



The Role and Impact of NGOs on Poverty Alleviation in North East Nigeria: A Study in Mubi-North

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The Role and Impact of NGOs on Poverty Alleviation in North East Nigeria: A Study on Mubi-North

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Abstract

Non-governmental organizations or NGOs generally refer to those voluntary or non-profit organizations which work in the field of development co-operation or in education and policy advocacy activities (Brodhead, 1987). They mainly provide services to the vulnerable people of the society in order to stimulate them for income generating activities. Aside the human cost in the Boko Haram insurgency, the atrocities of the sect have socioeconomic implications, especially in the northeast where Boko Haram has dominance. The economic, social and psychological costs of the insurgency cannot be quantified. Commercial activities in the northeast have been reduced because of the unprecedented attacks by the sect. Banks, markets and shops do not open regularly due to the fear of the coordinated attacks from Boko Haram. The question is, to what extent does boko haram insurgency affect economic activity in mubi north and how does it contribute to creating poverty in the area? and also, what roles does the NGOs played in alleviating poverty as a result of the insurgency? This study aims at finding out the answer to the above question. The results reveals that there is an increase in the percentage of those living below the poverty level as a result of the attack on mubi, also, The results reveals that, Human capacity training and development was tha impactful measure taking by the NGOs in alleviating poverty, followed by Food and relief materials, educational assistance and provision of farming tools, equipment, and materials. Assistance offerd in the area of Fish farming and also giving cash to the affected people was categorised as less impactful while the goat and sheep farming program offered by some NGOs was classified as not impactful.

Keywords: NGOs, Poverty Alleviation, Mubi-North

Introduction

Non-governmental organizations or NGOs generally refer to those voluntary or non-profit organizations which work in the field of development co-operation or in education and policy advocacy activities (Brodhead, 1987). They mainly provide services to the vulnerable people of the society in order to stimulate them for income generating activities. Their services include welfare works such as community development, assistance in national disasters, sustainable system development, and popular movements (Roy, Raquib and Sarker, 2017). So they contribute significantly in the development of a country through the engagement of grass root people in the national economy. However, NGOs are also working in the broad area of emergency response, democracy building, conflict resolution, human rights work, cultural protection, environmental activism, policy suggestion, research, information sharing (Lewis, 2010; Lewis and Kanji, 2009).

Aside the human cost in the Boko Haram insurgency, the atrocities of the sect have socioeconomic implications, especially in the northeast where Boko Haram has dominance. The economic, social and psychological costs of the insurgency cannot be quantified. Commercial activities in the northeast have been reduced because of the unprecedented attacks by the sect. Banks, markets and shops do not open regularly due to the fear of the coordinated attacks from Boko Haram. According to Okereocha (2012) human capital and investors drain is hampering economic development in the northeast this is due to the attacks on banks, markets, parks and government departments. The attacks on these commercial areas have led to the migration of people to other parts of the country. Shiklam (2012) posits that:

“The Maiduguri Monday Market said to be the biggest market in the city is reported to have been seriously affected as hundreds of shop owners, especially Southerners are said to have closed their businesses and left the troubled city. About half of the 10,000 shops and stalls in the market were said to have been abandoned by traders who have fled the city.”

Aside the migration of people who have business in the northeast to other parts of Nigeria, foreign nationals of Chad, Cameroun and Niger are being repatriated to their home countries for what the government of Nigeria said they constitute the members of Boko

Haram. Evidence has shown that not all the repatriated nationals of the above countries are members of Boko Haram. Definitely, those who have business in cities like Maiduguri, Damaturu and Yola will form part of those that are sent homes which will actually affect the economic activities in these cities. Ovaga (n.d) asserts that under this situation, the economy of the northeast will seriously be affected if foreign citizens who contribute large quota to the development of the northeast vis a vis their economic activities are sent back to their countries of origin. The never-ending attacks by Boko Haram in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states have a severe impact on the economic lives of people living in these areas. A case in point is that the working duration of most commercial banks in the affected areas hit by Boko Haram bombings has been reduced from eight hours to three hours (Mohammed, 2012). "In Maiduguri, Borno state, where the sect originated, the frequent bombings and clashes between Boko Haram and the security agents have weighed down seriously on the commercial and businesses activities in the city as many business have reportedly crumbled while many people have fled the state" (Shiklam, 2012). There is already a dichotomy in the north and south development in Nigeria. The poverty profile released by the National Bureau of Statistics illustrates that there is the prevalence of poverty in the north as compared to the south. It is in this data that the *Businessday* newspaper predicted if the insecurity situation continues development in the northern part will remain static and the gap between the north and south will broaden further (BDN, 2012). "The region needs peace and stability more than any region in the country, particularly because the region clearly lagging behind in term of infrastructure, education and other development indices" (Minster of Information, Labara Maku cited in Ogochukwu, 2013). Prominent Nigerians who have bemoaned the economic impact of Boko Haram insurgency in northeast Nigeria including the President Goodluck Jonathan and Northern Governors forum According to Obaremi (2014) "Economic affairs in the north is already depleting due to a massive departure of people and financial institutions from the northern region. But if the government delays in the implementing comprehensive plans to tackle insecurity from its roots, then not only will the northern region be economic desolation, the country as a whole risk losing billion of dollars in foreign direct investment" The business activities of telecom operators have not been left out from the attacks of Boko Haram. For instance, some telecom masts belong to some major mobile telephone operators were destroyed by Boko Haram and the banning of telephone services by the military affected the income generation of some of the mobile phone operators. Just as the economic implications of Boko Haram atrocities cannot be quantified, the social costs are enormous. The church, school, market, clinic and

mosque are potential targets of Boko Haram. For example, in April 2014, a federal government girls' college was attacked which subsequently led to the abduction of over 250 female students. Attacks on these social places have prevented people from going to these places. Some students have stopped going to school, others have been transferred to the southern part of the country to continue their education. Christians are afraid to go and worship in the church on Sundays due to the fear of being attacked by the sect. Same for the muslim faithfuls who abandon their worshipping centers because of Boko Haram attacks. The markets have become deserted.

The question is, to what extend does boko haram insurgency affect economic activity in mubi north and how does it contribute to creating poverty in the area? and also, what roles does the NGOs played in alleviating poverty as a result of the insurgency? This study aims at finding out the answer to the above question.

Methodology

In order to evaluate the role of different NGOs for poverty alleviation through socio-economic and infrastructural development of the affected areas, interview was conducted with some of the affected people in mubi north whose economic activities has been affected with the insurgency, and also received some assistance from some of the NGOs in an effort to alleviate poverty in mubi north.

Results and Discussion

A total of 80 people were interviewed in Mubi-North to assess the role of NGOs in poverty alleviation to those affected in mubi north. The results of the interview was collected transcribed and analyse. The results obtained are presented in the table below.

Table 1: Income and Its Sources Before insurgency

| S/N | Income Sources | No. of Participants | % of those that Earns Above poverty line | % of those that Earns below poverty line |
|-----|----------------------------|---------------------|--|--|
| 1 | Traders | 10 | 90 | 10 |
| 2 | Crop Farming | 10 | 70 | 30 |
| 3 | Livestock Farming | 10 | 100 | 0 |
| | Tailoring | 10 | 80 | 20 |
| | Capentry | 10 | 90 | 10 |
| | Welding | 10 | 100 | 0 |
| | Masonry | 10 | 60 | 40 |
| | Motorcycle/Tricycle Riders | 10 | 70 | 30 |
| | Total | 80 | | |

Table 2: Income and Its Sources After insurgency

| S/N | Income Sources | No. of Participants | % of those that Earns Above poverty line | % of those that Earns below poverty line |
|-----|----------------------------|---------------------|--|--|
| 1 | Traders | 10 | 70 | 30 |
| 2 | Crop Farming | 10 | 50 | 50 |
| 3 | Livestock Farming | 10 | 40 | 60 |
| 4 | Tailoring | 10 | 50 | 50 |
| 5 | Capentry | 10 | 40 | 60 |
| 6 | Welding | 10 | 80 | 20 |
| 7 | Masonry | 10 | 60 | 40 |
| 8 | Motorcycle/Tricycle Riders | 10 | 70 | 30 |
| | Total | 80 | | |

Table 1 shows the percentage of the interviewed participants that live above and below the poverty line before the boko harm insurgency, while table 2 shows their percentage after the insurgency attack on mubi. The data reveals that there is an increase in the percentage of those living below the poverty level as a result of the attack on mubi, where some people loose their capital, customers, or infrastructure, which make their earnings drop below the poverty line.

Table 3: NGOs assistance in alleviating Poverty

| | Type of NGOs assistance Aquired | Impact of the assistance in alleviating Poverty | Suggestions for NGOs on how to better alleviate poverty |
|---|--|---|--|
| 1 | Feeding and relief materials | Impactful | NGOs should improve on the methods of distributing releive materials by |
| 2 | Improving education | Impactful | Provide teacher training on methodology for teaching and handling IDPs |
| 3 | Human capacity training | Very Impactful | Provide entrepreneuership training and how to create a sucessful business plan |
| 4 | Farming tools, Equipment and materials | Impactful | Provide better ways of sharing tools and equipment to reach the targeted farmers |
| 5 | Goat and sheep rearing | Not Impactful | Not a feasible business in mubi, other options like cow fattening should be considered |
| 6 | Fish farming training and assistance | Less impactful | Capital intensive and assistance offered is little. |
| 7 | Financial assistance | Less impactful | Provide people with financial literacy program before giving them |

Table 3 above shows the type of assistance offered by some of the NGOs present in mubi after the insurgency, with the corresponding rating on its impact on alleviating poverty and suggestions on how to make their assistance more impactful in their effort toward alleviating poverty in the area.

The results reveals that, Human capacity training and development was tha impactful measure taking by the NGOs in alleviating poverty, followed by Food and relief materials, educational assistance and provision of farming tools, equipment, and materials. Assistance offerd in the area of Fish farming and also giving cash to the affected people was categorised as less impactful while the goat and sheep farming program offered by some NGOs was classified as not impactful.

Suggestions on how to make each of the category of assistance more impactful were also provided in the table 3 above.

Conclusion

The research study reveals how the insurgency affect economic activities in mubi north by revealing how some people drop below the poverty line after the insurgency attack on mubi. It further reveals the types of assistance offered by some of the NGOs in alleviating poverty, and also suggest on how to make those assistance more impactful in alleviating poverty.

This shows that NGOs plays significant roles in assisting those in needs in order to make their lives better.

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