



## **THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF RECONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION OF NORTH EASTERN NIGERIA IN THE POST-BOKO HARAM ERA: THE GAP IN CONTRIBUTION BETWEEN AFRICA AND EUROPE**

**Dr. Sheriff Ghali Ibrahim\* & Ipinmoye Ayodele Olu\*\***

Department of Political Science & International Relations,  
University of Abuja, Abuja-Nigeria

### **Abstract:**

*This paper specifically seeks to understand the situation of the North-Eastern Zone of Nigeria in post Boko Haram era, particularly in the area of reconstruction and rehabilitation. As a global norm and practice, following the devastating impact of disasters, there follows a period of interventions, which are usually in the order of relief, reconstruction, rehabilitation and readiness to assist the affected people. Following the initiation of the armed conflict by Boko Haram insurgents, there had been massive losses in human lives, occupational opportunities, and infrastructures such as schools, hospitals, bridges as well as homes and farmlands, leading to many becoming internally displaced persons and refugees. The study discovers that the Federal Government, Borno State Government alongside the United States, United Kingdom, China and the United Nations have been mostly providing relief services and materials whilst only the Borno State Government is providing reconstruction and rehabilitation. The process of coordinating these responses also have come up with challenges, chief of which is the multiple agencies set up by the Federal Government and a national prioritization of needs. The study recommends that the Governments should harmonize efforts with foreign partners and prioritize needs for an efficient allocation of scarce resources within the affected area. There is also the need for Federal and state Governments, in collaboration with the international community and partners to start the process of reconstructing the communities and rehabilitating the citizens who have been affected by the insurgency.*

**Keywords:** Boko Haram, Reconstruction, Rehabilitation, Funding, Building & Government

### **1. Introduction:**

Rehabilitation, reconstruction and sustainable recovery refer to measures that help restore the livelihoods, assets and production levels of emergency-affected communities. These measures rebuild essential infrastructure, institutions and services; and restore the means of production destroyed or made non-operational by a disaster. Rehabilitation and reconstruction assistance is geared towards limiting the need for relief and allowing development activities to proceed. Rehabilitation and reconstruction include measures which help increase the resilience of food systems in case of future disasters and emergencies (FAO Reference Manual, 1996).

Violent conflicts and natural disasters have historically led to significant impacts and disruptions on the society, with attendant losses of life, destruction of property, infrastructure and disruptions of communal and individual relationships. The disasters often leave the society vulnerable to economic, social and physical challenges, as existing infrastructures are destroyed or significantly damaged; housing, which is in perennial short supply in most societies are further depleted and communication linkages within communities and society are ruptured.

## **2. Conceptual Clarification:**

Arising from the above, post conflict or post disaster societies usually focus on developing appropriate responses to the conflict situation. According to Niazi (2008) post disaster response has been typically at four levels:

**Relief:** immediately after the calamity, lasting from the first 24 hours to about two or three months and catering to immediate shelter, food, water and medical assistance

**Reconstruction:** following relief and extending to a period of approximately two years, aimed at rebuilding the basic physical infrastructure and shelter to enable people to begin afresh.

**Rehabilitation:** rehabilitation looks at more term inputs of reinstating lost livelihoods, introducing new economic opportunities and improving land and water management processes so as to reduce people's vulnerability and enhance capacities to handle future calamities.

**Readiness:** a response which should ideally have been a proactive measure, is to enhance preparedness in identified vulnerable regions by introducing mechanisms and methods of construction that mitigate impacts of future disasters. Corazon(2013) stated that Post-disaster rehabilitation and recovery encompass support strategies that are geared towards the restoration of human-centered services and infrastructure, as well as the restoration of the physical and ecological integrity of the affected ecosystem.

According to International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (2012), Rehabilitation and reconstruction after disasters is usually in the domain of governments, civil society organizations and international donors that are focused on the area of relief provision. In post disaster situations, it becomes more important that these be done in a collaborative and integrated manner. "Reconstruction is a complex process which may take up to several years...Rehabilitation and reconstruction aims to restore the functioning of the existing structures and services or upgrade them to meet current needs" (IFRC 2012).

## **3. Material and Method:**

The method used in data collection for this research is the secondary methodology, which suggests obtaining materials from published books, journal articles, newspapers, periodicals, magazines, reports and internet sources. The material and method also see the support of the relational/vengeance theory as theoretical framework for the research, which explains the nature of Boko Haram activities that lead to the issue of reconstruction.

For the purpose of the study, we have attempted to understand the issues through the prism of the Relational Theory. The Relational theory attempts to provide explanation for violent conflicts between groups by exploring sociological, political, economic, (religious) and historical relationships between such groups. The belief is that cultural and value differences as well as group interests all influence relationships between individuals and groups in different ways. Thus, a number of conflicts grow out of a past history of conflict between groups that has led to the development of negative stereotypes, racial intolerance and discrimination (Faleti, 2006:54-55). The differences in value invariably create the "We" and 'Others" dichotomy: "The fact that 'others' are perceived as different makes us feel they are entitled to less or are inferior by reason of values. This disrupts the flow of communication between us and them and to that extent, twists perceptions that we have about each other" (Faleti, 2006.p.55).

It is also notable that sect members "attracted several descriptions where they operated based on the perceptions of the local population. In some communities, where

it existed, the sect and its members were described as terrorists and persons with psychiatric challenges" (Faleti, 2006.p.450).

The state and other members of Nigerian society who are targets of Boko Haram's violence may indeed find it difficult to understand the sect's penchant for blood-letting. On the one hand, the former group becomes in this context the "We" and all efforts are being to secure it from savagery of the "Others", the Boko Haram members. On the other hand, the latter group bond either by the common purpose of fighting the "unbelievers" for Allah, or feeling of deprivation or both sees the remaining members of the Nigerian society as the "Others". In the circumstance mutual antagonism exists and eventually boils over in an orgy of violence. On the part of Boko Haram, loss of members to government security forces- the "Others" incites revenge and reprisal action, the "We". The retaliatory attacks against Muslims in the Gonin Gora area of Kaduna state by an irate mob following the multiple suicide attacks on churches in the state on Sunday June 17, 2012, also highlights the vengeance thrust of the "We" and "Others" psychology. In this instance, the avengers, presumably Christians now constituted the "We", while Muslims became the "Others." The establishment of Alfurqan Islamic School, solely dedicated to the teaching of ethics opposed to Western civilization in Jalingo, capital of Taraba, a North Eastern state in Nigeria exemplifies an effort to institutionalize the "We" and "Others" dichotomy. In parts of the North, some segments of the Northern Muslim population are allegedly unhappy with the compromise of state-level Shari'a coexisting side by side with a Secular Federal System (Lengmang, 2011:101).

The cogency of the relational/vengeance perspective is such that for a long time, it remained the plausible explanation for the terror campaign by Boko Haram as the death of Yussuf in the police custody, and the hunting and incarceration of the members by the Nigerian security forces were seen to have fired the "we" and "others" psychology, and have been a major factor in the sect's resolve to avenge its members through the terror campaigns (Daily Sun, online, January 23, 2012). Jail-break operations to rescue incarcerated members and marrying of dead members' widows by living members, all sustain the theory. But the reported killing of members who decline suicide missions on the orders of Shekau, the killing in September 2011 of Babakura Fugu, an in-law to Yussuf, for allegedly accepting blood money from the government (This day, September 19, 2011) which signifies existence of faction within the group, all widen the sect's targets, blur the line between the "We" and 'Others", and so challenge this perspective.

Similarly, to the "Others", the sect is identified by the "prohibited name," Boko Haram, (Western education is sin), whereas to the sect itself, the "We", "our name is Jama'atu Ahlus Sunnah Lidda Awati Wal Jihad (Saharareporters, online, January 22, 2012). Beside its pejorative connotation, in the sect's perspective, the name does not capture its objective and has been be a motivation to violence. Its spokesman, Abu Qaqa offered this, in particular, as reason for the sect's targeting of the Nigerian media (Saharareporters, online, May 1, 2012). Somali's Al-Shabaab also exhibits this tendency (BBC Somali, online, June 21, 2009).

#### **4. Results and Discussion:**

**Boko Haram - The Sect:** The sect now widely known as Boko Haram, literally translated as "Western Education is forbidden" is actually named Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'Awati Wal-Jihad. The sect started as a group dedicated to the preaching and teaching of Jihad. The group's name translated into English is "People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad" (Cook, 2011). Founded in 2002 and

originally based in Borno State, the group which was led by Mohammed Ali Yussuf was focused on winning adherents to its teachings particularly amongst the poor and downtrodden. In the process of carrying out its visionary activities, it became increasingly radicalized and began having clashes with agents of the government. A violent uprising in 2009 led to its leader being arrested and extra judicially executed. The demise of its leader marked a radical shift in its relationship with the Nigerian State, as the group, now under the leadership of Abubakar Shekau, embarked on massive attacks on both civilian populations and security agencies. Deploying effective bombing attacks, assassinations and gun raids, the impact of its violent and daring attacks were soon felt beyond Borno State to the states in the North West and North Central Zones.

According to the Nextier Advisory Group (2015), Boko Haram is one of the most critical challenges facing Nigeria. It is currently contained within the North East region albeit to disastrous effect. The region was economically promising although with 68 percent poverty rate and 28.5 percent unemployment (2011 National Bureau of Statistics). Today, the economy is paralyzed with over 2.5 million residents classified as Internally Displaced Persons. If left unaddressed, Boko Haram can significantly affect quality of life in other parts of Nigeria. No doubt, the N3.6 trillion the government has spent in the last four years (2011-2014) on security could have been invested in other human development indicators. With declining oil prices, Nigeria may lose the ability to sustain this level of spending given competing demands for scarce resources.

In 2012, the government established a state of emergency that covered the States of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa. Whilst the three states are bear the most burden of violent attacks, the effects and impact of the Sects activities covered the entire North Eastern States, with Taraba, Gombe and Bauchi States having periodic attacks. The state of emergency did not achieve its stated objectives of taming the insurgency, as the Nigerian military was unable to effectively curtail the increasingly bold and devastating insurgent attacks. Thus, by mid-2014, the insurgents have gained control of large expanses of territory and declared a caliphate. The territory claimed by the insurgents was estimated at 50,000 square kilometers. From mid-2014, the insurgents extended their field of operations into the neighboring countries of Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Mali. Whilst they had always been hibernating and having bases in these countries from which they launched launching attacks at targets inside Nigeria, it was not until the latter half of 2014 that they started attacking targets inside these neighboring nations. The resultant effect was joint military operation by the Armed Forces of Nigeria, Chad, Niger, Cameroon and Mali against Boko Haram Insurgents. The Armed Forces were backed and strongly assisted by the local populations through vigilante groups that came to be known as Civilian JTF as well as mercenaries from South Africa.

According to Wikipedia (2015) Boko Haram's four-year-old insurgency has disrupted social and community harmony, bred deep rooted suspicions, inter-ethnic hatred and cost more than 13,000 lives and displaced people groups, destroyed hundreds of schools and government buildings and devastated an already weak economy in the North East, one of Nigeria's poorest regions. The insurgency overstretched the federal security services.

Although the Boko Haram insurgency has roots in several social and economic factors and deprivations that the people, particularly the youths had suffered, the response of the Government was largely military. The political will to engage the people groups and communities, at least to staunch the capacity of the insurgents to recruit new members, the political will to do the needful in this regard seems to be lacking.

With the epic proportions of devastations and destruction visited upon the communities of the North East, this work aims to look into the reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts, with a particular reference to the source and types of such efforts initiated and ongoing in the North east of Nigeria. The work will also try to explain the extent of gap that exists in terms of the level of assistance shown by Africa vis-à-vis her European counterpart in the effort to reconstruct and rehabilitate the North East of Nigeria.

#### **5. National Reconstruction:**

This is synonymous with post conflict recovery, referring to the process of rebuilding degraded, damaged, or destroyed political, socio-economic, and physical infrastructure of a country or territory, disarming and reintegration of combatants, resettling internally displaced persons, reforming governmental institutions, promoting trauma work and reconciliation, delivering justice, and restarting the economy in order to create the foundation for long-term development (Snodderly, 2011: 44).

Reconstruction differs from construction, in that whilst reconstruction seeks to restore and possibly upgrade facilities, infrastructures and social services that have been degraded as a result of conflict, construction entails developing new infrastructure which had been required previously but not provided up till current time. In some cases, new construction is required arising from the needs of new populations and settlements, or owing to improved and new technology. Reconstruction and rehabilitation is a restorative process that may in turn lead to development, whilst construction on its own is developmental, without the element of restoration.

#### **6. Emergence of Post Conflict Reconstruction and Rehabilitation System:**

In the history of mankind, times of reconstruction and rehabilitation of societal structures follow times of conflict. In the cycle of societal events and relationships, conflicts followed by recovery periods have been a constant. A biblical example is in the book of Nehemiah, wherein the man Nehemiah mobilized resources and obtained authorization from the King of Babylon to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, which had been destroyed during the assault that led into taking the Israelites into Babylonian captivity (Nehemiah, Chapters 1 -3.)

Nigeria as a country has witnessed its share of conflicts and disasters, leading to recovery efforts. A current prolonged and debilitating conflict is the ongoing Boko Haram Conflict, which had led to disruptions in social and communal relationships; destruction of physical structures such as places of worship – both mosques and churches; homes; offices; educational institutions and social infrastructures as well.

#### **7. The North-Eastern Nigeria:**

The North East of Nigeria essentially refers to the six states that make up the geopolitical zone. The states are: Borno, Bauchi, Adamawa, Taraba, Gombe and Yobe. The North East shares international boundaries with four countries which are Cameroon, Chad and Niger. Due to the sparse vegetation, increasing desertification and cultural ties between communities that straddle the boundaries, the borders are rather open and porous. Therefore movements in and out of the States of the North East are difficult to control. This works to the advantage of the insurgents who find it easy to slip in and out of the North Eastern States.

Carson (2012) citing a UN study, claims that poverty in the 12 most northern states is nearly twice that of the rest of the country. The health indicators reflect this. Children in the far north are almost four times as likely to be malnourished. Child mortality is over 200 deaths per 1000 live births, leading to lower life expectancy. Educational standards are just as bad. Literacy in the far north is 35 percent as opposed to 77 percent in the rest of the country. Seventy - seven percent of women in the far

north have no formal education, compared to only 17 percent in the rest of the country. In northern Nigeria, primary school attendance is only 41 percent, while youth unemployment is extremely high. All of this contributes to joblessness and a deepening cycle of poverty (Carson, 2012:2)

### **8. Impact of Conflict on the Socio-Economic and Political Development of the North East:**

Some of the impacts of conflict on the socio-economic and political development of north-eastern Nigeria may include the following:

**Disruptions in Community and Family Cohesion:** Boko Haram activities have led to the dislocation of many families as many communities had literally fled their ancestral lands and have become Internally Displaced Persons within Nigeria while many have fled to neighboring countries of Niger, Chad and Cameroon. According to UNICEF (2015), an estimated 800,000 children have been forced to flee their homes as a result of the conflict in Northeastern Nigeria between Boko Haram, military forces and civilian self-defense groups.

In this trend, Sidi (2015) believes that there are currently 981,416 Internally Displaced Persons in the country as at 2014 December. Out of this number, 915,329 were displaced through the insurgency in the North East whilst 66,087 of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) were by natural disasters.

It is in the same vein that UNICEF (2015) reported that, children are the hardest hit, being vulnerable and dependent on their parents and communities for care and nurture, the attacks on their communities make them even much more vulnerable to illnesses, lack of nourishment, and deprivation of education amongst others. In line with the above, David (2015) posits that:

Children are bearing the brunt of this crisis, experiencing unimaginable violence and horrors no child should ever be subjected to. Most disturbingly, children and young people have been very deliberately put in the crosshairs with targeted attacks on schools, mass abductions and even reports of children being forced to carry bombs strapped to their bodies for public detonation. These grave violations of children's rights must be stopped immediately" (David, 2015).

A region that experiences protracted conflict will also often suffer from economic underdevelopment, damaged assets, and a reduced capacity to function effectively. Armed conflict retards a country's development process, and also erodes its developmental foundation.

### **Material and Economic Losses:**

In addition to the huge loss of lives, war leads to material losses, such as destruction of crops and roads, and extensive damage to economic and social infrastructures. Transportation and communication system, banking, health care, education, and agriculture are often damaged or destroyed. The economic stress caused by war lessens production capacity and limits the investment capabilities of war-torn regions. During wartime, resources are "diverted from routine maintenance of existing social and economic infrastructure" and into defense. Non-military government spending is often tightened, and there is typically a decline in investments in industrial, agricultural and construction sectors. These industries, as well as overall trade, tend to decline. Debt often reaches very high levels.

### **Emigration and displacement of persons**

War can also lead to emigration and displacement, which can reduce the overall size of the labor force (Segovia, 1996). People are killed, or they abandon their homes. This can create significant costs for a country in terms of capital and labor power.

**Decrease in skilled manpower:**

Human resource shortages are also often severe in war-torn societies. Educational opportunities decrease, and access to land can be limited. Indeed, war-induced destruction and poverty can lead to illiteracy, malnutrition, inadequate access to clean water and sanitation facilities, and low school enrollment (Ball, 2000). Protracted conflict disrupts the routine life of many society members. These burdens may contribute to harsh economic or social conditions, pitting subgroups against each other. In severe cases, it produces social disorder resulting in widespread violence, famine, and flight (Kriesberg, 2003). This has been witnessed in the North East as skilled, educated manpower have fled the region to more conducive zones and states. Since the main grouse of the insurgents have to do with Western education, the skilled and educated persons, being the focus of attacks moving away, further depletes the already insufficient and inadequate skills set of the zone.

**Environmental degradation:**

The environmental degradation brought about by war is also extensive. War-related population movements wreak havoc on fragile ecosystems and natural resources are over-exploited to finance the war effort (Ball, 2000). Land mines particularly in the Sambisa and other main forested areas make territory unusable for agriculture. Following the resolution of the armed conflict, it is expected that multiple claims to land and assets arise, and are difficult to resolve in the contentious political environment that typically follows conflict.

**International Support in Ending the Crisis in North Eastern Nigeria**

The significance of a strategic multinational cooperation in fighting insurgency and terrorism cannot be overemphasized. This is because conflict and war have a spillover effect to not only the countries that are neighboring the crisis torn areas, but conflict and war go a long way in posing serious security threat to the interest of nations, which have a strong connection economically or politically with the crisis torn country.

European countries like the United Kingdom and Russia have got strong ties to Nigeria especially in issues relating to economy, politics and strategic relations especially in the area of weapon purchases and security alliance. In recent time, Nigeria have faced serious challenges in negotiating strategic alliance either in the form of coalition to fight terrorism or purchasing of weapons to tackle the menace of terrorism. The United States and the UK have not helped the Nigerian course much enough for reasons seemingly too tacit to the understanding of ordinary Nigerians. Though the US in particular continues to allege insincerity and hoarding of relevant strategic information to fight Boko Haram, Nigeria government on the other hand claim that the US haven't got good and strong intentions to assist in fighting terrorism. These confrontations and lack of trust between the two nations have created a bottle-neck in the fight against terrorism in Nigeria.

The African issue is one that also requires a good look. Nigeria no doubt needs the support and cooperation of many African countries to assist in fighting the security challenges it continues to face. Neighboring countries like Niger, Chad and Cameroun have a huge role to play. In fact, these countries must as a matter of urgency and necessity join hands with Nigeria to see to the end of the threat of Boko Haram for the obvious reason of the significance of 'Collective security'.

The concept of collective security involves a conscious effort by nation-states particularly states neighboring a crisis or war torn area to join strengths to combat crisis to avoid or reduce the effect of spillover. On a more positive note compared to the

level of assistance and support Nigeria enjoyed from Europe and America, African states have played a stronger and better role in combating the crisis in the North Eastern Nigeria. With the Multinational Joint Task Force (MJTF) consisting of Niger, Chad, Cameroun and South Africa, Boko Haram have been dealt a significant blow and for once, Nigerians are optimistic the crisis is coming to an end.

In terms of the gap in contribution between Africa and Europe in ending the menace of Boko Haram, it is obvious that Nigeria has mainly benefited more from the support of her African brothers particularly the neighboring countries. In Europe, Russia has played a key role by selling arms to the Nigerian government and so has South Africa. However, the involvement of the United States in the fight remains very minimal as far as Nigerians are concerned.

Nigeria expects more from Europe and the United States in particular. This is because of their status in the international world order. The US remains an absolute zero tolerance state for Terrorism. This informs her international policies on terrorism in getting involved in many countries affected by terrorism to check and end it.

#### **Efforts at reconstructing and rehabilitation of the North East:**

The development of physical and financial infrastructure, as well as investment in human capital and natural resources, are crucial to postwar economic reconstruction. After armed conflict has come to an end, parties face the difficult task of reestablishing and developing the political, social, and economic structures within society. Indeed, states emerging from armed conflict face the difficult challenge of transitioning from "war-weakened economies and highly polarized political and social relations to rejuvenated economies capable of providing the basic needs of all citizens and political groups that offer all social groups meaningful participation" in decision-making (Ball, 2000). An essential component of peace building is the rebuilding of economic institutions, government institutions, and communities (Cousens, 2005).

Our research efforts however reveal that the major responses to the conflict have been coming from the Federal Government of Nigeria through different agencies, Borno State Government, Other State Governments, which channel their support through the Borno State Government, the United Nations, largely through UNICEF and religious bodies and institutions.

We found that the major efforts have been in the provision of relief, such as food items, clean water, hygiene items, clothing, temporary accommodation and other necessities. Our findings reveal that efforts at Reconstruction are only being done by Borno State Government.

#### **Analyses of responses by the different major responders are as below.**

The Federal Government of Nigeria has the following Agencies and Committees responding and providing relief to the citizens of the North East:

- I. National Emergency Management Agency – NEMA
- II. Presidential Initiative on the North East (PINE)
- III. Presidential Committee on Distribution of Relief Materials
- IV. Victims Support Fund
- V. Safe School Initiative
- VI. Special Committee on the Resettlement and Rehabilitation of the IDPs

The interventions being carried out by the different Committees are highlighted below:

**(a) National Emergency Management Agency:** The agency had been active and consistent in providing relief to internally displaced persons. The Director General of NEMA, Muhammad Sani-Sidi (Jan. 2015) indicated that there were 981,416 internally displaced persons in the country as at January 2015. Out of this, 107,997

were living in established camps for IDPs while 804,732 live with the host communities and relations. About 66,087 of the IDPs were displaced by natural disasters while 915,329 were affected by the insurgency in the North East. There were 20 IDPs camps across the northern part of the country.

NEMA had been providing the following relief services:

- Deployed ambulances at strategic locations to support and evacuate victims to hospitals and to provide first aid”
- Provided comprehensive humanitarian support to 3,200 IDPs from Baga at its secure facility at Teachers Camp, Maiduguri”
- sewing of 5 sets of new garments for women and children rescued from Sambisa Forest
- registering and transporting 11,499 returnees from Niger Republic to their home states
- setting up and maintaining feeding and sanitation centers in IDP Camps
- partnering with bilateral and multilateral agencies, US Govt and others in providing relief to the IDPs
- providing psychosocial support and counseling for 275 women and children rescued from Sambisa Forest by the Armed Forces
- Presenting Relief Materials to refugees
- Conducting sensitization meetings with the Armed Forces
- Supporting the provision of educational materials and schooling by the Kano State Government to Orphans and IDPs

**(b) Presidential Initiative for the North East:** This was launched by President Jonathan’s Representative, the Minister of Power Alhaji Mohammed Wakil on November 14, 2014. The Federal Government will deploy more troops and resources that will help to ensure that the occupied towns are recaptured, A Marshall Plan for the rehabilitation, reconstruction and redevelopment of the area will be unveiled as soon as the insurgents are driven out of the area. (Information Nigeria Online News, 2914 Nov 15). News Agency of Nigeria (2015) reports that the Presidential Initiative for the North-East in collaboration with National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), has distributed relief materials to over 100,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the zone. The Chairman of the initiative, Prof. Soji Adelaja, made the disclosure on Tuesday in Jalingo during the distribution of the materials to over 16,000 households in the zone.

**(c) Presidential Committee on Flood Relief and Rehabilitation:** This agency had signed a N5 billion contract for the construction of rehabilitation centers for survivors of flood disasters, communal clashes and insurgency in some parts of the country (Voice of Nigeria Web site 2014, July 17).

**(d) The Borno State Government:** The Government of Borno State had taken significant steps in providing Relief, which was done through the Food for all Initiatives, wherein 2000 households in Bayo and Kwaya Kusar Local Government Areas of Southern Borno State had so far benefited from assorted food items. In addition to the relief efforts statewide, the State Government had taken the following initiatives on Rehabilitation and Reconstruction:

**(e) Reconstruction of destroyed towns and communities with 432 units of houses completed for victims of insurgency of Bulabulin-Ngarnam community in Maiduguri.** The units were handed over on March 21, 2015. New housing units have also been built and delivered in Bama, Konduga, Gwoza, Yoyo in Monguno, some parts of

Hawul, Kaga, to resettle victims of insurgency attacks. Schools, markets and hospitals have been rebuilt in local government areas.

- (f) United Nations Support: through UNICEF:** The United Nations provides counseling and psychosocial support to over 60,000 children affected by the conflict in Nigeria. UNICEF is also working with partners to provide safe water and life-saving health services, restore access to education by creating temporary learning spaces and deliver therapeutic treatment to malnourished children (UNICEF, 2015)
- (g) United Nations Support: Integrated Support Package:** According to the UNDP Website, the UN Integrated Support Package (ISP) For North East Nigeria, the United Nations Initiative worth \$59,138, 367.00 is aimed at providing all necessary support for ensuring that the rescued women, young girls and children receive all social, health, psychological and other related support before they re-join their communities. Further support will be provided to ensure that their livelihoods and communities are restored as early as possible. According to Mr. Dauda Toure, the UN Resident Coordinator and also the Humanitarian reassured the UN's support and solidarity with the people and government of Nigeria in building and sustaining peace and resolving conflicts so that Africa's largest economy can continue on its growth path. He said the rescued women and children needed special care and attention and that the agency had made all the necessary arrangements with relevant stakeholders to help them in trauma counseling and other forms of assistance to enable them recover and return to normal life.
- (h) Food Assistance Programs: United States:** The United States Government, through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)'s Food for Peace (FFP) initiated an emergency food assistance project for reduces food insecurity in Yobe and Gombe State. The Food for Peace Project is being done in partnership with Action against Hunger (AAH), Mercy Corps, and the American University of Nigeria, Yola to provide emergency food assistance to vulnerable, conflict-affected populations in northeastern Nigeria. The project targets 3,000 households in Yobe and 4,100 households in Gombe and aims to increase purchasing power to meet immediate food needs, increase dietary diversity, protect livelihoods of displaced persons and host community members, and prevent the risk of malnutrition in children. FFP supports unconditional cash transfers, food vouchers and nutritional sensitization, targeting the most vulnerable populations, including IDPs, pregnant and lactating women, female-headed households, and households with a child under five.
- (i) United States in partnership with the United Nations and the Federal Government of Nigeria: Safe Schools in the Northeast:** According to the USAID Website, the United States Ambassador to Nigeria, James F. Entwistle, joined Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, in witnessing the transfer of a \$2 million donation by the U.S. government to support Nigeria's Safe Schools Initiative—a project aimed at meeting the education needs of thousands of children affected by the ongoing conflict in northeast Nigeria, specifically in Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa states. Michael Harvey, Mission Director of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in Nigeria, and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Resident Coordinator, Daouda Toure, were signatories to the agreement. The UNDP will manage a multi-donor trust fund to support the Safe Schools Initiative.

The Safe Schools Initiative will manage school-based interventions, such as the improvement or refurbishment of infrastructure and furnishings, provision of teaching

and learning materials, community-based preventative planning, and support for double-shift scheduling to accommodate more students. Activities under the initiative include increasing the resilience of affected communities and building the capacity of children, teachers, and parents to prevent, reduce, and cope with challenging situations that affect children's education. Other aspects include multi-level communication/advocacy efforts and special measures, such as transferring students from schools in "high-risk areas" to schools in safer areas.

#### **China's Offer of Assistance to Nigeria:**

Boehler (2014) reports that the Chinese Government has been supporting the Nigerian Government in the bid to end the insurgency and provide much needed relief to the communities. The Chinese Premier, Li Keqiang, at the 2014 World Economic Forum summit in Abuja is widely reported to have told Nigerian officials that China will support their country's fight against terrorism. This is a departure from China's traditional stance in Africa of non-intervention in political or security matters. The Chinese premier may have been to some extent a victim of circumstance; it would be diplomatically difficult for him to have avoided offering assistance, given his presence in Nigeria at a time of considerable international attention on the fate of more than 200 female pupils seized by Boko Haram insurgents (China Insider 2015)

#### **9. Conclusion:**

The North Eastern Region has been confronted with similar challenges that confront regions that have been victims of disasters. However, the efforts at relief, reconstruction and rehabilitation seem not systematically and scientifically organized and driven.

- (a) The tendency to blame political parties and opponents, Muslims, Christians, other tribes have muddied up the waters and made the efforts ineffective.
- (b) There are many competing agencies of government, all charged with similar roles and competing to deliver same results to people of the North East. The multiplicity of Agencies of Government brings about a rather inarticulate response on relief and reconstruction.
- (c) There seems not to be any clear, well thought out response on Relief, Reconstruction and Rehabilitation as regards the North Eastern States. The Federal Government should take the lead and come out with clear policy guidelines, with detailed priorities, to guide the partners and institutions involved in the reconstruction response.
- (d) There should be a more effective harmonization of efforts, such that responses become more effective and focused. This will also eliminate conflicts and partners working at cross purposes.
- (e) As at now, only the Borno State Government is involved in Reconstruction. All others, including the Federal Government are involved in provision of Relief.
- (f) The international community has responded actively to the issues at hand. Their responses have been mostly in the area of provision of relief, in Education; medical care; Food, water and other nutritional supports; human resource training and empowerment. That the focus is mainly on relief can be understood from the fact that the violent conflict is still ongoing, though at a reduced intensity, thus there might be some hesitation in investing in reconstruction efforts that could be destroyed. However, the relief support given has been significant and may herald the willingness to engage in reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts with the anticipated cessation of violent conflict.

#### **10. Recommendations:**

Some of the recommendations provided for better strategy of reconstruction are as follows:

- (a) The Federal Government should streamline the responding agencies, of which six have been identified in this paper. A multiplicity of agencies leads to conflicting responses, policy statements and inefficiencies.
- (b) The Federal Government should take the lead in harmonizing the responses of the Partners, including the Religious bodies and United Nations so that real, prioritized needs are met effectively and efficiently.
- (c) Earnest efforts should begin on the issue of reconstruction and rehabilitation, whilst relief is ongoing. Reconstruction and rehabilitation will ensure that communities are weaned early enough from relief and be able to live normal lives back in their own communities.
- (d) The International Community should also go begin efforts at Reconstruction of towns, communities and properties destroyed and lost through the conflict, and also begin the process of rehabilitation of the communities and the social, cultural and economic systems. Though there is ongoing violence and skirmishes in some areas of the North East, the intensity has reduced significantly, and large swathes have been liberated from the Boko Haram fighters, thus the reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts could begin in those areas.

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