigene-settler conflicts in the state. This has informed the amnesty initiative which many respondents condemn as actually meant to satisfy certain narrow interests in the state. Some described it as "playing the politics of peace" instead of using it to promote the culture of peace.

Track 2

There are a number of not-for-profit organisations in Benue state working on peacebuilding and non-violence. They do this in two contexts of singly undertaking projects and sometimes working within a coalition.

Track 3

The traditional and religious rulers and other stakeholders in the state have been suing for peace and in fact some of them have been victims of the conflict while some have been misunderstood. Nevertheless, they have sustained their roles in advocating for peace and tolerance by all parties concerned.

Conclusion

The conflict in Benue state in the period covered has been mainly between the farmers and the herders. The extent of inhumanity, sophisticated weapons and conflation of interests in the conflict combine to make it a very complex one. This calls for specific analysis of the trends, patterns and actors' needs in micro and macro contexts. As the food basket of the country, the conflict has dire implications for food and economic security which underscore the need for a broad-based multidimensional approach in responding to it. In Benue state, the long protracted conflicts between Egba and Ologba communities in Agatu, were strongly linked to escalations of violence between herders and farmers. The conflict which is over ownership status of fishponds has divided the communities so much that communities do not share early warning information. In the 2014 attacks, it was reported that the communities were providing security, geographical and demographical information to the herders to aid their attacks on one another.

Gaps in Literature, Policy and Responses

Indeed, the fact that many communities still live in fear points to the enormous gaps in responses and expected outcomes by the people. This call for more and novel ways of interrogating the questions of belonging, securing, governing and managing access to natural resources towards having a more textured understanding of the ramifications, trends and patterns of the conflict between the herders and farmers which is the main source of conflict and insecurity in the state.
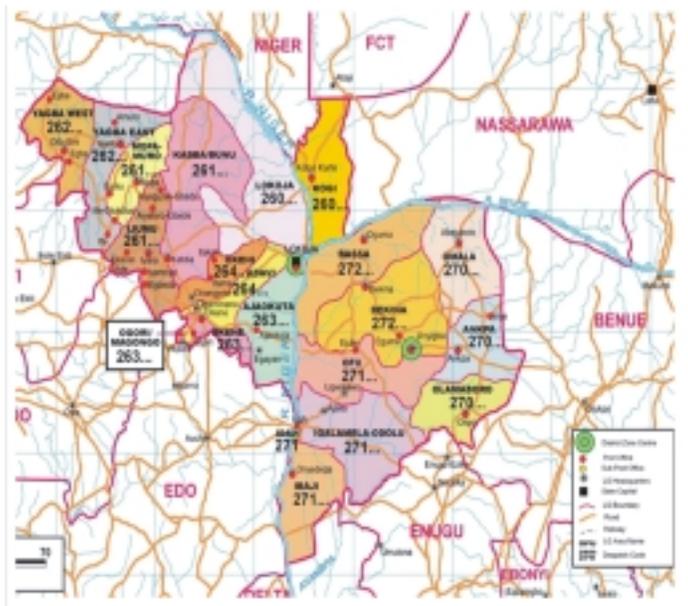
Recommendations

In addition to the recommendations generated in the course of the field work, we found the suggestions that emanated from a one-day dialogue on peacebuilding organised by the Angel Support Foundation (ASF) instructive, as listed below, also very noteworthy:

(1)   Provision of effective security at border posts, local *vigilantes*, Joint-Task Force established.

(2)   The need for synergy between border-states and Benue; the amnesty programme should be replicated to neighbouring states.

(3)   Engaging the telecom players in involving in corporate social responsibility by providing toll-free lines.

(4)   Imperative of a Benue state/Herders Peace Compact to sustain peace.

(5)   Enlightenment of communities across the state on patriotism and selflessness.

(6)   Fast-tracking the enactment of the legislation against open grazing of livestock in the state.

(7)   Ensuring that a census of livestock is taken at borders as interim measure pending the passage of a Bill into law.

(8)   Branding or marking of cows to avoid incidences of rustling.

(9)   Prescribed punishment for promoters and actors in the crisis.

(10) The CSOs and NGOs and Government Agencies should have a synergy in managing the conflicts and running of the IDPs and humanitarian efforts.

(11) Increased security presence in the local communities, especially the conflict-prone areas; i.e. establishment of barracks and other formations will be of help.

(12) Provision of agricultural inputs to aid internally displaced persons in addition to the foodstuffs and building materials in rebuilding them rather than occasional visits.

(13) Enlightenment of non-affected communities on security measures.

(14) Provision of shelter for affected communities, like it is done by the UNHCR in the state.

(15) Provision of adequate security to the IDPs.

Kogi State (The Confluence State)

Capital: Lokoja

Source: Nigerian Muse (2015): http://www.nigerianmuse.com/20100527092749zg/sections/
pictures-maps-cartoons/maps-of-various-states-and-their-local-governments-in-nigeria/

Introduction and Historical Background

Kogi state was carved out from Benue and Kwara states in 1991 and currently has 21 local government areas across its three senatorial districts. These are Kogi Central, comprising Adavi, Ajaokuta, Ogori/Magongo, Okene and Okehi; Kogi-East senatorial district has Ankpa, Bassa, Dekina, Ibaji, Idah, Igalamela-Odolu, Ofu, Olamaboro and Omala; Kogi-West has Ijumu, Kabba/Bunu, Kogi, Lokoja, Mopa-Muro, Yagba East and Yagba West.

According to Tenuche and Ifatimeyin (2009), the state is endowed with human and physical resources and hosts the confluence of the two largest rivers (Rivers Niger and Benue) in Nigeria. According to the head count of the 2006 National Population Commission (NPC), it has a population of 3, 278, 487, an average temperature of 28°C and annual rainfall ranges from 1016 to 1524 mm and humidity is 69 percent (Tenuche and Ifatimeyin, 2009).

Kogi state is bordered in the north by Niger, Nasarawa and the Federal Capital Territory; Benue and Enugu to the east and Edo, Ondo, Ekiti and Kwara states to the west (AOVA 2013). Kogi state has its ethno-linguistic minorities and majorities and these are evident

in the languages. The main languages across Kogi state are eight and they are Ebira in Kogi, Okene, Adavi and Okehi LGAs; Igala in Ankpa, Idah and Dekina LGAs; Nupe in Kogi LGA and Yoruba in the western LGAs of Kogi state all constituting the language of the majorities. The minority languages are Kakanda in Kogi LGA; Kupa in Kogi LGA around Abugi; Basa-nge in Bassa and Ankpa LGAs; and Oko-Eni-Osayen in Okene LGA, Ogori and Magongo towns.

Conflict Landscape of Kogi State

Like any commune of people of disparate identity fault lines and aspirations inhabiting a place where resources for everyday survival are scarce and access to state support is a struggle, conflicts in the context of inter-group frictions cannot be foreclosed. Some of these have been terminated while others have been mutating or festering. These conflicts revolve around political struggles, chieftaincy disputes and land/boundary contentions.

Kogi state experiences perennial violence before, during and after elections mostly in the contexts of intra-party and inter-party clashes which often breach public peace and safety in the state. As a state surrounded by ten other states and being one of the gateways between northern and southern Nigeria with a huge population of youth, the susceptibility of the state to sporadic and protracted armed conflicts cannot be ignored.

In February 2012 Boko Haram members attacked a prison in Koton Karfe during which a security man was killed while 119 members of the sect were set free. On 7 August, 2012, Boko Haram insurgents attacked a branch of the Deeper Life Church in Okene one of the major cities in the state. Barely 24 hours after this, another major attack was carried out by the sect at the Okene Central Mosque, killing two soldiers of the Joint Task Force attached to secure the Jumat service (Kogi Reports, 2012). Also, high-ranking members of the terrorist group have been arrested in the state (Oladapo, 2012; Itodo, 2016). This qualifies the state as one of the places where conflicts exist in the context of contentious relations between the Nigerian state and disgruntled groups.

Kogi State Conflict Case Studies

Olamaboro LG of Kogi and Igbo-Eze North LG of Enugu State

The bone of contention is on where the Ette people found in the border between Kogi and Enugu states actually belong to out of the two states which drew the attention of the National Boundary Commission in 2009 (Ozor, 2012). The seriousness of this kind of conflict can be best appreciated against the background of the observation of Ojebode and Akingbulu (2012:80) that 'Africa is dotted with innumerable border-split communities single cultural, linguistic and ethnic entities slashed in two by the colonially (nationally) imposed border.' The Ette people of Kogi state can be described as a border-split community that straddles Kogi and Enugu state. The conflict dates back to 1980 when the Igalla youths in the community began the agitation to be merged with Kogi which was rejected by the government of then Governor Jim Nwobodo (Ozor, 2012; Onah, 2011).

Major violent clashes have occurred in 2011, 2012, 2014 and 2015 and have continued over the dispute on where the community belongs to in addition to those that have frequently occurred during elections or at the slightest provocations. A member of the Ette community during interaction, recalled that the president of the Ette Community Development Association (ECDA) in the wake of one of the clashes in September 2014 in a communiqué alleged that the then Deputy Senate President and Secretary to the Federal Government (Ike Ekweremadu and Anyim Pius Anyim) were the sponsors of clashes over the boundary; although the allegation will sound spurious given the fact that the conflict predates emergence of these two individuals as political notables in the country.

During interviews with security agents in the state capital visiting the two communities was considered "unsafe" during the conduct of this research in July/August 2016 in order not to trigger any untoward reactions given the permanence of mutual suspicion in the relationship between the people of the two communities in the area on one hand and the perception of security agents as biased held by the two communities on the other hand.

A precise number of lives and properties lost to the conflict remain indeterminate because each episode of confrontations is characterised with loss of lives on both sides and of by-standers. However, about 2000 people were said to have been displaced according to leading peace practitioners interviewed in the state. Despite litigation up to the level of the Supreme Court and informal interventions by associations and the Catholic Church, tension continues to pervade the air and the parties remain susceptible to violence.

Aluaja, Itale and Iru villages of Iyano Community in Ibaji Local Government: Fishpond and Chieftaincy

The feud that has entwined these communities is traceable to the ownership of fishing ponds, land and the right to rule (chieftaincy matters). At different times, the villages have had to come together in defence of the Iyano community against incursions from Aguleri community of Anambra state but in 2013, violent exchanges began in Iyano Community, pitching the Aluaja against Iru. Responses from interviewees revealed two differing accounts of the conflict held by the two communities.

The account of the Iru holds that the conflict was over the ownership and control of a fishpond which had been brewing for long. However, the Aluaja opined that violence was unleashed on Aluaja by an aide of the former governor of the state Idris Wada (2012-2016) who hails from Iru who had earlier threatened to punish them if they refused to support the party of his boss. The Aluaja community recalled that even prior to the 2015 mayhem, a group known as "Abuchaga Boys" allegedly sponsored by the aide of the former governor had unleashed violence on the community. However, the aide of the former governor denied such claim and avowed that "it is not true. Ignore them. I didn't play any role. It was the Aluaja people who destroyed the Iruh people's yams. The

crisis is not related to politics" (Obagboho, 2015).

Visit to the villages was also discouraged by security agents in the state capital as it was considered "ill timed" because of the pervading tension within the community on one hand and over the conflict between the Iyano community and Aguleri community on the other hand. Also, some of the displaced whom we spoke to said they were discouraged from returning to their villages by the security agents as well.

In September 2016, Governor Yahaya Bello constituted a 13-member panel of inquiry into the Iyano crisis with a mandate to proffer recommendations that will bring about lasting peace to the community. During one of the sittings of the panel, a former councilor in Ibaji local government informed the panel that five corpses including those of two traditional rulers were still being kept in the morgue because the community was not safe for their burial rites. According to him 'the Okpale Iyeni, Ochawo Acholo and Enemene Ijoba are currently being preserved in a mortuary in Idah . . . We have equally buried eight members of our communities in borrowed lands . . .' (Obahopo, 2016).

The cost of the conflict in terms of lives lost and properties destroyed remain indeterminable but borne by both sides and their Diasporas in Lokoja the state capital and outside the state because of the huge number of people displaced from the community. During the attacks of 22-24 May, 2015, 47 houses were burnt and many lives lost. An eyewitness recalled that as news filtered in on the death of Mr. Ejima who was killed on April 3, 2015 for burial 'the three villages had gathered in their war regalia and started shooting at the center of Aluaja' (Kumolu, 2016). Previous clashes on December 23, 2013 and April 17, 2014 also led to loss of lives and destruction of properties.

Echeno-Odeke communities in Ibaji Local Government Area and Aguleri-Otu in Anambra East Local Government Area

The conflict was triggered by the discovery of oil and the announcement made by former President Good-luck Jonathan in October 2012 on the inclusion of Anambra state which shares border with Echeno/Odeke communities of Ibaji local government area of Kogi state. Echeno/Odeke communities claimed the land where oil was discovered belongs to them and as such they are entitled to the royalty. Noticing what seemed to be dispossession of their land and its valuable contents, the communities took to the agitation for the reclamation of the disputed land, along with the oil wells, leveraging on the historical and archeological relics of the past people on the land as an authentic prove and confirmation that the said land belongs to them. Subsequently, protesters from the community occupied the oil field owned by Orient Oils.

However, respondents informed us that there had been earlier interface between the Ibaji community represented by a committee named Ibaji Oil and Gas Committee which was inaugurated on 22 October, 2011. This was one of the factors that irked members of the community in 2012 when the oil well was announced as a site located in Anambra

state. Another account of the contention has it that it is Enugu state and not Anambra that actually shares border with Ibaji. The matter is before the National Boundary Commission (NBC).

There were on-going talks between the governors of the two states Obiano and former governor Idris Wada on exploring peaceful ways of managing the crisis who described the agitators on both sides as "misguided miscreants." In August 2015, the Federal House of Representatives mandated the Chief of Army Staff General Tukur Buratai and Chief of Naval Staff, Rear Admiral Ibok-Ete Ibas to deploy military personnel to the border communities to restore peace (Odaudu, 2015). Another source of clash between Echeno/Odeke communities and their neighbours from Anambra is the alleged encroachment of their fish pond by the people from Anambra state which also claimed lives. On both sides, lives continue to be lost alongside destruction of properties. Interactions during field work with civil society actors and key informants from the security agencies revealed that "they must not see us and if you go there, you are on your own".

Farmers and Herdsmen Conflicts across Kogi State

As a state located in Nigeria's north-central, farmers and herders frequently draw daggers in many local government areas of the state. Earlier in a related study, Tenuche and Ifatimehin (2006:362) identified communities in different parts of Kogi where violent clashes had taken place around the state. Some of these are Ogbagbala, Ibaji, Ogbogbo, Odolu and Okpakpata, Egga, Icheke, Isanlu and Ejiba. Our field work revealed that the worst hit communities are Ankpa, Ogani Enugu in Dekina, Abejikolo-ife, Idah, Ibaji and of recent Ogugu Olamaboro and Umomi in Ofu LGAs. The cause of the clashes has been the allegation of destruction of crops by cattle and retaliatory killing of cattle which often draws the ire of the herders leading to communities rising in self-defence. The murder of the Kogi state Chairman of the Miyeti Allah Cattle Breeders Association, Mr Ibrahim Jalido, on 29 October, 2016 by unknown gun men has thrown fear into the hearts of the residents of Lokoja (Agency Report, 2016). Interviews with security agents revealed that the conflict seems to have defied all interventions and pleas by the government. Although security men are deployed to the affected communities anytime clashes are reported, there has been the formation of community Vigilanté Groups as community structures of security to ward off invasion of farmlands by the herders.

Inter-Cult/Inter-Gang Clashes

During field work in the state respondents and key informants also revealed the incipient trend of what they called 'cult clashes', especially in Idah, Kabba and Adakolo and Ganaja areas of Lokoja. Such groups comprise male and female and some as young as 13 years old. The membership of such cults cuts across both the students of post-primary schools and tertiary institutions and artisan like taxi drivers and *Okada* riders. One of the groups arrested goes by the name "*Bobos*", made-up of young people including teenagers. A new pattern of killing which has surfaced as a trademark of cult/gangs,

especially in Lokoja, takes the form of visits to the residences of those they want to kill to murder them in the presence of their parents/guardians or their hosts in case they get caught where they have gone to seek refuge (Egwu, 2016). As at April 2016, seven lives were already lost to the clashes, according to respondents.

Legislature-Executive Crisis

The election of a new Speaker for the House of Assembly of Kogi state on February 16, 2016 by 5 out of the 25 members of the Assembly led to a friction within the legislature on one side and between the legislature and the executive; alleged to have had the backing of the executive governor of the state. While it lasted, the impasse heightened tension as the governor was faulted for allegedly supporting a side in the conflict and enlisting the support of the Nigerian army accused of providing cover for the 5 members who carried out the impeachment while barring the other members from having access to the chambers. This got to a head on one occasion when an exchange of gunfire nearly ensued between the soldiers guarding the five and the police on the premises of the House of Assembly. The Federal House of Representatives was also drawn into the matter as it constituted a 10-member committee that later recommended that the legislative functions of the House should be taken over. While it lasted the crisis heated up the polity as it drew in the House of Representatives, the Attorney-General of the Federation, the Inspector General of Police and the Army. However, the matter was later resolved through political means.

Human Security Implications of Conflicts in Kogi State 2012-2016

Loss of Confidence in Security Agents: In conflict-affected communities with pervading tension as at the time of our fieldwork in Kogi state, security agents were declared as persona non-grata in those communities. The security agents drawn from all the security agencies equally expressed fear of visiting the communities. This stems from a perception that security agents deployed to feuding communities in the past took sides and therefore could not be trusted to be impartial forces. This has negatively affected personal and communal security in the state.

Emergence of Armed Non-State Actors: Perhaps in displaying the loss of confidence in government security apparatus, many communities have ended up inadvertently supporting the proliferation of community-based security outfits, as a sort of community bulwark to defend the community. Consequently, this is promoting community armories in many communities and the proliferation of light arms and weapons.

Ungoverned Spaces/Sites of Limited Security Governance: The emergence of armed non-state actors as sources of security to communities portends the lack of legitimacy for government security agencies. This implies that such communities have become sites of limited governance. For instance in Ibaji local government, it has become impossible for the displaced to return to the communities to perform the rites of burial

for the interment of traditional rulers despite the existence of constitutionally elected government in the state.

Inter-Agency Conflict: What could have turned out to be a bloody inter-agency clash between the soldiers and police was averted while the crisis in the legislature lasted. A security operative who was at the scene of the confrontation that was averted revealed that the scene mirrored the rivalry and mutual disdain between the army and other security agencies especially the police. According to him 'the soldiers met our Mopol there and maybe they felt they could intimidate them, my brother if not for instruction from the CP, our boys were ready.' According to Odogun (2016) the former Commissioner of Police said "he withdrew his men in order to prevent a clash that might result in the loss of lives."

Social and Political Security Implications of Conflicts in Kogi State

While political tension and conflicts are not new to the state, its intensity has been on the increase further worsening the fragility of security and inter-group relations in the state. Rather than dialogue being the medium of political exchanges and settlement of differences, violence seems to be preferred by parties involved. The emergence of gangs across the state speaks to the loss of social authorities hitherto held by people like religious and traditional leaders who cannot easily call recalcitrant young people to order any longer. During communal clashes, sacred symbols and respected individuals of opposing communities get attacked and this has gone a long way denying the traditional authorities the leverage to rein in fighting youths who sometimes unleash terror on their own communities.

Ghettoisation of Security

Akin to other major cities where people are safe only in selected areas described as 'ghettoisation of security by Hills (2009). This has become a social phenomenon because even security agents are conscious of where to go and when in order not to incur the wrath of militias controlling specific places.

Neighbourhood Insecurity: This has been the fall out of the killings and reprisal killings amongst rival gangs/cults in the state. Due to this, some neighbourhoods in Lokoja have become unsafe for residents and visitors alike. Areas such as Adakola, Kabawa and Ganaja have become flashpoints of the gang war in the capital city.

Economic Security Implications of Conflicts in Kogi State

The economic implications of the conflicts have denied the state the contributions that could have accrued from uninterrupted economic relationships of parties and communities in conflict. The air of fear and mutual distrust pervading in most of these communities point to dire economic consequences given that farming and fishing are the leading economic activities of the people and most of these take place in places where people have become displaced due to conflicts.

Conflict Actors' Interests, Peace Agenda, Capacities and Incentives in Kogi State

Given the inter-communal nature of most of the conflicts in the state with the exception of attacks carried out by the Boko Haram, the actors in the conflict are typically, community warriors or militias and the several development associations in the state. The security agents are also part of the actors and in some cases they have been alleged as taking sides in the conflicts. Governments at the first and second tiers have also been indirectly involved in some of the conflicts especially when security agents such the police and soldiers are drawn in. The executive and the legislature are also actors in some conflicts.

In most of the communal crisis in the state, the narratives embody deep seated desire for the affirmation of rights which many parties feel are trampled upon. For instance, most of the protracted and violent clashes in Kogi involve local communities of the state with neighbouring communities from other states and in many of these cases the communities in Kogi have gone up in arms using local militias based on the conviction that they are pursuing a cause of the community. Therefore their interests as parties in conflict might include recognition, demand for economic rights, and preference for freedom to chose where they want to belong to like in the case of the Ette people.

While parties in the conflict have maintained rigid positions which might be far from their real interests as it typical of parties in conflict to behave, deciphering the peace agenda of the parties involved in the crises in the state without initiating a peace/reconciliation process in the communities involved might be hasty.

However, the capacities and incentives of the parties to enthrone and preserve peace is huge going by the level of their alleged involvement in many of the protracted crises. Not minding the protraction and bestiality that have characterised some of these conflicts and lack of trust in state mechanisms for intervention, the communities have huge capacities that can be converted for use as a driving force in many of the communities especially cognisant of the fact many of these once lived together peacefully in the past.

Impact of Conflicts in Kogi State

While it might seem too hasty to measure the impacts of the conflicts on state, human security, inter-group relations and state-society relations, doing same will equally serve well the purposes of planning and executing interventions. Apparently, the conflicts have left many communities in ruins across the state and many people displaced. Worst hit are women and children being the most vulnerable groups in times of emergencies and conflicts.

Intervention/Responses

As a state that has had two governments of two different political parties within the

period under review (2012-2016), there have been responses from government in terms of pleas, military deployment to affected communities and recently the setting up of a panel of inquiry to look into one of the cases by the current administration. However, it is noteworthy that some of the communities through their development associations have been calling on the government to intervene in their crises. One of such is the Odochala community in Ujeh ward of Ibaji local government (Steven, 2016). Therefore, the responses from the government have responded more by deploying security personnel and lately the setting up of an inquiry panel.

The Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) have had limited interventions largely due to their limited finances. Interactions with a leading figure revealed that NGOS doing peace practice in the state have been working selflessly but they could do more if there is increased financial enhancement. The traditional and religious institutions too have also been hampered by the increasing influence of untoward aspect of foreign culture which is increasingly weakening their moral authorities on the youths in particular. Some of the traditional rulers also pointed to the profitability of political violence and how politicians in the state have been encouraging violence as one of the factors responsible for the weakening of traditional authorities which in turn has become one of the banes of peace in the state.

Conclusion

The causes of conflict occurrence in Kogi state in the period covered in this study cannot be described as markedly different from what existed prior to 2012, however in tenor and weapons used, a noticeable shift could be seen. Also, an unprecedented rise in activities of gangs speaks of a direct challenge and conflict with core values of the society marking a generational conflict along demographic lines. In essence the overwhelming control held by the religious, traditional and political class over the youths has been eroded and today, from the home front to the public space. A major consequence of this is the availability of mass pool of youths who can be easily and spontaneously mobilised for acts inimical to public peace and safety.

Gaps in Literature, Policy and Programmatic Responses

The literature on conflicts in Kogi state has focused more on the farmers-herders conflict while not much attention has been paid to the interstate types of conflicts in the state which play out in peculiar ways and which could have far-reaching implications for national peace and security. However, the press has been consistent in bringing all incidences of conflicts to the public domain while many communities owned online news platforms have pitched their tents with their respective communities.

As a result of that, most reports on conflicts involving communities available on the internet are usually communal narratives that are slanted. Therefore, there is need for more studies on the conflicts in Kogi state in a dispassionate manner that treats most of

the reports especially available on the internet as part of data providing insights into the positions and interests of respective communities. By generating objective research findings, policy makers will have reliable basis to launch peace-oriented initiatives that will make the desired impacts.

Recommendations

There is need for more effective collaboration between the state government and the National Boundary Commission (NBC) towards exploring lasting solutions to many of the lingering crisis with neighbouring states.
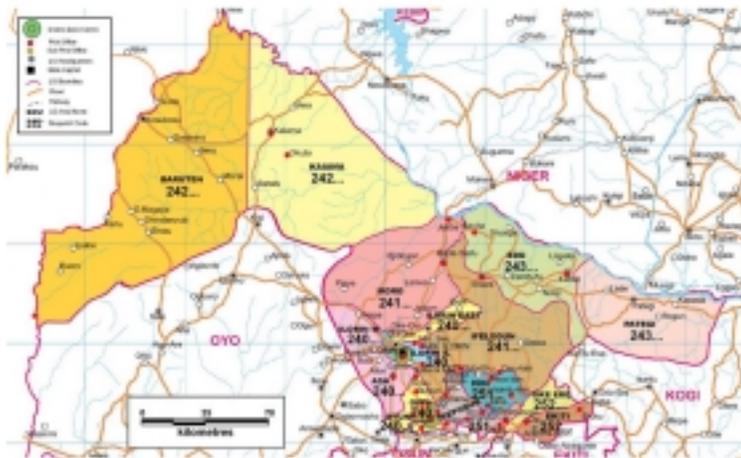
The state government should be more proactive, committed and transparent in handling conflicts within its borders in order to retain the confidence of all parties in conflict.

Efforts should be made to restore trust in civil-military relations in the state because according to respondents, there are communities in the state where security personnel are not welcome.

The state government should identify not for profit organisations with expertise in early warning generation and management towards being able to intervene before tension degenerates into violent exchanges of hostilities.

Kwara State (State of Harmony)

Capital: Ilorin

Source: Nigerian Muse (2015)
http://www.nigerianmuse.com/20100527092749zg/sections/pictures-maps-cartoons/maps-of-various-states-and-their-local-governments-in-nigeria/

Kwara state was created on 27 May, 1967. Presently, it stands midway between northern and southern Nigeria. The state is bordered on the north by Niger state, Benin-Republic on the west and Kogi state on the east. The southern borders of Kwara state is shared with Ekiti, Ondo, Osun and Oyo states. The state has a diverse ethnic and religious mix and bears the national appellation of "State of Harmony" perhaps owing to the relative level of peaceful co-existence and infrequency of conflicts. Administratively, it has sixteen (16) Local Government Area Councils with 193 political wards. The sixteen Local Governments are: Asa, Baruten, Edu, Ekiti, Ifelodun, Illorin-East, Illorin-South, Illorin-West, Irepodun, Isin, Kaiama, Moro, Offa, Oke-Oro, Oyun, and Patigi.

Conflict Landscape of Kwara State

As covered by previous SCA reports up till 2012, Kwara state is not immune from conflicts although most of these have been in the context of inter-group with hard to come by instances of insurgencies, that is, groups violently engaging the state. Inter-group conflicts in the state has been in the context of communal clashes arising from boundary disputes, political violence, industrial disputes, chieftaincy conflicts, herders and farmers confrontations.

Kwara State Conflict Case Studies

Conflicts in Kwara state from 2012-2016 covered in this study are not markedly different from the ones covered in previous reports of 2003 and 2012. However, in terms of tenor, successes and failures of interventions and emergence of new actors the conflict landscape in Kwara state warrant being given a second look. Apart from known adversarial relationships, there was an observed increase of youth rebellion against traditional, government and religious authorities in many parts of the city which was considered as unheard of before and an aberration signifying an emergent conflict along class and generational lines. Such was the clash between the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) and youths at Agbarere and Ita Ore which later spread to Oke-Kura, Oja-Oba and Popo-Igbonna quarters in Ilorin metropolis in April 2015. According to the alleged mastermind of the attack, Olatunji Ibrahim popularly called "Ariyo", after he was arrested:

"I did not fight with *Agberere* people intentionally. It was because one of my boys was 'dropped down' (killed) by the NDLEA men during the exchange of gun fire in a conflict. The officer came to our camp that he wanted to smoke weed, and one of my boys discovered that he was an undercover officer, disguised to be weed smoker. My boys tried to fight him and he ran out. He was given hot chase by my boys but he was lucky to be rescued by his colleagues. That was how the trouble began. I lost one of my boys to those officers during a cross-fire. I was hinted that one of their officers lived at *Agberere* and we went to destroy his house too (Ajikobi, 2016).

Another instance described as unheard of, which might have implications for the public and stability in the state in the near(est) future, was the stoning of the Senate President Dr. Bukola Saraki, son of former foremost politician in the state, Dr Olusola Saraki, on 24 September, 2015, during prayers marking the end of the Muslims' Ramadan fast for that year. The place and status of the target of the expression of rage by the displeased crowd, spoke volumes of the weakening of both formal and informal authorities – as both the Governor, the Senate President and other *crème de la crème* of the society did not attend the 2016 Eid-Fitri prayers held on 5 July, 2016. It was also observed that the prayers were hurriedly observed and many could not participate contrary to what had obtained in the past.

A fracas was also reported in the palace of the Emir of Ilorin when midway into the prayer, a cleric rose to defend the failure of the government to pay salaries of workers which sent the congregants berserk leading to an abrupt termination of the program during the Ramadan of 2016 held in July 2016. Occurrences like these ones might have dire consequences for public peace in time to come if not addressed. While it might not be immediately predictable how these emergent signs might progress, it is important to note that other communal conflicts like that of Ilofa and Odo-Owa, the students and Offa community and cult clashes involving students of tertiary institutions in the state appear to have simmered. However, communities affected still live in the fear of renewed attacks in places like Baboko and Ita-Amodu within the metropolis where reprisal killings

between rival cult groups threw the neighbourhood into chaos.

Early-warning signs of latent conflicts also exist across the state based on our observations and interactions with security agents, academics and opinion leaders. For instance, security agencies in the state are working round the clock to ensure that differences and alleged infractions do not snowball into violent confrontations between the Christ Evangelical Mission and the Tabligh, a Muslim group in Asa local government area. Similarly, key informants revealed that the Rhema Chapel and the Ahmadiya Muslim Jammat whose relationship was once a model of peaceful inter-faith relations was experiencing hiccups at the time of our field work. A chieftaincy dispute in Jebba also deserves skilful handling to prevent from degenerating into violence.

Erin-Ile and Offa Boundary Disputes

Offa and Erin Ile community are situated in the southern senatorial district of the state. Prior to the creation of Offa local government in 1991, the two communities were together in Oyun local government but with the creation of Offa local government, Erin-Ile remains in the Oyun local government, while Offa became the headquarters of the new Offa local government (Gbadeyan, 2012).The conflict is a protracted conflict with the first violent confrontation traced to 1961, followed by another in 1982, 2006 and 2013. Amidst claims and counter-claims on the ownership of the disputed boundary, the state government has sustained the pursuit of peace although this cannot be seen to have changed the narratives of the conflict which is what has sustained the tensed relationship between the two communities.

For instance, reflecting the mood of the Erin-Ile community a respondent drew attention to the constant appropriation of land 'rightly belonging to Erin-Ile and other communities around it by the Offa people' he brought out an advertisement purportedly signed by the traditional ruler of Offa community wherein a property situated in on Ilemona land which was wrongly described as 'Ilemona, Offa.' He went on cite many other instances to corroborate the allegation that Offa community is fond of and actually pursuing an expansionist move relying on the influence of her sons and daughters in high places.

The ineffectual impact of government interventions was evident in the bestiality of the killings that characterised the 2013 episode of the violence that has characterised the crisis between the two communities. The violent involvement of associations of commercial drivers that are supposed to be professional/civic platforms in the conflict reveals the extent to which the conflict has permeated every stratum of the two communities.

Share in Ifelodun LG and *Tsaragi* in Edu LG: Boundary and Chieftaincy Conflict

Share and *Tsaragi* are two communities belonging to the Yoruba and Nupe ethnic stocks respectively. Share is located administratively in Ifelodun local government while Tsaragi

is in Edu local government. The two contiguous communities lived peaceful together since 1808. The creation of Ifelodun local government and the naming of Share as its headquarters in 1976 put Share in Kwara South Senatorial district and Tsaragi in Edu local government in Kwara North Senatorial District. As a matter of fact the cause of the conflict has not changed from the one highlighted in past SCA Reports and that is the large expanse of farmland of over 200 hectares called "Fiangiawa" being claimed by the two communities. Since then, the two communities have intermittently engaged in violent conflicts over ownership of boundary, certain areas, allegations and resistance of forceful acquisition and construction of clashing narratives on who is indigene and who is the settler. Between 1976 and 2015, there had been six reports of judicial commissions of inquiry into to the crises and in the aftermath of the December 19, 2015, clash, the state government went a step further by implementing some aspects of the White Paper on the last commission.

However, interactions with élite drawn from the two communities during the field work in July/August 2016, revealed the deep-seated nature of mutually held animosity and also the capacity of Diasporas and community associations on both sides for peace. In all the interviews conducted with natives, security agents and residents in both communities, the efforts of the government might achieve little in reconciling the two communities given the thickness of enemy-images mutually held at the communal and individual levels in the two communities. Reconciliation efforts by the current government of Abdul-Fatai Ahmed no matter how altruistic are being seen as partial by the Tsaragi people who hold the view that as a native of Share, the governor will and 'is doing everything to favour his community.'

The conflict has been characterised by episodic clashes leading to killings and destruction of valuables on both sides. But most disturbingly, each episode of conflict comes in to scuttle or set back processes of reconciliation which are regularly on-going initiated either by the government or by the people. Such was the occurrence of 3/4 August, 2016 at a time of high optimism of reconciliation, a young man alleged to have been of Share extraction shot and killed five farmers of Tsaragi extraction which heated up the polity in the state and stalled both formal and informal peace processes being made by both the government and élite on both sides of the conflict. Respondents on both sides shared the view that the act should be treated as a criminal act of one man and not as an action carried out in the interest of the community. Despite the mutual understanding, the drawback on the reconciliation process between the two communities was palpable as security agents discouraged visiting the community. Also, natives of the communities spoken to in Ilorin discouraged the visit and a respondent from Share reiterated it by citing the refusal of the traditional ruler of Tsaragi to allow a visit from Share to come and commiserate with the community for the killing of the 5 farmers from Tsaragi on 3 August, 2016.

Ganmo and Ganna in Ifelodun LG

Ganmo is a community in Ifelodun local government of Kwara state embroiled in a tussle between the Oluganna and Oluganmmo of Ganmo. The Oluganna of Ganmo whose ascendancy is linked to the Igbomina community consider themselves as the autochthons of Ganmoland while there is the Ilorin Oluganmo of Ganmo whose ancestry is traced to Afonja house in Ilorin. The clashing claim of ownership of the stool and land has been the bane of peace, stability and development in the community. To this end, the Igbomina community, a larger part of the Kwara South senatorial district built Igbomina House, an edifice to serve as the landmark of the boundary between the Ilorin community and Igbomina putting the major part of Ganmo land on their side. Each round of clashes is characterised by killings, maiming and destruction of properties of residents/natives and by-standers because of a major road plied by travelers to Abuja from Ilorin which divides the two communities.

According to our respondents, in 2013, there was an unprecedented violent clash that exposed the extent of mutual hatred between the two communities and their respective capacities for violence. This was in the wake of the elevation of the Oluganna by the government to a fourth-class status. A lawyer had accompanied a police officer who is a native of Ganmo to asses a piece of land when youths of Ganna pounced on him and the police officer. In fleeing for their lives they fled into a family compound known as Idi-Ogun and in the ensuing rage, the attackers torched the house because they offered refuge to the fleeing. Our respondents went further to clarify that the main bone of contention in the conflict is the land and that the chieftaincy tussle is secondary. At the height of the 2013 clash, the two monarchs were remanded in prison by a Kwara state magistrate court. Since then, there had been loss of lives of known supporters and family members of the rival factions ascribed to the crisis between the two. In 2014, a son of the Oluganna was shot few minutes after he left his father's palace. This led to the arrest of the Oniganmo with whom his father had been having a running battle by the Police. Another respondent revealed that a seeming reprisal was carried out after the killing of the son of the Oluganna as a prominent supporter of the Oluganmo was also found dead days after the killing of the son of the Oluganna.

Alapa and Herdsmen Clash in Asa LG

Alapa is a community in Asa local government area of Kwara state that houses the Yoruba, herdsmen and those described as Bororos and kindred of the herdsmen residents. According to KII respondent, the 2013 conflict occurred during the Muslim yuletide when some Bororos were seen "exhibiting some sexually explicit behaviors openly in the community which the Yoruba frowned at." The alarm raised by the person to what was considered a socio-cultural aberration led to attacks that took identity lines during which the Yoruba man was killed. This degenerated for days as both parties went for each others' lives and belongings including animals.

Oro-Ago and Herders in Ifelodun LG

Oro-Ago is a community in Ifelodun local government area of Kwara state. The main groups in the community are the Yoruba natives and the Herders minority. The most recent clash between the two communities was on 13 April, 2015. All the interviewees rendered the same account that the tension began to mount when some herdsmen youths disregarded the rule of the community put in place by the new traditional ruler who ascended the throne in September 2014 that barred public barring or display of arms and ammunition to the market on market days or anywhere in the town. Some herdsmen traders were reported to have flouted the rule and their weapons were subsequently seized by the vigilante group of the community. After the seizure, a factional leader of the herdsmen community was said to have gone to where the weapons were kept and to have returned them to the herdsmen owners. The hunters and vigilantés of Oro-Ago attempted to re-seize the weapons and this precipitated violence and in the melee, two people were reportedly killed while properties worth millions of naira were destroyed including five vehicles and 10 motorcycles.

According to the president of the Oro-Ago Descendants Union (ODU), the herdsmen have lived peacefully with the Yoruba in the community since 1973 when they came into the community but things started going in the 1980s when the herdsmen started playing host to the Bororos. First was the frequent report of raping of Yoruba women by the Bororos who often ambushed and raped them in the bush paths on their ways to the farms. This was followed by the invasion of farms to cart away farm produce of Yoruba farmers and giving some of the farm produce as feeds to their animals. After a while this discouraged the Yoruba farmers from planting because it seemed they were just planting for the animals of the herdsmen to consume. Moreover there were instances of farmers clubbed to death or killed with machetes by herdsmen on their farmlands for daring to challenge the invasion of their farmlands. The herdsmen now carry AK 47 rifles. As at now, 'we are compelled to buy all grains from them, except yam – which they cannot plant because they have been able to scare our people away from farming' (Interviewee, 2016).

Asked when all of these started, a respondent recalled that it began in 1983. Since then, there had been pockets of conflicts which were informally resolved within the two communities by the chiefs and traditional rulers of both communities. A power tussle between a group known as Meshede group and another one known as Ndagogo group degenerated into a conflict within the herders but when the Police came to make arrests, it was the Yoruba in the community who were arrested in 2007 and remanded in prison. Further checks by the Oro-Ago community revealed that the arrest was on the instruction of Ndagogo who felt the Yoruba took sides with the Meshede group and eventually the case was thrown out by the court because Ndagogo failed to show up as the complainant after the trial went for over a year.

In 2015, just after the elections in April on a Monday market day, the Yoruba in Oro-Ago observed that Herders women did not come to the market despite the fact that they sell virtually all grains we consume to us and after the attack they came to the conclusion that their non-appearance at the market was pre-planned according to a respondent. So on this day, a herdsman was spotted with machete in the market by a Yoruba vigilanté man who subsequently accosted him for flouting the law and in response he was hacked in the neck. There was immediate mobilisation on both sides and the whole town was engulfed in commotion.

Impacts of Conflicts on Security in Kwara State

More than anything else, security remains the worst affected aspects of life in communities that have experienced violent conflicts. The realities in communities affected by conflicts in Kwara are not different. While most of the conflicts have histories predating 2013, the degree of intensity since then has had both positive and negative effects on security in different places. With the exception of Share and Tsaragi, all other communities affected by conflicts in Kwara state have established stronger ties with the security agencies and this has made their activities more effective.

Political Security

In this regard, the Kwara state government has been found wanting by one of the parties in the Oluganmo and Oluganna feud because they query why the state government continues to recognise one of the traditional rulers in the community. Also, respondents from Oro-Ago and other conflict-affected communities took exception to the provision of humanitarian support to victims of the conflict involving *Share* and *Tsaragi* while such gesture was not extended to victims of other communities wherein violent conflict took place and commissions of inquiry set up. However, it is noteworthy that there is no conflict in the state in which the government has not waded in either singly or in concert with security agencies.

Socio-Economic Security

This is by far the commonest scar on relationships of hitherto friendly communities. In communities in Ganmo, Oro-Ago, Alapa, Share and Tasaragi, the socio-economic activities of the people have suffered adversely as a result of the conflicts in the communities. This is because residents of these communities are farmers and traders who rely on daily income for their survival. Also, certain goods, services and farm produce are sold largely to people of other ethnic identities and when they are not available to buy such goods and service, the producers of such goods lose their incomes.

Conflict Actors' Interests, Peace Agenda, Capacities and Incentives in Kwara State Conflicts

The actors in these conflicts are mainly the youths most of whom serve as community

vigilantés or militias, ethnic associations and security agencies. Identifying the peace agenda of these actors is difficult because many of them have a zero-sum attitude to the issues in conflict. However, during interviews with many leading figures in the communities, it became discernible that the elites have strong influence and in some cases a resolution of such conflicts might make them to lose relevance. They occupy a critical and strategic place because they serve as gatekeepers between the government and their respective communities. This is why identifying elites' agenda on both divides in conflict and reconciling might hold a promise in generating a cross-cutting agenda for peace in communities affected by conflict. Indeed, the elites most whom operate under the umbrella of their respective town associations have huge capacities because they can also mobilise support for the community based on their understanding of the situation at any point in time. As observed, such capacities by the town unions are often diverted in furtherance of the conflict or violence in most cases.

If not for the persistence of the state government in formally and informally intervening before, during and after conflicts in the state, the impact would have been worse. However, the impacts of these conflicts have been felt within their immediate communities and beyond. The fact that most of the conflicts have not been fundamentally received keeps most of the communities on the edge because in most of the communities the core issues are lingering.

Interventions/Responses

Most of the interventions from the government have been basically tailored towards immediate containment of the conflicts by deploying police or military troops, setting up commissions of inquiry and providing humanitarian palliatives to affected people which in some quarters has described as done discriminately. The Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in the state have sustained their advocacies and exploration of means of collaborating with the government with limited success.

Conclusion

The trend and patterns of the occurrences of the conflicts and public breaches of peace that have occurred during the period covered by the scope of this study come in two categories. First, are some that appear to have been pre-planned and waiting for the trigger or a set time; while, some were spontaneous.

Gaps in Literature, Policy and Programmatic Responses

Not a few studies have been done on conflicts and their impacts in Kwara state but future studies should pay more attention to how government pronouncements and position affect the tenor of conflict. Future studies on conflicts in Kwara state should also pay focal attention to the impacts of the conflicts on women and children because of the many cases of rape reported to have characterised the farmers-herders conflict. Kwara state has one of the highest number of JCIs with recommendations, so studies should

begin to interrogate how the JCIs affect the cycle of conflicts in some cases. It is also one of the states where a JCI recommended a peace process in the aftermath of the 2013 episode of violence in the Offa and Erin-Ile crisis.

Recommendations

The state government should pay more attention to issues of boundary delineation in as part of the means of finding lasting solution to many of the boundary crises in the state.

There should be increased collaboration between the state government and other security agents in preventing conflicts arising from criminal activities.

The firm presence of the not for profit organisations in the state should be harnessed by the government in deepening peace advocacy and discouraging the use of violence as a means of expressing and settling disputes.

The government should be consistently neutral and impartial in interventions in conflicts.

Nasarawa State (Home of Solid Mineral)

Capital: Nasarawa
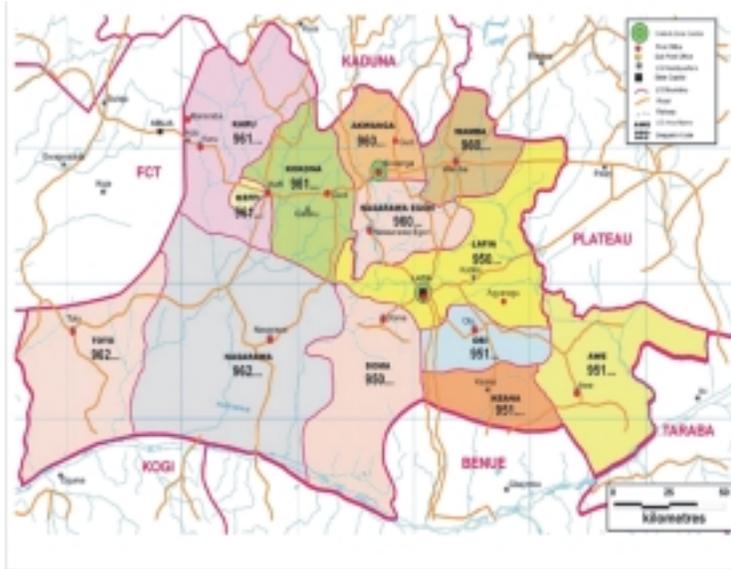
Introduction and Background

The area, which is today known as Nasarawa state, was formerly a geo-political unit under Benue and Plateau Provinces of Northern Nigeria and was carved out by the General Sani Abacha-led military government, on 1 October, 1996. The state is structured into thirteen (13) Local Government Areas (LGAs) namely: Akwanga, Awe, Doma, Keana, Keffi, Kokona, Karu, Lafia, Nasarawa, Nassarawa-Eggon, Obi, Toto and Wamba.

The state is made up of over 30 ethnic groups each with its distinct cultural heritage; living in harmony with one another. These include the Alago, Eggon, Gbagyi, Gwandara, Egbura, Migili, Kantana, Rindre, Herders, Hausa, Kanuri, Tiv, Afo, Gade, Nyankpa, Koro, Jukun, Mada, Ninzam, Nakere, Basa, Agatu, Arum, Kulere, Ibo, Yomba, etc. People from other parts of the country coexist peacefully with the indigenes. The diverse people of the state have very rich cultural heritage, which they uphold religiously. These manifest in the many festivals, which, serve as source of inspiration, recreation and entertainment all the year round. These festivals are also veritable tools of unity along the ethnic nationalities in the state. These customs and traditions are also platforms through which perceptions, ideas, aspirations and philosophies are transmitted as well as commune with their creator.

Conflict Landscape of Nasarawa State

Ombatse Crisis in Eggon

Nasarawa state has experienced a number of armed violence between the Egbura and communities in Toto Local Government Area, the Herders and farmers, the Tiv and Kwala ethnic groups in Azara, Awe Local Government Area, and the Eggon, Herders and Gwandara violent conflicts, which climaxed on the 7 May, 2013 incident in Alakyo, at the outskirt of Lafia, where about 74 security operatives were murdered by Ombatse militia. It is claimed that about 534 persons were killed in some communities across the state between 2012 and 2013. On Tuesday, 7 May, 2013, a joint security team, composed of the Police and Operatives of the Department of State Services were deployed to seal-up, search and recover all arms, dangerous weapons and ammunitions in the possession of the Ombatse militia group in *Alakyo*, in Nasarawa-Eggon LGA. It was in the course of carrying out the assignment that all members of the team were ambushed and brutally murdered (Tukur, 2013).

Currently, the most militant group in Nasarawa state is the Ombatse militia. The group has been involved in a number of armed violence, even before the 7 May incident. Between 30 May and 1 June, 2012, the *Ombatse* militia attacked the *Alago* community in *Assakio* and killed fifteen (15) people, as well as destroyed about four hundred and six (406) houses. Similarly on 21 November, 2012, the *Ombatse* militia attacked the *Migili* community of *Agyaragu* in Obi Local Government Area, and killed nine (9) people, as well as destroyed their houses and other property. Furthermore, in January 2013, the Ombatse attacked a number of communities, including: Iggah in Nassarawa Eggon Local Government Area; Burum-burum in Doma Local Government Area; Yelwa-Bassa in Kokona Local Government Area as well as Kwandere in Lafia Local Government Area. On 13 January, 2013, the Ombatse militia attacked and shot some Army personnel at Awonge, along Lafia-Doma road and also at the military check point along Akwanga-Keffi road. This violence is attenuated by the availability of sophisticated SALWs.

In our interaction with some government agencies such as National Orientation Agency (NOA), the Nigerian Police, NGOs, groups and individuals across the state, we discovered there were conflicts in the state which includes: Farmer-herders communal conflicts, ethnic conflict, electoral/political violence and even labour conflicts. There were no terrorist attacks but it was an area for tension as suspects of Boko Haram have been arrested on some occasions.

Herders and Farmers Crisis in Ekye Development Area

The farmer-herder conflict is a major crisis in the state. However, it has escalated and assumed a deadly dimension. It is a conflict that has kept reoccurring in many of the communities with a cycle of reprisal attacks from one area to other areas. For example, the attack of the Alakyo Community by suspected herders was said to be a reprisal attacks.

The actors involved are herdsmen, farmers and politicians. On 6 January, 2013 in Agbashi,

the headquarters of Eyke Development Area, there was an attack by a herdsman who drove his cattle into the farm of one Alhaji Zubairu Epo destroying his guinea corn harvest for storage. When Alhaji Zubairu complained, the herder quickly brought out his machete and in the process of blocking his head, one of the Alhaji Zubairu's hands was chopped off. The herder then took to his heels but the community youths on hearing the news fished him out and he was attacked. Both the herder and Alhaji Zubairu were taken to different hospitals in the state to receive treatment. Joint task force was mobilised to the Area to forestall further breakdown of law and order but they left the area barely after an hour leaving the people to the possibility of violent confrontation.

On 17 February, 2014, attack and counter attack in Kadarko district of Keana Local Government Area between the Tiv farmers and herdsmen. On 24 February, 2014, the continuous Tiv-herders conflicts in Awe Local Government Area and Ekye Development Area of Doma Local government extended to Keana Local Government Area. On 22 August, 2014, there was a violent clash between herdsmen and Eggon farmers in Lafia East Development Area, Nasarawa Eggon and Obi Local Government Areas. On 13 October, 2014 violent conflicts between the herders and Eggon farmers in Nasarawa South Senatorial zone – in which there was invasion into Lafia, the state capital on the 14 October, 2014 by the Ombatse militias in pursuit of the herdsmen. On 24 April, 2015, two herders were said to have gone to Dauda, a Tiv settlement which is a boundary between Nasarawa and Benue state for cow business but could not return that same day. Their dead bodies were discovered the following day after a thorough search by their relations from Keana town where they came from. The case was reported to the police for proper investigation. Then on 25 April, 2015, some Tiv communities surrounding Keana town were attacked by unknown persons suspected to be Herders, leaving people dead.

The Eggon-herders ethnic feuds that started in early February 2013 in Basa village of Kokona Local Government Area had spread to Doma and Nasarawa Eggon Local Government Area. Peace which had started returning to the affected areas was disrupted on 17 March, 2013, when some suspected herders invaded two villages in Nasarawa Eggon Local Government Area (i.e. Ladi- Ende and Ambana-Egga). Two people were killed with several others injured including women and children. The attack was a revenge mission by the herders who wanted to avenge the death of their people who were earlier attacked by youths from both communities mentioned above. Also on 19 March, 2013, Suspected herdsmen attacked and killed two people identified to be Eggon youths. The attack was connected with the Ladi-Ende clashes earlier mentioned. Security personnel were deployed to the affected areas to curtail the spread of the conflict to other areas.

Eyke Development Area witnessed series of conflicts where scores of lives and properties worth millions of naira were lost at the end of 2012 and the first quarter of 2013. Unfortunately, barely few months after the return of peace to the area, another violent conflict erupted on 4 June, 2013 at Rukubi town. The conflict started as a result of the

Tiv people suspecting Agatu people of Rukubi town to be habouring herdsmen that have been attacking them. The Tiv people also accused the people of Rukubi of removing and stealing roofing sheets (Zinc) from their abandoned houses as a result of the herdsmen attack. Many people were killed and houses were destroyed in this conflict.

On 10-14 September, 2013, there was a renewed clash in Obi Local Government which involved Tudun Odobu, Odobu Alago, Obi Town, Bukan Sidi, Tudun Kauri, Shinge and the people involved were the Eggon Militia and the Alago youths. The remote cause was the discovery of a beheaded body of an Eggon man at Opada in Obi Area and the Eggon people suspected the Alago people over the dead. The Eggon militia mobilised themselves alongside hired mercenaries to follow the Alago settlements and unleash terror. Lives and properties were destroyed, people were displaced, commuters were obstructed from movement and tension was created in other towns such as Doma, Keana and Agwatashi. On 1 and 2 December, 2013, there was hostility over previous crises between Alago and Eggon in Obi Local Government/Asakio in Lafia East Development Area. The crises started when a suspected Alago youth was apprehended by the security agents for attempting to steal two bags of rice from an Eggon farm. He was arrested and punished and later released after the alleged property was returned to the owner. Not satisfied with the action, some unidentified people suspected to be Eggon armed with sophisticated weapons attacked the sleeping community, shot sporadically and burnt houses belonging to Koro (Miligi), Alago and Sayawa (Bauchi people) who reside in the area. No life was lost but properties were lost and panic was instilled in residents and passers-by in the area.

On 2 February, 2014, there was attack on Gidan Babu Village in Ugah-Ashigye ward which involved *Ombatse* militias and herders youths. Two Herders youth on a motorcycle for the Eid Maulud celebrations were killed claiming they were robbers. One out of the three victims escaped to narrate his ordeal. The cause of the conflict was connected to robbery cases along Ashigye-Gidan Babu-Ugah and Alawagana road, the on-going Ombatse trend and general apathy and suspicion.

On 8 February, 2014, the Eggon people attacked the kwalla and Dumak people of Mankwar village Lafia East of Lafia Local Government. Mankwar village is blessed with thick forest with timber as the most revenue generating commodity. The Eggon people of Rafin Pa'a (a small community along the route) are not happy that revenue is been collected by the district head of Mankwar so the Eggon youth intercepted a truck loaded with timber demanding for revenue but the owner of the truck pleaded he had already done that at Mankwar but the response did not go down well with the youth. Later that evening, the Eggon youth mobilised themselves and attacked Mankwar with weapons kill two persons, burnt houses and farm produce. Many people have been displaced including the district head of Mankwar.

Igga Community and Eggon Militias Crisis

On 25 and 26 April, 2014, there was a renewed in Igga community attack by the Eggon militias (Ombatse) on a Gwandara dominated settlement that have been staying together with other Eggon people for decades. The cause of the conflict was the claim of ownership and possession of a farmland between an Eggon and a Gwandara man. Over forty lives were lost and dumped in wells, houses and properties were destroyed, mass movement of people to neighbouring places for safety, infliction of undue tension in Burum (a nearby village) which also caused mass movement of people out of the Burum village for safety and there was disruption of economic activities at Igga village and its environs.

On 13 and 14 April, 2016, there was a conflict at Daddare Odobu and Tudun Odobu communities in Obi Local Government Area. The conflict was between the Alago and Eggon as well the Alago and Gwandara. The conflict emanated from farmland disputes, interpersonal suspicion and the resultant effect of previous conflicts.

Impact of Conflict on Security in Nasarawa

One of the immediate impacts of the killing of security personnel in the state was the bad image it gave the state which before was not known for such. Also, inter-group relations, personal and communal security were strained. Economic and food security also suffered a bad fate going by the huge loss recorded in the aftermath of the conflicts in the state.

Intervention/Responses

Track 1 Responses

Peace and reconciliation meeting was held between farmers and herders, Eggons, Alago among others. The convener of the meeting was a member, House of Assembly representing Doma North Constituency. The essence of the meeting was to chat the way forward on the need to maintain peaceful co-existence among the people as the raining season draws closer, to always report matters affecting them to the security and not resort to taking laws into their own hands. Federal Ministry of Tourism, Culture and National Orientation organise peace talks and programme on peaceful coexistence amongst communities by drama presentations, comedy, paper presentation and discussions. Also, Talking Point used by NTA Lafia to the general public to educate and sensitise the people on the need for peaceful coexistence. This was done by appealing and calling on the people to support the security agencies in their respective communities and promising not to disclose the identity of any reporter of security threats. Radio talks on Peace, Tolerance and Satiation by the National Orientation Agency, the general public. The instruments used were phone in questions and answers as well as contributions to discussions. Awareness creation on peaceful coexistence by Media stations and the National Orientation Agency (NOA) to the general public, herdsmen, Tiv and Farmers through Radio and Television talks.

Track 2 Responses

Peace and Reconciliation Forum by the National Orientation Agency, Christian Association of Nigeria and Jama'atal Nasril Islam (JNI) to rub minds with Traditional title holders, Religious organisations, CSOs, Para-military Agencies, Police, Ethnic groups, Artisans, and the Press towards charting a course for Peaceful coexistence in the state, as well as map out new mechanisms in addressing present and future security challenges in the state by using Paper presentation, discussions, role play, testimonies, questions and answers.

Multi-Track Responses

Visits by National Orientation Agency, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO), to the Internally-Displaced Persons (IDPs) to sympathise and give them humanitarian supports, assure them of protection of lives and properties and encourage them to go back home when peace is restored. This was done by providing them relief materials and using the preaching of peace, unity and coexistence by clerics.

One-day stakeholders' sensitisation programme on sustaining peaceful coexistence: Stakeholders, such as traditional leaders, religious bodies, security agents, wives of House of Assembly members, commissioner, permanent secretaries, National Council of Women Society (NCWS), etc. were brought together – using paper presentations, drama presentations, interactive session. Goodwill messages were used also to sensitise them on peaceful coexistence. Town Hall Peace Forum by the NOA, where traditional title holders, religious organisation, CSOs, para-military agency, Police, ethnic groups and artisans are brought together to rub minds to ensure total restoration of peace in the state as well as fashion out a new mechanism in addressing security challenges in the state using tools such as discussions, role play, testimonies, questions and answers. Security meeting with okada riders, security agents, traditional and religious leaders, youth organisation, press by NOA and Karu Local Government Area, due to the insurgent attacks, theft and ritual activities in the society which have been traceable to okada riders. The meeting was an interactive session to sensitise okada riders on security consciousness, gather tips from trained personnel on security matters, and device ways of combating sequence activities of heinous crimes in the area.

Town hall meetings by British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and National Orientation Agency (NOA) on peace with herders and farmers with traditional title-holders, religious organisations, CSOs, para-military agency, police, ethnic groups, press and government officials using Discussions Testimonies, Questions and Answers, filling of Questionnaires as instruments. Sensitisation and awareness creation on 2015 General Elections by the National Orientation Agency to equip women and members of the press people with disabilities with requisite knowledge of the electoral process as well as sensitise and educate the people on voters' education using paper presentation and role play. A 2-day

Community Dialogue Meeting by the National Orientation Agency and other CSOs, with Traditional Leaders, Religions Leaders, Politicians, Youth, Women Associations etc, to mobilise the entire citizens towards peaceful conduct of 2015 elections, to educate and sensitise the communities through their leaders on the need to vote wisely. The instruments used were Interactive discussions, Drama presentations, Questions and Answers. One-day Community Dialogue by the National Orientation Agency to increase awareness and sensitise Leaders of Various Political Parties, Security Agencies, Community Leaders, Religious Leaders, women and Youth Association, etc. on Voters Education and mobilise the populace towards the 28, March General Elections by using interactive sessions.

Conclusion

The conflicts in Nasarawa state were in the context of people-to-people and insurgency going by the number of security personnel who lost their lives during the Ombatse attack. However it is one of the states with lowest frequency of attacks by the Boko Haram insurgents.

Gaps in Literature, Policy and Programmatic Responses

Studies on conflicts in Nasarawa state have been substantial however, more can still be done to examine policies and programmes of government in responding to conflicts on whether they are mitigating the conflicts or not.

Recommendations

The government should put in place a system of early warning and early response in both the conflict prone and not-too-prone local government areas in the state.

There should be a proper prosecution of perpetrators of violence to ensure that the confidence of parties in the neutrality and impartiality of the government is not lost

The government should not be too quick to forcefully respond to protests and dissents especially by organised labour.

Niger State (The Power State)

Capital: Minna

Introduction and Background

Niger state was created on 3 February, 1976, from the defunct North-Western state during the regime of General Murtala Ramat Mohammed; however, the state actually began functioning on April 1st of that year. There were originally Nine Local Government areas (LGAs), namely: Chanchaga, Rafi, Bangi, Gbako, Etswan, Suleja, Mariga, Magama and Lavun. Agaie and Lapai LGAs were later created out of Etswan Local Government Area.

Between 1979 and 1983 when Malam Muhammadu Awwal Ibrahim was Executive Governor of the state, eighteen LGAs were managed by the administration, namely Kuta, Paikoro, Chanchaga, Rafi, Gbako, Katcha, Lemu, Lapai, Agaie, Suleja, Mariga, Bangi, Magama, Auna, Lavun, Mokwa, and Jima-Doko. But when the military came into power in 1984, it returned to the original LGA structure.

Chanchaga was however divided into two: Minna Municipal Council, with headquarters at Minna; and Shiroro LGA, with headquarters at Kuta. The LGAs in Niger state became Nineteen (19) in 1991, when President Ibrahim Babangida created nine (9) states and additional LGAs in Nigeria. However, by 1996 when late General Sani Abacha created six (6) additional states and 182 LGAs, in the entire country, Niger state got additional

six (6) LGAs, namely, Katcha, Munya, Mashegu, Edati, Tafa and Mariga, bringing the total to 25 LGAs.

The state is bordered to the North by Zamfara state, West by Kebbi state, South by Kogi state, South-West by Kwara state, North-East by Kaduna state and South-East by FCT. The state also has an International Boundary with the Republic of Benin along Agwara and Borgu LGAs to the North-West. The aborigines of Minna are mainly the Gbagyis and the Nupes, with minority Hausas – who have been cohabiting peacefully with other tribes.

Conflict Landscape of Niger State

The update of the 2008, 2012/2013 Strategic Conflict Assessment (SCA) did capture some level of conflict under intra- and inter-conflict community within and outside Minna in Niger state; others are post-political conflict in the North of Niger state in 2011; the fuel-subsidy crisis led to a number of deaths and casualties and the Boko Harm bomb blast at Catholic Cathedral Church Madalla. Also, inter-gang violence is another phenomenon in the state capital, Minna which has seemingly defied all measures applied. The state also experienced its share of insurgency and terrorism in December 2014, when suspected members of Boko Haram attacked the Minna Medium Prison yard, releasing over 270 inmates and carting away with weapons (Nigerian Eye, 2014). Similarly, a female suicide bomber attacks the Federal College of Education in Niger state, on 12 November, 2014, killing herself with several students reportedly injured (Sean, 2014).

In September 2015, there was a violent clash between Herders and vigilante group of Lambata in Gurara Local government of the state that led to the death of three persons. The crisis started between herdsmen and Talba Vanguard (Local VIO) at a roundabout where the herders were ordered to stop on their motor cycle but they refused and proceeded to the market. The Talba Vanguard followed them to the market and this led to the beginning of the crisis. The crisis degenerated into a violent conflict which eventually led to the loss of three lives and the market was closed down.

The vigilanté members that were alleged to have killed the three persons were detained at the State Criminal Investigation Department (CID) pending the outcome of further investigation. The Lambata market, where the crisis happened, was relocated to a neutral place.

Conflict also broke out over a Facebook interaction between Christian and Muslim youth. An account has it that the Muslim youth mobilised other Muslims in the town on the pretext that the Christian youth spoke blasphemously against Prophet Muhammad, leading to violence. Three persons, including personnel of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) lost their lives. Also houses and shops were burnt while 25 other shops were looted following the violence. The hoodlums embarked on further violence blocking the Lagos-Kaduna road, a major highway connecting the northern

and southern parts of the country. Arrests were made in connection with the incident, and the suspects handed over to the police. The army and other security agencies commenced confidence building patrols in all the nooks and crannies of the area toward restoring peace. As part of measures to de-escalate tension and ensure lasting peace in the town, the military began working with the local government council authorities and community leaders, including the Kagara Emirate Council, to pacify all aggrieved parties.

Since June 2016, Niger state witnessed very high level of violent conflict creating so much tension that made villages involved deserted their communities. Barkuta community in Bosso Local Government Area witnessed two violent conflicts between herders and Gbagyis. The Herders communities comprises Herders from Borgu, Dindimawa and Katsina state who have been coexisting peacefully with Gbagyis in Bar-kuta. Though there had been clashes between herders and farmers but at a very low level. The main source of conflict has been that of encroachment of grazing route by farmers which herders are aware of, and invasion of farmland by herders which has sustained the tensed relationship among them over time, leading to suspicion and distrust.

The conflict was sparked off when a lady thought to be the wife of a Herder fled into the house of an elderly Gbagyi man. The conflict degenerated when the herder demanded for the release of the woman from the Gbagyi man. A respondent told us that a brawl ensued between the Herder and the children of the elderly Gbagyi man leading to Herders losing his life. This led to reprisal attacks which recorded loss of lives and properties such as economic trees, farms and houses were burnt down in addition to the displacement of virtually entire communities in the area.

The violent conflict of August 2016 involved five communities of Kpaidna, Legbe, Dagama, Bambe, Kopa and Lunku who claimed that they were simultaneously invaded by men of the Nigerian Army at about 1:00 am. These communities have not been involved in any serious conflict except few months ago, when criminals invaded the community whom the villagers identify as herders, who raided the village by destroying properties and looted villagers of their goods, amidst other casualties.

Security sources claimed that there was a notorious gun-runner in the neighbourhood based on intelligence report which informed the military operations in the communities. Residents of the communities claimed they mistook the soldiers who came around 1:30 a.m. for armed robbers wearing military uniform; which made them to resist and attack them. The communities called for help from other villagers around stating they were under heavy attack by invaders. The conflict degenerated causing tension, death and destruction of properties. The communities were completely deserted during visits.

Impact of Conflict on Security in Niger State

The conflicts in Niger state during the period covered by this study exposed the limitation of the infrastructure of security in the state as a whole and the communities affected

while there has been the manifestation of the capacity of the people to initiate means of providing security on their own. For instance prior to the conflicts that occurred in August 2016, the Niger State Police Force in Minna established community safety partnership under the platform of community policing where the police held meetings meet with all stakeholders on monthly basis to discuss challenges and issues mitigating against peaceful coexistence in the state. This has led to an improvement in the relationship between the police and many communities in Niger state police as a result of the monthly meetings that were held.

The involvement of the army and the airforce in the alleged invasion by residents of *Kpaidna* and neighbouring villages throws a fundamental question about the order/manner of responses to intelligence by security agencies. Should cordon and search operations be done jointly or with the information of sister or relevant agencies within the security sector? Should the community be informed? Although the matter is still on-going but lessons learnt on it might serve useful purposes on how to act on intelligence and how to coordinate inter-agency operation amongst other critical issues.

The activities of the *Yan-Daba* boys in the metropolis have not been curtailed by security agencies largely because of their alleged reciprocal relationship with those in authorities. In substantiating the claim that the *Yan Daba* boys have a 'special' relationship with politicians in the state, a respondent referred to the employment of these boys to carry out the interlocking of roads in the city a project meant to modernise the roads in the state with the ostensible claim by the government that it was meant to rehabilitate them. Another resident also informed that they are usually seen as part of the motorcade of notable politicians in the state.

Most of the conflicts that were devastating in the state occurred in rural communities and had direct impact on traders, markets and farmers. This led to the relocation of a market in an instance which fractured relations. Also, so many barns and other traditional food reserves were torched in communities where the military had a clash with the residents.

The actors in the conflicts in Niger state differ from context to context and setting to setting. But in all cases they involved the security personnel, the community vigilantes, herdsmen and farmers.

Intervention/Responses

Track 1

In all cases reviewed there was none without a response from the government even though the humanitarian support and palliatives provided to victims of conflicts were nothing to write home about in the communities visited. For instance, in Kpaidna a bag of rice was to be shared by almost 50 people. However, the communities expressed confidence in the police in the way they have related with them. The government has

also been consistent in expressing determination to get to the roots of all the instances of conflicts in the state.

Track 2 Responses

The Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and traditional authorities in the state enjoy a warm relationship with the government and security agencies. However, this is yet to be fully translated into a structured system of responding to conflicts effectively and sustaining peacebuilding interventions from national and international sponsors in the state which have not been rare.

Conclusions

For long, Niger state has enjoyed stable intergroup relations until some of the cases presented in this reported reared their ugly heads marking a break away from the norm in the state. The state also suffered instances of attacks by the Boko Haram insurgents. Responses by the state government to inter-group conflicts, local and international organisations have had positive impacts in ameliorating the conflicts. However, more should be done to ensure that such inter-group relations are restored to its usual state of peaceful co-existence.

Gaps in Literature, Policy and Programmatic

The literature on conflict and peace studies in Nigeria can be richly expanded with attention to Niger state given its relative stability and how recent conflicts in the state became bloody. The policies and programs of the state government were able to stem the tide of violence in the cases covered. However, it is important for the state to pay more attention to the threat posed by the existence of gangs and the attendant breach of public peace anytime a turf clash occurs amongst rival gangs.

Recommendations

Politicians in the state must be seen to, and actually distance themselves from the gangs because of the threat that these gangs pose to peace.

Plateau State (Peace and Tourism)

Capital: Jos

Source: Nigerian Muse (2015): Maps of Various States and their Local Governments in Nigeria http://www.nigerianmuse.com/20100527092749zg/sections/pictures-maps-cartoons/maps-of-various-states-and-their-local-governments-in-nigeria/

Introduction and Historical Background

Plateau state, with its capital in Jos, was created out of the then Benue-Plateau state on 3 February, 1976 by the Murtala Mohammed régime. Plateau state shares borders with Kaduna state to the North, Kaduna and Nasarawa states to the East, Benue to the South and Taraba state to the East. Plateau state is ethnically heterogeneous and religiously diverse state. Plateau state has over forty ethno-linguistic groups but no single group large enough to claim majority position. Some of the indigenous tribes in the state include: Afizere, Amo, Anaguta, Angas, Aten, Berom, Bogghom, Buji, Challa, Chip, Fier, Gashish, Goemai, Irigwe, Jarawa, Jukun, Kwagalak, Kwalla, Meryang, Miango, Miship, Montol, Mushere, Mupum, Mwaghavul, Ngas, Piapung, Pyem, Ron-Kulere, Rukuba, Taletc, Taroh, Youm. Each ethnic group has its own distinct language but some of them interact in Hausa or English. The people of the state are predominantly farmers and have similar cultural and traditional ways of life.

Plateau state, once regarded as a home of peace, soon acquired the notoriety of home of violent conflicts. There have been violent conflicts in several local government areas in addition to Jos, including Wase, Langtang North, Langtang South, Shendam, Mikang, Qua'an Pan, Barkin Ladi, and Riyom.

Conflict Landscape of Plateau State

Plateau state has harvested a number of armed violence in various degrees of intensity. Jos, the capital city, once known for its peace and serenity, was violently robbed of its peace repeatedly in 2001, 2002, 2004, 2008, and 2010. It has also experienced series of multiple bomb blasts by the dreaded Boko Haram terrorists. These conflicts have brought about extensive destruction of lives and properties.

A number of armed violence have occurred outside Jos between the Tarok and the Hausa/Herders in Wase, Langtang North and Langtang South local government areas in 2004, the Geomai and the Hausa-Herders in Shandam local government area in 2002, the Quan Vs Pan in Quan'pan local government area of Plateau state in 2006, the Berom and the Herders in Jos South, Riyom and Barikin Ladi, since 2006 to 2014.

The conflict has been mainly between "indigenes" and "non-indigenes" at the different locations. There is an added religious dimension to the violence as the identities of the indigenes coincide with the Christian faith and the "non-indigenes" with the Islamic faith. Faith became an important variable in the consideration of identity. An additional dimension in this context is the presence of Herders cattle herders in many parts of Plateau state. The Herders, who are nomadic and predominantly Muslim, are resented by many "indigenes" because they allow their cattle to graze on their land and cause damage. There have been numerous cases of cattle rustling, where cattle belonging to Herders have been stolen by members of other communities, leading to revenge attacks by Herders on these communities, followed by counter-attacks by these communities against the Herders. Politics in the state has been extremely competitive and elections are perceived as zero-sum game leading to increased militarisation of the communities. It is not surprising that a number of the armed violence occurred shortly before and after elections: local, state and federal.

Although, the issue of ethno-religious conflict in Plateau state has significantly reduced, residency remains segmented on the basis of religion and ethnic identity as is the case especially in Jos South and Jos North. The farmers-herdsmen conflict has also become a reoccurring decimal in the state with regular attacks by herdsmen in unguarded and loosely unsecured villages as is the case in Kwata, Bukuru and recent killing of first class traditional ruler in Bokkos. The *Saf Ron Kulere*, the traditional ruler of Bokkos and Chairman, Bokkos Traditional Council, in Bokkos local government area of Plateau state, *Lazarus Agai* was murdered in his home village of *Sha* by suspected gunmen on Monday evening, 18th July 2016. This was at the wake of the murder of the *Saf Manguna* (the traditional head of Manguna chiefdom) in June 2016. These murders generated tensions and violent conflicts that affected inter-community relations between Bokkos natives and Herders.

The conflicts in Plateau state and their protracted nature are largely influenced by a combination of endogenous and exogenous variables. According to Krause (2011),