

The Effect Of Non-International Armed Conflict On Socio-Economic Development In Nigeria

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Abstract

Armed conflict in any society is a product of dissonance or discord between two or more entities based on opposing interests be it economic, social, religious, or political. The continuous presence of armed conflict within a State could pave way for economic deprivation, poverty and the total breakdown of States' social order. Non-International Armed Conflicts (Non-IAC) in Nigeria have left negative landmarks on agriculture, food supply chain and economic development in Nigeria especially in the conflict-prone region of the country. This paper discussed the negative effect of protracted Non-IACs on Socio-economic development in Nigeria. Towards aiding the failing economic activities in Nigeria's conflict-prone regions, this paper recommended that meaningful steps should be taken towards the amicable settlement of disputes among warring parties and put in place

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economic policies that could revamp the agricultural food supply chain and economic sectors of the nation. In addition, beyond policy initiation, the government should utilize the combination of community leaders, para-military officers and judicial officers in Dispute Resolution Committees. The Nation's economic strategies should, also, be aimed at equipping vulnerable youths and capable persons from the conflict-prone regions towards capacity building, empowerment and basic skill acquisitions that can boost the entrepreneurial culture of the community and the economy as a whole.

Keywords: Armed Conflict, Non-International Armed Conflict, Infrastructural Development, Inclusive Growth, Poverty

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Introduction

One of the incidences of statehood is the gathering of persons of different kinds, and from a different ethnic background, religion, social status, tribe, etc., together as a Nation under a societal arrangement to become a sole entity. A State is a political community where there is in existence a form of independently organized government and one in which the primary loyalty is to a cultural self-identity, which can be termed as “nationality”; having a common language and is further characterized by a shared memory of historic events and by cultural factors of all sorts, such as sports contests, literature, media, political parties, social organizations, educational and political systems.¹ Bearing in mind the unique characteristics of a state, maintaining unity among all entities subject to States’ directives and control is key and germane to the continuous peaceful existence of any state. Towards achieving this huge responsibility, every state attempts to structure itself in strategic manners that will make it possible to accommodate the interests of all persons’ subject to the control of the state.

However, history has shown that not all state succeeds in this enormous task; leading to the outbreak of anarchy and disorderliness in the State in form of deep-rooted armed violence, terrorism, insurgencies, etc., herein termed as Non-International Armed Conflicts

¹ See Pick A.C, “The Nation State: An Essay” Available at <https://www.thenationstate.co.uk/TheNationState.pdf> Accessed 29 March 2020

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(Non-IACs). In the word of Common Article 3 to the four Geneva Conventions, Non-IAC are conflict not of international character. Under the Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions of 1979, non-international armed conflicts for the purpose of International Humanitarian Law was described thus:

“This Protocol, which develops and supplements Article 3 common to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 without modifying its existing conditions of application, shall apply to all armed conflicts ... which take place in the territory of a High Contracting Party between its armed forces and dissident armed forces or other organized armed groups which, under responsible command, exercise such control over a part of its territory as to enable them to carry out sustained and concerted military operations and to implement this Protocol.”

Thus, Non-IACs refers to the scale of armed conflicts -

- I. occurring within the territory of a state,
- II. between the State and dissident armed forces or other organized armed groups operating within the state,
- III. having a chain of command in their hierarchies,
- IV. capable of exercising territorial control,
- V. in other to carry out a sustained attack on any part of a state territory.

The word “conflict” itself is derived from the Latin word “*conflictus*”, which means collision or clash and it can be termed generally as a struggle or contest between people with opposing needs, ideas, beliefs, values, or goals and this opposition at the heart of the conflict reveals the exact nature of the incompatibilities, i.e. whether they are between individuals, groups or societal positions; whether they rest in different interests or beliefs; or whether they have a material existence or come into being only through discourse.²

In her 59-year statehood journey, Nigeria as a country has had its own share of protracted Non-IACs from her independence in 1960 till date. These Non-IACs were largely the product of negative responses to the perceived dominance of one part of the country over the other, of one religion or ethnic group over and above the others in the political, social or economic structure of the nation based on various indigenous interests. This paper looks into the effects of Non-IACs on Nigeria’s market supply chain, Agricultural development and economic growth since her independence.

Objectives:

The following were the focus of this work -

² See Pia .E. and Diez .T, “Conflict and Human Rights: A Theoretical Framework”, presented in a working paper Series tagged “SHUR: Human Rights in Conflicts: The Role of Civil Society, a STREP project funded by the EU 6th Framework Programme” 2007. Available at <https://shur.luiss.it/files/2008/10/shurwp01-07.pdf>
Accessed 21 March 2020

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- Exploring the effect of Non-IACs on the Socio-economic development in Nigeria
- Exploring the effect of Non-IACs on Nigeria's market supply chain
- Exploring the effect of Non-IACs on Nigeria's Agricultural development
- Suggesting means of combating the effect of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Non-IACs) in Nigeria.

2. Review of Related Literatures

Major tensions and conflicts in Nigeria's post-colonial era is mostly linked to religious and ethnic clashes and they stemmed from the agitations and the quest for power and dominance by various ethnic groups in Nigeria³. It was against this background that the country witnessed the spate of incessant *coup-de-etat* in quick successions that occasioned bloodshed, religious conflicts which gradually transformed into Non-IACs. Some authors have opined that these ethnic and religious had political backing and support by politicians for personal gains; and because of this, Non-IACs tend to be protracted until the political gains are realized.⁴ Other authors believed that armed conflicts are product of ignorance, misguidance and misinterpretation of

³ See Blanton R and Mason T.D, "Colonial Style and Post-Colonial Ethnic Conflict in Africa" 2001 *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 38(4), pp.473-491 @ 475

⁴ See Kenneth Omeje, "The State, Conflict & Evolving Politics in the Niger Delta, Nigeria" 2010 *Review of African Political Economy* vol. 31(101), pp.425-440

religious laws.⁵ However, a quantum of existing scholarly researches supports the notion that Non-IACs inflict hardship on the community besieged by it and by extension, the development of that community⁶. Previous literatures on Non-IACs in Africa found that persons in the affected regions struggle with livelihood⁷, while other researchers posited that the increased struggle for livelihood somehow underscores the response of the community towards Non-IACs. These scholars have shown the effect of Non-IACs on daily living of persons in the conflict-prone communities⁸; and it is imperative to consider the influence of Non-IACs on economic developments conflict-prone regions in Nigeria with references on how economic activities have been affected.

3. Discussion

Historical Background of Non-International Armed Conflicts in Nigeria

Post-independence armed conflicts in Nigeria dates back to 1966 when the first military coup in the country was staged by a

⁵ See Kamal-deen O.S, “Religious Violence in Contemporary Nigeria: Implications and Options for Peace and Stability” 2016 *Journal For the Study of Religion* vol. 29(1)

⁶ See Dauda G.O, “Islam and religious Tolerance: A Case Study of Nigeria’s Public Uprisings 1980-1992.” 1993 *Journal of Arabic and Religious Studies* vol. 10; See also Eniola S.O., “Religious Crisis in Nigeria: Analysis of Causes and Effects” MA. Dissertation, University of Ilorin

⁷ See Ikeke M.O., “The National World and Violent Conflict in Nigeria: An Appraisal” (2014) *Unizik Journal of Arts and Humanities* vol. 10

⁸ *ibid*

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collection of young military Officers under Major Emmanuel Ifeajuna and Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu which was partially successful and it brought about the death of some notable figures in the Country's political sphere such as the former Prime Minister, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the Premier Ahmadu Bello of the Northern Region and Premier Ladoke Akintola of the Western Region.⁹ The *Coup de etat* of January 1966 was interpreted by the northern oligarchies as being masterminded by Igbo military leaders and targeted at northern political leaders in political power.¹⁰ The coup evidenced an ethnic power tussle and struggle as the politicians and senior military officers killed were from the North and Western Region and this fueled the breakdown of Non-IAC in Nigeria as a newly formed Federation.¹¹

Subsequently, the observed inactions or unwillingness of the Maj Gen. J.T.U. Aguiyi Ironsi led Government (subsequent government that emerged after the January coup) to prosecute the perpetrators of the *Coup de etat* in its unfolding plans made matter worse. In the Northern part of Nigeria, the reaction in certain quarters was more of a studying silence and an observing attitude emerged

⁹ See Jacob .R.I., "A Historical Survey of Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria" *Asian Social Science Journal* Vol. 8, No. 4; April 2012, Doi:10.5539/ass.v8n4p13. Available at <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.663.3342&rep=rep1&type=pdf> Accessed 23 March 2020

¹⁰ See Akanji O.O, "Migration, Conflicts and Statehood problem in Nigeria: the Self-Determination Issue" *Journal of Nigeria Studies* Vol.1 Number 2, Fall 2012

¹¹ See Abubakar .A.A, "The Nigerian Civil War: Causes, Strategies and Lessons learnt" 2012 Available at <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/1992/AAA.htm> Accessed 24 March 2020

which gradually changed to resentment; culminating in the May 1966 riots throughout the North during which most Easterners residing in the North were attacked and killed.¹² The aftermath of these events was the initiated countercoup of July 1966 by the Northern military officers which removed and killed many other senior officers from the East including the incumbent Head of Government General Aguiyi Ironsi (an Igbo man from eastern Nigeria) and installed General Yakubu Gowon (a northerner) as the Head of State.¹³ These series of Coup led to an increase in ethnic tension and violence within the country and in addition, the coup produced a resultant bloodbath of both military officers and civilians, especially those of Igbo extraction; leading to the increased agitation by Easterners for their own autonomy and protection from the military's wrath.¹⁴ After series of failed conciliatory attempts to settle the obvious rifts through sovereign conferences, interventions from well-meaning personalities from around the world, and even other States, the Eastern Region as led by the ambitious Lt. Colonel Chukwuemeka Odumekwu Ojukwu declared itself an independent State calling themselves “Republic of Biafra” in May 1967.¹⁵ This led the Nation to an unprecedented Civil War which lasted from 2 July 1967 till 15 January 1970¹⁶; marking the beginning of Non-International Armed conflicts in Nigeria. It is noteworthy, that the war

¹² *ibid*

¹³ Akanji, above n10, p. 6

¹⁴ Jacobs, above n9, p.6

¹⁵ *ibid*

¹⁶ Abubakar, Above n11,p.6

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ended with a voluntary surrender and laying down of arms by the secessionist group known as “the Republic of Biafra”.

29 years after Nigeria’s first Non-International Armed Conflict (Non-IAC), two major series of protracted Non-International armed conflicts were further recorded during Nigeria’s democratic dispensation. The first Non-International armed conflict started in the Niger Delta Region of the country (southern part) from 1999 through to 2008 though a bit tensed down as of today; while the second Non-international armed conflict started largely in 2009 by an Islamic sect called Boko Haram meaning - Western Education is False. In their Security Reports on Armed conflicts in Nigeria, Project Ploughshares¹⁷ succinctly relied on information from World Human Right Watch, Amnesty International, Global Security Network Agencies, Local and International Medias in concisely breaking down the historical timeline of the Niger Delta Non-IAC in Nigeria as represented in the table below:

Table 1: Historical Timeline of the Niger Delta Armed Conflict in Nigeria.

1999	Regional and ethnic fighting started in several regions of Nigeria in 1999, claiming over 1,000 lives. Conflict flared
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¹⁷ See Project Ploughshares, “Armed Conflicts Report: Nigeria (1990 - first combat deaths)”. Available at <https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/eoir/legacy/2014/02/25/Nigeria.pdf> Accessed 25 March, 2020

	<p>not only between ethnic groups, but also between ethnic groups and the state, especially in the oil-producing region of the Niger Delta. Militancy and Kidnapping on a massive scale resumed in the Niger-Delta Region of Nigeria; prompting the government to deploy troops to troubled areas around Niger Delta Region in an attempt to control the violence.</p>
2006	<p>Violent clashes between various groups continued throughout 2006 resulting in the death of around 300 civilians. A new rebel faction - the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), emerged formally in early 2006 and is seeking independence for the region's 14 million Ijaw people. Its favored tactics reportedly include sabotaging oil production in the Delta region, damaging oil infrastructures, as well as kidnapping foreign workers.</p>
2007	<p>Separatist, state, and religious violence continued in 2007, while gang violence increased for the first time since 2004. The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) as well as other armed opposition groups, continued attacks against oil production facilities and employees, resulting in high financial losses for the government.</p>

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2008	Violence continued throughout 2008 in the Niger Delta between the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), other militia groups in the region, and the Nigerian government. Kidnappings and hijackings of oil workers both on the ground and from boats continued throughout the year. Militia violence was at its worst in September with 100 conflict deaths in the month alone. The rape of women by militias and militaries continued throughout 2008, with an increased worry over an increased prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the region.
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Closely following this tides of events came the advent of insurgency in the Northern part of the Country in 2009 borne out of political duels and power tussles from opposition to the incumbent Government and also being perpetuated under the guise of religion. Nigeria's most dreaded insurgent group, *Jama'atul Ahlus Sunnah Lid daawati wal Jihad* popularly known as Boko Haram started it violent operations and campaign against western education and in 2009, a deadly violence broke out in North East Nigeria between government troops and the *Boko Haram* sect which resulted in huge civilian casualties. In retaliation, the police and the army carried-out a five day assault against the sect which led to the death of the Leader of the Sect Mohammed Yusuf and hundreds of Boko Haram members.¹⁸ With the

¹⁸ See Imasuen .E, "Insurgency and humanitarian crises in Northern Nigeria: The case of Boko Haram" *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*. Vol. 9(7), pp.284-296. Doi:10.5897/AJPSIR2015.0789

death of the leader of the Boko Haram sect in 2009, the sect underwent a period of transformation with a new leader emerging in 2010, thereby championing the cause of major security threats to the Nigerian state. This sect has organized series of deadly attacks which has expanded the sect's area of operation and control from north east state to all the northern states including part of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja; their methods of attacks includes the deployment of armed gunmen on motorcycles, suicide bombers, vehicles-borne improvised explosives(VBIEDS) etc.¹⁹ Subsequently, Nigeria witnessed the first suicide bombings in police headquarters and United Nation's office in Abuja by the Sect, and their activities further escalated when on 14th April, 2014 the sect kidnapped 250 female students from Government Girl's Secondary school Chibok in Borno State of Nigeria.²⁰ The Sect became designated as Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) by the United State Security Department in November 2013 and the United Nations Committee on Al Qaeda sanction blacklisted the group on 22nd May, 2014 as one of the world terrorist organizations.

Protracted Non-International Armed Conflict and the Nigerian Economy

¹⁹ *ibid*

²⁰ See Salisu .S.S., Mohd .A.S. et al, "The Impact of Boko Haram Insurgency on Nigerian National Security" *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*. Vol. 5, No. 6. DOI: 10.6007/IJARBSS/v5-i6/1676 Available at <https://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v5-i6/1676> Accessed 29 March 2020

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It is noteworthy that in a bid to tackle and mitigate the effects of protracted conflicts on the country, the Nigerian government under the concept of the Vision 20:2020, designed six (6) main objectives towards achieving the target goals of economic revitalization, to wit:

- bridging the Infrastructural Gap to unleash Economic Growth and Wealth creation
- optimizing the sources of economic growth to increase productivity and competitiveness
- building a productive, competitive and functional human resource base, for economic growth and social advancement
- developing a knowledge-based economy
- Improving Governance, Security, Law and Order and engendering more efficient and effective use of resources and promoting Social Harmony and Conducive Business Environment for growing the economy
- Fostering Accelerated, Sustainable Social and Economic Development in a Competitive and Environmentally friendly manner.²¹

In addition to this, the present government administration in Nigeria championed the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP 2017-2020) to breathe life into Nigeria's economic space thus:

²¹ See Adenipekun .M.T, "Sustainable rural infrastructural development in Nigeria within the context of Vision 20:2020" *International Journal of Development and Sustainability*, Vol. 2 No. 1. 2013. pp 254-269 ISDS Article ID: IJDS12120101

“The ERGP has three broad strategic objectives that will help achieve the vision of inclusive growth outlined above: (1) restoring growth, (2) investing in our people, and (3) building a globally competitive economy.

Restoring Growth: To restore growth, the Plan focuses on achieving macroeconomic stability and economic diversification. ... Similarly, to achieve economic diversification, policy focus will be on the key sectors driving and enabling economic growth, with particular focus on agriculture, energy and MSME led growth in industry, manufacturing and key services by leveraging science and technology. The revival of these sectors, increased investment in other sectors, less reliance on foreign exchange for intermediate goods and raw materials and greater export orientation will improve macroeconomic conditions, restore growth in the short term and help to create jobs and bring about structural change...”²²

However, the targets are still very far from being met years after the launch of the Vision 20:2020 and the ERGP 2017 campaign; the

²² See the official text of the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) 2017-2020, at pg. 12, para II. available at <https://yourbudgit.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Economic-Recovery-Growth-Plan-2017-2020.pdf> last accessed 01 April, 2020

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continuous negative effects of Non-IACs on the Nigerian community remains apparent.

Non-International Armed Conflicts(Non-IAC) and Nigeria's Socio Economic Variables

The regions of Nigeria that have been plagued by protracted Non-IAC have experienced neglect and backwardness in agricultural and food supply chain development over the years and the effects have been alarming; leaving behind extensive socio-economic implications for the Nation. Due to the attack on agriculture and market supply, socio-economic developments in Nigeria has been greatly impaired across the country's conflict prone regions. It is noteworthy that the northern region of Nigeria is a region that takes it pride in enormous agriculture and farm outputs²³. Unfortunately, those records have been deleted and/or extinguished by the spate of continuous insurgencies and armed conflict between Nigerian military and the boko haram sect. Sadly, government expenditure has not translated into meaningful growth and development of the agricultural and social market sector in Nigeria especially in the northern and Niger-Delta regions with the

²³ See Jonas Chianu, Hiroshi Tsujii, Patrick Kormawa, "Agriculture in the Savannas of Northern Nigeria: Pressures, Transformations, Damage and Coping Strategies" (2004) *Outlook on Agriculture, SageJournal* vol 33(4). pp.247-253

worst hits armed conflict attacks and much distressed by the deficient social infrastructural developments in the country.²⁴

The predominant negative effects of this Non-IAC is that there are no safer lands for agricultural purposes in the conflict-prone regions. Worse still, there is public panic and anxiety in the conflict prone regions with people running for their safety. Voice of America (VOA) interviewed market stakeholders in Maiduguri and observed that the increased killings in the region has frustrated any chances of economic growth in the region²⁵. Continuous bomb-blasts have created fear and the run for safety by farmers who hitherto were on the front line of economic rejuvenation in the northern region.



²⁴ See Fasoranti .M.M, “The Effect of Government Expenditure on Infrastructure on the Growth of the Nigerian Economy, 1977-2009” *International Journal of Economics and Financial Issues* Vol. 2, No. 4, 2012, pp.513-518

²⁵ See VOA Special Reports on Boko Haram , written by Ibrahim Ahmed and Mike Ekel. Available at https://www.voanews.com/MediaAssets2/projects/boko-haram/index_en.html last accessed 01 April, 2020

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Image 1: A car bomb detonated in Maiduguri market killing atleast 56 people including farmers, buyers, marker traders and local market security men – July 2, 2014. Image Credit: VOA Report https://www.voanews.com/MediaAssets2/projects/boko-haram/index_en.

In addition to the problem of market safety, there have been little or no re-construction, and maintenance of existing public utilities like roads, drainages, railways etc., damaged by bombings in conflict-prone areas of the country like Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe States where the Boko Haram insurgency is mostly situated. This is so because of a number of reasons including but not limited to the following:

1. The government, though firmly aware of the fact that public roads, and markets are the primary target of the insurgents, yet makes little or no resource allocation for re-constructions in the region,
2. Inconsistent State policies on the revitalization of conflict-affected regions of the country, and
3. poor political leadership and acts of political bias.

Protracted Non-International Armed Conflicts(Non-IACs) and Nigeria's Inclusive Growth and Development.

In Nigeria, protracted Non-IACs occasioned by the activities of Boko Haram insurgency in the North Eastern region is a primary

challenge and significant factor militating against economic development in terms of sustainable entrepreneurial activities that would have reduced poverty in the region.²⁶ The economic and developmental challenge of the conflict-prone regions of the country have been further compounded by extreme violence, insecurity, youth unemployment, lack of empowerment (dependency syndrome), poverty, corruption, inadequate room for creativity and innovation, gender inequality, high rate of illiteracy, ethnic diversity, religious intolerance among others.²⁷ Many private investors are unwilling to invest in politically unsettled times that are characterized by continued insecurities, macro-economic instability, pervasive corruption, and weak government policies. In addition, poor health resulting from improper health services, degradation of human capital during conflict, inadequate nutrition, physical and mental trauma sustained from conflict present further challenges to economic growth and development.²⁸ The negative effects of protracted conflict on inclusive growth in Nigeria can be gleaned from the following perspectives:

Reduction in Small and Medium Scale Businesses and Entrepreneurial Activities in the Country

²⁶ See Dugguh S.I, “Peacebuilding: Meeting the Challenges of Sustainable Entrepreneurship Development in the Post-Boko Haram Conflict in North Eastern Nigeria” (2016) *Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM)* Vol. 18, Issue 2 .Ver. II. pp 32-40

²⁷ *ibid*

²⁸ *ibid*

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The situation of violence and protracted conflicts have resulted in a major setback for entrepreneurial development of citizens in the country; thus creating a clog in the wheel of the country's economic growth. Protracted armed conflict has watered down Small and Medium Scaled Businesses required for economic development in any developing Nation. Over the years, SMEs have served as economic catalysts in industrialized countries and in many developed countries, more than 90% of all enterprises are within the SME sub-sector.²⁹ For instance, SMEs contribute 80% of the total industrial labor force in Japan, 50% in Germany and 46% in USA.³⁰ Unfortunately in Nigeria, Key Note Speakers at the CBN's Financial System Strategy Conference 2020 confirmed the fact that SMEs in Nigeria only account for approximately 1% (percent) contribution to Gross Domestic Growth compared to over 40%(percent) contribution in other developed countries³¹.

²⁹ See Ogbo .A. and Nwachukwu .A.C, "The Role of Entrepreneurship in Economic Development: The Nigerian Perspective" *European Journal of Business and Management*, Vol. 4, No.8 2012

³⁰ *ibid*

³¹ See Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Financial System Strategy (FSS) 2020 International Conference Key Note Discuss, delivered by Professor Banji Oyelaran-Oyeyinka titled "SME: Issues, Challenges and Prospects" available at https://www.cbn.gov.ng/fss/wed/SME_Issues,%20Challenges%20and%20Prospects_Oyeyinka%20Banji.pdf last accessed 01 April, 2020

The benefits of small scale enterprises to any economy are easily noticeable, and these include, among others, the following as observed by Amire and Ngwama³²

- i. Contribution to the economy in terms of output of goods and services
- ii. Creating jobs at relatively low cost of capital, especially in the fast growing services sector
- iii. Providing a vehicle for reducing income disparities,
- iv. Developing a pool of skilled and semi-skilled workers as a basis for the future industrial expansion
- v. Improving forward and backward linkages between, socially and geographically diverse sectors of the economy,
- vi. Providing opportunities for developing and adapting appropriate technological approaches
- vii. Offering an excellent breeding ground for entrepreneurial and managerial talent, the critical shortage of which is often a great handicap to economic development.

The sustenance of a countries' interest in SMEs in developing economies is widely attributed to maintaining a user-free economic environment where citizens are able to set in motion their creative ideas

³² See Amire C.M and Ngwama J. C. "Emergence of Unemployment: An Assessment of Nigeria Directorate of Employment (NDE) Skill Intervention Programmes Between (2005-2011) in Lagos State". 2015 *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development, (IISTE)*, vol. 6(5)

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and innovations as entrepreneurs towards generating income for themselves, creating employments and thereby moving the country forward economically. The advent of violence, hostilities and protracted conflicts in any society creates nothing but an economically-hostile situation where citizens are prevented from carrying out entrepreneurial activities necessary for economic growth and foreign investors are by extension prevented from making investments due to the unreceptive and unfriendly economic situations occasioned by protracted conflicts. For the fear of safety, willful intimidation by opposition or rebels³³, business losses, little or no profit, and hostilities, economic participation from foreign investors in Nigeria, SME and entrepreneurial participation by citizens in the Nation's economic affairs continues to dwindle as a result of the perceived insecurity created by protracted conflicts.

Increased Level of Poverty

Poverty is a complex concept which does not fit into a neat definition. It entails a complex interconnection of descriptors surrounding the livelihood status of people in communities. According to the World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen in 1995³⁴ -

³³ See Umaru A., Pate H.A. et al, "The Impact of Insecurity and Poverty on Sustainable Economic Development in Nigeria" *International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education (IJHSSE)* Vol. 2, Issue 2, pp 32-48, 2015

³⁴ See Department of Economic and Social Affairs Publications, The United Nations – Final Report of the World Summit For Social Development A/CONF.166/9. Available at <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/world-summit-for-social-development-1995.html> last accessed 8 May, 2020

“Poverty has various manifestations including lack of income and productive resources sufficient to ensure sustainable livelihoods; hunger and malnutrition; ill health; limited or lack of access to education and other basic services; increased morbidity and mortality from illness; homelessness and inadequate housing; unsafe environments; and social discrimination and exclusion. It is also characterized by lack of participation in decision making and in civil, social and cultural life”

Poverty is multidimensional but specific to a location and a social group. However, the striking common features in the experience of poverty is that poor people lives are characterized by powerlessness which constrain the people’s choice and define the relationship and influence they are able to make with institutions in their environment.

The Niger Delta region had witnessed severe economic deprivation and social exclusion in sharp contrast to the enormous wealth of the region due to protracted conflict. It is notable that the dwellers of the region have been subjected to abject poverty due to the situations of environmental degradation, lack of infrastructural facilities, inadequate provision of functional educational system and deplorable socio-economic standard presently besieging them, among others. Presently, there are no fertile lands for agricultural usage, no

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portable water to drink, no efficient market to trade in due resettlement associated with the conflicts and for fear of the incessant kidnappings, foreign interventions have eluded the region even though huge wealth are being carted away by the foreign workers, especially the expatriates that also live in affluence, in contrast to the abject poverty and deprivation of the indigenes on whose land the former got their wealth.³⁵

Increased Rate of Unemployment

Closely linked to the problem of poverty is the problem of unemployment. A negative condition caused not by the unwillingness of the people to work but by bad governance that creates capability gap.³⁶ The capability gap portrays the inability of government to effectively utilize the resources of the State to better the lots of her citizenry through the provision of job opportunities, infrastructural development and initiation of potent or viable poverty alleviation and eradication program.³⁷ The government needs to improve on their investment, and develop more institutional capacity to tackle the issue of unemployment in the country. Beyond policy initiation, strategies

³⁵ See Idowu O.F, "Niger Delta Crises: Implication for Society and Organizational Effectiveness" *British Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, Vol.7 No. II, 2012

³⁶ See Umaru A., Pate H.A. et al, "The Impact of Insecurity and Poverty on Sustainable Economic Development in Nigeria" *International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education (IJHSSE)* Vol. 2, Issue 2, pp 32-48, 2015

³⁷ *ibid*

must be put in place for adequate implementation of the scheme towards eradicating unemployment³⁸.

In addition, a country where the negative tides of protracted conflicts thrive, the rate of unemployment will definitely continue to increase despite the abundant human and natural resources available in the country; thus making unemployment a major problem that torments the lives of the Nigerian youths and also challenges the Nigeria's economic growth.³⁹

Loss of Lives and Properties

Owing to the large-scale formal (institutionalized) and informal resettlement processes that is usually associated with protracted conflicts, loss of safety, life and means of livelihood are common events during protracted conflicts that further weakens the possibility of a stable market. Non-IACs in Nigeria have driven a stream of more than a million refugees in the Eastern Region, (the 'homeland' of the Igbos') out of their homes and displaced their inheritances in what was termed

³⁸ See Amire C.M and Ngwama J. C. "Emergence of Unemployment: An Assessment of Nigeria Directorate of Employment (NDE) Skill Intervention Programmes Between (2005-2011) in Lagos State". 2015 *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development, (IISTE)*, vol. 6(5)

³⁹ See Salisu .S.S, Mohd .A.S et. Al, "The Impact of Boko Haram Insurgency on Nigerian National Security"
International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences Vol. 5, No. 6. June 2015, DOI: 10.6007/IJARBS/v5-i6/1676. Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBS/v5-i6/1676> Accessed 28 March, 2020

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the massacres of the Nigeria-Biafra Civil War.⁴⁰ In addition, over 500,000 persons have become Internally Displaced persons (IDPs) in the northern part of Nigeria. With the increasing scale of Non-International armed conflict, survival becomes the broad theme ahead of economic stability or rejuvenation and hence, the destabilization arising from the conflict deprives the entire region from harnessing natures' potentials into financial empowerment that could advance citizens lives.

Administration of Land Tenure System

The chaos generated by wars and protracted conflicts also makes it difficult to effectively manage lands for business and economic use; leading to a situation that weakens the customary or local institutions managing and administering land rights in Nigeria, and thereby generating widespread tenure insecurity in the country, fostering of land disputes, and enabling elites and more influential persons to grab land.⁴¹ This in fact is closely connected to the displacement of persons from their homes and places of abode for safety concerns. Protracted Non-IACs makes it virtually impossible for the government to initiate a formidable land tenure and administration policy in view of the facts that apart from institutional challenges, most

⁴⁰ See Heerten L. and Moses A.D, "The Nigeria-Biafra war: postcolonial conflict and the question of genocide" *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol. 16:2-3, 169-203, 2014. DOI: 10.1080/14623528.2014.936700. Available at

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14623528.2014.936700> Accessed 05 October, 2017

⁴¹ *ibid*

of the lands have either been desolated, become inhabitable and hazardous to livelihood due to the depositions of chemical weapons, or are territories of a secessionist rebel group seeking to carve out a territory for themselves.

The following is a staged representation of the gradual effects of protracted conflicts on the economic affairs of the Nation.

TABLE 1. Staged Representation of the Gradual Effects of Protracted Conflicts on the Economic Affairs of the Nation.

<i>STAGE</i>	<i>STAGE-NOTE</i>
<i>STAGE 1</i>	Turmoil and pandemonium stage – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where the lives and properties of citizens are being threatened with little or no positive response from the government
<i>STAGE 2</i>	The psychological and mental instability stage – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where citizens are now living in fear of the unknown on a daily basis and commercial activities becomes volatile and capricious
<i>STAGE 3</i>	The dwindling market stage – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where commercial activities gradually paralyzes as a result of low or no patronage of different market commodities by consumers; coupled with the absence of the sellers (SME practitioners)

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	<p>themselves in the market due to insecurity concerns.</p>
<i>STAGE 4</i>	<p>The economic stagnation stage -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where Entrepreneurs, manufacturers and producers are out of production because of insecurity concerns, the absence of labor and workforce; • where the wholesalers are out of stock owing to the unavailability of warehousing facilities, massive damage or looting of stored goods for sale, and little or no supply of goods and commodities from the producers; • where retailers are denied access to the markets due to imposed curfews, indiscriminate attacks, unpredictable and impulsive violent activities and reprisals from the belligerent parties; • where end-users are incapacitated due to the lack of money in circulation, exorbitant prices of the remains of goods in the ad-hoc or make-shift markets, fear of insecurity, etc.
<i>STAGE 5</i>	<p>The nose-diving or plummeting stage –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where all the factors of production within the economy are in extinction and all that is left is the quest for survival and the struggle to sustain livelihood through desperate means.

The above illustration shows typically how the people in some Northern and some Eastern areas of Nigeria have been living due to the failure of the Nigerian government to re-invigorate, revitalize, rescue, and provide economic opportunity in the area for more than a decade.⁴²

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

Towards mitigating and reducing the harsh effect of protracted conflicts in Nigeria, players in the public and private sectors must work hand in hand to revitalize the Nation's economic prowess and restore Nigeria as the economic heartbeat of Africa.

1. Meaningful steps must first be taken towards the amicable settlement of disputes by warring parties; peace-making or peace-keeping agenda must be included in the plans of the Federal Government.
2. On a regular basis, economic policies that can revamp the agricultural, food supply chain and economic sectors of the Nation must be formulated and pursued vigorously.
3. It is also imperative that the government take adequate steps to reconstruct wasted public infrastructures, re-ensure safety of lives and properties, citizens' basic needs must be met, and the economy must be repositioned to sustain long-lasting and enduring peace. The government must also establish Bodies

⁴² See Salisu, above n39, pp. 15

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and Ministries that will oversee, supervise and monitor the development of infrastructure and economic activities in the conflict-prone areas, and periodically evaluate the progress so far using objective parameters.

4. In addition to generating economic policies, the government should ensure that policies to be generated must be inclusive. This is in the sense that the conflict-prone areas of the country affected by the spate of economic and infrastructural backwardness should be carried along when decisions affecting their lives are being made.
5. The Nation's economic strategies should be aimed at equipping vulnerable youths and capable persons from the conflict-prone regions towards capacity building, empowerment and basic skill acquisitions that can boost the entrepreneurial culture of the community and the economy. More specifically, the government should look into empowering persons within the Internally Displaced Person's Camps across Nigeria.
6. Exceptional effort should be channeled to large scale investments in the development of people in the conflict prone areas of the country. More specifically, the government must take steps to create an enabling business environment in Non-IAC affected areas so as to attract foreign investors.
7. For these measures to be sustainable, the government will also need to establish alternative dispute resolution platforms that are institutionalized and comprises of persons of good

standing in the community who can wade into any situation and forestall conflict at the earliest stage. The government can utilize the combination of community chiefs, police officers, para-military officers, local securities, NGO's and judicial officers in Dispute Resolution Committees that can effectively address the concerns of warring parties.

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