

# **Gender, Peace Building and Security in Northeast Nigeria: The imperative of Women Empowerment and Reorientation**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Northeast Nigeria has been devastated by the activities of Boko Haram insurgency since 2009, over 2.5 million people have been displaced, over 20,000 deaths reported and more than 2000 women and girls abducted, and the destruction of properties public and private. The insurgency has impacted on women in form of gender-based violence like rape, sexual exploitation, deprivation in IDPs Camps and radicalized. Involving women in peace building and security process in post conflict areas have in recent times dominated international and national discourse on conflict prevention and resolution. The main impetus being Resolution 1325 of United Nation Security Council on women, peace and security, related resolutions and declarations. The paper examined the imperative of women empowerment and reorientation for an engendered peace building process in northeast Nigeria. It argues that for effective peace building and security, the socioeconomic needs of women must be addressed, established social norms particularly patriarchy that subordinate women to men, as exploited in counterinsurgency strategies and undermines the potentials of women in peace and security process must be deemphasized. It recommends more/massive empowerment programmes education, skill acquisition and others.*

**KEY WORDS:** Gender, Peace building, Security, Empowerment and Reorientation

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The confrontation between government security operatives and the Boko Haram (BH) terrorist/insurgents in Nigeria’s northeast geopolitical zone began in 2009. The effect of this confrontation has been the huge humanitarian crisis. BH reign of terror did not just ravage local government areas and their communities in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states but also affected communities of neighboring countries of Chad, Niger and Cameroon. This campaign of terror and countermeasures resulted in the displacement of over 2.5 million persons between 2009 and 2016. Osita (2015: 1-2) note that the devastation and humanitarian crisis caused by the insurgency between 2009 and 2016 can only be comparable to the Nigerian – Biafra civil war. He also averred that women are the most vulnerable in times of war, they suffer despicable acts of physical and psychological abuses and torture, and they are victims of abductions and forced marriages, sometimes culminating in diseases, rapes, disabilities and eventual premature death. The Chibok girl’s abduction remains a sad reminder of the unfortunate fact of the crisis of insecurity in northeast Nigeria. And 2013 is said to have marked the significant evolution in Boko Haram’s tactics in form of gender-based violence with series of kidnappings involving women. Hence, the instrumental use of women in response to corresponding tactics by the Nigerian government. Kidnapping and abduction became crucial tactics for the insurgent after it issued a video message threatening to kidnap the wives of government official in response to government imprisoning of the wives of the sect members. In 2012, the Nigerian government arrested and detained over 100 women and children (including pregnant ones) of BH members. These arrests were not unusual as it is a common policy practice in Nigeria from the view of security experts and its significance was the deliberate deployment of the policy practice to strike at the heart of BH through family members, and this in turn has had a significant impact on the sect strategy (Jacob and Pearson, 2014). Women from all indications have been crucial in government efforts to counter BH insurgent and also as a corresponding strategic tactics for the insurgent to execute its campaign of terror on the Nigerian government and her civil population.

The use of women as strategic tools or means for counteroffensive by Nigerian security operatives as well as BH find expression in the argument of Emordi (2020) that men make policies and they determined how far the policies will benefit women. The use of women as strategic tools is an indication of gender-based violence and an outright disregard for international declaration on the protection of women and children in emergency and armed conflict such as the General Assembly Resolution 3318 (XXIX) of 14 December 1974 in response to the recommendation of the Economic and Social Council resolution 1861 (LVI) of May 1974. This

declaration was necessitated by the realization that women and children suffer victimization, inhuman acts and serious harm during armed conflict. Article I of the declaration for instance prohibits attacks and bombing of civilian populations. In addition, under this declaration, national governments or states are duty-bound to abide by their obligations as contained in the 1925 and 1949 Geneva Protocol and Convention respectively. It criminalized all forms of repression and cruel and inhuman treatment of women and children, including imprisonment, torture, shooting, mass arrests and collective punishment, destruction of dwellings and forcible eviction, committed by belligerents in the course of military operations and so on. The declaration also provides that women and children who found themselves in emergency or conflict situations should not be deprived of the inalienable and inherent rights such as shelter, food and medical aid, in accordance with the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Declaration on the Rights of the Child or other instruments of international law ( Olugbenga and Ayooluwa, 2017; Rehn and Sirleaf 2002). Ironically, despite the various provisions, women in northeast Nigeria have suffered some of these of inhuman acts and violation of their human rights. Their abduction and rape by insurgent BH as well as government official's exploitation of women sexually for food in Internally Displaced Persons Camps (IDPs) are just a few examples of such inhuman acts and violations in armed conflict situations (Adetoun and Osuigwe, 2017).

The counterinsurgency strategies of the Nigerian government security agencies and that of the multinational joint task force in the northeast and the Lake Chad Basin area led to the recapture of communities that the insurgent had laid claims to, such as Bama, Kondoga, Gwoza, Madagali, Michika, Mubi, Baga, and others, and also the dislodgement of the sect from their operational stronghold the Sambisa forest. With the conventional defeat of the insurgent the Nigerian government and international agencies, non-governmental organizations and others have intensified their collaborative efforts for the reconstruction of infrastructures destroyed in the affected areas and to ensure the return of IDPs to their communities. Specifically, the North East Development Commission was established in 2019 to facilitate the process. As the region transits from relief to recovery, it is important to ensure that rehabilitation and reintegration measures are grounded in human rights norms and to take into consideration the impact of the conflict on women and children. And from all indications women in contemporary times have not only become the worst victims of war but also the biggest stakeholders of peace.

Studies have shown that the impact of conflict on women is not the same as it is on men; and that women play an integral part in conflict prevention, transformation, and peace building (Mohammed, 2015). The United Nations recognized this fact and formalized through the establishment of Security Council Resolution 1325. The resolution highlights among others: the need to systematically include information on the impact of armed conflict on women, and women's role in prevention and peace-building. Watts (2016) notes that when war ends, peace building requires nations to seek justice, health, education and employment, security and political peace, and that all these goals should put women at the epicenter as the main victims. From the foregoing views this paper cannot help but concur by emphasizing that since women suffer more in conflict situations as exemplified in the BH crisis, post-conflict initiatives of which peace building is a key component should encompass women empowerment and reorientation programmes as imperatives in the northeast. In this regard empowerment and reorientation initiatives targeting women and communities in general are examined.

## **II. METHODOLOGY**

The paper relied on both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data was obtained through the conduct of an interview and focus group discussion. A few key respondents and specifically women affected by insurgency and are in IDP camp at Malkohi and those formally at NYSC camp but are now in host communities were singled out as the focal target for data generation. 6 women provided information in a focus group discussion in host community of Sangirei near Modibbo Adama University of Technology, while 4 women were interviewed at the IDP camp located at Malkohi near Yola. While secondary data was sourced from journals, proceedings, text books, internet sources and so forth. Data sourced through these were carefully scrutinized and analyzed descriptively.

## **III. CONCEPTUAL DISCOURSE:**

### **Empowerment:**

The term empowerment refers to measures designed to increase the degree of autonomy and self determination in people and in communities in order to enable them to represent their interests in a responsible and self determined way, acting on their own authority. Empowerment from this view is a multi dimensional social process that helps people gain control over their lives. It is a process that fosters power, (that is the capacity to implement) in people, for use in their own lives, their communities, and their society, by acting on issues that they define as important (UNICEF 2010). Empowerment is the mechanism through which an individual or group capacity to deal and respond to changing environmental issues such as high rate of poverty,

inequality, insurgency, forced displacement and related security and social concerns can be achieved. To achieve the goals of reconstruction, reintegration and specifically peace building process in post insurgency northeast stakeholder government and development partners need to induce appropriate change internally and externally focusing on creativity, innovation and commitment that would impact on women social stability. Basically the principles embodied in the concept of empowerment include transparency, accountability and inclusiveness. The strategy for empowerment is multi-dimensional and multifaceted and central to it is the mobilization of resources and peoples capacities, aimed at fostering consciousness about inequality as well as the best or most suitable healing mechanism to help overcome self-blame and feeling of worthlessness and to recognize the potential of women as the target for empowerment and the community to effect change. According to Mohammed (2016) the process of empowerment will differ from situation to situation of vulnerability thereby challenging change agents and communities to evolve coping and adaptive strategies based upon the extent of the presence or absence of empowerment elements such as access to knowledge and skills, access to income, asset and credit facilities, land and so on.

**Peace Building:** The concept of peace is generally defined as the absence of war, fear, conflict, anxiety, suffering and violence, and about peaceful coexistence. It is primarily concerned with creating and maintaining a just order in a society and the resolution of conflict by non-violent means. And various researchers and scholars views of peace tend to agree on six meanings of peace (i) peace as the absence of war (ii) peace as justice and development and it entails the absence of structural violence (iii) peace as respect and tolerance between people (iv) peace as a single natural system which organizes and control itself "Gaia" balance in and with the ecosphere, (v) Inner peace associated with spiritual peace (vi) peace as wholeness- complete (David, 2009 and Bakut, 2009). While peace building as defined by Galtung (2013) is the process of creating self supporting structures that deconstruct the basis of wars and offer alternative to war in situations where wars might occur. And United Nations peacekeeping Capstone Doctrine (2008) state that peace building involves a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels of conflict management, and to lay the foundation for sustainable peace and development. It is evident that peace building process particularly in areas devastated by conflict is imperative and strategic for enhancing social capacity of the most affected to deal with societal needs for positive co-existence and advancement.

The Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice (2013) points out that peace-building is the process that facilitates the establishment of durable peace and tries to prevent the recurrence of the violence by addressing not just the root causes and effects of the conflict through reconciliation, institution building, and political as well as economic transformation but to include in the peace process those affected, and women stand out in most conflict situations. Basically the principles of peace building as a process involves complex and multiple actors, and focuses on core values, goals, commitment to human rights and needs and going beyond conflict transformation. It could be stress that peace building process entails a holistic set of activities that cannot ignore structural forms of injustice and violence; founded on an ethic of interdependence, partnership, and limiting violence; depends on relational skills; involves understanding underlying cultures, histories, root causes, and immediate stressors; creates spaces where people interact in new ways, expanding experience and honing new means of communication; heals trauma, promotes justice and transforms relationship; and requires capacity and relationship building at multiple levels. These have been captured explicitly in the 2007 United Nations Secretary-General's Policy Committee definition of peace-building as involving range of measures aimed at reducing the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict through the strengthening of national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundation for sustainable peace. Meaning that peace-building is an intervention that is purposely designed to prevent the start or resumption of violent conflict and it includes a wide range of efforts by several actors in government and civil society at the local community, national and international spheres of social engagement to address the root causes of violence and to ensure that civilians (and by inference we say women since they form the focal target in this paper) enjoy freedom from fear, want, humiliation, abduction, abuse and rape during and after violent conflict.

The forgoing suggest that peace-building process helps to stabilize a society ravaged by conflict politically and socioeconomically. And there are two broad approaches to the peace-building (a) Direct work that internationally focuses on addressing the factors that serve as drives or triggers of violent conflict and it entails deliberate attempt to reduce structural or direct conflict and from the liberal structural conflict perspective reforms of the structures that triggers inequality, marginalization exploitation and so forth. (b) The efforts to coordinate a multi-level, multi-sectoral strategy and it include funding, proper communication and coordination mechanisms between humanitarian assistance, development, governance, security, justice and other sectors. It is worthy of not that peace building effort aim to mitigate, resolve, manage and transform focal areas or aspects of conflict through strategic channels like official diplomacy, civil society processes and also informal process ranging from negotiation, mediation dialogue and others. Furthermore peacebuilding

process also addresses the root causes of violence such as political, economic, and social factors so as to foster the processes of reconciliation and to prevent the return of the causative factor that are structural and direct violence impinging on individual and social group fundamental rights. According to Egbue, Nwankwo and Alichie (2015) peace building aim to change beliefs, attitudes and behaviours to transform the short and long term dynamics between individuals and groups towards a more stable and peaceful coexistence.

**Reorientation:** This has to do with actions aimed at changing the focus or direction of an individual or social group in a society. Is an act of figuring out again where you are in relationship to your environment, a change in set of attitudes and beliefs. The attitudinal and ethical change or the reshaping of attitudes of communities with regard to views about women and their social roles is to focus on the significance of women as pillars of the peace and security process. The attitudes of a vast majority of people in the northeast portray women as tools for just social reproduction and government generally often negate to the background the immense contribution that women make to national security and development. Before any nation can fully and totally achieve peace, the mind sets of its citizens have to change or have to be put in the right track and this can only be achieved through the process of reorientation on the need to shun violence and change violence induced attitudes. Of great emphasis will be the clear identification of the consequences of violence and war. Our ethic and values must therefore change if we are to collectively move our nation to greatness or achieve and sustain peace in our environment. Enenim (2013) pointed out that the attitudes of many young persons have either been formed or further strengthened by the set of beliefs, actions or inaction of elders, which have been accepted as a norm, no matter how evil these actions are. He stressed that these attitudes, actions and beliefs can only be changed by the acquisition of a higher level of knowledge which points in another direction. Therefore the need to cultivate positive attitudes and good ethical standards towards national growth and development cannot be toyed with. When our ethics and values change, our attitudes towards others will definitely change too, leading to a cultivation of positive mind sets and self confidence which would make us see others as partners not rivals. Attitudinal change will go a long way to make us realize the imperatives of diplomacy, mediation and persuasion as opposed to violence. When our attitudes and thinking towards things and people change from negative to positive, we are bound to give our best in whatever we do for the good of those around us and our nation at large. Women empowerment programme requires change in income generating process and medium for engaging in productive endeavours'. This could be seen as reform (as advocated as remedy for violent conflict by structural liberal theories) in social production process and training women in skill acquisition that will transform their social roles as dependants to employers of labour in their various trades equips them with self worth and enhanced dignity as human beings and thus spur them as advocates of peace and the peacebuilding process in communities.

**Gender:** Gender is basically a set of socially and culturally constructed characteristics that vary across time and place, and according to Tickner (2011) cited in David and Sanusi (2021) characteristics such as power, autonomy, rationality and others, are often associated with masculinity. While characteristics like weakness, dependence, emotionality and so forth are linked to femininity. David stressed further that gender denotes inequality and is a mechanism for the unequal distribution of social benefits between men and women, male or female and with male gender having advantage over the female. Gender norms are entrenched in the perception of male as superior to the female and permits gender-based violence to serve as a display of power as has been demonstrated in the offensive confrontation between Nigerian security operatives and BH sect.

#### IV. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theory is an essential component of research as it serves as a tool or frame of reference through which a particular scholarly interrogation is made more meaningful. This paper adopts the structural conflict theory for its analytical frame work and draws from the two sub-orientations Marxist and Liberal. The Marxist or radical structural sub-orientation based on the Marxist dialectical school is traced to the works and views of Karl Marx (1818-1883), Friedrich Engels (1820-1895), V.I. Lenin (1870-1924) and also Gunder Frank, Rodney Walter, Onimade Bade and others. While the liberal structuralism is expressed in the famous work of Johan Galtung (1990), Ross (1993), Scarborough (1998) and so forth. The Marxist and liberal sub-orientations are intricately linked in their analysis on the causes of social conflict in a polity. The basis of analysis is on incompatible interest and competition for societal scarce resources between social groups within a polity which serves as triggers or causes of conflict. And the focal point of argument of the structural conflict theory is that conflict is built into the manner in which societies are structured and organized. It examines social problems emanating from a polity like political and economic exclusion, injustice, exploitation, inequality and so forth as the sources of conflict.

Conflict is therefore seen as the outcome of the exploitative nature of human societies characterized by the domination of one class by another. And capitalism in practically is seen as exploitative evident in its relations of production and division of society into the class of owners and non-owners of means of

production (views linked to Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, V.I Lenin and others). For Marx history is seen as nothing but evidence of economic class struggle. In other words economics has far reaching effects on social and political conditions of every society (Faleti, 2009 and Mukhi, 2006). The exploitative nature of a class over another is the cause of conflict and this can only be resolved through revolution and the overthrow of the dominant class. Another position from Lenin holds that, under capitalism monopoly conditions play a predominant role and are bound to continue and in this regard added a new dimension to the concept of dialectic materialism indicating that the laws of the state are tailored or intended to safeguard the interest of the capitals alone, and that parliament or parliamentary institutions are mere talking shops and designed to protect vested interest.

The emphasis of structural theory from both orientations is basically on how the competing interest of groups ties conflict directly into the social, economic and political organization of society and on the nature and strength of social networks within a community. Ross (1993:4) in reference to Galtung concept of negative and positive peace argued that in situations where economic and political discrimination and weak kinship ties are the defining characteristics of a society negative form of conflict are likely to be higher than in situation where such conditions are the direct opposite. It means that when social, political, economic and cultural processes are monopolized by a particular group, the fertile ground or conditions for conflict is created and this pave way for people to adopt adversarial approaches to conflict. Resource therefore constitutes the major cause of conflict between individuals and groups within political systems and between nations. Kothari (1979:6) rightly submit that the control and use of natural resources lies at the heart of the deepening crisis in the world and that the world is separated into axes of material comfort and of deficiency with concentration of poverty, scarcity unemployment and deprivation in one large sector of human society and over abundance and over production in another much smaller section of the globe. In substantiating this line of argument Faleti (2009) keyed into Scarborough (1998) view which state that where existing structures are tilted in favour of one group to the advantage of other groups, and where culture are exclusive, where holders of certain power or privileges are unwilling to acknowledge the rights of others to be different or where people find it difficult to identify with the political and economic ideas of a political regime, the chances are that conflict will emerge and escalate if nothing is done to correct structural issues.

Structural theory provides us with strong and remarkable underlying factors that generate conflict in a polity such as social, economic, political, cultural and so forth. While economic and social factors are more common, political and institutional factors (such as structure of the state, discriminatory political institutions, intergroup politics and elite cohesion or fragmentation); security factors (national security dilemma, regional military environment, refugee regimes, cross border criminality, civil-military relations); as well as ethnic factors (demography and physical geography) are seen as equally critical as basis for the emergence or escalation of destructive conflicts between individuals and groups. To resolve these observed causative factors of structural conflict, Marxist oriented structuralist postulate that it is bound to end in a revolution, civil war or some form of violence leading to the overthrow of the exploitative system. The liberal structuralist on the other hand argues for the elimination of structural defects with policy reforms. Keying into these two theoretical sub orientations to the emergence and escalation of destructive violent conflict as perpetrated by the activities of BH in Nigeria, this paper reiterate the argument of structural conflict theorist which attribute conflict to competing interest of individuals or group in a society a society whose characteristic features especially capitalism is exploitative and encourages the domination of a class by another, and that when social, political, economic and cultural processes are monopolized by a group, it creates the conditions that make people adopt adversarial approaches. Inequality creates feeling of dissatisfaction within a social system and tends to push the oppressed or exploited to revolt against the structural imbalance. Such as the exploitative nature of capitalist economic and social structures, the great disparity between developed and developing parts of the globe in a world acclaimed to be practicing democratic system of governance as well as disparities between groups within a polity in terms of access to national resources, poverty and unemployment in the mist of abundances as found in Nigeria. The imbalances informed the emergence of the various militant groups and insurgent Boko Haram. As argued by Faleti (2009) revolution is driven by a relative sense or feeling of inequality rather than an absolute measure.

It could be stressed that the principal cause of violence and destructive conflict is the aspiration for economic or political equality on the part of the common people who lack it, and the aspiration of oligarchs for greater inequality than they have, that is a discrepancy in both instances between what people have of political and economic goods relative to what they think is justly theirs. Evidently, reaction to unemployment highlights the concrete manifestations of the lopsided nature of prevailing conditions and those affected are likely to seek an end or the downfall of a political establishment by mobilizing other dissatisfied individuals and groups by raising their expectations and calling attention to the poor performance of government and the deepening of people's feelings of undeserved marginalization and neglect. In relating the emergence of BH in Nigerian polity to the theoretical views it could be stressed that the unemployment rate in a country rich in oil resources, poor development and linkages between urban and rural communities and corrupt activities (as many individuals

facing credible allegations of violence and myriad forms of corruption rather than being persecuted are rewarded with positions of influence and power by the government) created the basis for democratic government and process to be criticized by the founder of BH and to also draw membership from the fertile impoverished and dissatisfied population. Scholarly analysis and interrogative engagement on the menace of BH have demonstrated that BH drew its membership from dissatisfied workers, unemployed youth (s) and Almagiri (Yusuf, 2016; The Punch April 20, 2011; and Okereke, 2010).

To address the triggers of violent conflict as perpetrated by BH from liberal structural view point will require a reform. However making the type of reform or changes that will lead to positive relationships requires not just change in the way the society is structured or organized but change in tactics, attitudes and ethical values. Change is not always a welcome phenomenon as it is often resisted and not because people do not acknowledge or see its positive values but because they are not willing to admit committed blunders and weakness in the structure and pattern of social relations. Internally induced change especially those resulting from product of social encounters such as opportunities for learning, growth and development that is capable of leading to the construction of new and flexible attitudes, culture and structures are essential. Women empowerment and reorientation is therefore a step toward change in social relations. Skills acquired through this means will enhance the capacity of women to address basic human security challenges as they become independent and also employers of labour in the various trades and businesses established. American University of Nigeria has provided such opportunities for 500 women affected by insurgency in Adamawa State and the Federal government has commenced the training of over 2,500 IDPs in the state as well. These are efforts directed towards the peace and peace building process in this area and inline with the various Resolutions and the pillars as well as the NAP, Gender Policy and so forth. In other words a kind of reform from the liberal structuralist points of view of removing triggers of violence, by addressing inequality gap in terms of socioeconomic and related forms of social engagement in society. But the critical question is are the skill acquisition initiatives of government and other stakeholders impacting positively or are they adequate? The response is captured as challenges in subsequent parts of the paper.

### **Impact of BH Insurgency on Communities in Northeast Nigeria**

The Northeast geopolitical zone of Nigeria comprising Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe states bordering countries like Cameroon, Chad and Niger is an area that has since the emergence of BH in Nigeria's polity experienced the worst form of the bestial manifestations of the sects' reign of terror characterized by brutal massacres, hit and runs, abductions, forced conscriptions and displacements. Literature on the impacts indicates that women and children have been more endangered than men (Mashi and Mohammed, 2020; Oshita, 2015). In relation to this is the radicalization of capture or abducted women and girls as suicide bombers. The sect has emerged from all indication as the greatest threat to human security not just for Nigeria's northeast but the whole of Nigeria and Africa at large. The spate of terror attacks cut across the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria and the destructive acts impacting on the civilian population, public structures and private properties. However, the northeast zone is the epicenter of violence and insecurity in contemporary Nigeria. Animasawun (2015) aver by drawing attention to a description made of the northeast in 1947 as an area enslave by ignorance, poverty and superstition.

Presently there is an acute humanitarian crisis in the region weighing more on women and children. A general look at the effect of the Boko Haram conflict in northeast Nigeria shows that from 2009 to 2017: about 2.5 million people have been forcibly displaced internally and more than 20,000 thousand people have been killed in the conflict; an estimated 2,000- 7,000 people have gone missing and over 2,000 women and children are reported to have been abducted and are often classified among the missing persons; at least 54,911 women are reported to have been made widows by the insurgency, while over 400 women and girls have been sentenced to death as suicide bombers, and over 52,311 children have been made orphans. In addition several local government areas and their communities were invaded and occupied between 2013 and 2014 and with thousands of those displaced living in IDPs (Sani, 2017; David, 2017; World Bank and UNHCR, 2016). According to Mala (2015), the displaced are mainly from Borno state with 62 percent, Adamawa state has 18 percent of the displaced and Yobe state has 13 percent. In addition over 700,000 IDPs in Maiduguri the state capital of Borno state are living in either state controlled camps or with host families. Reflecting on the rapid assessment mission by the UN office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Mala stressed that women and children are the worst affected by the insurgency and they constitute 72 percent of IDPs. However, the advancement and escalation of the sect reign of terror has been reversed since the adoption of an integrated approach akin to joint or collective problem solving initiatives for neighborhood security led by Nigeria and including Chad Cameroon and Niger (Multinational Joint Task Force). The Nigerian security operatives have recaptured local governments and communities that BH between 2013 and 2014 had laid claims to and even established its symbol of authority (Bama, Gwoza, Dambowa, Konduga, Baga, Mubi north and south, Maiha, Michika, Madagali and so forth). In addition the dislodgement of BH from the Sambisa forest their operational

stronghold means that the end has come for BH. Even though there are ongoing periodic hit and run attacks, ambush and suicide bombings between the Nigerian government security operatives and BH, it could be stressed that the asymmetric warfare is but a desperate move to demonstrate that it could still instill fear on Nigerian population after defeat. And from the recent declaration by the armed forces of Nigeria that BH has been defeated goes to show that this region is gradually moving towards holistic post conflict processes in form of reconstruction and reintegration, peace building and development.

As a region that is struggling to get back on its feet, the drivers and causes of the conflict and also the power differentials between social groups and particularly women and their male counterparts in pre-insurgency need to be de-emphasized. Women have been the most vulnerable since the escalation of the insurgency in all ramifications and as such they should be considered critical to any form of security and peace building process. According to Animasawun (2015) the agency of women must be maximized in order to influence the norms guiding the involvement and participation of women in both formal and informal peace processes in northeastern Nigeria. Furthermore, this scholar stressed that women can contribute in erecting enduring structures for peace and security processes and mindful of the fact that design and pursuit of security in post-insurgency must fuse militaristic and non-militaristic realities. The Post insurgency phase he averred provides a rare moment for promoting unity and solidarity across fault lines against a common enemy that is BH on one hand and the reconstructing gender relations, peace and security.

As more initiatives and efforts are being intensified towards post-insurgency in northeast geopolitical zone of Nigeria and in particular in the most affected states and communities, stakeholders in this process must take into consideration the peculiarities of social relations in these areas. Essentially the place of the individual and in particular that of women in the social strata and the specific challenges that this group has faced in pre-insurgency, during insurgency and as internally displaced persons need to be situated within the context of Resolution 1325 and related resolutions or declarations. The northeast from scholarly analysis bears gender indicators reflective of some critical concerns captured in the 1995 Beijing Platform of Action which constitute forms of structural and physical violence in peace and war times. These from the view of Animasawun (2015) are worsening burden of poverty on women; unequal access to education and training; inequalities; inadequacies and unequal access to healthcare; violence against women; the effects of armed or other kinds of conflicts; inequality in economic structures and policies in all productive activities and access to resources; inequality between men and women power sharing and decision making; insufficient mechanism for the advancement of women; disdain for the protection of the human rights of women; stereotyping of women and inequality in women access to and participation in all communication systems; gender inequalities in the management of natural resources and protection of the environment and persistent discrimination against and violation of the girl child (Animasawun, 2015 and International Alert, 2004). Essentially the northeast prior to the current insurgency induced humanitarian crisis had always been plagued by development challenges with poverty rate ranging from 54.9 % to 72.2 % and also food insecurity ( Mohammed and Ayebea 2019; Mala, 2015). The destruction caused by the nine years of insurgency has worsened the highlighted challenges for women in the north east. Women social wellbeing and survival in the society is under constant threat by different forms of security related issues. The subsequent section of the paper reflects on international concern for women in conflict situation and required national action plan to mitigate the effects

### **Women in Conflict Situation: A Brief Reflection on UNSCR 1325, Related Responses and Nigeria's National Action Plan**

Violent conflicts have become common phenomena in our contemporary world and women from all indications are often the victims of all forms of violence. This development informed the need to include women in the peace and security agenda at the international level and this was captured in the UNSC Resolution 1325 of 2000 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and other related Resolutions. The thrust of the Resolution is anchored on participation of women in conflict resolution and peace processes; gender mainstreaming in conflict prevention initiative; protection of women's rights and bodies in peace and war; and relief and recovery, especially for the survivors of sexual violence. Ironically, it has been argued that despite the WPS, the gendered power relations has been left largely unchallenged and there exist gap in the implementation and the lives of women in violent ridden areas remain unchanged and women continue to play marginal role in formal peace talks (Hudson, 2017). In reaction to this gap, the United Nation Secretary General in 2007 called on member states to ensure the consideration of gender in peace-building process through regional and national action plans. The action plans are to be streamlined or anchored on the objectives of the UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions on WPS. Essentially UNSCR 1325 was adopted in October 2000 and called on member states to ensure among others to reaffirm existing commitments under humanitarian law as applied to women; reaffirm specific undertakings like the Beijing Platform of Action; end impunity and seek to prosecute those responsible for war crimes including rape and sexual violence; mainstream a gender perspective into peace operations; take into account gender consideration and the rights of women in UN missions; Increase

participation of women in decision making and peacemaking at all levels. Resolution 1325 and related resolutions 1265 of (1999), 1296 (2000), 1325 (2000), 1612 (2005), 1674 (2006), 1738 (2006), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 1998 (2011), 2068 (2012), 2106 (2013), 2122(2013), and 2242 (2015) (Watts, 2016).

All of the forgoing Resolutions are collectively termed the 1325 framework or the women, peace and security (WPS). These are also meant to ensure women's participation in all peace –making process and to protect women against violence in conflict and post-conflict situations. Furthermore these instruments cover all aspects of peace processes such as peace negotiation, peace-keeping, political participation, response to sexual violence in armed conflicts, judicial and legal reform and security sector reform. Interestingly, regional bodies like Africa Union came up with the Maputo Protocol 2002; the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and ECOWAS has developed instrument aimed at catalyzing Resolution 1325. Nigeria has equally responded in policy and action aimed at the implementation of the Resolution pillar at national level.

A general reflection on women in conflict situation indicate that even with the enactment of these instruments and policies, women have remained on the fringes in the peace processes in post-conflict communities in Nigeria and other parts of West Africa. For instance in respect to most of these resolutions 1325 and its successors, UNIFEM according to Gorman (2011) have supported women participation in peacemaking and formal peace processes including Darfur, the project for the International Refugee Council on sexual and gender –based violence in Liberia and DRC, offering medical services, psycho-social counseling and support for the reintegration and livelihoods to women affected by conflicts, including support to Women in Peace Building Programme (WIPNET) in West Africa which played a pivotal role in the Liberian peace process and which has been pursuing the active participation of women at local and regional level. Ironically, despite the avalanche of resolutions and protocols, there have been critical responses and observations for instance the reported misdemeanors of peace- keepers or security operatives that constitute threat to the safety of women and children in war and conflict affected communities. And scholars have lamented that, even with the existence of Resolution 1325, personnel of the United Nations get indicted for cases of sexual exploitation and abuse which is conceptualized as any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of the another ( Animasawun, 2015 and Gorman, 2010). The UN Secretary-General Representative Yasushi Akashi is noted to have trivialized the reported infractions in UNTAC by remarking that boys being boys (Bellamy and William 2013). Similarly there have been reported instances of sexual abuse and exploitation of women and children in the Central African Republic by French troops working under the auspices of the UN.

The situation in Nigeria has not been different from the observations note above and Nigeria has since initiated the gender policy and the National Action Plan. The National Action Plan is aimed at the domestication of the resolution nationally and this means at the various tiers or levels of governance. The NAP from the forward reflects government's commitment as well as accountability in ensuring the security of women and girls during armed conflict and enhancing their active and direct participation in conflict prevention and peace building as well as post-conflict efforts. Furthermore, the NAP is also a practical and operational tool for those affected by armed conflicts (women, children and communities) to be informed about governments' response to their plight including assistance programmes options available to them. And with regard to frontline enforcement agencies and other peace-keeping forces, the NAP affirms their significant role in protecting the physical safety and security of women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence and in identifying their specific needs in the times of crises and so forth.

The UNSCR 1325 in Nigeria is anchored on the following priorities (a) Participation – increased political empowerment for women and engagement at all levels of decision making. (b) Justice, Protection and Peace- A more effective and credible justice and security environment for women during and after conflict (c) Economic Resources and Support- of greater and more sustainable financial resources to support women in recovery process. The areas of focus or scope are termed the Pillars on which the NAP stands. While the Pillars and areas of coverage include: Prevention, Participation, Protection, Persecution and Promotion and known as the 5Ps. It is stressed that the successful implementation of Nigeria's NAP depends on proper funding and political will (NAP, nd: 9-10). According to Animasawun (2015) the inability to fulfill the spirit and letter of these resolutions formal and informal peace processes continue to be initiated which still sustain the marginalization of women. And consideration is not made on the basis of the changing landscape of conflict and insecurity. For instance, women are not just abused or exploited sexually but they have been made widows and rob of their source of social and economic security and these have been document in Nigeria's northeast during conflict and in post-conflict situations. With the observed challenge what other challenges are women confronted with as the northeast move into the reconstruction, reintegration, peace building and sustainable security process phase of post insurgency.



### **Security and Peace Building Process in North East Nigeria: The Imperative of Women Empowerment and Reorientation.**

The most affected states of Northeast Nigeria by BH reign of terror and counterinsurgency measures are Borno, Yobe and Adamawa. Areas under BH control have been reclaimed by Nigerian military and security operatives and the combined efforts of the Multinational Joint Task Force. Many displaced persons have returned to communities and local government areas that are considered as safe and many more are yet to return to areas still considered as unsafe for return. Some of the liberated local government areas that have witnessed massive return are Michika, Mubi North and South, Maiha, Hong. But thousands of those displaced from areas like Bama, Gwoza Madagali and others are yet to return. Specifically, those displaced more than twice find it difficult to return for fear of being displaced again since there are still occasional or sporadic attacks on such areas. Women however have been noted as the most affected by the violence perpetrated by BH and counterinsurgency measures and the imperative for women to be involved in peace process have received considerable debate and legal institutional framework. But, scholars have noted that women involvement in peace process has been limited in most post conflict communities and is an indication of the hegemonic nature of masculinity in most settings. Post conflict process usually turn out to be missed denied opportunities for removing patriarchal structures of violence against women, because formal and informal peace processes in post-conflict communities hardly give women active roles despite the disproportionate burden borne by women, and the allocation of places for women usually stops at the establishment of Ministries of Women's Affairs and it serves as an avenue where women's experience of war ends (Hudson, 2017; Animasawun, 2015; Hassan, 2015). Animasawun (2015;) argued that it is condemnable that much of women's roles are altered during conflict, the need for change in gender relations are rarely emphasized as part of the post-conflict peace building rather what obtains he lamented is the reaffirmation of patriarchal norms. And as Deacon (2010) noted the assumption that women experiences mirror the experiences and needs of men, gendered postwar recovery processes often do not receive sufficient attention because of the assumption that by meeting the needs of men, the women would have inadvertently been taken care of.

With the encouraging progress being made in the fight against BH by the militaries of Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon and Niger, it is of great importance to ensure that the peace processes and security in post conflict northeast be more gender sensitive and inclusive. In this regard the paper emphasizes on the imperative of women empowerment and reorientation programmes and inclusive in nature and should address years of patriarchal ideology. In other words a new post insurgency northeast where the violent nature of entrenched hegemonic masculinity which Galtung (1990) referred to as violence in its direct, structural (indirect) and cultural contexts in peace and war time. For instance in the northeast Islam and Christianity are the major faiths, and women's place in this area is generally prescribed in accordance with the precepts of these faiths and associated culture. The northeast reflects societies where the community overrides the individual because the individual's see themselves as having obligation to abide by societal rules. And women have been socialized to believe that their role is to be subservient to men as the best form of social relations for their well-being and also for the good of their societies. This form of social indoctrination has conditioned women to become eager at all times to abide by social norms even those that are harmful to them such as early marriages and domestic violence in form of sexual abuse and exploitation denied access to education and so forth. This has been demonstrated in the fight against insurgent Boko Haram and literature indicates that displaced women and children face particular protection and human security challenges. Sexual and gender-based violence and transactional sex are reported to be significant issues affecting women and children, but the problem is suspected to be greatly underreported. For instance, girls affected or displaced by BH insurgency are increasingly likely to engage in arrange early marriages. Ironically very little efforts are being taken to prevent and address these issues and basically as the two faiths and associated cultural norms are silent on this.

This social indoctrination which abounds in north east must be de-emphasized and replaced with new forms of social interaction in which women have defined and sustained capacity to engage in productive socioeconomic endeavours on their own terms irrespective of their gender status or faith. The empowerment programmes initiated by the federal government and being implemented at various IDP camps in the affected states form the trust or focal point in this section of the paper and with single purpose of exposing observed challenges based on responses obtained from women at IDP Camp in Yola Adamawa State. The plights of those not in Camps are also examined. The notion of security and peace building processes should be holistic in nature and takes cognizance of quantitative and qualitative dimensions. In other words the pursuit of security and peace building processes should have human security as the ideal framework, and empowering women entails taking into consideration their vulnerabilities and challenges. Some of the empowerment programmes are:

### **i. Socioeconomic Empowerment for Women in post-conflict Northeast**

Northeast Nigeria in pre- insurgency and humanitarian crisis depicts an area characterized by poverty and unemployment and this has been made worst with the activities of Boko Haram in both urban and rural areas of this zones. Insurgency has created huge human security challenges in the northeast and women who constitute part of the rural agriculture labourforce have been displaced from their farm lands and homes for more than three years. And some have even lost their spouses and are now living either in IDP camps or in host communities. The possibility of return despite the recapture of the communities invaded and occupied may not be immediate as government and development partners are focused on the reconstruction of social infrastructures destroyed in these areas and the provision of immediate social needs of IDPs amidst paucity of fund required for this purpose. Since the return to original community and farm lands may not be possible for now women empowerment and reoriented towards alternative means of socioeconomic endeavours is imperative. In this regard government has flagged up empowerment programme for all IDPs at the various camps located in the northeast and particularly in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states. Sadiq (2018) note that the federal government has planned to train 11,300 internally displaced persons (IDPs) affected by the Boko Haram insurgency in the North-east an information disclosed by the Minister of Labour and Employment, Dr. Chris Ngige through his representative the Director Skills Acquisition Programme (Mr Ibrahim Jibiya) at the inauguration of the programme in Maiduguri, the Borno state capital 14<sup>th</sup> February 2018. NDE is mandated with this training process and is intended to help to fast-track rehabilitation, resettlement and stabilisation in the Boko Haram conflict zone and with women and youth as the focal target for the empowerment. NDE Director-General, Alhaji Nasiru Argungu, said the agency would train 4,000 persons in Borno state, 3,100 in Yobe, 2,500 in Adamawa state and 1,700 in Gombe state. He added that 70 per cent of the beneficiaries will be women and the vulnerable, and that the beneficiaries will be exposed to various trades and they include - production of pomade, soap, jelly, perfumes, tie and dye and hair dressing, among others, adding that the male beneficiaries would be trained in carpentry, block moulding, auto mechanic and GSM repairs. The director's categorization of trade tends to reflect the gender bias in women and men social occupation.

Government empowerment programmes are examined in relation to women participation and challenges and the paper draws from initiatives in Adamawa state. The National Directorate of Employment is noted to have commenced empowerment programmes for IDPs in the affected states and in Adamawa state the target for training is 2,500 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) on income generation. At the Malkohi Camp near Yola, during the launching ceremony the Acting State Coordinator of the directorate, Kenneth Maigida, said the beneficiaries comprised IDPs in camps and those settling in host communities in the state. He further reaffirm that framework and approach in training the IDPs in income generating activities is a direct response to their peculiar situation, the relevance and the potential effectiveness of the skills they will acquire. And that these skills were carefully selected based on the needs assessment and baseline survey and analysis conducted by the directorate. The Directorate has received active support from National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and Adamawa State Emergency Management Agency (ADSEMA) as well as the military, Red Cross and other international organisations in facilitating the take-off of the programme. As such the empowerment programme embarked upon at Malkohi and other camps in Adamawa state in which women are participating and which are alternative as well as associated to the traditional socioeconomic endeavours are:

#### **A. Government Initiative: Skills Acquisition carried out by NDE**

Government has commenced skill acquisition and empowerment programme for IDPs in Camps and host communities and 2,500 IDPs (women and youth) have been targeted for empowerment in Adamawa state. Some of these skills acquisition and empowerment programmes are: (a) Poultry farming- 21 women are participating in this (b) Fish Pound Development and Management- 05 women are being trained (c) Fashion Design- 69 of the women are said to be participating (d) Vegetable Oil Processing- 08 women involved in this skill development initiative (e) Cake Making- 17 women are involved in the training process (f) Soap Making- 15 women (g) Dry Season and Irrigation Farming- 10 women (h) Animal Husbandry- 12 women and so forth. These are some of the noted skills acquisition activities that women are participating in at the Malkohi Camp. These programmes are commended as laudable by the participants but these are not without challenges and these are discussed under challenges.

#### **B. Empowerment through Non –Government Initiative- American University Nigeria**

American University of Nigeria in collaboration with United Nation High Commission for Refugees and as part of the University's humanitarian services to members of the public, it targeted specific groups at IDPs for training in various micro businesses (Poultry Farming, Buying and Selling of agricultural produce -grains, Cake production, Pop Corn production, Groundnut oil production, Fashion designing and so forth) and assessed based on their level of income, over dependability of relatives, widows and divorcees. 500 women were trained successfully. The categorization of beneficiaries of the empowerment programme indicates thus: 180 women received training from Yola North and South Local government areas; 180 women were empowered for Mubi

North and South LGAs and 140 for Michika LGA. The AUN project coordinator Ahmed Mohammed said that women were trained in 17 cooperatives with different trades under the project of intervention termed “ Project Livelihoods empowerment Intervention” designed in collaboration with UNHCR to empower returnee IDPs and those still in camps to become self-dependent and discourage them from depending on government and organizations for their survival. He further stressed that such businesses would take their minds away from the trauma of BH attacks and also to restore their hopes of achieving their goals in life. The following are some of the established and registered cooperative groups: Liberty Multi-purpose; Alheri Multipurpose; Unique Multipurpose; Sa’a Multipurpose and Kauna Multipurpose. In addition 50 per cent of the shops rent cost was paid as well as N30,000.00 Naira paid into the accounts of each of the beneficiaries for takeoff and running cost so as to avoid borrowing to run their businesses at the infant stage. One of the beneficiaries( Mrs Mary Adamu) according to Emmanuel (2017), commended the AUN empowerment programme by stressing that the initiative will make her and other beneficiaries employers of labour and that their era of standing on a long queue in the sun for food and other items, which makes them feel like strangers in their own country and land, and worthless as human beings has now ended with their empowerment. As such their lost hope has been restored and also their dignity.

## **ii. The Imperative of Social Reorientation of Women and Communities in Post-insurgent Northeast Nigeria.**

The contemporary Nigerian society from scholarly observation discriminates against women, and it is this tendency in its many ramifications which breeds their marginalization, oppression and consequent exploitation by men and this account for women ignorance, poverty and disease. For instance it is stressed that women marginalization get their support from the general belief that as subordinates of men, women are, and must be dependent on men for everything especially their identities, the social definition of who they are. In other words women are to be seen as appendages of men economically, politically, socially and even emotionally. In this regard, women by implication are subject to the whims and caprices of the men, the men decides what women should strive for and want as well as stipulate what they should do or not, how and when, what is acceptable or not for the women (Ojogbane, 2007; Emordi, 2020 ). What is implied in this scholar’s observation is that all of the enumerated issues constitute marginalization irrespective of the particular view or perspective be it theological or secular, because it impinges on the social, political, economic, cultural and psychological liberty of the generality of women in Nigeria. These forms of marginalization contradict the provision of the UNSCR 1325, Nigeria’s NAP ,gender policy and other related provisions. According to Mala (2015:36) the key challenges of women in peace building in the region is ingrained in culture of patriarchy and gender sensitivity. Emphasizing that patriarchy has denied women the right to participate in peacebuilding and conflict resolution roles and educated men in society are not involved in championing the cause of women in the region. We cannot talk of security or effective peace building process in post insurgency northeast by sweeping under the carpet all entrenched forms of marginalization. As such the social norms and construct which helped in perpetrating women marginalization in social exchange and productive socioeconomic endeavour must be de-emphasis. The under listed are considered vital towards security and the peace building in northeast Nigeria.

- The reconstruction of insurgency ravaged communities and the resettlement or reintegration of affected population needs to be approached in a holistic manner. To this end women widowed or not should be the pivot of the process. Their views and aspirations should be articulated by them and the social medium for interchange be initiated, managed and control by women. Men should not be in the forefront of the decision- making process since they constitute a reminder of the trauma and physical abuse that most of the women have experience within the period of insurgency and even in IDP camps.
- The various forms of discrimination and marginalization which has been a characteristic features of most Nigerian social settings particularly in northeast and often encouraged and sustained by our social and religious institutions needs to be re-evaluated. For instance domestic violence in form of rape by spouse and others are common but not reported for fear of stigmatization
- The misguided ideology in the north that women’s role should be restricted to the kitchen and bedroom (which President Buhari jokingly or mistakenly in 2016 inferred as the first lady’s role in reaction to her comment on social media that the Nigerian administrative process under the leadership of Buhari had been high jacked ) and also the misperception that education of women or the girl child should be dependent on family fortune as well as ideological view of western education being sinful as propagated by Boko Haram are social, religious and institutional issues that should be given urgent attention and to reorient these views to be in tune with global concern for development and security related issues as evidenced in international declarations conventions protocols and national frameworks (for social justice and equality for all in all sphere of life – political, economic and so forth). Government and development partners are to lay more emphasis on the need to empower women and the female child by improving and increasing their access to educational development

opportunities and to be aware of their fundamental rights and dignity based on international and national policy frameworks (the various Resolutions, gender policy and constitutional provisions).

- The idea of marrying out young female instead of being educated in formal and informal sector of the education system should be de-emphasized at federal, state and local government levels of governance. Social institutions that are specifically designed for women or female education and empowerment formal and informal should be made more secure twenty-four hours a day (24/7) to prevent further attacks and women should be actively involved in this process. Furthermore the imperative of women's education as crucial for sustainable peace process and also for sustainable development should inform the basis for the reorientation because it forms the nexus between women and other areas of life- supporting opportunities such as access to quality health, economic freedom, legal and political rights.
- For an effective security and peace building process in northeast Nigeria the social roles that relegate women to the background of social production and national development should be re-evaluated by all stakeholders. For instance the social roles of women in society are multi-dimensional ranging from wife, mother, daughter, sister and so on. These roles can be exploited to further the security and peace building process. Thus instead of seeing women as just wives and mandated with the function of attending to spouse sexual needs and for social reproduction and often exploited in this regard, they could be seen as tools for peace building through these essential roles. The biological and social construct roles could be transformed to weapon for peace. Women can preach peace to their male counterparts as wives and to the young ones as mothers or sisters or as a daughter. However for women to effectively be vanguards for peace building society has to appreciate women at all levels and this will entail public awareness for men and community leaders on the need to respect women and not see them as tools to be exploited or abused. The imperative of this argument is embedded in the various resolutions and in particular 1325 and related Resolutions. According to Animasawun (2015:25) the resolution provided a comprehensive template for re-ordering conflict and terror- affected communities in ways that peace and security get defined in inclusive and sustainable terms, but with specific attention to peculiar needs, structures and sensibilities in affected communities... and that women participation must be consciously undertaken to ensure that resultant peace and security are inclusive, impactful and enduring. He suggested the translation of the Resolution into Hausa and Kanuri since it has been translated in over 100 languages but we also add that the translation should go beyond these two languages in Nigeria. Aniwassun also warn that women needs must first be met before they can become conscious peace-builders and because we cannot expect peace by perpetuating differentials in the capacity and skills of men and women. Government and development partners have come to terms with this and have initiated processes through which women affected by insurgency could be empowered economically to become employers of labour through skills and trade acquired. However women affected by insurgency and are not currently in IDPs camps are not likely to access the various skill acquisition programmes.

### **The Challenges for Women in IDPs Camp and Related Peace Building process**

The challenges confronting women based on information obtained through a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and interviews with women affected by insurgency in Adamawa State and specifically at Malkohi IDP camp and from those in host community like Sangirei close to the University are: (1) Lack of adequate water supply for fish pond development, management and irrigation farming (2) Poor financial capability of IDPs to purchase materials needed to start their individual skills (3) Lack of land for practical application of acquired skills and general farming activities. (4) 67 young women completed primary school but only 16 could secure admission into Post-primary while the remaining could not and they are part of those who are being trained in either fashion designed and related skills. They also have financial constraint to practice acquired skills. (5) Lack of outlet to market skills product as they are located some distance from the main town and their only customers are IDPs like themselves and most of them can barely feed themselves and talk less of having appetites for what is being produced at the camp. (6) Women who were at the NYSC camp and are now living in host communities instead of the Malkohi camp opted for their current location due to structural violence perpetrated by those who were supposed to provide them with scour. For instance, IDPs demonstrated to show their dissatisfaction with the management of the camps on inadequate and poor feeding and diversion of food items by camp officials (Conor, 2017) reported This inhuman act of official drove most of the camp members to abandon the camp for host communities and to cater for their needs as hired hands. Furthermore some of these women have been displaced threetimes; an example is the women leader at Malkohi camp Mrs Fatima Hassan who was first displaced in Lassa her home town and place of employment as local government staff, and became an IDP at Maraba Mubi some 20 km into Mubi town. She was forced to leave this place when BH attacked the area early hours of October 29, 2014 as they sect were advancing towards Mubi town and succeeded in occupying the town on that same day. This woman fled to Gombi some 100km from Maraba Mubi and was equally forced to move out of Gombi to Malkohi camp. Mrs Fatima Hassan cannot return to Lassa for now because she has nothing to return to. No house and her business were completely destroyed and attempt to stay

with relatives has not been a good experience so she prefers to remain in the camp. She has managed to open a small kiosk in the camp where she sells biscuits and soup ingredients to other members of the camp. She is also participating in the skill acquisition programme and has chosen Poultry farming and management as her trade. Her challenge is getting space to practice this new skill and the finance to support it.

The forgoing challenges are just a reproduction of the structural violence from the structural conflict theory anchored on the two sub orientations. As such the social reforms aimed at reducing socioeconomic and other triggers of inequality are yet to be properly addressed by government and the three tiers of governance have been overwhelmed by the humanitarian crisis. The effectiveness of any security and peace building process as envisaged in the various resolutions and related NAP and in which women are to be active advocates requires further evaluation and alternative policy framework. Women cannot be advocates of security and peace building process when social needs are yet to be met after undergoing multiple traumatic experiences and with no possible respite in sight.

## V. CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

The northeast has been ravaged by Boko Haram reign of terror and women have been the most affected. This paper examined the imperative of women empowerment and reorientation for security and peace building process in north east by focusing on adopted initiatives of government and other bodies and the challenges being experienced at IDPs camp by women. The paper concludes that; with reference to the provision of UNSCR 1325 and the key pillars as well as the NAP and gender policy as it relates to women, peace, security initiative, women have been exposed to violence rather than being protected and can be regarded as gender-based violence. Their participatory roles in the peace building process as the northeast transit into the post conflict phase have not been properly packaged. Women are still confronted with diverse forms of lack of protection, basic human needs and related issues. The humanitarian crises have continued to increase and expected humanitarian supports have declined. Most IDPs at camps and even in host communities have to cater for their needs as hired hands, they lack farm land to cultivate and even skills and trade being acquired is being impacted on by lack of required material and financial resources. These have not positively provided the needed boost for gendered/effective women involvement in peace-building process. It is recommended that non-government initiative should be mobilized to engender the peace building process. Such as that of the American University of Nigeria empowerment of women affected by insurgency with its requisite support which is the only observed initiative that seems to be the effective tools for wealth creation and a framework for women to be active employers of labour. In addition, government should bear in mind that millions of people have been displaced for more than ten (10) years and have been alienated from their source of livelihood, loss of bread winners and families, reintegrating the IDPs will require more than the reconstruction of public infrastructures. This is predicated on social construct of women alienation and marginalization from social, economic and political life hitherto the emergency of insurgency in the northeast. Women constitute about 54% of IDP in northeast Nigeria and most of them are the product of years of social, economic and political discrimination. And as part of the rural population of northeast Nigeria whose main socioeconomic/occupation is subsistent farming, government should endeavour to provide farmland and seedlings for cultivation in a secure environment or location for IDPs.

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