Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria: Conflict, peace building and post conflict economic recovery

Yusuf Ibrahim Gamawa *

Department of Political Science, Bauchi State University, Gadau. Nigeria

Abstract

The Nigerian State appears to have gone through several stages in its history and development as a nation. The country had gone through a civil war that lasted for 30 months and yet re-united. And since the civil War the nation had continued to witness different forms of violence and conflicts, sometimes in the form of uprisings, inter-communal clashes or struggles related to resources, such as the Niger Delta Militancy and of recent, the Boko Haram insurgency which is by far the most devastating armed conflict that has ever taken place in the country since the civil War. This paper tries to look at these conflicts that have taken place over time but with particular attention on the Boko Haram insurgency. The paper tries to evaluate the insurgency, its origins, growth, activities and consequences, and tries to find solutions to the insurgency and makes some recommendations on how the Nigerian government could tackle the violence that has left many dead and displaced, and several others in captivity. The paper also argues that a post conflict economic recovery process must begin in the north east region, so as to help recover livelihoods destroyed by the conflict, considering the humanitarian crisis in the region.

Keywords: Nigeria, Conflicts, Boko Haram, Dialogue, Recovery

* Corresponding author. *E-mail address:* yusufgamawa@ymail.com

1. Introduction

In the post colonial period, the African continent has continued to witness the occurrence and re-occurrence of armed conflicts across many states differing in magnitude and intensity. In the 1960's about 24 African states were involved in different wars, and about 22 other states had with much difficulty managed to avoid war or conflict within the continent. In recent times it has become clear that the number of conflicts has drastically reduced than it was in the past. And by 1990 studies showed that there were only 11 conflicts across the continent, and the same figure was reduced to 1, in Somalia. By the end of the cold war about 14 major armed conflicts had taken place in Algeria, Congo, Angola, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Guinea Bissau, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Liberia, Eritrea-Ethiopia and Uganda, apart from the Niger Delta militancy in Nigeria according to Grasa and Mateos (2010).

All the conflicts identified above appear to be intrastate conflicts that were highly regionalized and overtime became internationalized and transnationalised. Different actors came to involved in the management of most of these conflicts, and this appeared to have created complex networks. The UN, third world countries and other NGO's, as well as private security organizations came to be involved in the management and resolution of these conflicts. The conflicts were usually accompanied by devastating humanitarian consequences. In the Democratic Republic of Congo alone about 5 million people were reported to have perished as a result of armed conflict. In Sierra Leone the story is no different, and about half of the population, totaling about 2 million came to be displaced as a result of armed conflict. And in Darfur, it was estimated that about 300,000 people have died as a result of armed conflict (Grasa and Mateos, 2010). Reports also indicate about $300.000.000 has been lost to armed conflict across the continent. In Nigeria, reports published showed that the Nigerian government budgeted 400 billion in 2008 with regards to security in the Niger Delta region[1], and that between 2006 and 2008 the Nigerian government had lost 8.84Trillion Naira OR 61.6 Billion USD to oil theft (Paki and Ebienfa, 2011). This is apart from destruction of lives and property, as well as the kidnapping of expatriates and other innocent Nigerians and the demand for ransom by the militant groups.

The paper is divided into five different parts apart from the introduction and the conclusion parts. The first part takes a look at the different armed conflicts that have taken place or are ongoing in Nigeria, including inter communal clashes and is expected to serve as the background of the paper. The second part of the paper focuses mainly on the Boko Haram insurgency, and takes a look at its origins, growth and operations. This part shows how dangerous the group grew over a little period of time and the damages and destruction it has caused across the country. The third part tries to look at how the insurgency could be resolved and tried to look into how previous conflicts in different part of the world were resolved with a view to implementing such process in tackling Boko Haram in Nigeria. The part took a look at post conflict peace building steps identified in different studies conducted by scholars and organizations and tried to offer suggestions on how best to approach the Boko Haram insurgency. The fourth part looked into the humanitarian crisis that was created in the north east region of Nigeria as a result of the violence by the Boko Haram group. The part reveals the extent of the damage caused and the consequences in terms of the

conditions it created for the population of the north east. The section or part shows the displacement of the population of the region as a result of the conflict, and the poor socio-economic conditions it had created. The last part of the paper tried to look at the possibility of kick starting a post conflict economic recovery process in the north east region by the Nigeria government and tried to identify the key drivers that such a process will give priority to, in order to achieve successful economic recovery in the north east region in the post conflict period. Conclusion and a reference section come at the end of the paper.

2. Overview of armed related conflicts in Nigeria

In Nigeria, since the civil war not many armed conflicts had taken place or were recorded. The Tiv/Jukun dispute had always been bloody and had constantly occurred and re-occurred in 1959, 1980, 1990 and 2001. And it is still not certain if the dispute has permanently ended even though the situation appears a little stable unlike in the past (Yamusa, 1992). And apart from such inter-communal clashes Nigeria remained a far more stable country than many African states. The first major armed conflict that preceded the civil war was the Maitatsine uprising in the early 1980's in Kano and later in Yola in 1984. The Maitatsine uprising, though limited in scale was worrisome and had led to lost of lives and property in certain cities including Kano and Yola, and was the first time a religious violence was witnessed in the country (Danjibo, 2009). The Nigerian authorities were quick to bring an end to the uprising and the leader of the group Muhammadu Marwa was killed. And since then violence in the form of inter-communal clashes have occurred at Zangon Kataf, in Kaduna state and Tafawa Balewa in Bauchi state. The Zangon Kataf conflict occurred in February and again in May 1992, and was mainly a clash by the Kataf people and the Hausa community in southern Kaduna area (Akin et al., 1996). The government at that time set up a panel of inquiry to look into the cause of the conflict and to find people behind it and bring them to book.

Another crisis that took place in Nigeria was in Tafawa Balewa in Bauchi state between the Sayawa clan and the Fulani regarding chieftaincy and leadership in Tafawa Balewa city. The Tafawa Balewa crises is also seen to have re-occurred first in 1991, 1995 and again in 2001, leading to lost of lives and property, and at the same halting all government and economic activities in certain parts of Bauchi state (Otite and Albert, 1999). These were disputes that sometimes were seen as local disputes and often not given the serious attention they deserved, but yet were accompanied with devastating consequences, and sometimes laid the ground for future disputes. All disputes that are not addressed adequately are likely to re-occur in the shortest period. The tendency for the re-occurrence of these inter-communal conflicts still exist due to the fact that on many occasions the government has not been able to actually address the root causes of these conflicts. In certain instances the government had set up panels of inquiry to their remote causes, and to find people responsible, and generally to make recommendations to the government. However, as it turned out the government has on many occasions failed to implement the reports of these panels, and has sometimes failed to bring some of the people behind these conflicts to book. Such negligence and inability to implement and address real or imagined issues between groups has usually led to the constant re-occurrence of these inter-communal clashes across the country (Uwazie et al., 1999).

And apart from these inter-communal clashes no major armed conflict has taken place in Nigeria until the Niger Delta militancy surfaced in the early 1990's, led initially by Ken Saro Wiwa in the form of environmental agitations. Though the Delta struggles had started long before the 90's under Adaka Boro, who was a minority rights activist and constantly tried to champion the rights of the Ijaw and the Niger Delta in general. However, at that time the struggles were not extended to resources but appeared to have been political in nature. The militancy in the Delta appeared to have posed a serious threat not only to the oil based Nigerian economy, but also to the political survival of the nation as an entity, with demands of secession by the militants. In November 1995 the regime of General Abacha charged Ken Saro Wiwa a Niger Delta activist and writer with treason as a result certain claims and involvement in the murder of a pro – government Ogoni chief during negotiation regarding enviromental laws in the Niger Delta region due to oil spillage But even at this time the struggle was peaceful and without the use of arms. The militancy saw for the first time in Nigeria the use of sophisticated weapons such as machine guns, rocket launchers and bombs by any group since the civil war (Imomotimi and Ebienfa, 2012). The militant groups appeared to have been ready for a confrontation with the Nigerian military as they attacked one oil facility or the other, as well as the oil bunkering that followed their activities, which the Nigerian authorities were not ready to tolerate. And after series of confrontations between the militants and the Nigerian military a peace process was negotiated under president Umaru Yar'adua and amnesty was granted to the militants. This was also followed by the creation of both the NDDC in 2000, and later Niger Delta ministry by President Umaru Yar'adua in September 2008. These measures adopted by the government were intended to appease the Niger Delta people and to put a stop to their activities which was crippling the economy and affecting the corporate existence of the Nigeria state (Abidde, 2017).

Other equally newly emerging conflicts that are worthy of attention that exist side by side the Delta agitations are the issues related to the Fulani migrants that has also resulted in several clashes between the Fulani and other groups across the country. In Benue, clashes between the Fulani and other groups regarding land disputes in June 2014 left about 853 people dead. In May 2014, the clash between the Fulani and other groups in Sanga local government in southern Kaduna also left hundreds dead, and about 150 villages were sacked, leading to the displacement of thousands of people. In Taraba, since 2013, over 2000 people have died as a result of clashes between the Fulani and other groups regarding land or religious disputes. In Nassarawa clashes between the Fulani and groups like Eggon and the Ombatse cult resulted in deaths and destruction of property. The Fulani had also constantly clashed with other groups in Plateau State, including Jos the capital city, where clashes between the Hausa community and other groups were constantly reported. The Fulani's nomadic way of life has often brought the group into confrontation with other people as a result pasture and grazing land in the course of their movement. These clashes sometimes take place across borders, within the territories of neighboring states, and equally needs the intervention of government (Bergstresser, 2017).

3. Boko Haram insurgency

The most devastating armed conflict that has ever taken place in Nigeria is the Boko Haram insurgency that initially started from the north eastern city of Maiduguri. The conflict or violence that erupted was to later

spread to other cities like Damaturu, Potiskum and Bauchi all in the north east. The immediate causes and objective of the group is still somehow shrouded in mystery despite many disclosures. Among other reasons identified as the immediate causes is upholding the rule of law and other humanitarian principles, among the important ones observed. The security agencies had been partly blamed for the outbreak of the first uprising, and then the extra judicial killing of Mohammed Yusuf, the leader of the sect along with other followers on 30 July 2009 did also help escalate the violence. It was observed that the leadership of the group grew initially under Mohammed Yusuf who had lieutenants that included Abubakar Shekau.. The group it was observed never had firm command and control (International Crisis Group, 2014). It had a commander and a shura council which was the highest decision making body. The amir speaks on behalf of the group only with the approval of the shura. In all major cities that the group has strong presence, a local amir is appointed alongside a commander who oversees and coordinates armed operations. The commander is assisted by a deputy (Nabin) who passes orders to the foot soldiers. Cities and large towns were usually divided into sectors or lajna as called by the group and were supervised by sub-amirs for operational and administrative purposes. The main lietenants of Mohammed Yusuf were Mamman Nur, Muhammad Lawan and Abubakar Shekau. It was generally believed that Mamman Nur was the second in command and that Abubakar Shekau was chosen to be leader as a result of his radical stand on issues after the death of Mohammed Yusuf. And under Shekau's leadership the group transformed into a ruthless, violent and destructive organisation that was less open to dialogue.

And since 2009 the nation has not known peace, particularly in the north eastern part of the country where bombings have been reportedly taking place. Many villages have been razed by the group in the name of revenge. Since 2010 the group is reported to have carried out a total of about 108 attacks at different times and at different locations throughout the country (Smith, 2015). The group according to reports has at least assassinated about 15 personalities, and has carried out about 12 suicide attacks. About 39 bombings and explosions were reported to have been carried out by the group. And a total of 23 armed attacks were also recorded to have been carried out by the group since 2009. The group also carried out about 4 jail breaks across the country, and about 8 midnight terror attacks at different locations. In all these attacks carried out by the group, between 2009-2013, about 3000 lives were lost, 2000 people injured, and more than 9,000 people have been rendered homeless, apart from the destruction of property. The initial victims of Boko Haram were the security services, however the group appeared to have changed its tactics and its attacks came to target neighborhood chiefs, clerics, and politicians. It was as a result of this that the identity of the group began to be questioned. Its operations that were initially within Maiduguri, Damaturu and Potiskum were also seen to have expanded rapidly and a Deputy Inspector General of Police was assassinated in Kano by the group, and so also was a retired Comptroller General of Prisons shot and killed in Azare town of Bauchi state. The tactics employed by the group also appear to have become more sophisticated, from ordinary shootings in the initial days of the insurgency to the use of improvised explosive devices from December 2010 (Masleen, 2014). And after the 2011 elections, the group appeared to have began using the vehicle borne IEDs (VBIED), which usually has cars packed with many propane cylinders or explosives-filled drums. It was the same material the group used to attack the UN headquarters in August 2011 in what was described as a suicide attack. At the same time the group now began to attack churches in different parts of

the country, including that of St Theresa at Madalla in 2011 that killed about 40 worshippers (IRIN News, 2013)

The security forces stormed a Boko Haram enclave in Damaturu, including Shekau's home and almost arrested him. In the encounter about 35 Boko Haram fighters were killed and 2 soldiers were injured. However, Shekau escaped with a wounded thigh and his wife and children were taken into military custody, and Shekau was reported to have fled to Gao a city in Northern Mali. And on 22 November 2012, the Nigerian Army offered $1.3 for any information leading to the arrest of Shekau. The group and its leaders are also said to have links with certain foreign transnational groups. Most of these foreign groups are usually seen as extremist radical groups, and some were designated as terrorist organizations. However, it was reported that of all the group's foreign links, links with Ansar Dine, Al-Qaeda in Maghreb (AQIM) and MUJAO an AQIM splinter group are most significant. Most of the leaders of these groups are originally from Mali, Mauritania and Algeria. These three foreign groups were seen to have boosted Boko Harams capacity and operations. AQIM is reported to have made its financial resources, military arsenals and training facilities available to Boko Haram fighters, reports of the International Crisis Group confirmed (Comolli, 2015). Group's foreign link and specifically with radical groups in Mali, is further confirmed by Shekau's taking refuge in Gao after the security agents attacked his home and arrested of his wife and children.

The Nigerian government and its armed forces have since 2010 tried to put a stop to the operation and sustained attacks of the Boko Haram group, but has not been able to do so despite arrests and killings of many of the Boko Haram fighters in different encounters. The government has tried to address the challenges by increasing the defense budget from 100 billion in 2010 to 927 billion in 2011 and 1 trillion in 2012, 2013 and 2014. Other measures included strengthening anti terrorism legislation, boosting the capacity of the military and other security agencies, exploring dialogue with the group which has failed probably due to the fact that the right channels of negotiations were not utilized, declaring a state of emergency in the North East as well as launching a combat operation against the Boko Haram insurgents. However, all these efforts and initiatives have yielded very little result and the group continues to carry out attacks in different places, particularly around Maiduguri and other surrounding cities and villages. The latest of these atrocities was the kidnapping of more than 200 girls from a school in the Chibok Community which has received condemnation worldwide. And yet, the abducted girls are yet to be recovered by the Nigerian Armed Forces since their abduction almost two years ago by the insurgent group (Bunker, 2015).

4. Towards resolving the Boko Haram insurgency

It is very clear that the Boko Haram insurgency is now in a post conflict phase. This is despite the fact that it is still very difficult to define the term "post conflict", and it is partly due to the fact that conflict re-occurs after a period of peace. And in many cases violence continues even when the conflict is thought to have ended. The initial Boko Haram uprising that lasted for 5 days in 2009 saw the initial outbreak of violence and confrontation between the group and the Police and other security service. And after that incident, for about one year no one heard a whisper of the Boko Haram group until 2010. The post conflict phase is usually

characterized according to progress achieved along a range of peace building milestones (Frances et al., 2007). Most states idenitified to be in the post conflict phase are seen to be lying along a continum of each of these milestones, cognizant of the fact that it is still possible to move backwards. The peace building milestones identified include the following;

- Ceasing hostilities and violence.

- Signing of peace agreements.

- Demobilization, disarmament and reintegration.

- Return of refugees and internally displaced persons.

- Establishing the foundations of a functioning state.

- Initiating reconciliation and societal integration.

- Commencing economic recovery.

It is worthy to note that the Boko Haram insurgency may have differed slightly in character from other armed conflicts in other countries, partly due to the fact that it is first, not an ethnic conflict, and secondly, it does not affect the entire country and the actors remain only the members of the sect and they do not enjoy the support of almost all groups North and South of Nigeria, including the population within the North East. And for this reason the milestones outlined above may be applicable to the Boko Haram insurgency too but in a somehow distinct manner and not in the way they may have been applied to resolve conflicts such as those in Somalia or Darfur. The Boko Haram insurgency has come to be recognised as terrorism and is not a civil war between ethnicities or an inter-communal clash. Its religious and violent character has made it so. Nevertheless the objectives of these milestones outlined above remained the same for every conflict including that by the Boko Haram. In accordance with these set milestones, the first step is to put a stop to all violence and hostilities between warring factions. And in this case all hostilities between the Boko Haram group and the Nigerian government or security services must cease, and all violence stopped, and then the first milestone can be achieved.

And it is currently very clear that Nigerian government is yet to achieve the first objective after about 6 years of violence. Boko Haram is still attacking villages and cities across the North East despite all the killings and arrests of its members by the armed forces. It has some how become clear that force has not produced the required result in the fight against the Boko Haram group or is taking longer than necessary. And a careful look at the tactics employed by the group will reveal that achieving outright military victory is not impossible but difficult and may take longer time. Controlling or fighting acts of terrorism is a complicated and difficult task, especially since the enemy is not seen but only carries out attacks in form of suicide bombings, planting bombs in public buildings and markets, as well as other forms of guerilla attacks.

Nigeria is still categorized among weak states that are still grappling with the challenges of governance and economic development, and is yet to achieve what is known as "positive sovereignty". It is still believed that many of the conflicts across the African continent are related to what scholars like Robert Jackson coined "Negative Sovereignty" which is related to governance and development (Jackson, 1986). The Nigerian borders are never fully secured and the flow of weapons and arms cannot be checked, and this remains an element of weak states. "The weak state is generally described as a state where the central government has a

poor capacity to control public order within its territory, is unable to control its borders consistently, cannot reliably maintain viable public institutions or services, and is vulnerable to extra constitutional domestic challenges. Other indicators of state weakness are poor levels of economic performance, human welfare, economic distribution and levels of conflict. The government is completely unable to maintain public service, institutions or authority, and that central control over territory does not exist and implies that central state authority and control do not de facto exist".

The Boko Haram group had on many occassions ceased and put their flags in many parts of the country and declared these areas their territories, and it means the authority of the Nigerian government and control in such areas conquered by the group does not exist or has been lost to the group. And under such a situation as mentioned previously outright military victory may prove difficult or take a long time and that a dual approach may seem a more suitable tactic against the group. The dual approach may likely bring a quick end to the violence and lay the ground for genuine reconciliation and peace. The new approach will be to explore dialogue with the group and a sustained military action against the group simultaneously. The advantage of the dual approach is mainly due to the fact that a study of conflicts that ended since 1989 has shown that conflicts that ended in peace agreements tend to have lower rates of re-occurrence. According the studies, conflicts that ended with peace agreements had 14% rate of re-occurrence as against 47% with regards to conflicts that ended in outright military victory of one party (Doyle and Sambanis, 2006). Although it was observed that there was the possibility of re-occurrence even when peace agreements have been signed between warring parties as it happened in Angola, Burundi, Congo, Indonesia, Liberia, Rwanda, Srilanka and Sierra Leone. But again re-occurrence also is determined by the nature of conflict. It is however agreed that the way an armed conflict ends also appears to affect the risk of re-occurrence (Paul and Hoeftler, 2002). All armed conflicts are known to either end in outright military victory of one party, a peace agreement or negotiated cease fire and sometimes by just burning out. It was further observed that conflicts that ended in outright military victory lead to a more stable post conflict environment (Edward , 1991; Roy, 1995). A study of identity based competing violence showed that only 21% of civil wars that ended in military victory were followed by renewed violence. Sometimes armed conflicts that ended in peace negotiations are seen to likely re-occur for the fact that some of the parties to the agreement may have signed the agreement in order to reorganize re-arm and re-start violence at a later stage. It was also observed that negotiated settlements sometimes create power struggles which have the implication of undermining the effectiveness of post conflict governments. But most of these are observations were based on conflicts that were ethnically based and civil wars generally. The Boko Haram conflict appears to be slightly different from most conflicts, especially since it is not ethnic, and religiously also it does not enjoy the support of all other Muslim groups or sects in Nigeria but only that of the Boko Haram sect who are very few and insignificant compared to the rest of the Muslim groups in the country. So the issue of creating power struggle between the Boko Haram group and the Nigerian state in the event of negotiations is not likely to happen or impossible. And if the right channels of negotiations were utilised, it is expected that genuine settlements could be reached and the group will come to the table not to deceive the Nigerian government or to buy time to re-group or re-arm as has been the case in most identity based conflicts. And as mentioned previously studies have shown that

conflicts that ended in outright military victory have 47% rate of re-occurrence , whereas conflicts that ended in peace negotiations have 14% lower rate of re-occurrence.

Other equally important identified factors that increase the risk of conflict re-occurrence include low income and socio economic horizontal inequalities. Inequalities are seen in terms of uneven economic opportunities, unequal access to land and natural resources which are sometimes seen to cause feelings of frustration and discontent (Murshed and Gates, 2005). However, the risks associated with socio economic inequalities and the re-occurrence of conflicts are seen to depend on the following

- How inclusive the post conflict system is
- Whether or not the conflict has remedied such inequality
- Whether or not previously excluded marginalized groups have gained more equitable economic or political standing from peace agreements and their implementation.
- Whether prior injustices associated with real or perceived discriminations against aggrieved group has been satisfactorily addressed. This is likely applicable to the Boko Haram sect which claims revenge of extra judicial killings of their leader and other members of the sect in the 2009 uprising.
- How the dynamic of inter-group relations are affected by the conditions of post conflict peace building development.

Other factors include dependence on lucrative natural resources and youth unemployment as the case in the Niger Delta shows. Youth unemployment remains a challenge to the Nigerian government with regards all kinds of conflict including inter-communal inter communal clashes. UNDP (2008) Niger Delta militancy and of course Boko Haram inclusive.. Restive youths have always been innocently recruited and used to fight many civil wars and other related atrocities, including acts of terrorism. The issue of addressing injustices remains at the core of achieving a sustainable peace building environment, especially with regards to the Boko Haram insurgency.

5. Humanitarian crisis in the north east region

The increased violence by Boko Haram group in 2012 created a complex emergency situation in the north east region of Nigeria. The violence is seen to affect mainly the three states of the region that include Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states. Reports of the United Nations revealed that between 2014 and 2015 the violence in the region had led to the death of about 3,500 people, and had displaced roughly about 1.6 million people in the north east region of Nigeria. The UN report which was released in May, 2017 also showed that about 168,000 people that included returning migrants had fled to neighboring states like Chad, Niger and Cameroun. The internal displacement is seen to have affected all activity in agriculture and has lead to food insecurity and malnutrition not only in the region, but across neighboring states too. It is estimated that about 4.6 million people are affected by food insecurity (USAID/OFDA, 2017). Other reports showed that food insecurity could rise to about 5.2 million in the affected states in the coming months. In Borno alone about 3, 254, 980 have been identified to be in need, Adamawa has about 786, 883 people in need and Yobe

with the least number has about 626, 353 people in need. Apart from food insecurity, malnutrition also remains a challenge in the region, particularly among children. About 618, 344 children below the age of 5 are reported to have been under different interventions, including that of the management of Severe Acute Malnutrition. One of the problems identified is that there is limited presence of key nutrition partners as well as lack of access due to insecurity and the result is that about 94% of children are at risk of Severe Acute Malnutrition and 97% of children that are in need or could be placed under the Infant Young Child Feeding Interventions that cannot be reached due to lack of access.

Apart from these, infrastructure has been a challenge, and this means health, education, water, sanitation, housing and roads. Health remains a challenge in the region too. It is reported that out of the about 749 health facilities in Borno for example, only 288 are functional and the rest have either been partly or completely destroyed by the violence that has taken place across the region. It is currently estimated that there are about 6.9 million people that require humanitarian health services in the region, including more than 1.7 million IDP's that are located in about 100 IDP camps in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. In the area of education, feeding at IDP camp schools need constant support and such support has remained a challenge. There is also need to provide classroom supplies to the about 120,000 children currently enrolled in various IDP camp schools across the region. The issue of water, sanitation and hygiene continues to be a challenge, considering the fact that about 94% of water, sanitation and hygiene infrastructure in the north east region has been destroyed by the violence of the Boko Haram group. At the moment for example, there is continued influx of people into areas like Baa, Gwoza, Damboa, Munguno, Mata and Balge. Such movement is seen to have increased the need for food, shelter, non food items, water, sanitation and health services. Again at present an estimated 250, 000 households that represent about 1.7 million people need recovery assistance among the returning households apart from those residing in the communities of return across Borno, Adamawa and Yobe (OCHA, 2017).

Relief agencies, state, local and federal governments have been making efforts to provide food, health care and shelter support, especially following the recent influx of people to certain areas of the region. USAID/OFDA is providing support since May, 2017. The International Organization for Migration is also constructing about 500 emergency shelters to avoid overcrowding conditions. USAID is seen to be particularly involved in providing critical health care, water, sanitation and hygiene to IDP's and other vulnerable populations around Dikwa and Ngala local governments in Borno state. The organization has distributed about 4, 400 hygiene kits and distributed relief commodity to about 1000 households in Bama and Ngala (USAID, 2017). www.usaid.gov/news. Prior to such effort, a donor mission had visited the north east region between 13 and 15 February, 2017, shortly before the Humanitarian Conference on Nigeria and the Chad Region that was hosted in Oslo, Norway. www.oslohumanitarianconference2017.0rg . The delegation visited IDP sites and host communities at Maiduguri, Bama and Gwoza, and held meetings with key stake holders that include Borno governor, theater commander of the army, religious leaders, civil society representatives, UN staff and IDP's. The reason for the visit was to create an understanding of the complex challenges facing the area due to the Boko Haram insurgency. The delegation identified three critical areas that would require attention at the conference in Oslo and the areas include; food security and nutrition, protection and access and then education (Oslo, 2017). At the conference that was attended by

about 170 representatives from 140 countries, the UN, Regional organizations and civil society groups, 14 donors pledged $458 million in 2017. Additional pledges of $214 million for 2018 were made at the conference. The pledges were announced by the European Commission, Norway, Germany, Japan, Sweden, Switzerland, France, Italy, Ireland, Finland, Denmarl, Luxembourg, Neitherlands and Korea. Foreign Minister Borge Brende of Norway was quoted as saying;

"The conference has helped raising awareness and increased support for millions of people affected by this crisis, not least for the many children and young people who are currently out of school. It is crucial to provide and protect education to safeguard their rights and pave the way for a peaceful development in the region. Our goal must be to ensure quality education for all, for girls as much as for boys. It is of critical importance also to enhance the protection of women and girls, who often carry the main burden of crisis and conflict, and ensure that women are involved in ongoing processes related to peace and development in the region." (www.reliefweb.int/repor).

6. Post conflict economic recovery in the north east

Following the recent effort by the Nigerian government and military in the fight against Boko Haram insurgents, the activities of the group appears to have been weakened seriously. Recently the Chief of Army Staff of the Nigerian army announced that Boko Haram's last strong hold in the Sambisa forest on the Cameroun border had been taken over by the Nigerian army. As a result of increased effort by the military whose command operation was moved to Maiduguri after Muhammadu Buhari emerged as President in 2015 has led to a decline in Boko Haram attacks in Maiduguri and surrounding villages across the north east region. And only recently the Nigerian government agreed to a prisoner swap with the Chibok girls abducted by the group in 2014. The swap was the result of a negotiation brokered by certain individuals and organizations based in Europe with the consent of the Nigerian authorities and it led to the release of about 106 girls out of the about 200 taken hostage by the Boko Haram group. One feels confident to at the moment to say that no state, local government or single community is under the control or influence of the Boko Haram group. And even though the group has not officially surrendered and announced that it has abandoned all hostilities, it is increasingly becoming clear that the group has been subdued or defeated in a way. Bombings are recorded once in a while in certain parts of Maiduguri, rarely and not as frequent and devastating as in the past. And in such case the Nigerian government must see to complete seizure of hostilities either through dialogue as suggested earlier, which had led to the release of the 106 Chibok girls, or through concerted military effort and victory. In the mean time what is required is for the Nigerian authorities to commence an economic recovery process across the region so as to alleviate the suffering of the population as result of the conflict which has affected their livelihoods. Many communities, markets, houses and other important centers were bombed and burnt by the insurgents across the north east region that has affected economic activities in the area and has led to rising poverty level in the region. The conflict is seen to have affected commercial activities that include agriculture, trade and commerce. The relative peace that has returned to the region should provide for an immediate economic recovery process by the

Nigerian authorities so that those that have been affected by the conflict will have the opportunity to recover their livelihoods or create new ones. The demand for such a process to be kick started will not be out of place if the humanitarian situation highlighted above is taken into consideration. The influx and return of refugees shows a significant step in the peace building process and should signal that start of an economic recovery process that will help recover livelihoods.

There are several studies conducted on post conflict economic recovery, many of such studies have identified areas that require attention in post conflict economic recovery period. Most of these studies were carried out and their findings and analysis were usually based on empirical data, of conflicts that have existed or on areas that are still undergoing economic recovery after conflict. The studies show how livelihoods have been recovered in those areas and the process followed or the recovery plan that was implemented. And in the Nigerian case, it will not be difficult to begin a post conflict economic recovery process, given the fact that government is already putting in place structures and institutions that will aid and support such a process which is deemed timely. Among the efforts being made by the government in this area is the establishment of the "Presidential Initiative on the North East" and the proposed "North East Development Commission". Both the Initiative and the Commission will greatly accelerate the implementation, step by step of the drivers of post conflict economic recovery in the North East region. The main drivers of post conflict economic recovery include the following (UNDP, 2008);

- The rehabilitation of infrastructure.
- Reinvesting in human capital.
- Reintegrating ex combatants and special groups.
- Securing economic opportunities and creating jobs.
- Strengthening local institutions.
- Mediating access to financial resources.

Achieving the above outlined drivers of post conflict economic recovery should at this time remain the focus of the Nigerian authorities. And as seen above, the rehabilitation of infrastructure remains at the top of the list of the recovery drivers, and it is partly due to the fact that infrastructure facilitates economic activity by lowering unit costs, enlarging markets and facilitating trade. Studies show that the rehabilitation of physical infrastructure has a direct impact on development outcomes like health and education and can have a positive impact on long term economic growth (IMF, 2004). Availability of infrastructure like roads, creates access, which is currently lacking in the region and is seen to compound the problems of health care, food insecurity and malnutrition in the region. All these will however have to follow a rigorous process of identifying local needs and priorities in the course of the recovery process either in the area of infrastructure, human capital, creating jobs or mediation of access to finance (Louise, 2008). The identification of the above outlined economic recovery drivers is mainly to maintain or revive farms, run macro enterprises, schools, health centers, roads and other important associations within communities. Studies also show that the economic drivers achieve faster and better results when they are able to locate local efforts of individuals, households and communities in their socio-historical context. Such is considered the most appropriate platform on which to build a post conflict economic recovery and international support. The local population

is seen to be better positioned to rehabilitate their livelihoods and for this it is advisable that post conflict recovery policies focus on local capacities and social processes available. They may require time and preparation but recognition of local conditions and circumstances has usually resulted in successful and self sustaining recovery in the long run.

Reinvesting in human capital remains strategic to the recovery plan and is seen as the basis upon which upon a recovery process can be achieved. Human capital is considered as education, skills and other aptitudes embodied in labour that is usually diminished by conflicts and these usually determine the prospects of economic recovery (Stanley, 1993). The rehabilitation of ex combatants and special groups, in the case of Boko Haram, the members of the civilian JTF, IDP's, Youth groups as well as returning refugees could be considered for rehabilitation and resettlement. Again securing economic opportunities and the creation of jobs remains a task in post conflict economic recovery (Darryl and Davalos, 2007). Job creation remains important in the post conflict economic recovery plan for political, public policy and donor interventions. It helps create a sense of normalcy and routine which contributes to social stability. The strengthening of local institutions remains key to an economic recovery process among recovery drivers. Such institutions include government mechanisms and formal and informal rules that help guide social interaction at the community or local level, and may include issues related to property rights, access to land and housing. The last driver, mediation of access to financial resources is considered highly important in the post conflict economic recovery process. Armed conflicts have usually led to decapitalisation which leaves many households and individuals extremely poor and requiring assistance and financial resources to support their various efforts at recovering their livelihoods. The government in such a situation will have to mediate and ensure the establishment or provision of micro finance houses and local credit institutions that would assist individuals and households recover their livelihoods through loans and credit facilities. Globally, there are about 500 million clients served by Micro finance programs (Jonathan, 1999).

It is believed that the step by step and successful implementation of the economic recovery drivers in the north east region of Nigeria that has been affected by the Boko Haram insurgency will bring or restore livelihoods and normalcy in the region. The implementation is of course not without challenges, challenges of finances and from communities themselves, in planning, strategizing etc are usual and to be expected. A lot of resources will have to be committed to building the infrastructure, human capital and other drivers like job creation and access to micro financing. The government may not be able to shoulder all the responsibility and may have to work hand in hand with donor agencies to implement the economic recovery plan of the north east region of Nigeria.

7. Conclusion

The paper has indeed provided a glimpse into the various conflicts that have affected and continue to affect the Nigerian state since its creation in 1960. And of all the various conflicts that have taken place, religious and inter-communal ones, one would say as the paper has shown that the Boko Haram insurgency remained the worst to have hit the country. No violence of such nature and magnitude has ever taken place in Nigeria.

The country had fought a civil war with huge casualty, but the methods used by Boko Haram had never been known. Suicide attacks have never featured in Nigeria's history until the arrival of Boko Haram and this shows how deadly the group has operated as shown in the second part of the paper. The paper has given information about the rise and expansion of the group and its activities as well as the kinds of destruction it has caused and carried out across the country. The paper also tried to look into how the Boko Haram violence could be resolved and outlined steps identified by scholars and organizations with regards to peace building in post conflict environments. And based on these studies it is clear that the insurgency is now in a post conflict phase and that of recent there has been tremendous improvement in the security situation in the country as shown in the paper. The release of the abducted Chibok girls after negotiation and a prisoner swap has shown that negotiation in armed conflicts is possible and can produce results as suggested in the paper. The girls had been abducted since 2014 but 106 of them were released only in 2017 and the Nigerian military has not been able to use force to secure their release. With the relative peace that has returned to the north east and the country at large, there is need for the Nigerian authorities to kick start an economic recovery process in the north east region that is most hit by the crisis as shown in the paper under the "Humanitarian crisis in the north east". The situation and the displacements caused by the conflict appears to have affected livelihoods in the region. The recent decline in attacks by the Boko Haram group has led and continues to lead to the return of displaced people to their respective communities. These communities at this time are lacking basic amenities and infrastructure, and it is only when an economic recovery process is started that such amenities can be provided and afterwards, the population will be assisted in their various efforts to recover their livelihoods as outlined in the paper. The paper had identified key post conflict economic recovery drivers that were the result of extensive research by scholars and organizations. The report by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance has indeed justified the argument of this paper by pointing out that the return and influx of people back to certain cities has created an emergency situation and that currently there are about 250,000 households that represent about 1.7 million people that need assistance to recover their livelihoods in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states apart from those in IDP camps. The paper it should be noted has shown that about 6.9 million people are in need of humanitarian health services in the region, 4.6 million are affected by food insecurity that is expected to rise to 5.2 million in a couple of months. And at the moment about 4,668,216 have been identified across the states of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa to be in need of assistance as shown in the report of the USAID. And for this reason the Nigerian authorities must begin an economic process and hasten the commencement of activities and operation by the North East Development Commission and immediately begin studies of the various needs in the different areas of the north east and identify local capacities upon which a successful economic recovery plan can be built upon.

References

Abidde, S.O. (2017), *Nigeria's Niger Delta: Militancy, Amnesty and Post Amnesty Enviroment,* Lexington Books, Maryland.

Abrak I. (2013), "Boko Haram Rebels Say Nigerian Military Offensive is Failing", Reuters News, London, 13 July.

Akinteye, A., Wuye, J.M. and Ashafa, M.N. (1996), *Zangon Kataf Crisis: A Case Study,* Abebooks, Victoria, British Columbia.

Becker, Gary Stanley, B.G. (1993), *Human Capital: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis with special reference in Education, 3rd Edition*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Bergstresser, H. (2017), *A Decade of Nigeria: Politics, Economy and Society 2004-2016,* Amazon Publishers.

Bunker, R.J. (2015), *Counter Terrorism: Bridging Operations and Theory: A Terrorism Research*, iuniverse, Bloomington, Indiana.

Collier Paul, C., Hoeffler, A. (2002), "On the Incidence of Civil Wars in Africa", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 46 No1. Pp. 13-28.

Comolli, V. (2015), *Boko Haram: Nigeria's Islamist Insurgency*, Oxford University Press, London.

Danjibo, N. (2009) "Islamic Fundamentalism and Sectarian Violence; The Maitatsine and Boko Haram Crises in Northern Nigeria", Peace and Conflict Studies Paper Series, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Ibadan.

Darryl, M. and Davalos, M. (2007), "Post Conflict Employment and Poverty Reduction", UNDP Bureau Development Policy, UNDP, New York.

Ebienfa, K.I. (2012), *Oil, Militancy and Political Opportunities in the Niger Delta,* Lambert Academic Publishing, Saarbrucken, Germany.

Edward, L. (1991), "Give War a Chance", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 78 No 4, pp. 36-44.

Frances, S., Brown, G. and Langer, A. (2007), "A Typology of Post Conflict Enviroment: An Overview of the Main Issues and Factors", Background Paper, Bureau for Conflict Prevention and Recovery, UNDP, New York.

Grasa, R. and Mateos, O. (2010), "Conflict, Peace and Security in Africa: An Assessment and New Questions After 50 Years of African Independence, ICIP Working Papers, Institut Catala Internacional, Per La Pau, August, Barcelona.

IMF (2004), "Regional Economic Outlook: Sub-Saharan Africa", International Monetary Fund, April, Washington DC.

International Crisis Group (2012) "Curbing Violence in Nigeria (I): The Jos Crisis", Africa Reports, No 196, Brussels, 17 December.

International Crisis Group (2014), "Curbing Violence in Nigeria (II): The Boko Haram Insurgency", Africa Reports No 216, Brussels, 3 April.

IRIN News (2013), Timeline of Boko Haram and Related Violence in Nigeria, IRIN Association, Geneva, 22 February,

Jackson, R.H. (1986) "Negative Sovereignty in Sub-Saharan Africa I", Review of International Studies, Vol. 4 No 10, 1986. P. 250.

Jonathan, M. (1999), "The Microfinance Promise", *Journal of Economic Literature*, Vol. 37 No 4, p 390.

Louise, A. (2008), "Democratic Governance in Post Conflict Liberia-An Interview with Dr Amos Sawyer", Danish Institute of International Studies Working Papers, No 20, Copenhagen, August.

Masleen, S.C. (2017), *The War Report: Armed Conflicts in 2013, Casualities,* Oxford University Press, London.

Michael, D.W. and Sambanis, N. (2006), *Making War and Building Peace, United Nations Peace Keeping Operations,* Princeton University, NJ.

Murshed, S. and Gates, S. (2005), "Spacial Horizontal Inequality and Maoist Insurgency in Nepal", *Review of Development Economics*, Vol. 9 No 2, pp. 121-134.

Otite, K.O. and Albert, I.O. (1999), *Community Conflicts in Nigeria: Management, Resolution and Transformation*, Spectrum Books, Ibadan.

Roy, L. (1995), "The Consequences of Negotiated Settlements in Civil Wars, 1945-1993", *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 89 No 3. Pp. 681-690.

Smith, M. (2015), Boko Haram: Inside Nigeria's Unholy War, I.B Tauris, London.

Stanley, B.G. (1993) "Health as Human Capital: Synthesis and Extentions", *Oxford Economic Papers*, Vol. 59 No 3, pp. 379-410.

Stanley, B.G. (2007), "Health as Human Capital: A Synthesis and Extensions", Oxford Economic Papers, Vol. 59 No 3.

UNDP (2008), Youth and Violent Conflicts: Society and Development, Bureau for Crises Prevention and Recovery, New York.

United Nations (2017), "Nigeria-North East Humanitarian Emergency", Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Situation Report No 7, March, New York.

USAID (2017), "Lake Chad Basin: Complex Emergency", Fact Sheet, No 17, June.

Uwazie, E.E., Albert, I.O. and Uzoigwe, G.N. (1999), *Inter Ethnic and Religious Conflicts in Nigeria,* Lexington Books, Maryland.

Yamusa, G.A. (1992), *The Story of the Jukun/Tiv Crises,Why and How They Happened*, Abebooks, Victoria, British Columbia.