

# Political Violence and Internal Displacement in Borno State, Nigeria: Historical Context, Socio-Economic Impacts, and Government Interventions

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## ABSTRACT

Nigeria is not only a vast country but also a populous country with over 200 million people. It is not an overstatement that associated disasters and other disorderly occurrences often result in the displacement of millions of people. Hence, internal displacements are ushered in at different locations in the country. Political violence in Borno State, Nigeria, has significantly contributed to widespread internal displacement, disrupting livelihoods and exacerbating socio-economic challenges. Employing qualitative methodology and secondary sources, this paper identified a nexus between political violence and internal displacement in Borno State with insurgency, particularly the Boko Haram crisis, leading to the displacement of millions. Drawing on historical and contemporary perspectives, the study highlights the severe socio-economic impact of such violence, including the loss of lives, destruction of infrastructure, and the forced migration of millions into displacement camps or host communities, as well as efforts carried out by the government to mitigate the situation. The findings highlight severe impacts such as loss of lives, destruction of infrastructure, and forced migration into camps or host communities. Government interventions, both military and socio-economic, are critically assessed, revealing mixed outcomes due to corruption, inadequate resources, and inconsistent policies. In order to find a sustainable solution, the paper recommends effective governance, collaborative security measures and vast socio-economic programs.

## INTRODUCTION

In contemporary times, conflict is identified to be the primary cause of forced displacement (Nasai et al., 2018). Often, conflicts erupt into violence. The intention of this violence by perpetrators may be to address certain grievances through unconventional means or to destroy especially when their demands are not met. With this kind of mindset, displacement becomes inevitable. The issue of Internal displacement has become a global problem that has intensified in Africa in recent years. This phenomenon is often attributed to insurgency, guerrilla warfare, and terrorism, causing significant displacement and disruption of livelihood. Consequently, an increasing number of individuals and families find themselves compelled to seek refuge in camps and host communities, facing dire living conditions, limited access to essential services, and heightened risk of Human rights abuses.

According to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, IDPs are “persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border” (OCHA, n.d.). Those who have crossed an internationally recognized border are no longer referred to as IDPs but as refugees. Internal displacement may be caused by several factors, which vary from country to country. The most imminent factor that has been said to be the major cause of internal displacement in most countries is conflict (Akpoghome, 2015). Ukaibe (2014) identified broken homes, natural disasters, political conflicts, riots, and religious crises/extremism as the cause of internal displacement.

Nigeria is a multinational state inhabited by more than 250 ethnic groups speaking 500 distinct languages, all identifying with a wide variety of cultures, and religious and political divides often become violent. In the history

of Nigeria, Political violence has been a persistent challenge, with roots tracing back to pre-colonial inter-communal conflicts and evolving into modern-day insurgencies. These conflicts, often fueled by ethnic, religious, and political tensions among other factors, have shaped Nigeria's socio-political landscape. Among the states most affected, Borno has become synonymous with violence-induced activities primarily due to the Boko Haram insurgency. This violence has resulted in widespread displacement, forcing millions to flee their homes and endure significant socio-economic hardships.

Additionally, Political Violence has led to disruption of livelihoods, poor infrastructures, and limited access to essential services like education and healthcare. These challenges have exacerbated the region's poverty, food insecurity, and overall human suffering. This article seeks to provide an overview of historical context of political violence in Nigeria, the socio-economic impacts on IDPs in Borno State, and the effectiveness of governmental strategies in addressing these issues.

## **A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF VIOLENCE AND INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT IN NIGERIA**

One of the human tragedies that the world is currently facing is internal population displacement, orchestrated by floods, erosion, and conflicts. Over time, these conflicts have resulted in a massive wave of internal displacement that has affected millions of individuals.

### **Violence and Internal Displacement in Pre-Colonial Nigeria**

The history of political violence, as observed in Falola and Heaton (2008), dates back to the days before the British colonial administration in Nigeria. According to Falola and Heaton (2008), many empires and societies rose and fell before contemporary Nigeria was formed. Ibenwa and Ukoro (2020) submitted that these societies, kingdoms, and empires had inter-communal wars, a major indicator of political violence. A major example of this inter-communal conflict was the Ekiti Parapo War in Southern Nigeria. The Ekiti Parapo War, also known as the Kiriji War, was a major war fought in the Yoruba Kingdoms between 1877 and 1893. The war, which involved several Yoruba factions, including the Ekiti, Ijesa, Oyo, and Ife, fighting against the imperial ambitions of the Alaafin of Oyo and the expansionist policies of the Ibadan military oligarchy (Oluwafemi, 2023), was characterized by intense battles, guerrilla tactics, and alliances shifting among various Yoruba Kingdoms. The wars which eventually ended in a stalemate, with the signing of the Peace Treaty in Imesi-ile in 1886 brokered by British colonial authorities, marked a pivotal moment in Yoruba history and the decentralization of power in the region (Oluwafemi, 2023).

Another notable event of political violence in the history of Nigeria is the 1804 jihad war in Northern Nigeria. The war, which was fueled by grievances against corrupt and oppressive rulers, as well as a desire to spread Islam and consolidate political power, was led by Islamic Cleric and leader Usman Dan Fodio and aimed to establish an Islamic caliphate and reform society based on Islamic principles (Hassan, 2020). The war consequently resulted in the establishment of the Sokoto Caliphate, which became a dominant political and religious authority in the region until the British conquest of the Sokoto Caliphate between 1903/1904.

### **Violence and Internal Displacement in Colonial and Early Post-Colonial Nigeria**

In the early era of its colonial history, implementation of several British administration policies resulted in violence. Examples are the 1929 Aba Women's Riot in the East and the 1916 Iseyin-Okeho insurrection in the West (Letswa et al., 2018). The first ethnic violence that occurred in the post-colonial Nigeria took place in the Western Nigeria and was a result of the disagreement between two prominent leaders from the region, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, and the then Premier of the Region, Chief Ladoke Akintola. The rift between these two prominent leaders resulted in a number of confrontations and crises which ultimately led to declaration of a state of emergency in May 1962 (Falola et al, 1990).

The northern region was the next to experience violence, specifically in Kaduna, the regional government seat. The assassination of the Premier of Northern Nigeria, Sir Ahmadu Bello, along with other prominent leaders from the North, during Nigeria's first bloody military coup, led by Army Major Kaduna Nzeogwu, an Igbo

officer, sparked ethnic violence. Although the coup was expected to incite animosity and provoke a backlash against the Igbo by Northerners, particularly the Hausa, none of the Igbo leaders were killed in the coup. The mounting discontent eventually culminated in the Nigerian Civil War (1967–1970), during which a significant portion of the Igbo population in the northern regions was slaughtered while officers ran back to the Eastern Region (Letswa et al., 2018).

Nigeria, in the 1990s, faced a wave of political violence that threatened its national security. The political violence was due to the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential election by the then military ruler, General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida, which was considered free and fair. The aftermath of the annulment was greeted by protests and civil unrest, particularly in the southwestern region (Adebajo, 2022). The struggle for democracy and accountability was met with state repression, including crackdowns on pro-democracy activists and journalists, highlighting the recurring theme of political violence as a response to dissent and opposition.

Ethnic and religious tensions continued to fuel political violence in Nigeria, as seen in incidents such as the Ogoni crisis in the 1990s (Mai-Bornu, 2020). Odey (2021), as an amplification of the submission by Mai-Bornu (2020), reported that the execution of environmental activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and other Ogoni leaders by the military government sparked international condemnation and further exacerbated divisions within the country.

### **Violence and Internal Displacement in Post-1999**

Nigeria's transition into the Fourth Republic, despite Obayomi (2020) stressing that it brought hopes of stability and democratic governance, has been marked by over a hundred politically, ethnically, and religiously induced conflicts, leading to the deaths of thousands and the displacement of millions. Prominent among these conflicts is the one unleashed by the Boko Haram sect, a religious movement fueled by imported extremism. Known as Jama'atu Ahlis-Sunna Lidda'Awati Wal-Jihad, this radical and deadly Islamic terrorist group in northeastern Nigeria has become the most significant challenge confronting contemporary Nigeria. The group's insurgency, which began in July 2009 in the northern state of Bauchi, quickly spread to other northern states and neighboring countries. To forcefully establish an Islamic state under Sharia law, the group's violent activities have resulted in the deaths of over 30,000 people and the displacement of more than two million (Familusi & Oshomo, 2019). In response to the escalating violence, a state of emergency was declared in the northeastern region in 2013 by the then President of Nigeria, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan.

Since 1999, Nigeria's six geopolitical zones have been engulfed in conflicts driven by various movements claiming to represent and defend their ethnic, political, or religious interests in a nation that struggles to meet its citizens' basic needs (Adesote & Peters, 2015). Scholars have identified several factors contributing to these widespread conflicts and violence that threaten Nigeria's sovereignty. These factors include the weak character of the Nigerian state, the inability of its equally weak institutions to ensure order and security, poverty, military intervention in politics, citizens' apathy toward the state, elitist greed and manipulation, disputes over land, space, and resource availability, jurisdictional disputes between monarchs, disregard for cultural symbols, and the pollution of cultural practices (Adeniji, 2003; Ayodele, 2014; Olu-Adeyemi, 2018).

The first significant conflict in Nigeria since 1999 was sparked by the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), which emerged in response to years of neglect and deprivation experienced by the indigenous people. This neglect was attributed to successive governments (both military and civilian), the lack of corporate social responsibility from transnational oil companies operating in the region (Omojeje & Adesote, 2011), and the Nigerian security forces. MEND engaged violently with the Nigerian government, highlighting the dire conditions and grievances of the region. A notable incident during this conflict was the Odi crisis in Bayelsa State, which resulted in the displacement of approximately 60,000 people due to a violent episode that occurred when civilian rule was reinstated in 1999 (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre [IDMC], 2009).

The second significant conflict in post-1999 Nigeria occurred in the northern part of the country, affecting states such as Taraba, Plateau, Nasarawa, Benue, Kaduna, Zamfara, and Kano. These areas experienced a series of violent events, including inter-ethnic and ethno-religious conflicts, uprisings, and violent clashes. For example, the imposition of Sharia law in Kaduna in 2000 led to violent clashes between Muslims and Christians in the city, resulting in the deaths of hundreds of Igbo Christians. As thousands of Christians and Muslims fled the far

North, tensions between the two faiths escalated in other regions, with people relocating to areas where their faith was predominant for safety reasons. In response, Igbo groups in the south massacred hundreds of predominantly Muslim Hausa migrants from the North as retribution for the violence in Kaduna (HRW, 2003).

The first of Nigeria's return to civilian rule between 1999 and 2003, Nigeria witnessed more than forty (40) incidents of violence across the 36 states of the federation. These incidences of violence, which took many forms, among which are inter-ethnic conflict, ethno-religious, and communal, as reported by Brownwen (2002), claimed about 10,000 lives, with many displaced from their place of usual residence. In an interview with a local newspaper, the Federal Commissioner for Refugees recently estimated that around half a million people had been displaced between 1999 and 2005, when communal clashes peaked (This Day News, 17 April 2008).

This violence continued into the second term of the then-president of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, where it was reported that inter-ethnic, ethno-religious, political, and communal conflicts across the country in states like Adamawa, Plateau and Gombe resulted in the displacement of more 20,000 people (Adesote and Peters, 2015), with the indigenes/settlers crisis in Plateau necessitating the declaration of a state of emergency under Governor Joshua Dariye in 2004.

Data from the Global IDP study revealed that there were 23.7 million internally displaced people living in 50 different countries as of 2005. Of these, 20 were in Africa, home to 12.1 million internally displaced people (Sohne, 2006). The figures show that Uganda, Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo are the most affected nations. Including these three nations, there are nine million internally displaced people (IDPs) in Africa as of today, June 27, 2006. There are between 200,000 and 800,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) in Nigeria. The total number of IDPs was estimated to be 200,000 in the 2005 report by the Norwegian Refugee Council (online <http://www.idpproject.org> in Nigeria: a hidden crisis, February 2005).

Consequent administrations, such as that of Yar'Adua/Jonathan, which lasted from 2007 to 2011, also witnessed various forms of violence that invariably led to the displacement of thousands of people, mostly in the northern region, and few numbers of displaced persons in the southern part. In November 2008, inter-communal conflict erupted in Plateau following the outcome of the Plateau State elections. In the capital of the state, it was reported that thousands of people were displaced following a clash between Christians and Muslims (BBC, 1 December 2008). Subsequent reports from Jos, the Plateau state capital, showed that the tensions primarily reflected resentment between the indigenous (Christian) minority and settlers from the Hausa-speaking Muslim north (Reuters, 30 November 2008). The ensuing conflict, which resulted in the displacement of thousands of people, led to the establishment of IDP camps across the state, with the Nigerian Red Cross registering some 14,000 IDPs in 13 camps across the state (ICRC, 4 December 2008).

In 2009, it was reported that sectarian violence with causes unknown broke out in Bauchi resulting in the displacement of over 4000 people in the state (IRIN, 25 February 2009; This Day, 28 February 2009). The violence which made a lot of residents of the states scamper for safety in schools, army barracks, and neighboring cities like Jos, resulted in many deaths and destructions, with some residents of the states who were in search of safety after the violence broke out, reporting that Nigeria security operatives did not make efforts to intervene and stop the unrest (Punch, 23 February 2009).

In the Niger Delta, prior to the declaration of Amnesty for the militants in the Niger Delta region by Alhaji Yar'Adua in August 2009, there were series of clashes between the armed militants group known as the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) and Nigerian security forces charged with uprooting militant groups and restoring order in the Niger Delta. These gun duels resulted in the displacement of innocent people in the region. The Military Joint Task Force (JTF) in carrying out the mandate of the President launched a wide range of air, water, and land assaults in different areas in Delta State and neighboring Rivers State (Reuters, 24 May 2009), which resulted in the lot of casualties among the civilian population in the region, with many sought for shelter and many fled into the forest (IRIN, 22 May 2009; BBC, 21 May 2009). In July 2009, two years into the administration of Alhaji Yar'Adua, clashes between the Nigerian Army and an Islamic group in Bauch resulted in widespread violence and displacement. The violence which quickly spread to neighboring northern states of Borno, Yobe, and Kano, resulted in widespread displacement of between 3000 and 4000 people (ICRC, 31 July 2009).



The emergence of Boko Haram as a major force in 2009 ushered another dimension to violence and displacement in Nigeria. Although the activities of the group began fully in 2009, with Uzodike (2012) tracing its origin to becoming a full-fledged insurgent group to a vicious faceoff between some motorcyclists and personnel of the Nigerian Police Force in Bauchi. According to Uzodike (2012), the state government of Bauchi set up a security outfit to enforce the newly introduced law that required motorcyclists in the state to wear crash helmets. He further stressed that the failure of this group of bike men to adhere to this law resulted in a faceoff between the security outfit and the bike men. 17 members of the group died. A mop-up operation by the police led to the discovery of weapons of destruction in the possession of the bike men, which were destroyed. Angered by the act of the police, Agbiboa (2013) stressed that the group of bike men mobilized themselves and launched reprisal attacks, which resulted in the death of several policemen and civilians. A counteroperation and the capture of the group's leader, Mohammed Yusuf, by men of the Nigerian Police, put the situation under control. Subsequent operations by the police saw some members of the group arrested. This made them retreat for a while. The killing of Mohammed Yusuf resulted in the group carrying out its first attack in Borno State in January 2010. The attack resulted in the death of four people. Since then, the group has transformed itself into a network of underground cells with a hidden leadership – a situation that today makes any military solution illusory.

Following the passing of President Umar Musa Yar'Adua in May 2010, and the immediate emergence of his Vice President, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, as the substantive President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the activities of Boko Haram became more noticeable. The victory of President Jonathan at the poll in 2011, which for the first time since 2007, marked a shift of power from the North to the south, did not go down well with some political elites from the North, with some going public to swear that they would make the country ungovernable for President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan (Ajayi, 2012). Post-election violence immediately erupted as a direct result of this in several Northern States across the federation, with about ten Corps members from Southern Nigeria—Ondo, Osun, Lagos, and other regions—killed in Bauchi State as a result of the post-election violence that erupted in this region of the nation (The Punch, Saturday, December 2011). Following this murder, several additional corps members from the south who were serving in the state were evacuated by their respective state governors.

The second term of President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan witnessed a more dreaded Islamic sect that employed a wide range of violent tactics to unleash mayhem on the state and the citizens by launching attacks on government establishments, worship centres, public spaces, symbolic monuments as well as the assassination of important public figures. The activities of the group were dread that it brought the nation to its knees (Ajayi, 2012; Abimbola & Adesote, 2012)

The nefarious activities of the sect across the northeastern region of the country resulted in the death of over 100 people and the displacement of over 90,000, necessitated a declaration of a state of emergency in some local governments in the region by President Goodluck Jonathan (ICG, 2 Jan. 2012; The Economist, 14 and 23 Jan. 2012; Reuters, 9 April 2012). At the peak of the insurgency in 2014, Boko Haram launched an attack that received widespread condemnation on the Government Girls Secondary School, Chibok, Borno State. During the attack which happened between April 14 and 15 2014, the group abducted 276 girls, mostly Christian female students. To date, a large number of the girls are still in captivity. The incessant attack on churches, mosques, marketplaces, clinics, and hospitals by the sect has made people avoid social gatherings. To forcefully create an Islamic state under Sharia law, the violent activities of the group have led to the death of over 30,000 people, with over two million displaced (Famulusi & Oshomo, 2019).

It has recently come to light that this sect is opposed to Western principles, including Christianity, as evidenced by significant attacks on churches in the northern states of Kano, Kaduna, Bauchi, Adamawa, Niger, and the Plateau. . Gwamna Dogara Je'adayibe (2008) opined that these attacks perpetrated by Boko Haram are motivated by both political and ethno- religious factors. As a result, Ethno-religious violence which Boko Haram is currently committing was the primary cause of the greatest number of internally displaced people in Nigeria (Gwamna Dogara Je'adayibe, 2008).

## **POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN BORNO STATE**

In recent years, Borno state has been the epicenter of political violence. This is largely due to the activities of Boko Haram, officially known as Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda 'awati wal-jihad. The sect, a radical and deadly

Islamic terrorist group domiciled in North East, Nigeria, is made up of Islamic extremists who are against Western values in Northern Nigeria. They believe that Western values are corrupt and not good for Nigeria. Their goal is to create a kingdom of God on earth by giving justice to the poor, which will be achieved by the strict application of the Sharia law.

The origin of the group has been mired in controversy, with different scholars tracing the origin of the sect to different years. For instance, Uzodike (2012) traced its rise to a full-fledged insurgent group to a deadly faceoff between some motorcyclists and personnel of the Nigerian Police Force in Bauchi, a state in Northern Nigeria. Uzidike (2012) reported that in an attempt to enforce the newly introduced law that required motorcyclists in the country to wear crash helmets, the government of the state-enforced the newly introduced law. He further stressed that the failure of this group of bike men to adhere to this law resulted in a faceoff between the security outfit and the bike men. 17 members of the group died. A mop-up operation by the police led to the discovery of weapons of destruction in the possession of the bike men, which were destroyed. Angered by the act of the police, Agbiboa (2013c) stressed that the group of bike men mobilized themselves and launched reprisal attacks, which resulted in the death of several policemen and civilians. A counteroperation and the capture of the group's leader, Mohammed Yusuf, by men of the Nigerian Police, put the situation under control. Subsequent operations by the police saw some members of the group arrested. This made them retreat for a while. The killing of Mohammed Yusuf resulted in the group carrying out its first attack in Borno State in January 2010. The attack resulted in the death of four people. Since then, the group has transformed itself into a network of underground cells with a hidden leadership – a situation that today makes any military solution illusory.

The group's violent insurgency, which started in 2009, has resulted in widespread destruction in the Northern part of Nigeria. Since the group launched its violent insurrection, Awojobi (2014) highlighted that the activities of the sect have resulted in the death of thousands of people, the displacement of millions, and the destruction of private and public properties. Ogunrotifa (2013) opined that the political violence in northern Nigeria is not only orchestrated by the Boko Haram sect but also by long-standing socio-economic and political grievances in the region.

There is a plethora of factors that have fuelled the Boko Haram crisis. Scholars have extensively discussed some of these factors in literature. These factors are but not limited to educational disparities between the North and south, social injustice, poverty, bad governance, ignorance socio-economic deprivation experienced by the population, high level of unemployment, lack of economic opportunities, historical marginalization of the northeastern region, and religious extremism (Henry, 2002; Walker, 2012; Adesoji, 2012; Oloju, 2013; Umar, 2013; Familusi & Oshomo, 2019).

## **SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN BORNO STATE**

Political violence in the Borno State has not only affected the state, but its impact is felt across the nation. The violent activities of the group have led to the death of over 30000 people, the displacement of over 2 million people, and the destruction of both private and public properties and infrastructure worth millions of dollars (Familusi & Oshomo, 2019; IDMC, 2020). The economic impact of the Boko Haram insurgency has been severe in the North East, as commercial activities have been reduced to the barest minimum as a result of unprecedented and highly coordinated attacks by the sect. Oladayo (2014) reported that the business of communication operators was severely impacted in the wake of incessant attacks by members of the sect. At a point, a ban was placed on telephone services as part of efforts to decimate the sect. This, however, had economic implications on telecommunication operators, as revenue was greatly affected (Ovaga, 2018).

Mohammed (2012) also stressed that an unprecedented attack by the sect has necessitated that commercial bank in the North East review their operational hours to begin from 9.00 am to 12.00 noon as against the normal operational period of 8.00 am to 4.00 pm. Under this new operational arrangement adopted by the banks to safeguard their business premises, banks customer especially the traders had no choice but to hide their money in their shops. This contributed to rising cases of shop-breakings and burglaries in the affected region. Just like the traders are affected, the banks' total earnings are also affected, so foreigners involved in trading in the Northern part of the country are affected (Ovaga, 2018).

In further discourse on the economic implication of the Boko Haram insurgency, Igwe (2021) lamented the seizure of the popular Baga international fishing market close to Lake Chad. Igwe stresses that Boko Haram uses money generated from the international sale of fish and pepper to fund its operations and grow its influence in the region. According to the World Food Programme, prior to the insurgency, the combined fish and pepper trade contributed about \$48 million to Nigeria's economy. The violent activities of the group have also affected food security in the country. Gilbert (2014) reported that farmers in Northern Nigeria, due to incessant attacks from the sect, had fled their farms. This has affected food security in the country. The inability of these farmers to engage in productive activities due to the activities of the group has affected the general prices of foodstuffs in the country, particularly the southern region where they are greatly consumed.

The sect has not spared educational facilities, Health facilities, religious facilities, Government institutions, Parks, and other Commercial centers. The insurgency has threatened the continued existence of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) scheme. The government principally designed the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) scheme after the end of the Nigerian Civil War to foster unity among Nigerians. However, In 2011, 4171 corps members were deployed to Adamawa state and later were trained by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) as Adhoc staff to conduct the 2011 general elections. Ovaga (2018) reported that 1041 of the corps members abandoned their national duty and fled back to their respective states before the elections, due to the risky security situation in the North. The abduction and horrific murder of corps members in the North east has resulted in corps members vehemently protesting against posting them to any of the crisis-ridden states in the North until peace is restored. Some have vowed to quit the scheme should they be forcefully posted to the region.

At the peak of the insurgency in 2014, Boko Haram launched an attack that received widespread condemnation for the kidnap of the Government Girls Secondary School, Chibok, Borno State. During the attack which happened between April 14 and 15 2014, the group abducted 276 girls, mostly Christian female students (Pohle & Assheton, 2024). To date, a large number of the girls are still in captivity. The incessant attack on churches, mosques, marketplaces, clinics, and hospitals by the sect has made people avoid social gatherings. Christians and Muslims are afraid to go to their places of worship, people are afraid to go to markets, and students are afraid to even go to school due to fear of being attacked, dehumanized, raped, criminalized, and killed by the sect.

In conclusion, the rancorous activities of Boko Haram have become a nightmare to the Nigerian state, with the impact felt across the socio-political and economic sphere of governance. Nkwede, Abah, and Nwankwo (2015) contended that the overall effect of the insurgence is that Nigeria's economy is quickly declining. Despite being blessed with enormous resources, the leadership of Nigeria is faced with the problem of focusing its expenditure priorities on security instead of viable human capital development and other growth productivity-promoting sectors (Ogege, 2013).

## **NIGERIA'S GOVERNMENT EFFORT AT COMBATING POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN BORNO STATE**

The Nigerian government has responded accordingly to the political violence in Borno State. After the first attack on the Nigerian state by the Boko Haram sect in 2009, the Nigerian government responded militarily, with the massive deployment of troops to the affected regions. The deployment was with no clearly defined military code of justice for operation. Akande (2013) pointed to the instance of the April 21, 2013, military invasion of Baga, a fishing community on the fringe of Lake Chad, which resulted in the death of over 200 civilians presumed to be members of Boko Haram. The different advanced operational tactics of the group has warranted that the Nigerian military invest heavily in training special troops for such special operations. After being trained, these troops were deployed to the operation theatre to suppress the groups' activities.

In addition to military action, the government has also pursued initiatives to address the violence's root causes. These include efforts to promote economic development in the region, such as the Northeast Development Commission, which focuses on rebuilding infrastructure and providing social services (Mohammed, 2019). However, these initiatives have been hampered by corruption and a lack of political will, limiting their effectiveness.

Another step taken by the Nigerian government to combat the political violence in Borno state and the northeast entirely is the acquisition of conventional and sophisticated weapons for asymmetrical warfare from advanced nations of the world. An example was the purchase of 12 A-29 Super Tucano fighter jets for a whopping \$500m from the United States of America. According to the US Department of Defense, the purchase was the largest single arms purchase in Sub-Saharan Africa. Upon the arrival of the A-29 Super Tucano fighter jets on Nigeria's soil, they were immediately deployed to the North East. A total of 64 pilots and maintainers from the Nigerian Air Force were trained to US standards with the US Air Force's 81st Fighter Squadron at Moody Air Base in Georgia, USA.

In addition, the authorization given by the international bodies to legally deploy troops on Nigerian soil by neighboring countries was a big boost in the fight against violent extremists. This means that Nigeria can legally deploy troops to neighboring countries (Chad, Niger, and Cameroon). This authorization means that troops can operate beyond their borders. This has further boosted the fight to annihilate the sect. Lastly, the government encourages both public and media support to provide intelligence regarding terrorist groups or their activities (Jumare et al., 2020).

## CONCLUSION

This article explored the nexus between political violence and internal displacement in Borno State, Nigeria. It began with historicizing violence and how it has led to widespread internal displacement in Nigeria. From pre-colonial inter-communal wars to contemporary insurgencies, this violence has caused widespread displacement and untold suffering. Significant conflicts, including those caused by ethnic, religious, and political tensions, with a particular emphasis on the Boko Haram insurgency, were highlighted and discussed as the major driver of internal displacement in Borno State, as continuous attacks by this group have led to disruption of lives.

Furthermore, the article was able to identify the severe socio-economic and political impact this violence has had on the population, resulting in loss of thousands of lives, displacement of millions of individuals, and destruction of private and public properties and infrastructure across various regions in Nigeria, with Borno State being one of the most affected areas. Communities in this region have suffered from food insecurity, limited access to healthcare, and disruptions in education, while the displaced populations continue to grapple with the loss of livelihoods and psychological trauma. Efforts by the Nigerian government to combat political violence and manage internal displacement have yielded mixed results. While military interventions and regional collaborations have been helpful in curbing some insurgent activities, other factors such as corruption, inadequate resources, and a lack of political-will have hindered long-term progress. Additionally, initiatives, such as those spearheaded by the Northeast Development Commission, have shown promise but require greater transparency and efficiency to achieve meaningful impact; without the zeal from political actors and the Nigerian state to combat this menace, efforts will remain ineffective. Moving forward, a holistic approach that combines security measures with robust socio-economic programs and inclusive governance will be appropriate in finding solutions to violence carried out by insurgent groups and, by extension, reducing the number of internally displaced persons in Borno State, Nigeria.

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