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# Nigeria and the Boko Haram sect: adopting a better strategy for resolving the crisis

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## MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

# THESIS

**NIGERIA AND THE BOKO HARAM SECT: ADOPTING A BETTER STRATEGY FOR RESOLVING THE CRISIS**

by

Aminu Mohammed Umar

June 2013

Thesis Co-Advisors:                                 Hafez Mohammed
                                                              Jessica R. Piombo

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# NIGERIA AND THE BOKO HARAM SECT: ADOPTING A BETTER STRATEGY FOR RESOLVING THE CRISIS

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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The purpose of this thesis is to examine the growth and activities of the Boko Haram sect in Nigeria with the aim of suggesting a strategy for resolving the crisis. The thesis will focus on the evolution of the sect and the enabling environment that served to support its growth especially in the North East region of Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa States of Nigeria. This thesis will demonstrate that the present response of the government which is more focused on addressing the symptoms of terrorism, remains inadequate, and requires a strategy that addresses the root cause and symptoms of terrorism to resolve the crisis. Such a strategy involves a government-wide approach whereby the military expands its operations to limit the operating space for the sect, and the government simultaneously addresses the root causes of the crisis as well as the conditions that facilitated the growth of Boko Haram in North-Eastern Nigeria.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# LIST OF FIGURES

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# LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| ATB | Anti-Terrorism Bill |
| AQIM | Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb |
| COIN | Counter Insurgency |
| DDRR | Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration |
| DIA | Defense Intelligence Agency |
| DHS | Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey |
| DSS | Department of State Security |
| EFCC | Economic and Financial Crimes Commission |
| ICPC | Independent Corrupt Practices Commission |
| IED | Improvised Explosive Device |
| INEC | Independent National Electoral Commission |
| JTF | Joint Task Force |
| NACTEST | National Counter Terrorism Strategy |
| NAPEP | National Poverty Alleviation Program |
| NDE | National Directorate of Employment |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organizations |
| NIA | Nigerian Intelligence Agency |
| NP | Nigerian Police |
| SOF | Special Operation Forces |
| YOWICAN | Youth Wing of the Christian Association of Nigeria |

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# I.    INTRODUCTION

## A.    BACKGROUND

Nigeria is a country with many developmental problems that include endemic corruption, political, ethnic and religious violence, militancy, and crime across the country. Religious sentiments have been used to justify almost all situations, and this is worrisome for there has been a steady growth of religious extremism since the 1980s. The Shari'ah debate that began with the introduction of Shari'ah in Zamfara State in 2000 was not the first major conflict to polarize Nigeria along religious lines, but it brought about a new dimension which was later repeated during the debate of 2011 for the establishment of Islamic banking in the country. However, these conflicts never resulted in violence. The recent violence by Boko Haram, an Islamic sect that uses bombings, targeted assassinations, and violent crime, was a different type of religious extremism never before experienced in Nigeria. Boko Haram's actions have resulted in an unprecedented level of insecurity. A military operation conducted by security agencies since the violence has had little success despite a massive budgetary allocation. This questions the ability of the military-driven strategy to combat the group. More so, the strategy has exposed the security agencies to accusations of highhandedness and allegations of atrocities, both of which have initiated an action-reaction cycle of violence. Although a military response remains indispensable in counterinsurgency operations, it has remained incapable of addressing the root and immediate causes of insurgencies all over the world.

Nigeria has a long history of religious conflicts, and some of the most virulent have been between the Christians and the Muslims in the northern part of the country.[1] The increased radicalization of many Muslims in that part of the country led to violent extremism such as the Maitatsine violence witnessed in the 1980s. The Maitatsine was a quasi-Muslim fringe group that sparked religious riots in the northern cities of Kano and Kaduna in 1980, and later Maiduguri in 1982 after police tried to control its activities.

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[1] Andrew Walker, "What is Boko Haram?" *United States Institute of Peace*, Special Report 308 (2008), http://www.usip.org/files/resources/SR308.pdf (accessed December 13, 2013).

The disturbance in Kano alone resulted in the deaths of 4,177 people. The sect's leader Mohammed Marwa with Cameroonian linkages was killed in 1980, which brought an end to the main activities of the group.[2]

The recent Boko Haram crises that began in 2009 were considered an off-shot of the Maitasine initially, but the ideological differences between the two groups sets them apart even though both have adopted terrorism as a weapon. The Maitatsine violence ended when the security forces killed the sect's leader, but that of the Boko Haram only escalated when the group's leader was killed. The official name of Boko Haram is Jama'atu Ahl As-Sunna Li-D'awati Wal-Jihad which in Arabic translates to "People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad." The group's intention is to carry out holy war (Jihad) to Islamize Nigeria. Given the global jihadist movement, there is the likelihood that the group may be receiving ideological, motivational, and material support from other jihadist movements in Africa and elsewhere. The past administrations viewed it as a routine law enforcement issue and therefore treated insurgents as ordinary criminals even though their crimes were beyond ordinary crimes. A number of military joint tasks forces (JTFs) were established across the country to help mitigate the violence and bring about peace. A few proactive measures were taken to defeat this group, but these measures achieved only limited results and thus indicated the lack of an effective strategy to deal with the crisis.

As a result of the insecurity in the country, Nigeria's cohesion has been further weakened. There are a high number of home grown terrorists driven to violence by poverty, illiteracy, and hopeless situations in their localities. They fall into the hands of radical clerics who entice them with the creation of an Islamic state that will address all the social and economic issues. The activities of these groups brings to light the precarious religious fault lines existing in Nigeria made worse by the direct targeting of churches by the Boko Haram group. There is a resultant increase in population

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2    Raliat Ahmed, "Nigeria: Is Al-Qaeda in Nation?" January 9, 2012, http://www.allafrica.com/stories/201001111249.html; "Maitatsine Rioting in Nigeria 1980–1982," *Armed Conflict Events Data*, 2000, http://www.onwar.com/aced/nation/nap/nigeria/fnigeria1980.htm; Onukwube Ofoelue, et al., "Nigeria: Violence, Terror, the Human and Material Costs," *National Newspaper*, January 3, 2013, http://nationalmirroronline.net/index.php/sunday-mirror/big_read/20356.html (accessed January 3, 2013).

displacement especially in the northeastern part of the country where the Boko Haram adherents are more active. This population displacement has worsened the social and economic situation in that region.

## B.     MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION

This thesis will examine the current strategy in use by the Nigerian Government to defeat the Boko Haram insurgency. Serious religious fault lines exist in Nigeria especially in the North where there is a high level of illiteracy, poverty, and socio-political issues. The rest of the country has also experienced various conflicts, including a civil war from 1967 to 1971, due to reasons other than religion. Unfortunately, the last four years have witnessed an unprecedented level of terrorism being perpetrated by the Boko Haram. The Boko Haram violence has attracted international attention and created fear in the hearts of the citizenry. It has also caused a mass displacement of the population and further weakened the economies of some states in the country.[3] This indicates that something is wrong and begs the question, why? Additionally, despite attempts to defeat this insurgency that poses the greatest threat to the nation's grand strategy for national unity, there has been only a little success, and the violence seems unabated.

The fundamental question here is why has the government effort yielded little results? To understand this, one must ask whether government's attempt at resolving the Boko Haram problem is directed at the root causes, or the symptoms of the conflict, or both?  Understanding these questions will allow for the identification of a solution-based framework that requires a well formulated plan, is effectively communicated, and effectively implemented by all government agencies.[4]  This thesis will endeavor to answer the questions with a view to suggesting how best the government of Nigeria can effectively resolve the Boko Haram crisis.

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[3] "Nigeria: Providing for Internally Displaced Persons," *Daily Times*, April 12, 2012; Friday Olokor, "One Million Persons Internally Displaced-Refugee Commission," *Punch*, March 12, 2012, http://www.punchng.com/news/one-million-persons-internally-displaced-refugee-commission/ (accessed January 3, 2013).

[4] Major General (Rtd) David, O. Enahoro, "Path to Understanding Military Strategy*"* (lecture, National War College, Abuja, Nigeria, October 20, 2008).

## C.  IMPORTANCE

If the further decline in security in Nigeria is not addressed, the problem will become more than a domestic one. Its attendant impact on the stability of Sub-Saharan Africa will become an even greater problem; it has, therefore, become imperative that Nigeria end this crisis to avert a displacement spillover that could affect the demography and security situation of neighboring countries.[5] This thesis is premised on the assumption that only a minority of the Muslim population is radicalized in Nigeria, and that of these, only a few are involved in the Boko Haram's activities. One of the main objectives of this research is to uncover the underlying causes that have contributed to the radicalization and growth of the Boko Haram. Among the causes investigated is a continuous restriction of the operating space through military operations and a decline in education, socio-political, and economic conditions. Also considered is a widening ethno-religious divide that has bedeviled the country. The study will argue that unless these root causes are addressed while attacking the symptoms of the crises, the Nigerian government may not defeat the terrorists. The study will also show the link between policy, strategy, and remedial actions that are necessary for a counterinsurgency plan.[6] Finally, this thesis will propose a strategic framework needed for the effective resolution of the Boko Haram crisis in Nigeria.

Boko Haram continues to retain its intention to Islamize Nigeria. This may be part of an overall intention to establish and Islamic kingdom from Sub-Saharan Africa, across Central Africa, to the coast of Somalia. This could be responsible for their deliberate effort to key into the overall plan and activities of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) so that they may enjoy some support. The successful capture of Northern Mali, made possible by arms from dissipated Libya, is considered a precursor to AQIM's overall intention. In a globalized context where threats are no longer confined within particular borders, it has become important that all neighboring states of Nigeria get involved in joint operations against the Boko Haram to deny them access to arms from

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[5] Heather Deegan, *Contemporary Islamic Influences in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Alternative Development* (London: St. Malo Press, 2002).

[6] Enahoro, "Path to Understanding Military Strategy."

AQIM and prevent them from having a safe haven in their countries. Additionally, countries such as the United States and Britain that have many years of counter-insurgency operations could be called upon to help in this regard.

Aside from the scholarly benefit of this research, it portends for the study of counter-terrorism and related issues; it is also expected to be a significant contribution to Nigeria's effort in resolving the Boko Haram issue. In addition to the military-driven strategy being undertaken at the moment, this study will suggest a holistic solution that will also address other identified factors responsible for societal failures that lead to the creation of ready-made manpower for the various violent sects in Nigeria. To this end, this thesis will attempt to compensate for the scarce academic materials needed for counter-terrorism efforts in Nigeria and the Sub-Saharan region.

This thesis will argue that many underlying factors, including socio-economic, political, and literacy issues could be the root causes of Boko Haram activities, while the government's use of targeted neutralization of members, restrictions, and violent crackdowns contributes to the radicalization of the group and gives rise to this unprecedented violence. Until a comprehensive strategic framework, such as the one proposed in this thesis, is adopted and implemented to bring about effective policies, strategic planning, and counter-insurgency operations, including de-radicalization, an end may not be in sight any time soon.

## D.    METHODS AND SOURCES

The foundation of this thesis is a review of counter-terrorism literature, reports, and journals, which will be used to help analyze the challenges faced by Nigeria in counter-terrorism operations against the Boko Haram sect. The thesis will evaluate the level of effectiveness of government's approach and relate it to the theoretical frameworks available for engaging such terrorist organizations by simultaneously targeting the root causes as well as the symptoms of the crisis. By evaluating the present response, it will allow for the identification of observed weaknesses which will provide for the consideration of a new strategy to encompass the use of military force along with other viable policies to address the root grievances and the drivers of the violent group.

The study, in most part, will research an ongoing insurgency. Secondary sources of information including, but not limited to, journal articles, official databases, official policy papers, reports and other publications from and about Nigeria and Sub-Saharan Africa will be extensively used. Furthermore, wherever relevant, extensive use will be made of mass media sources such as the print media, web-based newspapers, television reports, and other relevant authentic internet sources.

## E.     LITERATURE REVIEW

Despite the fact that there is limited literature related to the study of the Boko Haram problem, it remains a burning issue not only for Nigeria but to the entire region. There is also a limited understanding of the group's ideology, the root causes of the crisis which are the group's grievances, and what drives the crisis. Understanding these issues will help in crafting an effective response to the conflict. In this review, I summarize and analyze works that address how terrorist groups originate and grow, as well as examine the literature on how to combat terrorism. Most of the literature that exists on Boko Haram activities in Nigeria consists of government reports, journal articles, and scholarly write-ups. Some of the works on combatting Boko Haram emphasize the use of force or the granting of amnesty without necessarily identifying the importance of addressing root causes as well as the drivers of the situation.

This review includes literature that discusses the causes and drivers of terrorism and terrorist groups, which is important information for the development of an effective counter-terrorism effort. It will also consider the position of literature that discusses the futility of counter-terrorism efforts that focus on attacking the symptoms only without consideration of the root causes. Finally, this review will cover the position of different scholars on how best to deal with terrorist-related conflicts similar to the Boko Haram crises.

### 1.     Foundation and Drivers of Terrorism

Many factors can be attributed to the emergence of terrorist activities within any society. Huma Haider, mentions socio-economic factors as a potential driver of extremist activity. She specifically observes that the socio-economic situation of the people within

the state, including the lack of employment opportunities and access to education and to social services could determine its resort to extremism.[7] Haider also indicates that even though the socio-economic factors were important in explaining terrorism and insurgency, there is no empirical evidence to support the arguments that the reduction of poverty and rapid change in economic growth alone could eradicate terrorism once it forms. She also indicates that most violence of a non-political nature could be attributed to economic inequalities.[8]

Other reasons that could be the drivers of terrorism include the absence of political reforms and the failure to establish a participatory politic. The lack of politics of inclusion and representation could lead to terrorist activities by the aggrieved parties as argued by Haider.[9] Additionally, weak democratic governance could also be responsible for the emergence and evolution of domestic terrorist groups. It is further argued that consolidated, mature democracies and totalitarian states are less likely to experience domestic terrorism than semi-authoritarian states.[10]

It is certain that significant socioeconomic inequalities could generate conflict especially when the economic growth prospects are negative. When these inequalities get reinforced by political grievances such as ethnic discrimination, it becomes the root cause of conflict in many societies. Many studies of violent crimes reveal a significant correlation with socio-economic inequalities. Additionally, there is also evidence that many countries experiencing economic growth seem to tolerate increased inequality without greater exposure to violent conflict. Research findings support a relationship between average per capita income across countries and civil conflict.[11]

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[7] Huma Haider, ed., *Drivers of Extremism* (Birmingham, AL: Governance and Social Development Resource Centre, 2007), 3.

[8] Ibid., 2–3.

[9] Haider, *Drivers of Extremism*, 3.

[10] "Report of the International Workshop on Global Terrorism, Terror, and Response Strategies," (Alexandria: SMWIPM Peace Studies Institute and Strategic Foresight Group, 2006), 17.

[11] Haider, *Drivers of Extremism*, 2–3; Lia Brynjar, Skjolberg Katja, *Causes of Terrorism: An Expanded and Updated Review of the Literature* (Kjeller: Norwegian Defense Research Establishment, 2004), 27.

Individuals have also been considered to be the foundation as well as the drivers of terrorism in many cases. The individual's psychopathology or personality profile could be deepened by a negative social situation or grievance which could prompt the emergence of terrorism. However, such a search for social context-based determinants of terrorism that includes the consideration of socio-economic status, age, education, relative deprivation, religion, foreign occupation, or poverty has suffered from two fundamental problems. Conceptually, while many people share the same oppressive environments, only a small number ever consider forming or joining terrorist organizations. Empirically, none of the environmental factors may automatically produce terrorism or constitute the necessary and sufficient cause of terrorism. The drivers in many cases, aside from the personal causes and ideological reasons, remain the motivating factor which could be rooted in the belief in the sense of social duty and obligation whether internalized or induced by social pressure to commit terrorist acts.[12]

## 2.    Symptoms of Terrorism Approach

Different scholars have varied views on how best to deal with terrorist-related conflicts in national and trans-national scenarios. While some argue that all efforts should be made to suppress the symptoms of the crisis over the long term in an attempt to "starve out" the crisis, others maintain that a focus on resolving the root causes was the most important. In the case of attacking only the symptoms, Paul Bremer states that the West's strategy of counter-terrorism is based on a sustained period of operations aimed at making the political, economic, and psychological climate in which terrorists operate more hostile which will eventually bring terrorism down to the lowest level.[13]  Thomas Dempsey supports this argument when he identified the U.S. government's predominant approach of direct military actions targeting identified terrorist cells with a view to

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[12] Arie W. Kruglanski, Shira Fishman, "Psychological Factors in Terrorism and Counterterrorism: Individual, Group, and Organizational Levels of Analysis," *Social Issues and Policy Review* 3, no. 1 (2009): 6–10.

[13] Paul L. Bremer, *Counterterrorism: Strategy and Tactics*, Bureau of Public Affairs, DOS, Current Policy No. 1023, November, 1987.

starving out terrorism without necessarily tackling the root causes.[14]  These assertions seem to be more in relation to terrorist conflicts taking place across transnational borders. Denis Sandole also supports this view, pointing out that there is a tendency to locate terrorism and respond to it in a method similar to the Israeli approach of targeted assassinations and destruction of assets associated with individuals involved in terrorism. These methods are used in an attempt to starve out terrorism and eliminate the incentives for any aspiring terrorist.[15]

Oldrich Bures mentions that the European counter-terrorism policy having considered the root causes of terrorism as politically incorrect focuses more on attacking the symptoms to starve out terrorism and stop radicalization.[16]  Benjamin Netanyahu also suggests the targeting of all those who support the terrorists, and support for terrorists' grievances was to be considered a criminal action aimed at diverting the attention of the public.[17] All these approaches target the symptoms of terrorism and totally neglect the root causes. This approach is further supported by a global non-profit organization which identifies the current counter-terrorism policies as encouraging charities to avoid conflict hotspots and collaboration with local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to attack the root-causes of terrorism.[18]

### 3.    Root Causes of Terrorism Approach

In contrast to this group of thought, a contending approach argues that addressing symptoms will never fully eradicate a terrorist threat. This camp argues that instead, policies and efforts should address the root causes that drive individuals to join terrorist groups and allow these groups to thrive. Joshua Sinai finds fault in attacking only the

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[14] Thomas Dempsey, "Counterterrorism in African Failed States: Challenges and Potential Solutions," *United State Government Publication*, Title 17, Section 105 (April 2006).

[15] Denis J.D. Sandole, "The New Terrorism: Causes, Conditions, and Conflict Resolution," http://scar.gmu.edu/sept11/article14.pdf (accessed February 8, 2013).

[16] Oldrich Bures, *EU Counterterrorism Policy* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2011), 10.

[17] Benjamin Netanyahu, *Terrorism: How the West Can Win* (New York: Farrar, Strauss, Giroux, 1986), 7–8.

[18] "Counterterrorism Policies Discourage Charities from Attacking the Root Causes of Terrorism," *Global Non-Profit Information Networks*, http://www.gwob.net/advocasy/pdf/gni_091508-s.pdf (accessed February 8, 2013).

symptoms when he asserts that terrorists are generally driven to commits acts of terrorism due to variety of factors, rational or irrational, in an attempt to express grievances and demands. He adds that the inter-relationship of these factors, which could include education, economic deprivation, and political marginalization, becomes the root cause of violence and any attempt to resolve the conflict without solving these issues will not see the problem go away.[19] The efforts by the Nigerian government could therefore be considered as only addressing the symptoms of the conflict without resolving the issues that started the Boko Haram crises.

Interestingly, other scholars argue that a solution focused on addressing the root causes is best for resolving terrorist-related conflicts. Amongst these scholars is Daniel Byman, who points out that the use of force-only methods is considered weak and brutal at the same time. Such an approach creates an action-reaction cycle of violence which perpetuates a terrorist group and bolsters its ranks through new recruits inspired by their capabilities.[20]

Other scholars who do not support the targeting of the symptoms and who strongly believe that the root causes are the most important issues in any counter-terrorism fight include Thomas Riegler, who also argues strongly that terrorism can only be tackled if the root causes are addressed. He identifies the root causes as political, social, and economic.[21]  These identified root causes are applicable to those of the Boko Haram in Nigeria. In the case of the Egyptian counter-terrorism strategy, Yonah Alexander identifies what was missing was a long-term effort to address the root causes of terrorism.[22]  Anne Aldis and Graeme Hard similarly assert that counter-terrorism efforts must address the root causes of global Muslim grievances. Terrorism cannot be

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[19] Joshua Sinai, "Resolving a Terrorist Insurgency by Addressing Its Root Causes," *Analysis Cooperation*, http://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007%2F978–0–387–71613–8_5.pdf (accessed February 13, 2013).

[20] Daniel Byman, *The Five Front War: The Better Way to Fight Global Jihad*, 1st ed. (New York: Wiley, 2007), 2.

[21] Thomas Riegler, "Addressing Root-Causes: The Example of Bruno Kreisky and Autria's Confrontation of Middle Eastern Terrorism*," Perspectives on Terror: Journal of the Terrorism Research Initiative* 5, no. 2, 2011.

[22] Yonah Alexander, *Counterterrorism Strategies: Success and Failures of Six Nations* (Herndon, Virginia: Potomac Books, 2006), 214.

stopped simply through the defeat of the terrorist forces or by attacking the underlying values of the acts, obsession with revenge, and the ideological motivations.[23]

Other literature focuses on the use of force as a response to terrorism. Thomas Imobighe argues against this response by stating that the ideals behind most counter-terrorism measures on the utilization of the state's coercive apparatus to crackdown on the perpetrators of terrorism is not a functional approach for it fails to address the root causes of terrorism and only exposes the weakness of such counter-terrorism efforts.[24]

Limiting of the operating space of the terrorists through the use of military force alone is another typical strategy. It is also considered an attempt at taking on the symptoms. Such an approach will achieve limited results, according to Daniel Masters who posits that despite counter-terrorism measures, many terrorist organizations continue to launch attacks with increasing lethality all over the world.[25]  This is similar to the Boko Haram group which has continued to successfully launch attacks despite the measures put in place through the National Counter Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST) that may not have addressed the root causes.[26]

This is similar to the position of Bruce Scheier who states that defense alone cannot stop terrorism for it is asymmetric in nature and remains driven by many factors.[27] A comprehensive review must be considered to tackle the many complementary factors driving the terrorists as well as to prevent their further radicalization. John Nagl states that in order to be successful all military doctrine must consider gaining and maintaining the support of the domestic population in order to isolate the insurgent. He adds that not only is it important not to apply excessive force, even when justified, counterinsurgency

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[23] Anne Aldis, Graeme Herd, *The Ideological War on Terror: Worldwide Strategies for Counter-Terrorism* 1st ed. (New York: Routledge, 2006), 156.

[24] Thomas Imobighe, "Combating Terrorism: An Integrated Conflict Management Approach," in *Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism an African Perspective*, ed. Thomas A. Imobighe and Agatha N.T. Eguavoen (Ibadan, Nigeria: Heinemann Education Books PLC, 2006), 7.

[25] Daniel Masters, "The Origin of Terrorist Threats: Religious, Separatist, or Something Else?" *Terrorism and Political Violence* 20, no. 3 (2009), http://libres.uncg.edu/ir/uncw/f/mastersd2008–1.pdf, 396.

[26] Draft of National Counter Terrorism Strategy for Nigeria, 2011, yet to be passed into Law.

[27] John A. Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam: Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife,* 1st ed. (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2002), 26.

operations (COIN) must also consider issues and actions from the perspective of the domestic population.[28]

### 4. A Solution Based on Tackling the Root Causes and Symptoms of Terrorism

In an effective counter-terrorism situation, the origins and drivers of the conflict must be identified and addressed in order to resolve the crisis. Mark Sedgwick makes a strong case by stating that the cause of every terrorist group must be understood as well as their history before an effective counter-terrorism policy can be adopted.[29] In most literature, there is less disagreement over the use of military force against terrorists despite the backlash that often results. Military force is necessary for de-escalation and containment before other relevant and necessary policies can be effectively applied to address the issues driving the conflict.[30]

The initial grievances that lead to terrorist activities may often change after the initiation of the action-reaction cycle. New drivers may emerge to push on the terrorist groups, as Martha Crenshaw argues. Even though the group's reasons for resorting to terrorism may have been relevant, new drivers may emerge that will negate all state responses, even when the original grievances are addressed, in which case a physical crushing of the group may be necessary.[31]

Denis Sandole who supports a two-prong solution states that some actors would necessarily deal with the symptoms of terrorism but the best would deal with the conflicted relationships and their underlying causes as well as the conditions that have

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[28] Ibid.

[29] Ivan S. Sheehan, *Has the Global War on Terror Changed the Terrorist Threats?* (Boston: University of Massachusetts, 2009), 759; Mark Sedgwick, "Inspiration and Origins of Global Waves of Terrorism," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 30, no. 2, (February 2007), 97. https://www.ncjrs.gov/App/publications/Abstract.aspx?id=239377 (accessed February 8, 2013).

[30] Grace Sanico, Makoto Kinaka, "Terrorism and Deterrence Policy with Transnational Support," *Defense & Peace Economics* 19, no. 2 (April 2008), doi: 10.1080/10242690701505419 (accessed March 1, 2013).

[31] Martha Crenshaw, "The Cause of Terrorism," *Comparative Politics* 13, no. 4 (July, 1981): 397. http://www.jstor.org/stable/421717 (accessed March 1, 2013).

given rise to the symptoms.[32] Istifanus Zabadi also supports such a pathway to crisis resolution. He posits that a crackdown on terrorism and terrorists creates draconian measures that include indiscriminate arrest and detention of suspects as well as harassment of political opponents, which could lead to support for the terrorists. It also disperses many of the terrorists and creates new rounds of violent activities in other areas of the country. This is similar to the Boko Haram situation whereby some politicians were implicated in the activities of the group. Also, many of the terrorists have been dispersed to many new areas where they have set up cells that have successfully carried out attacks with devastating consequences. Zabadi, therefore, affirms that the exclusive use of force aids the militants in their effort to radicalize and mobilize the general population for it strengthens their warped vision of the world. He suggests that the root causes of a crisis must be simultaneously tackled along with the symptoms.[33]

The literature reviewed for this thesis indicates views of scholars vary on how best to address terrorist crises. While some of the scholars emphasize a focus on the root causes, others maintain that suppressing the symptoms alone is adequate. Unfortunately, many of these possible approaches to resolving terrorist-related conflicts mostly consider terrorism in a transnational setting, which is not similar to the Nigerian scenario where the Boko Haram crisis is still considered a national conflict. Some of the scholars believe that targeting the symptoms alone is capable of destroying terrorists, dissipating their infrastructure, and limiting their support base which would be enough to eventually starve out all incentives for "would be terrorists," thus bringing the crisis to an end. However, these arguments are mostly made in situations of specific targeting of terrorists outside of the territories of those targeting them similar to the U.S. in Yemen, Pakistan, and Afghanistan as well as the Israelis in Palestine. Such arguments do not apply in the case of the Boko Haram situation in Nigeria.

Some other scholars maintain that addressing the root causes is the most appropriate strategy for counter-terrorism. They argue that root causes are mostly

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[32] Denis Sandole, "The New Terrorism," 3.

[33] Istifanus S. Zabadi, "Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism: Lessons from Asia and the Middle East" in *Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism an African Perspective*, ed. Thomas A. Imobighe and Agatha N.T. Eguavoen (Ibadan, Nigeria: Heinemann Education Books, 2006), 91–93, 100.

economic, political, and social, and once these are resolved, terrorism will dwindle and eventually stop. However, these authors fail to take into account the fact that other drivers often emerge during conflicts which could be separate from the root causes at inception; these additional factors then become fundamental grievances in the crisis. These new drivers make it difficult to resolve the crisis even if the original root causes are addressed.

This thesis will use the existing literature as a basis for research and will fill in the gap in the literature for how governments react to terrorism. Most of this literature will form a critical part of this thesis aimed at suggesting a framework that will not only address the symptoms of but also the root causes of the Boko Haram conflict in Nigeria. This framework will result from an assessment of three arguments about how to best combat Boko Haram in Nigeria. The first is that a military approach is justified in resolving the Boko Haram crisis and that it remains an integral part of any solution. Therefore, for any solution to be effective, the government must not only sustain but strengthen the military approach to include regional military cooperation to limit the operating space of the Boko Haram adherents. The second argument is that any effective solution would be achievable by resolving the root causes of the conflict. Therefore, the Nigerian government must focus on addressing all the identified root causes of the crisis. The third argues for a solution that targets both the symptoms and the root causes in the case of the Boko Haram crisis.  As noted above, this thesis seeks to interest policy makers in Nigeria and elsewhere.

## F.    PROBLEMS AND HYPOTHESES

Islamic radicalization is a global phenomenon being driven by a wide range of factors. The War on Terror spearheaded by the U.S. has achieved considerable success from which lessons can be drawn. Additionally, the war has further highlighted the importance of a region-specific strategy which considers the religion, cultural norms, and economic situation in its implementation. Consequently, the problem in Nigeria cannot be discussed in isolation from similar occurrences in other parts of the globe and without consideration as to whether it is a national or transnational crisis. Different factors contribute to religious extremism in various parts of the world, and Islam remains the

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major driving force for most of the Islamic militants. Thus to resolve the Nigerian problem there must be a thorough understanding of the religion, and one may also need to draw from lessons learnt and to adapt this knowledge to local customs similar to attempts made by other countries in similar scenarios. Many attempts to resolve the crisis in Nigeria have yielded few results, which could be attributed to the fact that the adopted measures may have focused more on the symptoms rather than both the symptoms and the root causes.

This study accepts that there may be a political objective in the Boko Haram operations which is similar to those of other insurgencies and will search for empirical evidence to support such an assertion. This author also believes that there are a wide range of underlying factors driving the support for the group amongst its followers. This fact necessitates a holistic plan that is politically-driven and implemented in a well-coordinated manner using a full range of national resources. The thesis will explore a framework based on analysis that could be adopted for the resolution of the Boko Haram crisis in Nigeria. It will examine the Boko Haram organization holistically and critique the military-driven strategy in use by the Nigerian Government that attacks only the symptoms of the crisis before suggesting a workable strategic framework for the government.

Also explored in this thesis is the hypothesis put forward by scholars that going after the root causes of terrorism will endure and eventually eradicate terrorist acts. This hypothesis posits that the government must take deliberate action to address the socio-economic, developmental, and educational failures that have plagued the region where Boko Haram is most active in order to resolve the crisis. Nemat Shafik, identified countries with legacies of economic stagnation, high levels of unemployment, and uneven economic development as fertile ground on which terrorist seeds can flourish. Another hypothesis would be that if the government focuses all its efforts on treating the symptoms of the Boko Haram crisis long enough, it would suppress the symptoms and eventually starve out the terrorist group. This is similar to the tactics of the Israelis who carry out targeted assassinations of terrorist suspects and destroy the suspect's infrastructure. A final hypothesis is a combination of the two which is that the

government simultaneously suppresses the symptoms while at the same time addresses the root cause of the crisis.

## G.    THESIS OUTLINE

This thesis is comprised of four chapters. The first of which is an introductory chapter focusing on the need for a new strategic framework for resolving the Boko Haram crisis in Nigeria and containing the literature review.

Chapter II contains a discussion on the evolution of the Boko Haram Sect in Nigeria and is focused on the conditions that allowed for the group's growth. This chapter will also highlight the ideology and grievances of Boko Haram.

Chapter III includes an assessment of the government response to the crisis which is presented in two parts; the first part is an assessment of the current government response to Boko Haram while the second part is a critique of this response.

Chapter IV will discuss the best counter-terrorism response to Boko Haram. This chapter contains a suggested "whole of government" response that involves addressing the symptoms as well as the root causes of the crisis. This chapter is also the concluding chapter that will sum up all issues raised as well suggest how best to tackle the crisis.

# II.     THE EVOLUTION OF THE BOKO HARAM SECT IN NIGERIA

## A.     CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

Recent developments, including the call by Osama Bin Laden that Muslims in African states especially Nigerians should rise up in rebellion against the West, made it an important nation in the discourse on terrorism.[34] Even though Nigerian Muslims are mostly moderate Sunnis, existing divergent views on interpretation of the requirements of being a Muslim are a catalyst for recurring violence in the country. Some of these varied interpretations also pitch many Muslim sects against Christians in unending violent conflicts. The origin of the traditional Islamic sects and their stand on modernization and Westernization contributes significantly to the recorded violence in post-independent Nigeria. The desire to "upgrade" the purity of the religion led to the establishment of many Islamic schools promoting different backgrounds and beliefs, which resulted in varied ideologies across the Muslim-dominated North. Some of these scholars introduced different ideological messages which created conflicts not only amongst the sects themselves but also among other religions in a secular Nigeria.[35]

In most West African states including Nigeria, the Qadriyya and the Tijaniyya sects were the two main orders during the mid-twentieth century. Sufi Islamic interpretations and practices—an ascetic, mystical movement that rejected materialism and concentrated on individual spiritual development—molded both sects. Despite its early violent history, the Sufi version of Islam practiced in Northern Nigeria transformed into a conservative, tolerant, and peaceful religion. This situation remained until the recent spread of Wahhabi-Salafi Islam. Through the influence of countries like Saudi Arabia and multitudes of Islamic charities, the Wahhabi tradition of Islam has slowly and

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[34] The other African country mentioned in the video release was Morocco. Nigeria and Morocco joined the other Middle Eastern countries of Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

[35]  Joseph Kenny, "The Spread of Islam in Nigeria: A Historical Survey" (paper presented at the Conference on Sharî`a in Nigeria, Spiritan Institute of Theology, Enugu, Nigeria, March 24, 2008); Musa Adeniyi, "Evolution of Islamic Education in Nigeria," (unpublished research paper, Ahmadu bello University, Nigeria, 2002).

steadily crept into Northern Nigeria. As a result of contacts with newly established Islamic schools as well as contacts through scholarship programs to study in Egypt, Yemen, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, and other Muslim countries across the world, the Salafi, Shia, and other versions of Islam, often with more radical ideologies, gained acceptance in the region. Boko Haram is one such radical sect which is considered an evolution of previous violent sects in that region.[36]

The historical evolution of the Boko Haram movement with the aim of identifying what factors led to the emergence of the sect is examined in this chapter. The origin of the sect and their ideology is also identified in this chapter along with a discussion of their possible grievances. An analysis of the conditions that could have facilitated the growth of the movement follows that discussion and concludes with the identification of other terrorist groups in the region that could be influencing the sect. These considerations will help in determining how best to address the crisis.

### 1.    The Origins of the Boko Haram Sect

Boko Haram is the local name for the Jama'atu Ahl As-Sunna Li-D'awati Wal Jihad given by the residents of Maiduguri, Borno State. Eventually the name was adopted by all. The residents gave the group this name because of its strong aversion to Western education, which the sect members consider to be corrupting Muslims. The exact date of the establishment of the sect remains unclear, but a majority of analysts, including the security forces in Nigeria, trace it to around 2002-2004.[37] There is also limited information regarding the sect's first leader who was identified by his alias, Aminu Tashen-Ilimi. He established the group's base in Kanamma village in Yobe State in approximately 2004.[38]  Mohammed Yusuf later emerged as the popular leader of the

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[36] Deegan, *Contemporary Islamic Influences in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Alternative Development Agenda*; Kenny, "The Spread of Islam in Nigeria: A Historical Survey."

[37] Abdulkareem Mohammed, Mohammed Haruna, *Paradox of Boko Haram* (Abuja, Nigeria: Moving Image Limited, 2010), 27–60.

[38] Ibid.

movement. He barely had any Western education and hailed from a poor family background in Jakusko, Yobe State.[39]

Mohammed Yusuf was a dedicated Salafist who was also deeply influenced by Ibn Taymiyyah ideologies. This perspective is deeply rooted in the staunch defense of Sunni Islam based on strict adherence to the Qur'an and authentic Sunna (practices) of the Prophet Muhammad.[40] While still in his 30s, Yusuf established a mosque and Islamic school for the sect that attracted many poor members from families in the township and from the neighboring states of Niger, Chad, and Cameroon who enrolled their children and wards for Islamic education under his tutelage. Yusuf, himself, lived a very different lifestyle from that of his followers: he had four wives and 12 children, and was not considered a poor man by the Nigerian standards. In fact, Yusuf lived a lavish life, and his children attended Western-styled schools. He maintained private attorneys and doctors, and used expensive automobiles which were contrary to the lifestyle he preached to his followers.[41]

The sect was organized initially with Yusuf as both the spiritual and political head with an advisory council referred to as the Shura committee. Its initial base in Yobe State was called "Afghanistan," and the sect's adherents were referred to as "Talibans" by the locals. This became a base for migrants where they engaged in moral rebirth through strict study of the Qur'an. Mohammed Yusuf, as the leader, was surrounded by several disciples organized in a hierarchical structure based on their loyalty and devotion to him. The sect attracted more and more people under its roof by offering welfare handouts, food, and shelter. Many of the people the group attracted were refugees from the wars across the border in Chad as well as jobless Nigerian youths. The sect also maintained a cadre of militant youths who were the armed wing of the group and had received some physical and weapons-handling training in established camps in the forests. A tangential

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[39] Juliana Taiwo, Michael Olugbode, "Nigeria News Update: Mohammed Yusuf Killed while in Custody," *Pan-African News Wire*, July 31, 2009. http://panafricannews.blogspot.com/2009/07/nigeria-news-update-mohammed-yusuf.html

[40] Abdul Hakim I. Al-Matroudi, The *Hanbali School of Law and Ibn Taymiyyah Conflict or Conciliation* (New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2006), 20- 22.

[41] Mohammed, Haruna, *Paradox of Boko Haram*, 40–48; Roland Marchal, "Boko Haram and the Resilience of Militant Islam in Northern Nigeria," *NOREF Report*, June 2012.

group of politicians, financiers, sympathizers, and supporters were also maintained to serve as a link to the society and government. Yusuf effectively controlled all these members, and there was no splinter group until the recent emergence of the "Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis Sudan" (Vanguards for the Protection of Muslims in Black Africa) in 2012.[42]  The Nigerian Police (NP) investigated the group following reports that the sect was arming itself.  Several leaders were arrested, which sparked deadly clashes with security forces and led to the death of about 700 people.  Though government forces halted the activities of the Nigerian Taliban, strains of the movement remained in many parts of northern Nigeria.[43]

The main remnant group under the guidance of Yusuf relocated to Maiduguri and expanded rapidly as young, middle-class Islamic students from universities and colleges within the region joined its ranks. The sect drew heavily from the multitudes of Muslim graduates who had completed studies but were unable to secure employment. The sect also engaged in extensive and intimidating sermons that included the threat of the use of force in recruiting new members. Additionally, other intellectuals who were swayed by the sect's ideologies abandoned their jobs, burnt their certificates, and sold their assets to contribute to the growth of the group as they joined. Tradesmen, carpenters, and drivers who were disgruntled with the provisions of government also joined. Some privileged youths from well-to-do families as well as migrants from neighboring Niger, Chad, and Cameroon also became radical followers of the sect's leader.[44]

The group primarily began its operations using small arms in attacks against opportunistic targets before graduating to the use of automatic weapons, grenades, and explosives against fortified or vulnerable targets. Many of the group's initial weapons were considered to have been captured during raids of security forces and through smuggling from the neighboring countries using networks across the porous borders.

[42] Mohammed, Haruna, *Paradox of Boko Haram*, 40–48;  Taiwo, Olugbode, " Nigeria News Update: Mohammed Yusuf Killed while in Custody."

[43] Umaru Alhaji Waziri, "Boko Haram: Genesis Consequences and Solution," *Weekly Trust Newspapers*, September 12, 2009.

[44]Abdulrafiu Lawal, "Rage of the Puritans," *Tell Magazine*, August 10, 2009, 34; Freedom C. Onuoha, "The Audacity of the Boko Haram: Background, Analysis and Emerging Trend," *Security Journal* (Lagos, Nigeria: Macmillan Publishers, 2012), vol. 25, no. 2, 134–151.

Through its limited links with other terrorist organizations outside the country, the group was able to achieve more sophistication in its attack capabilities that included the use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) especially after the security forces' crackdown on the sect in 2009. There is evidence that some disgruntled ex-service men and sympathetic security forces officials also joined this group to inflict more damage on the state.[45]

The source of the group's money at its early stage of existence is not clear but included contributions from members as well as sustenance through its farm.[46] At some point, the Borno State Government appointed a member of the sect, Buji Foi, as commissioner of water resources and chieftaincy affairs in return for political support from the sect. This individual became the chief financier of the sect until he was killed during the 2009 onslaught on the sect by security forces. Other sources of funding are believed to have come through clandestine contributions from politicians, businessmen, and other wealthy individuals who fear attacks from the group. There is speculation that the group may have received some support from AQIM.[47] Funding also came through armed robberies that the sect successfully carried out during attacks against commercial banks and wealthy individuals. The group terms all its stolen funds as "spoils of war" arguing that they are legitimate sources of income for Jihad according to their interpretation of Islam. The Al-Muntada al-Islami, an agency headed by Dr. Adil ibn Mohammed al-Saleem, based in England and associated with Saudi Arabia charity and Da'awa institutions as well as other institutions that have been classified as terror-financing agencies have been identified as having provided funding to the sect.[48] In some cases, though, the financial support from these institutions could have been in aid of Islamic propagation and not for terrorism.

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[45] Jacob Zenn, "Niger, Nigeria Step Up Cooperation Against Boko Haram," *World Politics Review* (October 31, 2012) http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/authors/850/jacob-zenn; Ogala Emmanuel, "JTF Declares Boko Haram Leaders Wanted, Places Over N240 Million Bounty on Insurgents," *Premium Times* (November 24, 2012).

[46] Walker, "What Is Boko Haram," 3.

[47] Nathaniel Manni, "Boko Haram: A Threat to African and Global Security," *Global Security Studies* 3, no. 4 (Fall 2012): 45.

[48] Stephen Shwatz, "Islamic Extremism on the Rise in Nigeria," *Jamestown Foundation*, 2001, http://www.jamestown.org/.

Boko Haram's clashes with security forces came to light on July 12, 2009, when they were conveying their dead members for burial at a local grave yard. Some members of the burial party were stopped and cited for violations of traffic regulations by the security forces who had mounted road blocks within Maiduguri City, Borno state. Altercations resulted in violence between the sect members and the security forces, and some of their members were shot dead in this process. This incident provoked the entire Boko Haram who demanded an apology from the government. They vowed to take revenge for what happened to their members if the government failed to apologize. Neither the government nor the security forces reacted to this threat. Consequently, on July 16, 2009, the sect made good on the threat by attacking police stations in Maiduguri. Since then, Boko Haram has continued to perpetrate violence using terrorist acts in many parts of Nigeria, especially in the North East Zone, resulting in the killing and maiming of civilians, as well as in the destruction of properties.[49]

The 2009 uprising was eventually crushed by a police and military assault, leaving hundreds dead and the sect's headquarters and mosque in ruins. Boko Haram's leader, Mohammed Yusuf was captured by the army and passed to police for interrogation and prosecution. Unfortunately, he was killed in custody under bizarre circumstances. The group re-emerged in 2010 and began launching unprecedented scales of attacks that included freeing 721 prisoners, among them 105 suspected sect members, from a Bauchi jail in northern Nigeria. This violence coincided with the run-up to the presidential elections. Boko Haram had regrouped under a new leader, Abubakar Shekau.[50] He assumed leadership of Boko Haram after the death of Yusuf and quickly reorganized the sect members. While some people describe him as a complex and paradoxical man, others see him as a fearless loner who is partly an intellectual and partly a gangster. He is nicknamed "Darul Tawheed" (Specialist in orthodox doctrine of the uniqueness and oneness of Allah) and is fondly called imam or leader by his followers.

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[49] Foard Copeland, "The Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria," *Civil-Military Fusion Centre* (February 2013), http://www.reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/20130220%20Boko%20Haram%20in%20Nigeria.pdf.

[50] "Boko Haram Attacks – Timeline: Nigeria Struggles to Stem Islamist Sect Responsible for Deadly Wave of Bombings Across Africa's Most Populous Country," *The Guardian*, September 25, 2012, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/sep/25/boko-haram-timeline-nigeria.

He was born in Shekau village in Yobe State and is believed to be in his 30s. When Yusuf was killed, Shekau married one of his four wives and adopted his children, a move that was considered an attempt to preserve the cohesion of Boko Haram.

The group had re-emerged in a highly decentralized structure with the unifying force remaining its ideology. This remains its "modus operandi" to date. Recently, a splinter group emerged due to disagreements within the leadership of the sect over the modes of their violent operations, but both still maintain the same ideology. Although Shekau does not communicate directly with the sect's foot soldiers, he maintains strict control through a few select cell leaders. Unlike his predecessor, Shekau lacks charisma and oratorical skills, but his intense ideological commitment and ruthlessness have kept him as the group's spiritual leader.[51]

### 2. Ideology and Grievances of Boko Haram

The emergence of the Boko Haram ideology poses a threat to the existence of Nigeria. The group opposes Western education, which apparently clashes with the position of the majority of Islamic scholars, who categorize these and many more as issues that require a collective verdict. Western education is not specified in Islam as one of those religious issues requiring the interaction of scholars (mu'amalat) for resolution. This means that it falls within religious requirements for which a debate of sorts is required by learned Islamic jurists, after which a binding decision is passed for other Muslims to strictly observe. Invariably, Western education has been classified as part of those things that do not form the fundamentals of worship (ibadat) and as such is not important enough for a Muslim to be classified an infidel simply because he accepts Western education. This classification makes it the responsibility of whomever claims that it is prohibited to provide evidence to convince other Muslims. Unlike most Muslims who consider Western education as permissible as long as it does not contradict clear teachings of the Qu'ran, hadiths, and objectives of the Shari'ah, the Boko Haram

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[51] "Profile of Nigeria's Boko Haram Leader Abubakar Shekau," *BBC News*, June 22, 2012, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-18020349.

adherents have termed it completely forbidden in Islam (Haram).[52] The sect also adopted the Ibn Taymiyya's formulation of the right to revolt against rulers who violate the terms of Islamic law.[53] This was a required instrument for mobilization against the state which it considers as corrupt and inept.

The sect believes in the union of state and religion. It continues to advocate making Nigeria an Islamic state administered by Shari'ah. The sect also considers the Muslim community as one under Islamic principles with no chance of secularism, which the sect terms atheistic or syncretistic practices. According to Boko Haram, the imposition of secularity amounts to a cultural affront and an attempt to relegate Muslims to the position of second-class citizens. The group also labels the both the state and federal government as a tyranny that must be attacked even at the risk of death in order to achieve what it considers as the Islamic path to justice.[54] The group has little regard for the traditional Muslim hierarchy in the country and has frequently threatened and even attacked the historic seat of the Nigerian caliphate. This is because the sect considers traditional and religious leaders as irredeemably tainted by Western-style ambitions and marred by corruption.[55]As a result, the group extended its attacks to most parts of northern Nigeria (see Figure 1). In 2013 the sect made a bold attempt to assassinate the Emir of Kano who was a respected traditional and religious leader in northern Nigeria.[56]

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[52] Mohammed, Haruna, *Paradox of Boko Haram*, 40–48.

[53] Roxanne L. Euben, Muhammad Q. Zaman*, Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought: Texts and Contexts From Al-Banna to Bin Laden* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2009), 135.

[54] Ilesanmi Simeon, "Constitutional Treatment of Religion and the Politics of Human Rights in Nigeria," *African Affairs*,100, 2001, 529–40; Ibrahim F. Omar, *Religion and Politics: A View from the North, In Transition Without End: Nigerian Politics and Civil Society under Babangida,* ed. Larry Diamond et al., (Ibadan Nigeria: Vantage Publishers, 1997), 36–64; Imo Cyril, "Religion and the Unity of Nigeria," *Uppsala Research Reports in the History of Religions*, 1995, 58–59; Danjibo N. D*.,* "Islamic Fundamentalism and Sectarian Violence: The 'Maitatsine' and 'Boko Haram' Crises in Northern Nigeria*,*" *Peace and Conflict Studies*, 2009, http://www.ifra-nigeria.org/IMG/pdf/N-_D-_DANJIBO-_Islamic_Fundamentalism_and_Sectarian_violence_The_maitatsine_and_boko_haram_crises_in_Northern_Nigeria_pdf .

[55] Pham J. Peter, *Boko Haram's Evolving Threat, African Security Brief*, African Centre for Strategic Studies, No. 201, April 2012, 2.

[56] Abdul Salam Muhammad, "Emir of Kano, Ado Bayero Attacked," *Vanguard Newspaper*, January, 19, 2013.
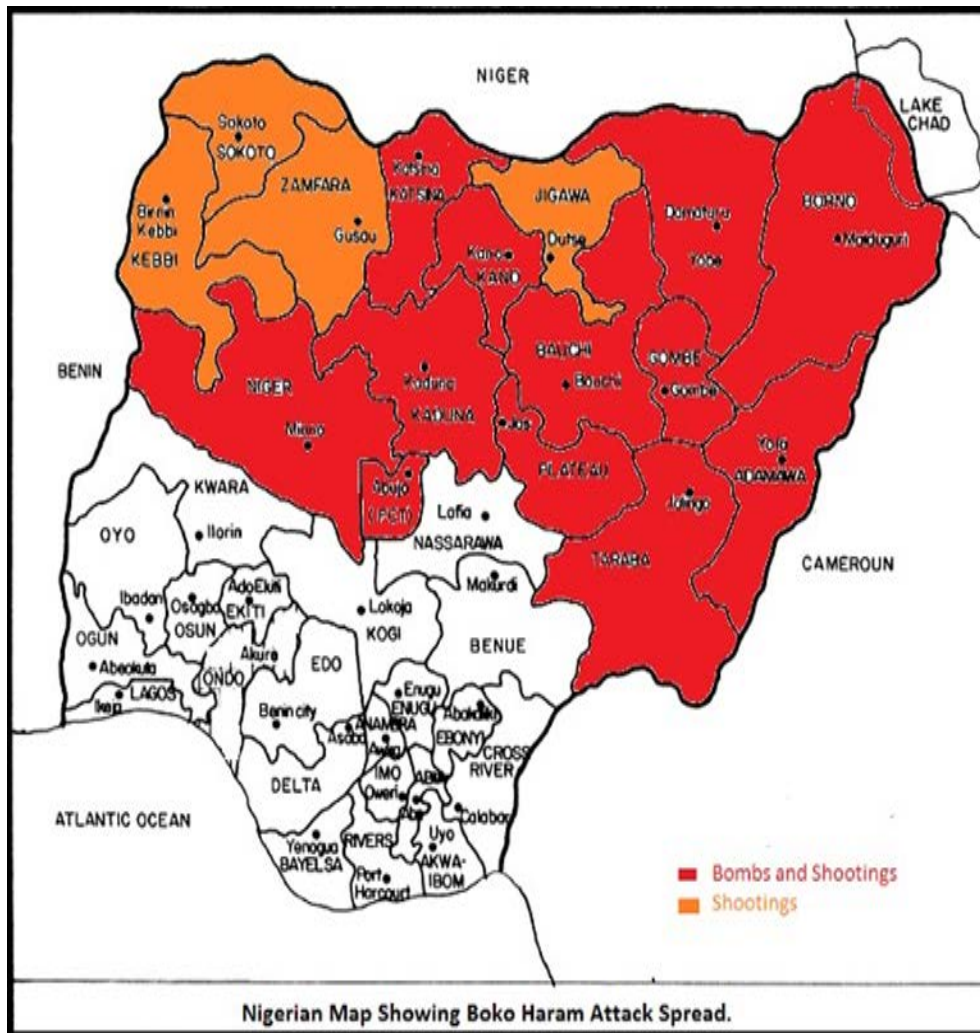
Figure 1.        Map of Nigeria showing Areas where Boko Haram Attacks have occurred. Source: *Small Wars Journal*, http://council.smallwarsjournal.com/showthread.php?p=134385.

The group's grievances continue to evolve over time even though their fundamentals seem to have remained the same. The central issue of the sect's grievances is related to the security operations against the sect in 2009 which led to the death of its leader, Mohammed Yusuf, and many of its members. The sect now emphasizes the revenge dimension. The indiscriminate coercion by security agencies also provoked a staunch reaction from Boko Haram members who primarily want to settle their scores

with the security agencies as well as the state. These indiscriminate actions made the sect to become ultra-violent setting them on a revenge path[57]

The Boko Haram uprising in Nigeria rekindled the dangerous religious fault lines existing in Nigeria. Due to the heterogeneous nature of the Nigerian society, and the divisive religious sensitivity, the quick degeneration of the situation perhaps was inevitable. The Islamic fundamentalists tried to forcibly impose a religious ideology on a constitutionally recognized secular society which was not their first attempt, but so far it is the most brutal. The move by Boko Haram widened the scope of Islamic revivalism which serves as a mobilization tool for many of its adherents. Boko Haram challenges the legitimacy of the Nigerian state in the course of promoting Islamic revivalism and further indicts the government as ineffective in securing and preserving the lives and properties of Nigerians.[58]

In the sect's ideology, the greatest motivation to fight and kill is the act of Muslims declaring other Muslims to be takfirs (infidels). Central to takfir is the distinction between genuine and nominal Muslims. Many people have accused radical Islamists of killing fellow Muslims, but to the extremists their violence is not against Muslims but people who have betrayed their creed and, therefore, should no longer be considered Muslims. Boko Haram is similar to other extremist Islamist movements that divide Muslims into four categories. The first group includes Muslim regimes that do not rule in accordance with Islamic law (Shari'ah), and who thereby cease to be members in the community of the faithful. The second category is defined as apostates, those sects that have violated the principle of "Al Wala' Wal Bara" (loyalty to Muslims and failure to disassociate from unbelievers). The Boko Haram accuse this group of working for the state and other infidels, such as foreign powers, and include members of the security agencies and government employees, local police, and anyone who sustains the government. Another group in this category is composed of heretics and polytheists;

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[57] Roland Marchal, "Boko Haram and the Resilience of Militant Islam in Northern Nigeria," *NOREF Report,* http://www.peacebuilding.no/var/ezflow_site/storage/original/application /dc58a110fb362470133354efb8fee228.pdf.

[58] Abimbola Adesoji, "The Boko Haram Uprising and Islamic Revivalism in Nigeria," *Africa Spectrum*, February 2010, 95.

these are Muslims who violate the principles of monotheism upheld by orthodox Sunnis (an orthodoxy usually claimed by Salafists and Wahhabists). This label mainly applies to all other Islamic sects in the country. The fourth category includes those whom Boko Haram sees as true believers, that is, Muslims who support the lslamist project or at least abstain from supporting the government and its agencies. The sect legitimizes spilling the blood of the first three groups and allows for harming of the fourth group only as collateral damage which would be beneficial to the Muslim community in the long run.[59]

The declaration of Muslims as takfirs is frequently a stepping-stone to violence. Many Boko Haram adherents and radical fundamentalists elsewhere argue that existing regimes, which rule according to secular laws, violate God's sovereignty, and therefore, it is permissible to reject them and rebel against them until they repent and apply Islamic law. Many extremists argue that suicide bombings are a form of martyrdom that God rewards with particular generosity by erasing the sins of the 'martyrs' the moment their blood is shed, and granting their loved ones "tickets" into heaven. By dying in such a cause, they would be permitted to reside in paradise for eternity with the saints, prophets, and other martyrs of Islam.[60]

Although many of these ideologies and grievances create an Islamic consciousness amongst members of the sect, it is the overriding self-interest of the foot soldiers that has pushed them to action against the state. Many were initially involved in violence basically because of the material benefits and incentives. Others were there for heavenly incentive which was a sort of identity validation of their faith within their communities. However, many of the foot soldiers have now joined the leadership which has since re-prioritized their interests (that is, experienced a transvaluation of values). Now they consider their activities as the only way to be a true Muslim who stands the chance of being rewarded by God in the hereafter.

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[59] Mohammed M. Hafez, "Takfir and Violence Against Muslims," in *Fault Lines in Global Jihad: Organizational, Strategic, Ideological Fissures,* ed., Assaf Moghadam and Brian Fishman (New York: Routledge, 2011), 25–27.

[60] Mohammed M. Hafez, "Illegitimate Governance: The Roots of Islamist Radicalization in the MENA," *Governance in the Middle East and North Africa,* ed. Abbas Kadhim (New York: Routledge, 2012), 92–93.

### 3. The Conditions Responsible for the Growth of Boko Haram in the Region

No meaningful analysis can be made of the factors that have facilitated the growth of Boko Haram without considering the educational disparity between the North and the South of Nigeria. This disparity could be traced to historical events related to pre-independence and the colonial era. At the time Western education arrived at the shores of Nigeria through the colonial missionaries, Muslims, who were the majority in the North, rejected the content and process of Western education because it was perceived as a tool of evangelism by the Christian missionaries. Muslim Northerners retained the traditional religious schools, popularly referred to as 'Tsangaya,' which were Islamic schools dedicated to the study of Qur'anic education. The South on the other hand embraced it whole heatedly, and thus made considerable progress ahead of the North. It created a gap which remains until today and could be considered responsible for the spread of the Boko Haram ideology.[61]

Disparities remain between the educational attainments of the indigenes of the two regions. Relative to their share of the national population, the northern zones contribute less than 30 per cent of the young people going to university.[62] This is a further attestation to the widespread discrepancies in primary and secondary enrollments between the two regions (see Figures 2 and 3). Without a primary and secondary education many of the children in most parts of the North could never advance to attain a university education. In fact, a recent report by the National Population Commission found that literacy rates are much lower among states in the North, and that 72 percent of children between the ages of 6 and 16 never attended schools in Borno state, where Boko

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[61] Abdulmalik J., Olayinka Omigbodun, Beida, et al., "Psychoactive Substance Use Among Children in Informal Religious schools (Almajiris) in Northern Nigeria," *Journal of Mental Health, Religion & Culture* (2009): 527–542; Abeeb O.Salaam, "Yandaba on the Streets of Kano: Social Conditions and Criminality," *Vulnerable Children and Youth Studies* 6, no. 1 (2011): 68–77; Lantana M. Usman, "Assessing the Universal Basic Education Primary and Koranic Schools' Synergy for Almajiri Street Boys in Nigeria," *International Journal of Educational Management* (2008): 62–73.

[62] National Population Commission (Nigeria) and RTI International, 2011. Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) EdData Profile 1990, 2003, and 2008: *Education Data for Decision-Making, 2011.* (Washington, D.C.: National Population Commission and RTI International), 3–8.

Haram was founded.[63]   Although, some leaders and members of Boko Haram are university graduates and students from influential and affluent backgrounds, the majority of its recruits and followers are unemployed and uneducated youths based in a cell network that ensures adequate training and skills in the use of weapons as well as ideological orientation.[64]

Without any formal educational system most of the children fall back on the traditional Islamic school system. Many of these schools lack formal structures and curriculum. Children are sent by parents who want them to acquire an Islamic education from these informal schools. Initially most of the parents' decisions hinge on their orthodox interpretations of Islam which they believe abhors Western education. This system has long being in place in northern Nigeria but is aggravated by the economic situation that has impacted negatively on many families and pushed them to explore this option rather than a formal education. These children tend to end up on the streets as "almajiris."[65]   Thus, the term "almajiri" has evolved to mean "street-children" which has become a culture of sorts in northern Nigeria. These children, without any form of parental care, easily fall under the sway of anyone who is willing to provide for them. This is why the "almajiri" children remain a potential target of recruitment and indoctrination for Islamic extremists to promulgate their violent fanatical ideology. In fact, it has been reported that "almajiri" schools have been used to indoctrinate their students to perceive those who pursue Western education as infidels.[66] One such school was the Mohammed Yusuf-founded Ibn Taimiyya Mosque in Maiduguri, which is a school of ideology and orientation, as well as a training camp for Boko Haram recruits.

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[63] Ibid.

[64] Muhammad K. Isa, "Militant Islamist Groups in Northern Nigeria," in *Militias, Rebels and Islamist Militants* (Pretoria, South Africa: Institute for Security Studies, 2010), 330.

[65] Almajiri is a corrupt spelling of the Arabic word, al-muhajirin, which describes someone who leaves home in search of knowledge or for the sake of advocating Islamic knowledge. This type of traditional religious education, which is equivalent to the 'Madrassas' of Central Asia, is common in Northern Nigeria.

[66] Abubakar Kabiru Tsafe, "Problems and Prospects of Almajiri Education in Northern Nigeria," *Scientific Journal of Pure and Applied Sciences*, (March 30, 2013), http://www.academia.edu/3271725/Problems_and_Prospects_of_Almajiri_Education_in_northern_Nigeria.

This vulnerable "almajiri" fell into the waiting hands of the sect, lured by handouts that include food, housing, and guidance from the sect's leadership.[67]
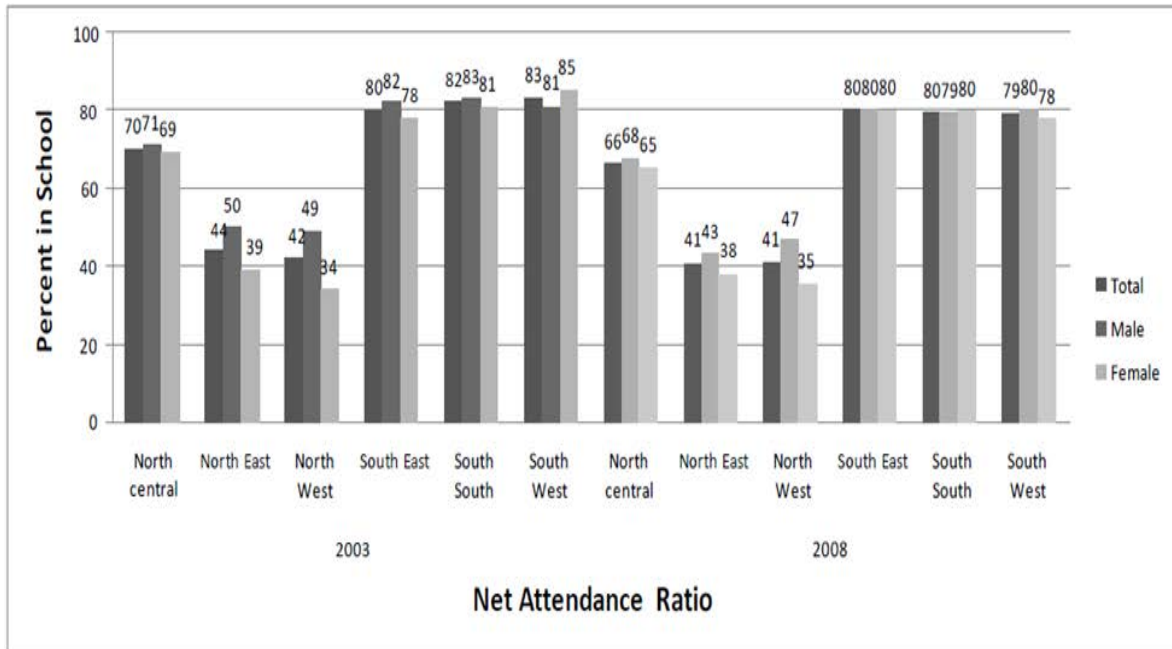


Figure 2.     Primary School Education Enrollment in Nigeria. Source: Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) EdData Profile 1990, 2003, and 2008.

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[67] Andrew Walker, *What Is Boko Haram?*, 3.
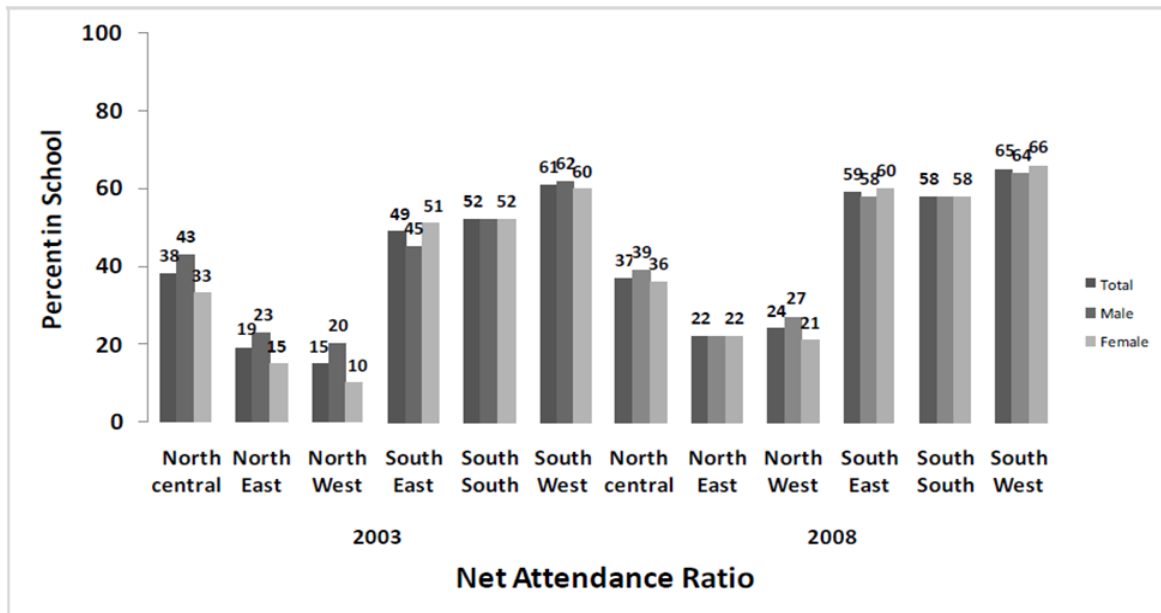
Figure 3.        Secondary School Education Enrollment in Nigeria. Source: Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) EdData Profile, 1990, 2003 and 2008.

Poverty and social injustice also contribute to religious violence such as that of Boko Haram in Nigeria. Despite its enormous resources, which if they were invested wisely could improve the lives of the people, the country remains plagued by high rates of poverty, economic disparity, limited educational opportunities, and mass unemployment.[68] Though economic problems are an issue across the country, the Northern part of Nigeria, where Muslims form the majority, is most acutely impacted.[69] The available statistics reveal that almost 70 percent of the people in northern parts of the country live on less than one dollar a day as compared to 50 and 59 percent across the southern zones.[70] This leads to the conclusion that the persistent high level of poverty in the country is more a northern phenomenon that could be responsible for the militancy in

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[68] Alao Abiodun, "Islamic Radicalization and Violence in Nigeria: Country Report," *London: Conflict, Security and Development Group Publication*, 2012; Abeeb O. Salam, "Boko Haram: Beyond Religious Fanaticism," *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism* 7, no. 2 (2012): 147–162, http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/18335330.2012.719096#preview.

[69] Emma Ujah, Luka Binniyat, "Northern Nigeria Has World highest illiterate – World Bank," *Vanguard Newspaper*, June 11, 2011.

[70] "Spiraling Violence: Boko Haram Attacks and Security Force Abuses in Nigeria," *Human Rights Watch*, 2012, http://www.hrw.org/reports/2012/10/11/spiraling-violence-0.

that region. From a wider perspective, many of the young people in the region, unaware of any other ways of coping with the pressure created by the economic situation, may turn to religion for solace. This could subsequently render them more vulnerable adopting extreme religious views.[71] This pattern fits perfectly into the political economy model for mobilization as the poor view their situation to be a result of mismanagement and corruption by the elites, and thus the poor express their real world grievances by joining the sect or supporting it against the state.[72]

Many scholars argue that the idea of the Boko Haram is not only about rejecting Western education per se, but it is also a judgment about the failure to provide opportunities for the people. This feeling by the people thus becomes an advantage for the Boko Haram movement who use it as an instrument for mobilizing and radicalizing the unemployed, unskilled, and poverty-ridden youths to join its cause and dislodge the secular state. Boko Haram is logically positioned as an alternative and plausible answer to their misery.[73]The sect exploit the role of religion, which provides the required instrument for stereotyping and demonizing other members of faith as well as fellow Muslims working for or supporting the state.[74]

The growth of the sect could also be related to the growth of Islamist movements in the region. Prior to 2001, there were no designated "foreign Islamists organizations" in Sub-Saharan Africa. Even though some terrorist activities did take place, none of the groups were designated as Islamic terrorist organizations; rather they were considered indigenous organizations. Terrorism in Africa is not only related to radical Islamists, even though these groups of radicals always receive the most attention during terrorism discourse. Despite the common mantra that "failed states lead to terrorism," the case in

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[71] Henry S. Wilson, "Terrorism and Religions," *Bangalore Theological Forum* 34, no. 1 (June 2002), http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=2457.

http://atheism.about.com/od/weeklyquotes/a/marx01.htm.

[72] Carrie R. Wickam, *Mobilizing Islam: Religion, Activism, and Political Change in Egypt* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 7.

[73] Isa, "Militant Islamist Groups in Northern Nigeria," 314–315.

[74] "Northern Nigeria: Background to Conflict," *International Crisis Group*, African Report No 168 (December 20, 2010), 21.

Africa could be considered an exception. The situation is that many indigenous terrorist organizations have originated and continue to operate in both stable and unstable countries. The Al Shabab is very active in Somalia and Kenya, while Boko Haram and AQIM continue to operate in Nigeria and Mali, respectively, despite their advanced infrastructures. These areas form what is part of the region referred to as the arc of instability in Africa (see Figure 4). The largest al-Qaeda network in East Africa was uncovered in Kenya. Mali, a stable and democratic country was recently destabilized by the Al Qaeda group that took control of the entire northern part of the country.[75] There is also an observed increase of violence since the ousting of the Libyan regime as weapons and mercenaries have moved across borders to increase internal pressures in most of the countries in the Sahel, including Nigeria.[76]

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[75] Jessica R. Piombo, "Terrorism and U.S. Counter-Terrorism Programs in Africa: An Overview," Centre for Contemporary Conflict, 2007, http://www.gees.org/documentos/Documen-01928.pdf.

[76] *LRA, Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab, AQIM and Other Sources of Instability in Africa. Hearing Before the Committee on Foreign Affairs House of Representatives*. 112th Congress. 112–142, (2012) 31.

Figure 4.    Map of Africa Showing the Arc of Instability and AQIM's Region of Influence as at 2012. Source: American Task Force on Western Sierra, http://www.atfws.org/uncategorized/the-polisario-front-still-a-player-in-the-western-sahara-conflict/.

An insight into terrorism networks in Africa requires the understanding of such terrorist threats in the various regions. It is important to note the distinct regional variations and extent of Islamist terrorist networks across Africa. There is a limited threat of terrorism in Southern and Central Africa due to relatively few Muslim populations in these areas. The focus of the Islamists here is directed at converting Christians to Islam, rather than proliferating radical Islamist networks. The Muslim population is much more prevalent in Northern, Eastern, and Western Africa.[77] This makes these regions the hotbeds of Islamic fundamentalism in Africa with a corresponding level of violence. The radical and non-radical Islamist groups in these areas have extensively solicited support from international terrorist networks to increase their capacities towards the establishment of an Islamic belt across Africa. They have also extended their support to internal fundamentalist groups in an attempt to use them as "force multipliers" for achieving their overall goals. Boko Haram falls within this force multiplier group and derives ideological, military, and inspirational support from these movements.

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[77] Ibid.

There are indications that Boko Haram fighters are traveling to Mali and Somalia for training under AQIM and Al- Shabab; some may have gone to Afghanistan, too. That information has been partially corroborated by statements claiming to be from Boko Haram, who continue to boast about well-trained fighters from Al-Shabab and AQIM camps in the region.[78] A German special operations forces group has acted on some occasions to disrupt a rumored meeting between a representative of Al-Shabab and Abu Zeid, a prominent al-Qaeda commander in the Sahel. The operations of the German forces were based on a piece of intelligence found in Nigeria that linked Boko Haram to AQIM and indicated a fairly robust relationship.[79]

## B.    SUMMARY

The origins and growth of Boko Haram within Muslim society in Northern Nigeria were examined in this chapter. Also included in this chapter was an analysis of the factors that facilitated the steady growth of the sect within those societies. Among these factors was a direct link to the low level of education, the socio-economic problems, and the ideological inspirations derived from other Islamic movements in the region. Understanding the issues which form the grievances of the poor and other potential recruits, as well as tracing the trans-valuation of sect members' values are required if an effective solution is to be suggested. Additionally, the socio economic environment which permits the growth of the group needs to be addressed when formulating an effective resolution of the crisis.

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[78] Jonah Fisher, "Are Nigeria's Boko Haram Getting Foreign Backing?" *BBC News.com*, June 21, 2011, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13843967.

[79] Matthew Bey, Sim Tack, "The Rise of a New Nigerian Militant Group," *Stratford Global Intelligence* 21 (February 2013), http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/rise-new-nigerian-militant-group?0=ip_login_no_cache%3D45fe1d6d2b64c817b280613461770d41.

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# III. ASSESSING THE GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

## A. OVERVIEW

The resolution of the Boko Haram crisis for Nigeria is an enormous challenge similar to that of other counter-terrorism efforts. The way in which the government has tried to address these challenges through disparate actions and intervention activities thus far has not been effective. Tactics employed by government security agencies against Boko Haram have been consistently brutal and counterproductive. Their reliance on extrajudicial execution as a tactic in "dealing" with any problem in Nigeria not only creates more problems, but it has enabled Boko Haram to expand with a remarkable regenerative capability. These responses reflect the symptom approach solution in counter-terrorism. This approach is often argued to have limited effectiveness as it fails to address the underlying issues that push people to join terrorist organizations. In the case of the Boko Haram sect, this approach may be considered a failure as the crisis persists today.

A difficult challenge in addressing the root causes of the crisis also lies in the organizational structure of the sect after the death of Mohammed Yusuf. This change in structure has made meaningful dialogue between the government and the group a frustrating episode. With the group's cell-like structure open to factions and splits, there is no guarantee that someone speaking for the group is speaking for all of its members. In this chapter we will assess the government's response by analyzing it as a symptom or root cause approach to combating terrorism before finally carrying out a critique of such responses.

## B. GOVERNMENT APPROACH

Aside from many physical security improvement measures, the Boko Haram crisis has also inspired a re-assessment of Nigeria's security apparatus, after which an Office of Counter-Terrorism Advisor to the President was created. Despite this, there is no evidence of any clarity or cohesion in the way Nigeria's security and intelligence agencies are set up. The current intelligence structure dates back to the military era, when

the biggest "enemies" were potential coup-plotters and pro-democracy activists. This confirms the statement made by the former National Security Adviser (NSA), General Awoye Azazi (retired), who admitted that the structure, equipment, and capability of the security forces in Nigeria were not adequate for counter-terrorism at all.[80]

### 1. Addressing the Symptoms of Terrorism Approach

The Nigerian government responded to the Boko Haram crisis in many ways. The government initially considered the violence as temporary problem, similar to previous experiences across Nigeria, which could be solved through police action. Unfortunately, the crisis has persisted despite the escalation of the military response. Many consider the responses as haphazard and hampered by political considerations which may have rendered the actions ineffective.

In response to the bombings of December 25, 2010, General Azazi accepted that the Nigerian nation was not prepared for the spate of violence it was experiencing. The NSA identified the Nigerian Police (NP) as the primary agency tasked with the maintenance of law and order, and the NP was the vanguard of the country's response to internal security challenges. General Azazi further stated that the armed forces of Nigeria had the constitutional responsibility to aid in civil authority by assisting the police in the maintenance of law and order, but they were only to be called upon if the situation was beyond police capability, as was the case of Boko Haram.[81] The current security operations carried out by the JTF in Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa States in the northeast region were considered as not only stability operations but as violent crackdowns on the sect members and sympathizers. The Department of State Security (DSS) and the Nigerian Intelligence Agency (NIA) saddled with intelligence gathering responsibilities in the federal constitutions, provide support for the operations, though coordination is

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[80] James Schneider, "Boko Haram: What Are the Key Questions that Must Be Answered about the Poorly Understood and Violent Boko Haram?" *Experts Weekly*, January 30, 2012, http://thinkafricapress.com/nigeria/experts-weekly-boko-haram.

[81] Gen O. A. Azazi, "Responding to the Emerging Trends of Terrorism in Nigeria," opening remarks at a seminar organized by CLEEN Organization, 2011, http://www.cleen.org.

always a source of worry.[82] Even though conducting stability operations could contribute greatly towards the creation of an environment that would foster a comprehensive settlement of the problems, this approach has not been happened. Perhaps the operations have been unsuccessful because they are not fully promoted through the use of other government programs such as poverty eradication, employment, and conflict resolution programs that are necessary to resolve the conflict.[83] Stability operations are military operations which contribute to order, security, and control to set the conditions that allow the primacy of non-military and indigenous organizations to develop accountable institutions and mechanisms in the conflict area. Such operations are necessary to provide the platform for the return of peace and order in a conflict environment. They also serve as a means of improving civil-military relations in such an operation area.[84] However, these results have not been the case in Nigeria.

The JTF continues to carry out active measures in countering the challenges to internal security by Boko Haram. Their operation involves the use of the security forces to conduct road blocks, cordon and search operations, and armed patrols. The legislative and executive branches took some steps, such as the National Assembly enacting the Anti-Terrorism Bill (ATB) while the executive branch declared a state of emergency in the affected areas. The executive branch also ordered the closure of the international borders around that region. The ATB criminalized terrorism as well as defined acts of terrorism and related offenses. Other aspects of the bill include issues related to terrorism funding, the legal position of properties owned by identified terrorists, and the mutual assistance, extradition, and investigation and prosecution of terrorists and sponsors of terrorism in Nigeria. Additionally, the propagation and dissemination of information in

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[82] Ovada Ohiare, "Nigerian Military, SSS Sideline Police in Fight against Boko Haram Terrorism," *African Outlook*, http://africanoutlookonline.com/new/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id =2917%3Anigerian-military-sss-sideline-police-in-fight-against-boko-haram-terrorism&Itemid=53.

[83] "The Comprehensive Approach," British Military Publication, JDN 4/05, Revised October 2007, 1.

[84] "United States Military Publication, Stability Operations," Joint Publication 3-07, vii, September 29, 2011, http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new_pubs/jp3_07.pdf.

any form calculated to cause panic, evoke violence, or intimidate government, person or group of persons, all fall within activities criminalized by the bill.[85]

Other measures put in place by the government include attempts to improve physical security in buildings and towns. These efforts include the installation of closed circuit television cameras in many parts of Abuja aimed at enhancing surveillance and gathering evidence for the investigation and prosecution of terrorism-related offenses. The development and broadcast of security tips in mass media is another measure employed.[86] Although many people have hailed the passage of the ATB, others have identified factors that may affect its implementation in a state like Nigeria, where several laws have been promulgated in the past but not implemented due its cumbersome judicial process.[87] In fact, Amnesty International recently asserted that Nigeria has a weak criminal justice system, which is under-resourced, is blighted by corruption, and struggles to earn the trust of the population.[88] Given these observed weaknesses that directly hinder the implementation of laws, it can be expected that the ATB may be an effort in futility unless broader reforms are carried out in the justice system. These reforms if well executed will ensure the effectiveness of the ATB.

Another strategy to counter the Boko Haram group involves intelligence operations by the NIA in partnership with security agencies of neighboring countries and the DSS that spearheads intelligence gathering within Nigeria. This effort is aimed at decimating the sect by eliminating its core leadership elements. This effort also has the objectives of denying the Boko Haram group the space necessary to mobilize and recruit members from within the vulnerable communities in that region. This strategy has

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[85] Nigeria's Terrorism Prevention Act of 2011 and the Amendment Bill of 2012, Passed by the Senate on October 17, 2012.

[86] Unpublished, National Counter Terrorism Strategy for Nigeria, 2011.

[87] Jude Cocodia, "Identifying Causes for Congestion in Nigeria's Courts Via Non-Participant Observation: A Case Study of Brass High Court, Bayelsa State, Nigeria," *International Journal of Politics and Good Governance* 1, no. 1.1 (1st Quarter 2010), http://www.academia.edu/2348991/identifying_causes_for_congestion_in_nigerias_courts_via_non-participant_observation_a_case_study_of_brass_high_court_.

[88] Amnesty International Letter to Catherine Ashton, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Vice President of the European Commission, February 6, 2012, http://www.amnesty.eu.

achieved limited results because the sect has been able to replace captured or killed core leadership members.[89]

The military and police responses are similar because they seek to provide physical security, while the NIA and DSS provide the intelligence network. The various groups that make up the JTF were established to address Boko Haram issues in the Northeast of Nigeria where the sect is most active. The headquarters of the JTF is located in Maiduguri, the Borno State capital, and is headed by an army Major General. This JTF operation is nicknamed "Operation Restore Order" and is expected to defeat the insurgency completely. At its inception, the operation gathered information about the operations of the Boko Haram sect and their characteristics. The JTF began by using strategies aimed at subduing the group through a military crackdown with a view to eradicating it. The JTF actions were mostly aimed at limiting the operating space for the sect and eliminating or arresting members of the group and their supporters. JTF's operations to achieve this aim were military-oriented actions that included roadblocks, checkpoints, arrests, cordon and search. It also entails guarding of key points, surveillance, protection of very important persons and raids among others.[90] These methods are discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs.

### a.      *Establishment of Check Points*

The Boko Haram operatives make use of roads to reach their targets. To frustrate their movements and to maintain a continuous check on roads, the JTF established a number of check points along main roads and approaches. At these points, suspicious vehicles and persons are searched and in most cases the passengers are asked to walk through the checkpoint or the axial routes for the troops to physically screen them. While this has produced limited results, its overall effectiveness is still below expectations. The check points are poorly manned due to inadequate manpower and required screening equipment. Despite these operations, Boko Haram operatives still carry out their attacks against selected targets within and outside Maiduguri, possibly by

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[89] Unpublished, National Counter Terrorism Strategy for Nigeria, 2011.

[90] Nigerian Army Order of Battle.

using minor roads to evade detection. The inherent administrative problems associated with prolonged check points have further contributed to public disenchantment. Thus, the much-needed public support which is vital to success in the fight against Boko Haram is being lost.

### b.    Cordon and Search

Another approach which the JTF uses is cordon and search operations. These are conducted together with the NP. Cordon and search operations are carried out based on intelligence reports about sect members in certain locations.  The JTF normally plans in detail and rehearses before conducting an operation, and these efforts have led to successes. Such operations have in many cases led to the capture of some suspected members of the Boko Haram sect and the recovery of arms, ammunition, and explosives. The operations have also led to the capture of some equipment used in the production of improvised explosive devices. There were, however, a few cases where surprise and security were lost due to the lack of proper coordination at the infestation stage, and casualties were suffered on both sides. Also, there have been cases when the searches irritated the civil populace who view it as an infringement on their fundamental human rights. As a result, the public has been uncooperative with the JTF in furnishing it with useful information.

### c.    Guarding of Key Points

The mayhem, which the Boko Haram sect has meted on the civil populace since 2009, is witnessed in the crippling of state institutions and telecommunication networks in Maiduguri. This situation necessitates increased physical security by JTF through the deployment of armed personnel to guard such facilities, in order to prevent further attacks. However, the deployment of troops at some facilities that are not proximal further exposes them to attacks from the sect members.

### d.    Armed Military Patrols

The JTF also conducts mobile patrols along major roads and environs to discourage activities of the Boko Haram sect. The patrols have gone a long way in

checkmating the group's activities and reassured the populace of their safety. The purpose of such patrols is to deny members of the sect freedom to operate with impunity. This purpose of these patrols is to avail the planners with adequate information for detailed preparation before operations such as raids. Despite the successes of such operations, the conduct of the patrols in military uniforms and vehicles has exposed the JTF troops as targets to the Boko Haram sect. There are recorded incidents of soldiers on patrol coming under attack, resulting in serious casualties.

### e.  *Military Raid Operations*

Raids carried out by the JTF troops based on intelligence are used to curb the menace of Boko Haram. The persistence of such operations has resulted in some success, including the arrest of Boko Haram members, and truncated the group's plans of attack. Some sect members have been killed in the raid operations and weapons and explosives recovered. However, such operations have also frustrated the civilian populace and created more hatred for the JTF as innocent individuals are believed to have been killed in some failed operations or as part of collateral damage.

### 2.  Addressing the Root Cause of Terrorism Approach

In an attempt to tackle one of the root causes through the establishment of "learning areas" to remove the "almajiri" problem and deny the sect foot soldiers, the government conceived of and partially introduced a formal education program across the North. This program is considered the only functional approach to combating the situation that led to the Boko Haram crisis. The novel program introduced by the administration is aimed at integrating the poor children into the formal education system with a view to teaching them skills and giving them a bright future. The schools were to be equipped with modern boarding facilities and located in each of the states of the North. The government formally inaugurated one of the pilot schools in Sokoto State, in the North East region far away from the troubled Boko Haram enclave.[91] Although, it was to provide a new learning environment that has the potential to keep children off the

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[91]Muhammad Z. Kura, Mahmoud Mohammed, "Nigeria: Almajiri Schools – Right Step, Little Impact," *All Africa News*, June 2, 2012.

streets temporarily as well as keep them away from the radical clerics, a slow construction rate and failure to establish the program in the "heart" of the troubled region has created doubts as to its success.

The government has stated that the "almajiri" school project is one of the federal programs intended to combat the poor education of youths in the North. Lack of education is believed to be one of the reasons for the security breach in the region. About 35 such schools would be established across the 19 northern states to provide Qur'anic, Islamic, and formal education to over nine million "almajiris" in the country. The schools come as a result of seminars, conferences, and symposia conducted on the "almajiri" syndrome where many scholars and analysts had made suggestions on how best the issue could be addressed. One of the recommendations proffered was the integration of the "Tsangaya" system of Qur'anic learning with the contemporary education. The program was expected to rehabilitate the "Almajiri" by educating them in both religious and secular education, so that they could contribute to national development.[92]

The program has become problematic because of low turnout of students and bureaucratic measures that have impacted the program even where schools have been constructed and handed over to local authorities. The provision of basic amenities such as water, electricity, and meals for the students remains a problem yet to be resolved. Such issues may hinder the success of the program which is required to prevent more radicalized foot soldiers from amongst these vulnerable children.[93] One of the bureaucratic issues that may create challenges for the program include the ownership of the schools. The primary school system in Nigeria falls under the purview of local government authorities, but the financial administration of such model schools may well be beyond their capabilities for funding. Additionally, the staffing and selection of pupils for the schools may create problems if not quickly resolved by government. Furthermore,

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[92] "Unending Plight of the Almajiri," *The Nigerian Tribune*, April 20, 2012; "Islamic Scholar Lauds FG for Building Modern Almajiri Schools in North," *News Agency Of Nigeria*, April 11, 2012.

[93] Muhammad Z. Kura, Mahmoud Mohammed, "Nigeria: Almajiri Schools - Right Step, Little Impact," *All Africa News*, June 2, 2012; Gabriel E. Elechi, Letei R. Yekorogha, "The Almajiri Model Schools in Nigeria: Matters Arising," *International Journal of Educational Foundation & Management* 1, no. 1 (January 2013): 71–77, http://www.ijefm.com/IJEFM%20Vol.,%201_1_-Elechi%20&%20Yekorogha.pdf.

offering a meal plan in these schools may lure hungry, poverty-stricken students away from regular schools in which they are already enrolled, which would result in a population shift and potential destabilization of the present primary school system. These bureaucratic issues eventually may not help the "almajiris" who are supposed to be the sole beneficiaries of the program.

### 3. Appeasement Strategy

The latest attempt in resolving the crisis is one of appeasement. This strategy arose from what was considered as a success during the resolution of the Niger Delta conflict. The amnesty granted to the Niger Delta militant was considered necessary to allow members of the sect to come out of hiding and state their grievances for a negotiated settlement. Even though this process proved effective during the resolution of the militia activities in the Niger Delta area, it is pertinent to state categorically that the Niger Delta crisis is distinct from that of Boko Haram. In considering this appeasement approach with Boko Haram, the Nigerian President set up a panel to look into the possibility of granting amnesty to the Islamist militant group. The move came after religious and political leaders concluded that the military approach would not solve the violence that has crippled the economic situation in many parts of the country. Previously any form of appeasement by the government had been rejected because the government claimed that the Boko Haram leaders were "ghosts" whose demands were not known. The current amnesty panel includes senior military representatives and is tasked with considering the feasibility of granting amnesty to Boko Haram members and recommending modalities for implementing such a step. The group was inaugurated in April, 2013 and has since begun its functions. What remains unclear is whether the government is genuinely considering an amnesty approach or simply trying to appease detractors across the country.[94]

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[94] "Nigeria Moots Amnesty for Boko Haram Islamist Rebels," *BBC News.com*, April, 5, 2013, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-22042352.

### 4.        Effectiveness of Government's Response

The successes achieved by the government in tackling the Boko Haram crisis usually last for short durations. This is because the sect, which goes underground during periods of heightened crackdowns, always resurfaces stronger, more organized, and more lethal. The population of sect members, their weaponry, and the scope of operations has increased since 2009 when it first started. The group has successfully launched attacks in areas never expected, including the federal capitol. The movement continues to find sympathy amongst the local population resulting in more recruits for the sect. Its growing membership comes from within the communities enabling it to perpetrate more violent acts despite its presumed containment when most of its members were extra judiciously killed in 2009.[95] The sect also retains the initiative by selecting and hitting varied targets at will despite the high number of casualties they sustain in such operations.

Arguably, public sentiment seems to be in their favor as the local population continues to accuse the security forces of perpetrating human rights abuses. These allegations come as a result of heightened physical security and during counter-attacks on sect members. The hard line approach and unapologetic trumpeting of the killing of the sect members and its leader has brought victory with a devastating cost. This pyrrhic victory has outraged the general public and created a steady stream of volunteers for the movement in northern Nigeria.[96] Also the limited attempts at tackling the root cause in the region allow the sect to have access to the "almajiris" whom they exploit to achieve their aim. The "almajiris" are considered a vulnerable set of individuals who have participated in many of the violent ethnic and religious fights in Nigeria.[97]

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[95] Nathaniel Manni, "Boko Haram: A Threat to Africa and Global Security," *Global Security Studies* 3, no. 4 (Fall 2012): 48.

[96] Jonathan N. C. Hill, "Boko Haram and the Prospects of a Negotiated Settlement," *NOREF Expert Analysis*, Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Center, October 2012, 2.

[97] Ifijeh I. Goodluck, James, I. Juliana, "Provision of Formal Education to Almajiris: The Role of the Libraries," *European Scientific Journal* 8, no. 15 (July 2012 ): 98.

## C.  CRITIQUE OF GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE

*"There can be no such thing as a purely military solution to an insurgency because insurgency is not primarily a military activity."[98] –General (Sir) Frank Kitson, British Army*

This statement by the British general aptly defines the limitations of the government response to Boko Haram. The Nigerian Government's response to the crisis is one that focuses on the symptoms of terrorism. Although, many government institutions exist that are designed to alleviate poverty, improve school enrollment, reduce unemployment, and eradicate the problems of street children, most of them maintain their routine programs and never specifically target the region in crisis. In fact, the security situation in that region has forced many of these agencies to relocate and even close down. This failure on the part of government institutions does little to address the identified root causes. Furthermore, it nurtures an environment that allows for the continuation of violent terrorism.[99]

This situation confirms the position of some scholars who argue against the use of force only in resolving terrorist related conflicts. They argue that the utilization of the state's coercive apparatus to crackdown on the perpetrators of terrorism is not a functional approach because it fails to address the root causes of terrorism and only exposes the weakness of such counter-terrorism efforts. This is similar to the Boko Haram crisis in which the crackdown by security forces only succeeds in suppressing the violence temporarily, allowing it to resurface in a more violent and widespread way. These operations have also exposed the inherent weaknesses of the security agencies in counter-terrorism operations.[100] Although casualty figures are never accurate in Nigeria, military operations against Boko Haram have resulted in high number of civilian

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[98] *British Army Field Manual on Counter- Insurgency*, Vol. 1, Part 10 (London: January 2010), 18.

[99] Alexander Alderson, "Britain," in *Understanding Counterinsurgency: Doctrine, Operations, and Challenges*, ed. Thomas Rid and Thomas Keaney (New York: Routledge, 2010), 30.

[100] Thomas Imobighe, "Rethinking Terrorism and Counter- Terrorism," in *Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism an African Perspective*, ed. Thomas A. Imobighe and Agatha N. T. Eguavoen (Ibadan Nigeria: Heinemann Education Books PLC, 2006), 7; Benjamin Maiangwa and Ufo O. Uzodike, "The Changing Dynamics of Boko Haram Terrorism," *Aljazeera Centre for Studies*, http://studies.aljazeera.net/en/reports/2012/07/20127316859987337.htm.

casualties. In recent attacks in Borno State, a total of 55 persons were killed in the border town of Bama, and 187 persons were killed in Baga. These figures are for recent operations only.[101]

Limiting the operating space for the terrorists through the use of military force alone as practiced by the JTF is also considered as taking on the symptoms of terrorism only. This approach is bound to achieve limited results as argued by counter-terrorism experts who point out that even though the operating space for the terrorists is reduced, most may still continue to launch successful attacks with increasing lethality.[102]  In the case of Boko Haram, this continued violence may be attributed to the fact that the government may not have addressed the root causes. As a result the sect continues to gain support as well as new members ready to carry out attacks against the government. This is considered to be fallout from the violent crackdown by the JTF that may have alienated the population.  These results also confirm the position of experts who state that military operations must gain and maintain the support of the domestic population in order to isolate the insurgent and achieve success. These experts note that even when it might be justified, it is important to apply excessive force. Successful counter-terrorism operations must consider issues and actions from the perspective of the domestic population.[103] Unfortunately, the military response against Boko Haram has provoked the domestic population as well as aggravated the conflict as confirmed by the many calls for the withdrawal of the security forces by the local populace in that area and elsewhere.[104]

The argument that defense alone in the form of military operations cannot stop terrorism is confirmed in the dealings with Boko Haram. This is due to its asymmetric nature. The suggestion that a comprehensive review was necessary to tackle many complementary factors driving the terrorist as well as preventing further radicalization

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[101] "High Death Toll Feared in Nigeria after Boko Haram Battle," *DW News*, April 22, 2013; "Deadly Clashes Between Military, Islamic Insurgents in Nigeria," *France International*, April 22, 2013.

[102] Daniel Masters, "The Origins of Terrorist Threats: Religious, Separatist, or Something Else?" *Terrorism and Political Violence* 20, no. 3 (July-September, 2008): 396, http://0-www.informaworld.com.uncclc.coast.uncwil.edu/smpp/content~content=a794711659~db=all~order=page).

[103] Nagl, Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam, 26.

[104] Hamza Idris, "Nigeria: Killing of 30 Civilians in Maiduguri - JTF, Residents Trade Blames," *Daily Trust Newspaper*, October 13, 2012.

remains relevant while dealing with the sect.[105] The government crackdown on Boko Haram terrorists required draconian measures that included loss of innocent lives and extra-judicial killings. These measures created a backlash amongst the people as evidenced in some support for the terrorists.[106] Evidently, the increase in the number of terrorists since the crackdown from 2009 is indicative of this. This confirms the assertions of scholars such as Daniel Byman, who point out that use of force only, is considered weak and brutal and could perpetuate a terrorist group and bolsters its ranks through new recruits.[107]It also supports the position of John Nagl who also states that for military operations to be successful, the military must consider gaining and maintaining the support of the domestic population in order to isolate the insurgent.[108]

The military actions also disperse the terrorists and create new rounds of violent activities in other areas of the country. This result facilitates the creation of new cells in other areas with devastating consequences. The exclusive use of force to address the crisis without a corresponding focus on the root causes has only aided the militants in their effort to radicalize and mobilize in a better organized fashion. The exclusive use of dominant military power is contrary to the opinion of scholars who have consistently argued that war must be made more sophisticated and nuanced. Military power should be just one of the tools which are reluctantly or rarely used.[109]

Despite the government's stated intention of attacking sect members since the events of 2009, it seems incapable of containing the sect's expanded operating space. This indicates that other factors are contributing to the rise of violence, and that these factors require the government's attention. Analysts have tried to explain the resurgence of Boko Haram activism from the angle of revenge to a system that it considers to have brutally suppressed them. The findings of relational theory analysts provide an explanation for this. They consider factors such as sociological, political, economic,

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[105] Bruce Scheier, *Beyond Fear: Thinking Sensibly about Security in an Uncertain World* (New York: Springer, 2006), 208.

[106] Will Ross, "Nigerians' Fear of Northern Atrocities," *BBC News*, November 1, 2012.

[107] Byman, *The Five Front War*, 2.

[108] Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam*, 26.

[109] Zabadi, in *Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism an African Perspective,* 91–93.

religious, and historical relationships between all the groups which create differences. These differences in values invariably create the "We" and 'Others" dichotomy similar to that of Boko Haram. This dichotomy is implied in the vengeance perspective of the terror campaign by Boko Haram that escalated after the death of Mohammed Yusuf while in police custody. This same psychology of "we" vs. "them" is fueled by the hunting and incarceration of Boko Haram's members by the security forces. It is a major factor in the sect's resolve to avenge its members through the terror campaigns.[110]

This school of thought argues that the recourse to jihad by the sect is a retaliation for the acts of violence meted out to its members including the destruction of the sect's headquarters in Maiduguri and the killing of its leader during the July 2009 uprising. Additional public sympathy for the group resulting from the violent crackdowns which claimed the lives of innocent persons from 2009 until today is also indicative of this perspective.[111] This argument fits perfectly with the position of counter-terrorist experts who assert that the use of force alone against terrorist organizations only results in the action-reaction cycle. This cycle continues to drive the level of violence to unprecedented heights.[112]  In the case of Boko Haram in Nigeria this pattern has played out as violent crackdowns have only brought about more sophisticated and revenge-driven operations by the sect members. The killing of their leader, Mohammed Yusuf, brought about more violence including the use of IEDs and increased suicide bombings.[113]

The establishment of the "almajiri" school which is a great effort towards eliminating foot soldiers for the sect remains beneficial only outside the region where

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[110] Simeon H.O. Alozieuwa, "Contending Theories on Nigeria's Security Challenge in the Era of Boko Haram Insurgency," *The Peace and Conflict Review* 7, no. 1 - ISSN: 1659–3995;  In February 2010, Al-jazeera television aired shocking footage showing security agents on house-to-house arrest operations against members of the sect. Having been arrested by the security agents, some alleged members of the sect were lined up and shot in the back.

[111] Hakeem Onapajo and Ufo O. Uzodike, "Boko Haram Terrorism in Nigeria: Man, the State, and the International System," *African Security Review* 21, Issue 3 (2012), http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10246029.2012.687693.

[112] Walter Enders and Todd Sandler," Effectiveness of Anti-Terrorism Policies, A Vector- Auto Regression- Intervention Analysis," *The American Political Science Review* 87, no. 4, 1993, 829.

[113] Scott Stewart, "Is Boko Haram More Dangerous Than Ever?" *Stratford Global Intelligence*, December 13, 2013, http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/boko-haram-more-dangerous-ever?0=ip_login_no_cache%3D18194b681c790feb3b51508c013bb729 (accessed on February 28, 2013).

Boko Haram is rooted. The potentials these schools hold to reduce the number of vulnerable children that could be recruited by the sect is enormous. Because many members of the sect were products of this same "almajiri" culture in the North they were vulnerable to misleading ideologies. The bureaucratic issues as well as the slow progress in the establishment of the schools, enables the sect to have continued access to these vulnerable children. Also, the large populations of unemployed, uneducated, and aggrieved youths within this region fall outside the state's social provisions. As they become more frustrated they are easily mobilized by the sect and its modest incentives. This is as a result of corruption, bad governance, and marginalization which the government has failed to address in that region.[114]

The government has also failed to counter the sect ideologically or provide a safe passage for those willing to leave the sect. The ideological campaign by the sect members could be considered highly successful based on their growing number and the absence of counter-ideological messages from the government. It could be concluded, therefore, that the sect is winning this all important campaign. Also, the military focused approach provides no safe passage for members who might want to leave the sect and live normal life. The continuous crackdown and indefinite detention of all arrested members provides no alternatives for members willing to stop fighting. The plan for amnesty may be a step in the right direction if eventually implemented by the government.[115]

The recent attempt to resolve the crisis by granting amnesty to the belligerents is ongoing. This resolution follows a similar path similar to that of the Niger Delta militancy. However, in an audio recording, Abubakar Shekau, the purported head of the group, rejects the amnesty deal claiming they have not done anything wrong that requires amnesty. He insists that it is the sect that should grant the Nigerian government a pardon. This response indicates that the plan has not been communicated well enough to gain the confidence and acceptance of the sect's leadership. Many people also consider the

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[114] Abdulmalik et al.,"Psychoactive Substance Use Among Children in Informal Religious schools (Almajiris) in Northern Nigeria," 527–542; Salaam, "Yandaba on the Streets of Kano," 68–77; Usman, "Assessing the Universal Basic Education Primary and Koranic Schools' Synergy for Almajiri Street Boys in Nigeria," 62–73.

[115] Ibid.

thought of amnesty as a victory for Boko Haram. They argue that amnesty is usually granted by the stronger to the weaker or the victor to the vanquished. This they believe should be discussed on the pedestal of strength and not of weakness by the federal government which appears to be the weaker link in this amnesty talk. In a similar development, the Youth Wing of the Christian Association of Nigeria (YOWICAN) has threatened violence if the plan is carried out. This shows some level of opposition to the planned amnesty to the sect across the country.[116]

The heavy handed military response is also considered ill-suited for such a crisis with a multi-causal phenomenon. Arguably, the extra-judicial killing of Mohammed Yusuf and many of the sect's followers in 2009 only served as a recruitment tool for the sect and many of the members now desire to die as "martyrs" like their leader through any means including suicide bombing operations. Such response by security forces only served to clear the immediate threats posed by the group at the expense of a longer-term management of the crisis.[117]

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[116] Okey Ifeachor, "High Cost of Granting Boko Haram Amnesty," *African Village*, April 10, 2013, http://www.africankulture.com/2013/04/hiigh-cost-of-granting-boko-haram.html#axzz2QejZ1Ens; Paschal Okeke, "Christian Youths Reject Amnesty for Boko Haram, Threatens Violence," *Nairaland Forum*, April 11, 2013, http://www.nairaland.com/1253675/boko-haram-christian-youths-opposes-amnesty; "Nigeria's Boko Haram Rejects Amnesty Deal," *VOA News*, April 11, 2013, http://www.voanews.com/content/nigerias-boko-haram-rejects-amnesty-deal/1639310.html (accessed on April 17, 2013).

[117] "Northern Nigeria: Background to Conflict,' *International Crisis Group*, African Report No 168, December, 20 2010, 25.

# IV. A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR RESOLVING THE BOKO HARAM CRISIS

## A. INTEGRAL COMPONENTS OF THE FRAMEWORK

*"Any Society that seeks to achieve adequate military security against the background of any acute food shortage, population explosion, low level of productivity, inadequate and inefficient public utilities, and chronic problems of unemployment, has a false sense of security"*[118] *–Robert McNamara*

This statement by McNamara, who was the Secretary of Defense of the United States during the Vietnam War, implies that for any solution to a security situation like that of Boko Haram to be effective, a multifaceted approach that addresses not only the symptoms of terrorism but also the root causes must include addressing the problems that create the enabling environment. The fact that the sect continues to survive a series of crackdowns by the security forces to emerge stronger, better organized, and more lethal indicates that the wrong approach is being carried out and that it is based on the wrong assumptions. Such failures also discredit the security forces and lead to the population's loss of confidence in the government.[119] The sect has grown increasingly virulent which indicates a major transformation in its capacity, tactics, and ideology. This is further enhanced by the support enjoyed from amongst the population based on the enabling environment as well as reactions to the military crackdown that have negatively impacted ordinary people. The conclusion is that government's response so far remains inadequate to solve the issues related to the crisis. The required response would entail a combination of the root cause approach and the symptoms of terrorism approach if the desired outcomes in fighting the Boko Haram are to be achieved. This chapter will identify a strategy that will entail a comprehensive government effort to resolve the Boko Haram crisis. The proposed strategy examined in this chapter suggests the need to improve the present security effort and ideological operations, the need to address the legitimate

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[118] Robert McNamara, *The Essence of Security: Reflections in Office* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), 149.

[119] Peter Pharm, "Boko Haram's Evolving Threat," *African Security Briefs*, African Center for Strategic Studies (April 2012): 7.

grievances of the sect, and the need to create employment. Also suggested is the need to improve school enrollment and to reform all formal and informal school systems in the affected region. Improvement of the justice system and the enforcement of the respect for the rule of law, as well as the need for political reforms are discussed as part of a comprehensive solution. Further, in an effort to foster national reconciliation, the need to organize an interfaith dialogue is examined. This step is crucial before finally articulating an amnesty plan for many adherents of the sect. In other to analyze this strategy, the likelihood of success of the suggested strategy is assessed in this chapter.

### 1.    Improve Security Efforts

The Nigerian government needs to improve the security operations aimed at limiting the operating space for the sect. Undoubtedly, some level of achievement was made by the security forces in curtailing the violence but at a huge cost that led to loss of public support in many areas of the region. The high number of civilian casualties in areas where operations took place as a result of misapplied military tactics undoubtedly contributed to the loss of public support. In many instances the use of conventional military tactics against an irregular force came with attendant consequences. More so, the lack of required weapons and equipment and the inadequate intelligence required for such a sophisticated operation was a problem for the agencies.[120] This necessitates the establishment of Special Operation Forces (SOF) units with requisite training and equipment appropriate for such operations.

Military operations are required to establish a stabilized environment for other non-military efforts in a counter-terrorism situation. The environment needs to be "secured" to enable other governmental agencies to address some of the root causes of the conflict. Most importantly, military operations will deny the sect the space to organize, recruit, and execute violent acts in such areas. While carrying out such operations, caution must be taken to avoid killing or imposing burdensome restrictions on the population. This balance is necessary to retain the support of the people and to deny

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[120] Ibid.

same to the adherents of the sect. Some of these military operations could include but are not limited to:

### a. Neutralizing Core Leaders of the Sect

The capture or neutralization of core leaders of the sect is an important requirement for resolving the crisis. Most of the core leaders are considered "hardened" and may not be amenable to change. They may also be using coercive methods to retain members who may want to leave the sect. Security operations would be required to locate and neutralize such individuals in order to disrupt the organizational structure of the group. The infrastructures that support them in these environments must also be located and destroyed. This would also serve as anti-morale for the sect members and demonstrate to the rest of the Nigerians the capability of the government to decisively resolve the problem. Securing the confidence of the people through successes is a requirement for the government in any counter-terrorism operation.121

### b. Deny the Sect the Required Operating Space

Aside from preventing the sect from organizing, recruiting, and launching attacks, any form of support for the sect must be denied. The porous borders and networks through which other Islamic movements from elsewhere can support the sect must be blocked. It is important that the group be denied access to resupply of weapons, manpower, funds, and technology from sympathetic movements in the sub-region. Adequate security must be ensured at the local and international borders of that region in order to trap sect members within the country and to prevent any form of resupply from AQIM or Al-Shabab. Joint operations and supportive operations should be solicited from the neighboring countries in the region to accomplish this task. The countries neighboring Nigeria in that region are Chad, Niger, and Cameroon. Boko Haram has on many occasions exploited the limited capabilities of these countries in securing their borders to smuggle in weapons. A United Nations' (UN) report in 2012 noted that Boko Haram

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121 Richard Medina and George Hepner, "Geospatial Analysis of Dynamic Terrorist Networks," University of Utah, http://www.academia.edu/209520/Geospatial_Analysis_of_Dynamic _Terrorist_Networks.

members had received training in Mali. This report was confirmed when seven members were arrested in Niger with contact details of AQIM militants.[122] Greater cooperation and intelligence sharing between Nigeria and these countries need to be encouraged. Nigeria could also consider helping some of these countries in strengthening their capabilities to secure their borders.

The cooperation of neighboring countries is also important because the sect draws a considerable following from these countries. Many members of the sect captured over a period were found to be citizens of these neighboring countries. In fact, one of the sect's leaders, Mamman Nur, who organized the attack on the UN building in 2011, is a Cameroonian citizen.[123] Additionally, most of the sect's camps are located in the "ungoverned" territories along the borders with those countries. These areas are utilized as safe-havens by Boko Haram as there is a passive belief that these countries lack the capabilities to launch kinetic operations in those areas. Support from international allies could also be solicited to provide the technology needed to locate and destroy these camps.

The objective of these military operations which target the symptoms of terrorism is aimed at isolating sect members in those communities amongst others. Once they are isolated, effective targeted operations can be launched against them without risking the lives of innocent persons. The security agencies will create a favorable condition for some of the members who are considered as forced into the movement to voluntarily surrender. The established situation will also allow the police to make arrests and facilitate the resumption of work by other governmental agencies in those areas.

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[122] Adam Nossiter, "In Nigeria: A Deadly Group's Rage Has Local Roots," *New York Times*, February 26, 2012.

[123] Jamestown Foundation, "Ansaru: A Profile of Nigeria's Newest Jihadist Movement," *Terrorism Monitor* 11, no. 1 (January 10, 2013), http://www.refworld.org/docid/50f69aaf2.html.

## 2.    Improve Ideological Operations

Ideology remains the core strength of the Boko Haram adherents. It is ideology that enables the sect to replace fighters and gather resources for their course. Scholars such as Patrick Sookhedeo attest to the fact that ideological battles are in many ways more important than the physical battles and that once the ideology is defeated, the terrorist movement withers and dies.[124] Many of Boko Haram's ideologies are linked to classical Islamic doctrine which appeals to a wider Muslim population. To counter these ideologies, the government must establish counter-ideological committees to pick on the vulnerability of interpretations by the sect's leadership so as to demonize them in those communities. These committees should be comprised of learned clerics with positive and moderate views of the religion. The counter-ideology war could also be routed through existing Islamic organizations such as the Jama'atul Nasri Islam (JNI), the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, and various Muslim organizations with moderate beliefs who abhor violent fundamentalism.

Other governmental agencies including the education ministry should be involved in the counter-ideology fight. The success by the sect so far is a confirmation that government has failed so far in this war. Ideology war remains the most vital in the fight against Boko Haram. A government-wide effort through aggressive means using all avenues to reach the vulnerable population in the country, including some members of the sect, will surely reduce the sect's influence and regenerative capability. Although this process will be long and costly, the government must be determined to "stay the course" until victory is achieved. Massive public enlightenment programs should be introduced through all available media, including a rural information operation targeted at the neglected "periphery" in the region. A cabinet office with a minister could be established to coordinate all such efforts necessary to highlight the values of moderate Islamism and denounce radical ideologies. De-radicalization of arrested sect members should also fall within the responsibility of the cabinet office.

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[124] Sookhedeo, *Ideas Matter: How to Undermine the Extremist Ideology behind Al-Qaeda*, 228.

**3.    Addressing Legitimate Grievances of the Sect**

A commitment to resolve the crisis would require addressing some of the grievances of the sect. The government must also address many legitimate claims of damages suffered by innocent individuals caught in the cross fire during crackdowns on sect members. Some of these legitimate claims have rendered a meaningful segment of the population amenable to the sect's messages of overturning the status quo in that region. Members of the security agencies identified to have grossly violated human rights of individuals must be prosecuted. Those to be prosecuted should include those involved in extra-judicial killing of sect members and associates of the sect, and a speedy trial for the police officials accused of murdering the leader of the sect will also be necessary. The prosecution of sect members arrested will also be a step in the right direction.

The unwritten policy of destroying all abodes occupied by Boko Haram, including rented structures, should be moderated. Such punitive acts only add to the frustration of landlords who are innocent and may not be aware of the activities in those structures. Investigations must be thorough to confirm any complicity of such landlords before their structures are destroyed. Such indiscriminate actions only alienate the people and make them amenable to the messages of Boko Haram. The government must put a stop to human rights abuses and all forms of law enforcement violation by the police including the arbitrary arrest and detention by the security forces. The use of excessive violence against the population must also be stopped if favorable outcomes in resolving the conflict are to be accomplished.

**4.    Address Root Causes: Create Greater Employment Opportunities**

The lack of employment in Nigeria remains a monumental challenge. The North East region were Boko Haram remains active is considered the worst affected. This is partly due to the failure of government and is exacerbated by the ongoing conflict in that region. The government agencies such as the Ministry of Labor, National Directorate of Employment, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency, National Poverty Alleviation Program and many others have a prominent role to play in this regard. The government must double its effort to create the enabling environment for businesses to

thrive in there. Private sector participation must be encouraged and facilitated through tax waivers, government credit facilities, and incentivized investment opportunities. This will help to reduce the deplorable unemployment rates in the North East.

By creating employment in that region and in Nigeria, in general, the government must productively engage the youth and keep them away from criminal activities like those of Boko Haram. The inequality created by a lack of jobs helps sustain the unstable environment that allows Boko Haram to attract the youths through incentivized offers. The government also needs to embark on a massive infrastructure development effort in that region to repair widespread damage due to devastation and neglect. These infrastructures will help support the businesses it plans to facilitate in order to reduce unemployment. Such businesses with the government's support and credit facilities have the potential to employ youths and generate economic growth from the bottom-up despite the devastation experienced. Poverty and social injustice are also responsible for religious violence such as that of Boko Haram in Nigeria.[125] Many scholars have argued that the idea of the Boko Haram is not only about rejecting Western education per se, but it is also a judgment about the failure of the government to provide opportunities for the people.

The agricultural sector in the region should also be revived. This sector, which remains the largest employer of labor, remains an important sector in the creation of jobs. The gradual disappearance of water from the Lake Chad basin with its attendant consequences should be reversed for it remains pivotal for agriculture in that region. The Chad River Basin Authority should be adequately financed to provide water needed for irrigation for farming and fishing in that region. The Ministry of Agriculture should also be encouraged to implement farming programs that will revive the sector in the North East region.

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[125] Toni Johnson, "Boko Haram," *Council for Foreign Relations*, December 27, 2011, http://www.cfr.org/africa/boko-haram/p25739.

**5. Address Root Causes: Improve School Enrollment and Reform Existing Formal and Islamic Education Systems**

In order to reduce the education disparity of this region in comparison to the rest of Nigeria, a massive school enrollment program must be embarked upon. The "almajiri" school program that has begun at a snail's pace elsewhere should be speedily implemented in this region. This will help reduce the problem of unsupervised informal schools run by various clerics who are susceptible to radical ideologies. At the moment, all kinds of clerics establish local schools to tutor children without adequate supervision which allows these clerics to indoctrinate children for their selfish agendas.[126] A case in in recent memory is that of Muhammad Marwa, sect leader of the Maitatsine, and Mohammed Yusuf of Boko Haram, who exploited this space to educate the youth in radical ideologies under the watchful eye of supervisory agencies of the government. Formal schools could be incentivized by providing free breakfast and lunch to encourage the parents to enroll their children and wards. This is considered a long-term program for which adequate resources must be put in place to coordinate and sustain it by the government.

There would also be a need to develop a comprehensive policy guide for the establishment of Islamic schools. This is necessary to regulate the curriculum, authenticate the ideologies of the clerics, and supervise the methods of instruction of such schools. The government, through the local education agencies, could consider absorbing some of these informal schools into the formal education program which would make it more beneficial to the children. By absorbing the informal education into a formal Western-style education system, the government would greatly eradicate the chances of an individual indoctrinating a large number of children in his school.

Another aspect to be addressed is the quick rehabilitation of all destroyed schools in the affected region. Boko Haram sect members have engaged in the wanton destruction of educational institutions and have put them out of use. These institutions require quick

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[126] Idris Hamza, "Reforming the Tsangaya School System in Borno State," *Daily Trust Newspaper*, August 10, 2012.

repairs.[127] The longer schools remain destroyed or un-occupied, as the more likely it is that they become a sign of victory for the sect which seeks to deny children the opportunity of attending schools. The rehabilitation of such structures and the opening of more schools would greatly increase school enrollment and surely impact positively on the literacy rate in that region.

### 6.     Address Root Causes: Improve Justice System and Enforce the Respect of the Rule of Law

The justice system and the respect for the rule of law in Nigeria are in dire straits. A Nigerian public commentator, Mamman Yusufari, sums it up by stating that:

> Nigeria has laws but it does not rule; lawlessness is so pervasive that it is not only a feature, but another name for the country[128]

This statement captures the entrenched culture of impunity and disregard for laws across Nigeria. This culture has led to a loss of confidence by a large number of the citizenry. Even though the promotion of the rule of law is a tenet of democracy, there is a disregard for it amongst Nigerians, especially among the elites. Security remains compromised as the guarantee of opportunities and rights of individuals are critical for attainment of good security. The justice system is marred by corruption, judicial malpractice, and a culture of disrespect for laws.[129] This situation has been capitalized upon by Boko Haram for they identified these problems as a limitation of secular laws and called for the establishment of Islamic law.

There is a need to carry out judicial reforms to strengthen the rule of law in Nigeria. This will give hope to the people by providing them a space to seek redress whenever they feel wronged rather than by having no option but to resort to violence. Reforms will serve as concrete actions which counter the Boko Haram narrative. Additionally, the courts will become empowered to prosecute any individual without

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[127] Adam Nossiter, "Wielding Fire, Islamists Target Nigeria Schools," *New York Times*, March 25, 2012.

[128] Mamman Yusufari, "Restoring Rule of Law in Nigeria," (paper presented at the University of Warwick Law School, England, 2007).

[129] Ibid.

regard to his office or political standing within the community. The issue of arbitrary arrest, violations of human rights, and extra-judicial killing leveled against the security forces as well as Boko Haram adherents would be subject to judicial intervention. This will serve as a deterrent to others and will restore confidence in the people as to the equality of all before the law.

Ambiguities regarding the extent to which Shari'ah should be implemented must be addressed. The debate over the constitutionality of Shari'ah, which remains a source of debate, must be resolved. A former Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Kanu Agabi (SAN), in his infamous letter to the governors of states implementing the Shari'ah only fell short of claiming its unconstitutionality. The Repugnancy Test of Shari'ah, which is abhorred by most Muslims, stipulates that Shari'ah can be struck down whenever it is found in conflict with the English common law. This controversy should be resolved if harmony between the two systems (secular law and Shari'ah) is desired. Another factor affecting judicial reform is the lack of knowledgeable and qualified Qadis (judges). Despite the fact that the success of Shari'ah is solidly based on a thorough understanding of Islamic law and an ability to make decisions within the framework of the federal constitution, most of the Shari'ah courts remain headed by unqualified judges. A major consequence of unqualified judges is that many judgments are repealed at superior courts. This situation increases the resentment of many Muslims for the present form of Shari'ah implemented in most parts of the North. This limitation, if not addressed, could be a continuing issue that is used for mobilization by sects. Educating all citizens on the role and limitations of the Shari'ah will also help Muslims and non-Muslims to understand and appreciate the implementation of Shari'ah so as to avoid unnecessary antagonism against it.[130]

### 7. Address Root Causes: Political Reforms

The political landscape in Nigeria as it is today creates disenchantment for the majority of the people. The disenchantment of the people has created a growing army of

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[130] A. Basheer and A. Birnin-Kudu, "Practical Approach to Harmonization of Shari'ah and Civil Law: A Critical Analysis of the Nigerian Experience," http://www.gamji.com/article4000/NEWS4855.htm.

well-known and dangerous militias that have been tools for the politicians. The reluctance of the government to check these growing armies over time creates a ready pool for the Boko Haram extremists in the North.[131] Many members of the sect today are former members of the political group called "ECOMOG" which was used for political manipulations during the previous regime.[132] The absence of a level playing field, intimidation, and electoral fraud has plagued the politics of Nigeria. This is further worsened by the "winner-takes-all" approach and the absence of a legal means to resolve political grievances. In this climate militias emerge to fight political interests.

The illegitimate ascension to power situation denies the government the required legitimacy in a democratic setting. This significantly contributes to the militarization of the opposition often followed by a violent crackdown by government agencies. The Boko Haram and similar organizations not only benefit from such a situation but also capitalize on it to suggest an alternative form of government. There is a need for a deliberate effort by government to rebuild the confidence of the people in democratic practices through the reformation of the political process. This will require the re-evaluation of the electoral act to address glaring inadequacies which continues to deny the electoral process the required legitimacy. The authority of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and the courts must be upheld, free from government's influence, so that it can organize credible elections and serve as a place to seek redress.

The politics of winner-takes-all currently in practice should be discouraged. This form of politics is a limitation inherent in the presidential system for it allows for the introduction of an undesirable element of winner-takes-all in political societies where there is need for conciliatory politics.[133] This situation is similar to what obtains in Nigeria where the fixed terms for election makes the system too rigid and allows office holders to engage in marginalization tactics against those that oppose them. Many of the conflicts in Nigeria are often related to political marginalization for this determines access to resources often shared through neo-patrimonial systems. Other forms of

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[131] Abimbola and Adesoji, "Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram."

[132] Unpublished DIA Reports, 2011.

[133] Donald L. Harowitz, "Comparing Democratic Systems," *Journal of Democracy* 1, no. 1 (1990).

political arrangements, such as the less expensive parliamentary system, could be explored. Better still, structures could be put in place to prevent political marginalization of any individual or groups while at the same time providing avenues for seeking redress.[134]

No form of political reform can be achievable in Nigeria without eliminating corruption. Corruption remains the most endemic problem in Nigeria. The objective of this fight would be to reduce corruption, root out nepotism, and eradicate maladministration in the public and private sectors in Nigeria. The presence of corruption created an environment similar to those that facilitate the rise of terrorism. The existing structures established to address this climate include the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC). They must be allowed the required independence and increased power by an act of parliament to fully achieve their goals. Public servants must be held accountable for their actions and those who violate the laws promptly prosecuted. The government must also cooperate with other countries and international partners to trace and recover all stolen funds deposited in banks of those countries and track all movements of illegal funds. At the moment, Nigeria earns a low rank for transparency as adjudged by Transparency International which accounts for the debilitating effect on the structures of the country.[135]

The gap between the state and the constituent societies must also be closed. The levels of instability in any society tend to reflect the degree to which members of that society feel unaccounted for and neglected by the policies of the states as well as its leadership.[136] In the region where Boko Haram is most active, and in the rest of Nigeria, there exists a complete disconnect between the centers and the peripheries. The political leadership executes policies for their own political gain rather than for the good of the

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[134] Ebere Osieke, "The Federal Republic of Nigeria," in *Legislative, Executive, and Judicial Governance in Federal Countries*, ed. Katy Le Roy and Cheryl Saunders (Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 2006).

[135] Chizoba N. (Zee) Madueke, "The Role of Leadership in Governance: The Nigerian Experience," Research Paper, Walden University, College of Management and Technology, 2008, 4.

[136] Chalmers A. Johnson, *Revolutionary Change* (California: Stanford University Press, 1982).

people. Additionally, most of the leadership enjoys financial prosperity by pilfering from government funds which maintains the gap between leadership and the majority poor population. Efforts must be made to ensure that the center connects adequately with the periphery, and the interest of the people must be taken into consideration when making policies.

## 8. Deal with the Effects of the Insurgency: Dialogue and National Reconciliation

A long period of instability has deepened the existing religious and ethnic fault lines. The emergence of the Boko Haram sect has further complicated the relationship between the regions as well as between the major religions. This situation has handicapped the government by making it focus on balancing demands between ethnic and religious groups that now compete for resources. The ethnic and religious groups have created movements and organizations to promote and protect their own interests which have made development difficult. There is an observed religious patronage by the political elites which makes them indecisive in making prompt decisions. There is a need to insist that religion and ethnicity should only be practiced and subscribed to in the private realm amongst political office holders. This will help prevent conflict of religion and state in Nigeria.

The observed rise of ethnic identity groups and the prevalent rivalry amongst religious organizations must be addressed. Interfaith dialogue should be encouraged amongst the leadership of the religious groups in each community. Preventing the emergence of political organizations based on religion and ethnic identity must be enforced across the country. Reconciliation must be strongly pursued while at the same time compensation and rehabilitation of those affected by the violence of Boko Haram should be carried out by the government. Efforts must also be made to rebuild the worship places that were destroyed where possible.

## 9. Deal with the Effects of the Insurgency: Amnesty for the Sect

Granting of amnesty for those who unconditionally renounce terrorism will be necessary. This offer should only be made to the members not directly identified in

violation of human rights so that the government will not be seen as rewarding the guilty. The Roman author Vegetius once noted that "When men find they must inevitably perish, they willingly resolve to die with their comrades… The maxim of Scipio, that a golden bridge should be made for a flying enemy, has much been commended."[137] This statement aptly explains the importance of building a bridge when fighting insurgency operations similar to that of Boko Haram that persist for a long time. Amnesty is a program that weakens insurgent groups by encouraging surrender and defection. Members who embrace amnesty will help in many ways in the eventual defeat of the group due to valuable intelligence. Amnesty is also a way to reduce the number of the sect by allowing those that are tired of fighting to defect from the sect.

**10.    Deal with the Effects of the Insurgency: Implement an Effective Rehabilitation Program**

Government must be committed to conduct the full package of DDRR of members of the sect and their sympathizers. Sustainable reintegration of former Boko Haram will serve as a long-term development of the region. The participation in the DDRR program will serve as a precondition for amnesty to the adherents of the sect. The program will help tone down the "psyche of fighting" of members who wish to rejoin their communities after a long period of embracing the ideology of violence with the Boko Haram group. This program is an important aspect of the strategy to resolve the crisis in Nigeria.

**B.    LIKELIHOOD OF THE STRATEGY'S SUCCESS**

The success of the proposed strategy is likely in the short, intermediate, and long term. The prerequisite for success will hinge upon the government's commitment to pursue the process to logical conclusions. Undoubtedly, the Boko Haram sect will fight back in the immediate and intermediate future but will fizzle out in the long term. The elimination of its leadership will disorganize its structures and result in dispersion of its members. Many will be forced to go underground if the military effort is sustained.

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[137] Travis K. Weinger, "Building the Golden Bridge: Does Military Pressure or Incentives Best Explain Increase Success in Counterinsurgency Amnesty Program" (Master's thesis, Georgetown University, Washington, DC, 2010), 1–2.

Desperate attacks may be launched in the short term in an attempt to revive the movement. However, these attempts may not succeed once recruitment is stopped by creating an enlightened, employed, and integrated population over time. Attempts will also be made by the sect to insinuate that there is a deliberate marginalization of the Islamic faith to generate sentiment. This will also have limited impact if the counter-ideology and enlightenment programs work.

In the long term, there will be a decline in violent radicalization amongst Muslims in the North. Radical clerics will be denied space to spread their radical ideologies due to the scrutiny that will be in place as a result of the re-organization of schools and educational outlets in that region and elsewhere. The prosecution of all leaders and sponsors of the sect will also serve as a deterrent to other mischief makers who may be nursing similar intentions like that of the Boko Haram.

The risk associated with this strategy lies in the faulty implementation of the kinetic operation aspect of the strategy. Human rights abuses by security forces and any form of disregard of the rule of law will serve to further alienate the government from the people. A counter-ideology program must be well crafted so as to prevent other Muslims from perceiving the strategy as an attack on them. The counter-ideology narratives should emanate from clerics within the society whom the people respect and identify with. International religious groups could also be cultivated to help shape the perception of the Muslim population while implementing the strategy.

The implementation of the strategy is considered an expensive undertaking. It is expected to cost the government enormous resources that can only be spent with the required political commitment by the leadership and the rest of the population. The cost benefit of engaging in eradicating the Boko Haram crisis is considered worthwhile as failure to tackle the crisis at this stage would only allow the conflict to spread. This may eventually lead to the disintegration of the country. The strategy requires sustainability, and it must be supported by other ethnic and religious groups in the country for it to serve its purpose. Otherwise sentiments could be easily derived from its implementation which could become a root cause for another problem in Nigeria. The importance of

international partners in the area of intelligence, funding, and moral support is also considered an important aspect of the strategy.

## C.    SUMMARY

The proposed strategy for the successful resolution of the Boko Haram crisis is a combined approach that will address the symptoms of terrorism as well as the root cause. It is considered a comprehensive government solution with each government agency doing its bit to narrow the operating space of terrorists and to eliminate the conditions that allow Boko Haram ideologies to resonate with the people. Because of its scope and long-term time commitment, the proposed strategy is an expensive prospect. The impact of the strategy is expected to have the short term, mid-term, and long-term effects that will eventually resolve the crisis. A deliberate phasing of funding for the suggested solution will be required as it will be expensive to take on at a go by the government. The government could also tap into America's global war on terrorism which could make it a beneficiary of enormous funding as the threats posed by Boko Haram indirectly threatens the interest of the U.S. This is important as failure to implement the solution will be more costly to Nigeria whose existence remains at stake if the violence persists.

## D.    CONCLUSION

The Boko Haram crisis has further added to the continued instability in Nigeria. Although this crisis is not the first of all sectarian violence, it remains the most virulent with the potential to not only destabilize the country but the rest of the region. The intent of this thesis is to suggest a strategy that, if adopted by the government, could help resolve the crisis.

In constructing the solution proposed in this thesis, we examined the origins of Boko Haram as well as the socio-economic issues that persist in the area where Boko Haram is most active. Basically, the Boko Haram issue is rooted in ideology and grievances. The group remains focused on Islamizing Nigeria and continues to make attempts to align its ideology with those of regional terrorist organizations such as the AQIM and the Al-Shabab with the intention of gaining support from them. Fundamental to the group is a mission to avenge the extra-judicial killing of its charismatic leader,

Mohammed Yusuf, and other members during the security forces' onslaught against Boko Haram in 2009. Some of the incidences in 2009 drove the sect underground only to emerge better organized with more recruits from within the society who were sympathetic after watching the gruesome killing of the sect members by security forces.

It is important to understand this background and to analyze the government's minimally successful attempts to address the crisis in light of these issues and in terms of the available scholarship on counter-terrorism. Among the various options posed by scholars and which are examined in this thesis is an approach that focuses on the symptoms of the crisis using military assets. They concluded that this strategy will narrow the operating space for the terrorist organization and eventually eradicate the group. The second option is to vigorously address the root causes behind a conflict with the expectation that the terrorist group will become isolated and eventually fizzle out.

The strategy proposed here is one that combines these two approaches. This involves addressing the root causes as well as the symptoms of the crisis simultaneously. The strategy supports an expanded military operation that will effectively narrow the operating space of the sect and at the same time provide the space needed for other governmental agencies to move in and address the root causes of the crisis. The approach to resolving the symptoms involves eliminating core leaders of the sect and denying the sect the required operating space to mobilize, organize, and recruit members of the public. Targeting the core leaders is considered necessary as most of them will be hardened ideologists who control the nodes of the group. Their elimination will disrupt the structure of the movement as well as free ordinary members who may have remained only as a result of coercion.

The proposed strategy addresses the root causes that created an environment in which Boko Haram could thrive. The effort to address the root causes as detailed in this thesis include: creating better employment opportunities, improving school enrollment and reforming the current formal and informal education system, improving the justice system and enforcing the rule of law, and implementing political reforms. Another aspect of the suggested strategy is to initiate a dialogue and national reconciliation. As part of the reconciliation process an amnesty program is recommended for the members of the

sect who renounce violence. A successful implementation of the amnesty program will be made possible through an effective DDRR program to be organized by the government to rehabilitate the fighters who embrace peace. The central requirement for the success of the strategy will be through an effective counter-ideological effort organized by the government through identified clerics and Islamic organizations to isolate the ideology of the sect and deny them support from amongst the people. It is pertinent to state also that some legitimate grievances of the sect must be addressed, especially the prosecution of those found culpable in the murder of its leader and members in 2009.

The success of the strategy is considered in the short, mid, and long term and hinges on the commitment of government to pursue the strategy to its logical conclusion. Even though the Boko Haram sect is expected to fight back in the short and midterm, a well-planned and effective government wide response is expected to deny it space to recruit, organize, and operate which will eventually lead to its demise in the long term.

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