

# The Impact of Insecurity on the Sustainable Development Goals in Nigeria.

Ukiyedeikimie Ugo Moses

Department of Social Studies, Isaac Jasper Boro College of Education, Sagbama, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.804074>

Received: 23 July 2023; Revised: 22 August 2023; Accepted: 29 August 2023; Published: 06 May 2024

## ABSTRACT

The state of insecurity in Nigeria is a major challenge in the efforts to attain the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the country. Every region is under one form of security challenge or the other resulting into large scale destruction of lives, property and infrastructure, particularly in the northern part of the country. Consequently, the prevailing insecurity has almost grounded socio-economic activities thereby risking the attainment of the sustainable development goals in the country. This paper takes a critical look at the possibility of attaining the Global Goals in 2030 in the face of mounting security challenges. Secondary sources – books, journals, magazines, newspapers and the internet were the sources of data. For the country to make appreciable progress on the Global Goals, the paper recommends the resolution of the root causes of conflict through effective and honest engagement with disaffected groups and the promotion of national reconciliation. The need to intensify the fight against criminal gangs and the ongoing military efforts against Boko Haram was also recommended.

**Keywords:** SDGs, Boko Haram, global goals, insecurity, refugees, internally displaced persons.

## INTRODUCTION

There are different views on the causes of insecurity in Nigeria. There is a school of thought that attributes the prevalence of insecurity in the country to poor governance and government failure to promote economic wellbeing of the citizens (Onoja, 2014). To those that share in this belief, the primary cause of government failure in the country is corruption which makes it difficult for successive governments to meet development targets and therefore the aspirations of the people (Onoja, 2014; Basse, 2018). Economic deprivation of the people which translates to lack of jobs, education, basic health care, access to potable drinking water and other basic necessities of life is believed to be the primary cause of insecurity in the country. This, it is believed contributes to the high level of frustration and cause people to resort to violence. The prevailing harsh economic condition in the country is therefore a driver of insecurity and is one plausible explanation to the general insecurity plaguing the country. A situation where majority of youths are unemployed and without a means of livelihood is a major source of frustration that predisposes them to frustration, violence and cause security problems in the country. This is a major contributor to the Boko Haram insurgency. Apart from unemployment and poverty, religion is a major driver of the insurgency by Boko Haram. The desire to establish an Islamic caliphate in the country is a major objective that inspires the activities of Boko Haram.

Deprivation from the oil resources and political exclusion of people from the Niger Delta are some reasons for the militancy and general security crisis in the Niger Delta (Basse, 2018). Even in the Niger Delta, high unemployment among the youth and lack of economic opportunities are noted as drivers of insecurity in the

region (Bassey, 2018). It is argued that at the heart of the insecurity in the north-west is lack of socio-economic opportunities and greed. According to Zubairu (2020) the causes of insecurity in Nigeria are unemployment and poverty, corruption, elite exploitation of ethnic and religious differences, porous borders, weak security apparatus, bad governance and poor leadership and marginalization and inequalities. Ojewale (2021) identified governance failure, widespread poverty, unemployment, drug use and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons as the drivers of insecurity in the north-central of Nigeria. Ojo, et al (2023) categorized the causes of insecurity in the north-west of the country to existing causes and triggers. The existing causes of insecurity noted by Ojo et al (2023) were poverty, ungoverned spaces, porous borders and weak security infrastructure. The identified immediate causes of insecurity were climate change, ethno-communal factors, competition for resources, drug abuse, religious intolerance and criminality. Political marginalization of the south-east zone of the country is a major cause of the separatist agitations and the security dilemma in that part of the country. These security challenges have severely constrained the ability of the country to realize the global goals in the country. This paper is aimed at establishing the impact of the prevailing insecurity in the drive to attain the global goals in Nigeria by 2030.

The paper is divided into five sections. Following the introduction is clarification of concepts which is followed by presentation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The third section deals with the challenge of insecurity in Nigeria. Section four discusses the social, economic and environmental impacts of insecurity and its effect on the SDGs in the country. Section five is conclusion and recommendations.

## 1.1 Conceptual clarifications

### a. Insecurity

Security and insecurity are two sides of the same coin. The concepts of security and insecurity are used in relation to the individual, society or state. In this paper, insecurity is used in the context of the individual in the Nigerian state and not threats to the survival of the state itself. Onoja (2014:35) defined insecurity as 'peoples' relative feeling of the presence of economic, political, social, cultural and psychological fear'. As rightly noted by Onoja (2014), insecurity of individuals in society is abroad and multidimensional phenomenon. It encompasses economic, political, social, cultural and psychological dimensions. At the level of the individual, insecurity portends fear in any of these dimensions but particularly the fear of death or threat to lives and property. Insecurity also denotes the inability of individuals to improve their wellbeing and promote their interests in society. Economic insecurity which is basic to the survival of individuals in society implies the loss of livelihood, unemployment, hunger, disease, homelessness etc that affects the economic wellbeing of individuals in society.

### b. Sustainable Development

Sustainable Development is defined in the Brundtland Report (1987) as the ability of the present generation to meet their needs without sacrificing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable development is closely related to efficient utilization of resources in society. The focus of sustainable development is the availability of resources both for the use of the present generation while also ensuring the availability of the resources for future generations. The implication is that sustainable development is a process of careful planning and proper allocation and use of resources while being mindful of the use of the same resources by future generations.

## 1.11 The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a collection of 17 goals set by the international community

for nations to achieve between 2015 and 2030. The goals were adopted by 193 nations at the end of the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit of September 2015. It is the global response to sustain the gains of the MDGs beyond its terminal date of 2015. While the MDGs were primarily targeted at poor and developing countries, the SDGs broadened the scope and reach of the objectives of the goals to include both developed and developing countries. The SDGs are therefore more ambitious and broad-based goals set by the international community for countries to achieve by 2030. The goals are a global call to action for countries to make individual and collective efforts to improve the lives of people globally. Four themes were developed as the focus of global efforts: economic, social, environment and global peace and security. The goals envisioned a present and future that is economically sustainable, socially inclusive and environmentally resilient in a world that is peaceful and secure. The SDGs are therefore a conscious effort by the international community to improve the lives of people globally and create an environment that is sustainable for future generations.

The SDGs are therefore a set of integrated goals that are aimed at ending global poverty, the sustainable use of natural resources and protection of the environment. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals are:

- Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
- Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.
- Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
- Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all.
- Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
- Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all
- Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all
- Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation
- Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries
- Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
- Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
- Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development
- Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss
- Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for

all, and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

## **THE CHALLENGE OF INSECURITY IN NIGERIA**

For over two decades, Nigeria has been plagued by persistent security challenges in various parts of the country (Nwagboso, 2018). From militancy in the Niger Delta region to Boko Haram insurgency in the north-east, insecurity in the country has escalated virtually in every part of the country.

From its operational base in the north-east of the country, Boko Haram and its splinter group, the Islamic State of West Africa Province (ISWAP) have continued to terrorize the north-east while spreading its influence and targets beyond its domain (Human Rights Watch, 2022). In the north-western zone of the country, several criminal groups armed with sophisticated weapons, now officially known as bandits are on rampage, kidnapping, looting, killing and maiming innocent citizens (Human Rights Watch, 2022).

The activities of groups agitating for an independent state of Biafra have become a menace to the security of the south-east zone. These groups impose and enforce orders and engage in killings thereby engendering general insecurity in the region (Human Rights Watch, 2022). Security threats are not limited to the regions as Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory have also been under the burden of insecurity arising from attacks and threats from Islamic militants and other criminal groups (Human Rights Watch, 2022). The Islamic State of West Africa Province (ISWAP) made good their threat when Kuje prison, a prison facility in the suburb of Abuja was attacked on July 5, 2022, leading to the escape of over 60 Boko Haram fighters and 900 inmates (Human Rights Watch, 2022). The United Nations office in Abuja had earlier come under attack. The frequent attacks in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) and threat from various criminal groups necessitated the closure of all federal government colleges in the FCT for security reasons. People lived in fear in Abuja as a result of recurrence of security breaches in and around the federal capital territory (Human Rights Watch, 2022).

Major highways in the northern part of the country were overrun by criminal gangs and Boko Haram fighters. Kidnappings and large scale destruction of lives and property by bandits and various Islamic fundamentalist groups continued to terrorize and traumatize the citizenry and made living a nightmare. For five consecutive years (2015-2019), Nigeria was ranked third, after Afghanistan and Iraq, in the Global Terrorism Index (United Nations, 2022); an indication that during the period, Nigeria was one of the most terrorized countries in the world.

Travel advisories issued by various countries to their citizens intending to visit Nigeria and those living in the country are indicative of the dire security situation of the nation. In its updated travel advisory of July 7, 2023, the Government of Canada strongly advised its citizens to avoid non-essential travels to Nigeria, including its capital, Abuja (Government of Canada, 'Nigeria travel advice', 2023). The reason, according to the advisory is because of 'the unpredictable security situation throughout the country and the significant risk of terrorism, crime, inter-communal clashes, armed attacks and kidnappings' (Government of Canada, 'Nigeria travel advice', 2023). The advisory noted that Nigeria is challenged by insecurity and virtually no part of the country was sufficiently safe for non-essential visits by citizens of Canada.

The travel advice by the Government of the United Kingdom was similar in content. It also painted a dire situation of insecurity in the country and advised its nationals to avoid non-essential travels to the country

(GOV.UK, foreign travel advice: Nigeria, 2023). These travel advisories were important indicators of the pervading insecurity in the country against the backdrop of government claims of improved security.

### **A. Insecurity and the Social Goals in Nigeria**

Since the emergence of Boko Haram in 2009, it has constituted a major security threat to the Nigerian state.

The rampaging Islamic fundamentalist group has put at stake several objectives of the SDGs in the country. Education which is a critical global goal has suffered severe setback. Schools have been primary target of the insurgents. The onslaught of the group against education and educational infrastructure is founded on the group's belief that Western education is a major source of corruption in society and therefore an evil to be extirpated for the development of a truly Islamic state. In fact, Boko Haram literally means, 'Western education is forbidden'. Imbued with this warped ideology, the group embarked on a sustained campaign of attacks and bombing of schools in the north-eastern part of the country, the base of their operations (Africa Growth Initiative, 2014; United Nations Development Programme, 2020). The intensity of the attacks resulted in frequent closures of schools as was the case in Borno state in March, 2014. The United Nations Development Programme (2020) indicated that in 2020, 1.8 million children were out of school in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe (the BAY states) in the north-east as a result of insecurity. The attacks climaxed with the adoption of 276 secondary school girls from Chibok Secondary School in Borno state in 2014 (United Nations Development Programme, 2020).

According to the Phuong Nguyen, UNICEF Chief of Maiduguri field office, the protracted conflict has resulted in the death of 600 teachers and the displacement of 19,000. It also led to the closure of 1,500 schools while 900 schools were either completely destroyed or damaged. An estimated 900,000 children have been forced out of school while 75 percent of children in camps do not attend school (Thisday, 2023). When this is considered against the backdrop that in 2008, before the onset of the crisis, over half of the children in the north-east were out of school, then the prospect of realizing the global goals on education in that part of the country is at best bleak (United Nations Development Programme, 2020).

The impact of insecurity on education is not limited to the north-east. Phuong Nguyen noted that in March 2021, 600 schools in the north-western states of Sokoto, Kano, Niger, Katsina, and Zamfara were forced into closure for fear of attacks and abduction of pupils and staff (Thisday, 2023).

Education is a major determinant in achieving the goals as the attainment of almost all other SDGs is dependent on quality education. The actualization of SDG goal 1 (end poverty in all its forms); SDG goal 2 (end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and sustainable agriculture); SDG goal 3 (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages); 4 and 5 (provision of quality education and life-long learning opportunities and achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls respectively are endangered by attacks on schools. Due to the interrelatedness of the goals, attacks on schools by Boko Haram gravely complicate not only the educational objectives but several other SDGs in the country.

Also, Boko Haram insurgency and counterinsurgency operations have displaced millions of people in the north-eastern region of Nigeria (Assessment Capacities Project [ACAPS], 2016). The Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) suffer lack of access to clean water, basic medical care, and schools for their children and live in hunger and malnutrition (Thisday, 2023). The entire north-eastern zone of the country was in humanitarian crisis even before the introduction of the Sustainable Development Goals and the grim situation has intensified, leaving people in dire conditions of want and poverty. The UNDP Report (2020)

aptly noted that the conflict in the north-east has set back development in the region by decades. The consequence is a drastic slow-down in the progress of some of the basic goals of the SDGs.

The insurgency has also left large scale destruction of livelihoods, properties and communities thereby forcing people to flee from their homes. According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), Government refugee data (2023), 3,167,581 people are internally displaced in the northeast as at June 2023 and a total of 336,862 persons are refugees in neighbouring Niger, Cameroon and Chad.

Table 1: Number of Nigerian Refugees in Niger, Cameroon and Chad, 2014- 2023.

| 2014                      | 2015    | 2016    | 2017    | 2018            |
|---------------------------|---------|---------|---------|-----------------|
| April=3,069<br>Dec=37,388 | 79,552  | 200,168 | 209,685 | 232,465         |
| 2019                      | 2020    | 2021    | 2022    | 2023            |
| 279,328                   | 304,562 | 327,313 | 332,219 | 30 June 320,485 |

Source: adapted from UNHCR, Government refugee data, 2023.

At the end of the first half of 2014, only 3,069 Nigerians were refugees in the three countries. The numbers escalated dramatically to 37,388 in the last half of the same year due to the intensification of the conflict in the north-east zone of the country. This is further shown in the number of refugees, 79,552 in 2015, over two times the previous year. The numbers increased to 200,168 in 2016 and continued in all subsequent years. This is a possible indication of the poor security situation back home which do not give them any incentive to be repatriated. It is remarkable that as at June 30, 2023, the number of refugees is 320,485 which points to the possibility of surpassing the numbers of the previous year.

Boko Haram conflict has had massive negative impact on infrastructure development (SDG-9) and productive employment and decent work (SDG-8) in the north-east of the country. It has also had disruptive impact on industrialization (SDG-9); increased inequality between the zone and others within the country (SDG-10); created general social instability and has worsened living conditions in the zone, which were the poorest in the country before the crisis (International Crisis Group, 2020; Brechenmacher, 2019). For instance, Brechenmacher (2019) noted that eight years of conflict has devastated 45 percent of health facilities and 75 percent of water and sanitation infrastructure and left 2.9 million children out of school.

The north-west zone of the country is also plagued by insecurity. The spiraling violence in this zone affects the ability of the country to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (SDG goal 11). Furthermore, the chaos caused by the crisis and the staggering number of people affected are sufficient to destabilize any commitment and pursuit of the sustainable goals in this zone (International Crisis Group, 2020). Therefore, the insecurity compromises both economic and social goals of the SDGs in the zone and the country. It is noteworthy that conflict disproportionately affects the most vulnerable in society: women, children and the elderly. This complicates efforts aimed at ensuring the well-being of people of all ages and the promotion of healthy lives (SDG-3). The Assessment Capacities Project (ACAPS) (2014) correctly noted that the insecurity ravaging the country has direct impact on all the social objectives of the global goals. According to United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA, n.d), in 2021, 5 million people depended on humanitarian assistance and will continue to depend on the

goodwill of international donors for their well-being in the north-eastern states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe, so long as the insecurity persists.

In northern Nigeria, Boko Haram and other criminal elements have established an atmosphere of general insecurity through kidnapping, armed robbery, large scale destruction of properties, rape, sexual violence against women and various other criminal activities. Armed groups have often had women as their primary target and they suffer sexual and other forms of gender based violence in the hands of these armed non-state actors (International Crisis Group, 2020). Women and girls are also often forced into prostitution by hardship. Children rights are abused and violated as they are forcefully recruited as child labourers and combatants by armed groups.

Boko Haram and other sources of insecurity in the country necessitate the allocation of huge chunks of public resources to the security sector. These are resources that would have been employed to enhance the objectives of the SDGs through the provision of infrastructure for economic and social development. The prevailing insecurity and the resulting humanitarian crisis certainly slows down national efforts to realize set objectives and makes progress towards the attainment of the SDGs difficult in the country and uneven between zones in the country.

All these social consequences of the conflict negatively impact on the SDGs in the country. The interrelatedness of the goals makes substantial progress on other areas difficult once some goals are compromised. This explains the severe limitation of the country in the efforts to attain the global goals.

## **B. Insecurity and the Economic Objectives of SDGs in Nigeria**

Agriculture is a major economic activity and the biggest employer of labour in the north-east. It employs between 65 to 80 percent of the workforce in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe, and contributes over half of the GDP of the region (United Nations Development Programme, [UNDP], 2020). Agricultural activities are negatively impacted by conflict as farmers are either displaced or are forced to abandon their occupation for fear of attacks. This results in acute shortage of food, leading to food crisis, malnutrition and the dependence of millions of people on food aid (UNDP, 2020). In a report on the northeast by OCHA (2021) the World Food Programme (WFP) noted that household budgets were not enough to meet basic food needs and as a result, 60% of households are food insecure and vulnerable. This directly impacts on SDGs 1-3 and reduces the capacity of the country to achieve these and other goals.

Insecurity has a destructive impact on food security and other socio-economic objectives (SDGs 1, 2, 3, 8, 12 – 17) (Africa Growth Initiative [AGI], 2014). Agriculture and agricultural production in the three Northern regions of the country has been drastically reduced by multiple sources of insecurity: Boko Haram, bandits, militias, criminal gangs and herders-farmers conflicts (International Crisis Group, 2020: 5). OCHA (2021) projected that in 2022, millions of people in the north-eastern states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe will depend on humanitarian assistance for sustenance. It was also projected that 1.74 million children under the age of five will suffer acute malnutrition in the north-east in 2022 as a result of conflict.

Economic activities such as trade between the north-east and other parts of the country and cross border trade between the region and neighbouring countries (Cameroon, Niger and Chad) have been disrupted thereby impacting negatively on all economic objectives of the SDGs (AGI, 2014). The promotion of sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all people (SDG-8) are difficult to attain in the country as a result of insecurity. The impact will be better appreciated when one considers the fact that agriculture employs about 70% of the work force and contributes 40% of the country's GDP (NBS 2013, cited in Africa Growth Initiative, 2014).

By stalling economic growth, the Boko Haram conflict directly contributes to the worsening levels of poverty in the region. This is exacerbated by the destruction of major infrastructures and the disruption of new developments with the intensification of the crisis (United Nations Development Programme, 2020). The onset of insecurity transformed cattle rustling to an organized and sophisticated criminal enterprise by armed groups in all the zones affected by conflict (International Crisis Group, 2020). As Boko Haram and other criminal elements operate from the forests, farmers and herders are made soft targets of abduction and kidnapping (International Crisis Group, 2020). Therefore, agricultural activities suffer devastating setbacks

with consequent impacts on the Sustainable Development Goals in the country.

Conflicts associated with artisanal gold mining in Zamfara state, north-west of the country have also emerged as a major source of insecurity. The struggle by armed groups to take control of artisanal mining in different parts of Zamfara state and the displacement of people as a result of attacks and the struggles for control over mining sites have combined to make human settlements unsafe and unsustainable, thereby compromising SDG goal 11. These are further complicated by acts of outright robbery and pillage of communities by gangs and armed groups with interest in the gold produced in the state (International Crisis Group, 2020). For instance, International Crisis Group (2020) observed that between 2014 and 2020, thirteen of the fourteen local governments in Zamfara state had the presence of active armed groups. The report further noted that from 2015, these groups started infiltrating neighbouring Kaduna, Katsina and Sokoto states and even up to Niger in the north-central zone of the country. The activities of armed groups have been aided by the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Between 2014 and 2020, all the states in the north-west had experienced attacks by armed groups with worsening intensity and frequency. These attackers engage in cattle rustling and robbing farmers of their agricultural produce (International Crisis Group, 2020).

Farmers-herders conflict and other armed actors are the major cause of insecurity in the north-central of the country (International Crisis Group, 2020). Armed groups in this zone commit all kinds of atrocities: mass killings, the burning of homes and communities, destruction of infrastructure and the displacement of people from their communities are common occurrences. This has tremendously impacted agriculture and constrained SDGs 1, 2, 8 and 12 which are agriculture based. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, insecurity is the cause of protracted food shortages in the north-east and the prevalence of famine in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe (OCHA, n.d). The north-central of the country is the epicenter of farmers-herders conflict in Nigeria which has had devastating economic and social impacts.

### **C. Insecurity and the Environmental Goals in Nigeria**

The Niger Delta region of the country has been a theatre of conflict (Ugwuanyi, 2014 et al). Destruction of oil pipelines was a common strategy employed by militants in their struggle for economic, political and environmental rights from the Nigerian state. Though oil spills and environmental degradation were common problems in the Niger Delta, the attacks on oil pipelines by militant groups exacerbated the crisis in the region (Ugwuanyi, 2014 et al). Consequently, there was an unprecedented despoliation of the fragile environment of the Niger Delta. The resurgence of militancy in 2016 and the resort to attacks on pipelines by the Niger Delta Avengers resulted in massive oil spillages in the region (The Fund for Peace, 2017; Mgbonyenbi & Ameni, 2020). Environmental damage from blow-outs and destruction of oil pipelines by aggrieved groups have been a recurring problem since the emergence of militancy in the region and the ensuing confrontation it engendered. This has complicated the environmental crisis in the region and has had negative impact on the environmental goals of the SDGs. Apart from the environmental goals, security of lives and property of the people - a key provision of the global goals - is also jeopardized in the region as a result of the crisis. The conflict also risks the economic goals as farmers and fishermen depend on the



environment as the source of livelihood. This shows the interrelatedness of the global goals and the fact that an impact on one affects a lot of the rest objectives.

Oil spillages occasioned by bombing of oil installations and infrastructure degrades the environment and makes sustainable living of plants and animals difficult. Attacks on oil installations also lead to oil spills on land which lays waste vast expanse of arable land in the region. This complicates the source of livelihood of the people as it makes difficult farming, fishing and other agricultural activities. According to Ordinoha and Brisibe (2013:10) oil spills contaminate the environment, crops, water bodies and results in long term effects on human health. Similarly, Osuagwu & Olaifa (2018) noted that oil spills threaten agriculture and the survival of people in the Niger Delta as farmlands, lakes and rivers get polluted by chemical substances. They further argued that the consumption of fish and other agricultural produce from the polluted environment exposes people to different health problems. In the same vein, Akpan (2020) stated that oil spills are deadly to marine habitats, shore birds and generally upset the delicate balance of the ecosystem. These and several other studies have shown the devastating impact of oil spills to the environment and the people. The devastation of the environment makes it impossible to attain goal 17 in particular and other socio-economic goals.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The realization of the global goals in Nigeria is threatened by insecurity. It has had negative impacts on all the goals but particularly the socio-economic and environmental objectives. Insecurity has caused enormous crisis in the education sector particularly in the north-east and in other parts of the country. It has also displaced millions of Nigerians and has exacerbated existing social problems in the country. These are bound to have negative impact on the performance of the country on the SDGs.

Insecurity also affects the economic lives of the people as farmers are frequently kidnapped or killed by criminal gangs and terrorists. Consequently, farmers have abandoned their occupation which has resulted to widespread famine and malnutrition in the north-east and the entire nation. The activities of criminal elements engaged in gold mining in Zamfara, the frequent herders-farmers conflicts and conflicts in the Niger Delta directly contribute to Nigeria's poor performance on the global goals.

Insecurity in Nigeria is the biggest problem in the efforts to make progress on the global goals. The security crisis cannot be resolved by a single solution as there are diverse causes of insecurity in the country. Boko Haram conflict is the most intractable security problem in the country. The primary objective of this group is to impose their version of Islam on a secular state. Acceding to their demand is a recipe for more crises in a country made up of different religions and where freedom of worship is fundamental to the existence of the country as a single entity. Government should intensify ongoing military campaign against Boko Haram as the operations of terrorists and terrorist activities in any part of the country should not be condoned.

The grievances of some groups are resolvable through effective dialogue initiated by government. The separatist agitations in the south-east can be addressed by good government policies and a fair allocation of resources and political positions in the country. Also, tackling the development issues bedeviling the south-east zone will go a long way in resolving the crisis in the zone. Furthermore, a constitutional provision for the office of the president to rotate amongst the six geo-political zones of the country should be put in place. This will assuage the feeling of marginalization by people of Igbo extraction and contain the secessionist agitations from that zone. Herders and farmers conflicts should be approached through dialogue, provision of grazing areas for cattle farmers and modernization of traditional methods of cattle rearing in the country will assist in the resolution of the problem in different parts of the country.

There should be no negotiation with terrorists and bandits terrorizing different parts of the country. Banditry and other criminal activities have become very lucrative engagements. Government should be ready and prepared to fight crime in society. All powers at the disposal of government should be deployed to eliminate the operations of criminals in all parts of the country.

## REFERENCES

1. ACAPS (Assessment Capacities Project) (2016, July), “Northeast Nigeria conflict”. [https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/products/files/160712\\_acaps\\_crisis\\_profile\\_northeast\\_nigeria\\_b.pdf](https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/products/files/160712_acaps_crisis_profile_northeast_nigeria_b.pdf)
2. Africa Growth Initiative (2014, July). (Working paper). The impact of conflict and political instability on agricultural investments in Mali and Nigeria. [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/14-07-22-impact-of-conflict-malinigeria\\_final.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/14-07-22-impact-of-conflict-malinigeria_final.pdf)
3. Akpan, E.E., (2022, June). Environmental consequences of oil spills on marine habitats and the mitigating measures—The Niger Delta perspective. *Journal of geoscience and environment protection*. 10(6).<https://DOI:10.4236/gep.2022.106012> <https://www.scirp.org/journal/paperinformation.aspx?paperid=118339>
4. Bassey, I. (2018). Militancy and youth restiveness in the Niger Delta of Nigeria. *LWATI: A Journal of Contemporary Research*, 15(4), 194-214. <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjFvZzuh-yAAxVjVUEAHZgUCFQQFnoECDkQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ajol.info%2Findex.php%2Flwati%2Farticle%2Fview%2F179568%2F168926&usq=AOvVaw21vWlvfPBji1QnhNZdni9c&opi=89978449>
5. Brechenmacher, S., (2019). Stabilizing northeast Nigeria after the Boko Haram. Carnegie endowment for international peace (working paper).
6. Brundtland Report (1987). <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5987our-common-future.pdf>
7. Government of Canada, ‘Nigeria travel advice’ (2023, July 7). <https://travel.gc.ca/destinations/nigeria?wbdisable=true>
8. GOV.UK, ‘foreign travel advice: Nigeria’ (2023). <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/nigeria/safety-and-security>
9. Human Rights Watch (2022, August 9). Nigeria: insecurity grips nation’s capital. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/08/09/nigeria-insecurity-grips-nations-capital>
10. Ika I., (n.d). Counting the development costs of the conflict in North Eastern Nigeria Eka Ikpe - Academia.edu. [https://www.academia.edu/35061533/Counting\\_the\\_development\\_costs\\_of\\_the\\_conflict\\_in\\_North\\_Eastern\\_Nigeria](https://www.academia.edu/35061533/Counting_the_development_costs_of_the_conflict_in_North_Eastern_Nigeria)
11. International Crisis Group (2020, May). Violence in Nigeria’s north-west: Rolling back the mayhem. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/nigeria/288-violence-nigerias-north-west-rolling-back-mayhem>
12. Mgbonyenbi, V.C.,& Ameni, F.C.A. (2020). Militancy and sustainable development in the Niger Delta: Excerpts from the fourth republic. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ujah.v21i4.5>
13. Nwagboso, C.I., (2018, May-Aug.). Nigeria and the challenges of internal security in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. *European journal of interdisciplinary studies*. 4 (2), pp. 15-33. [https://revistia.org/files/articles/ejis\\_v4\\_i2\\_18/Chris.pdf](https://revistia.org/files/articles/ejis_v4_i2_18/Chris.pdf)
14. Ojewale, O (2021). What’s driving violence in Nigeria’s north-central region. Reliefweb. <https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/what-s-driving-violence-nigeria-s-north-central-region>
15. Ojo, J. S; Oyewole, S. & Aina, F. (2023). Forces of terror: armed banditry and insecurity in north-

- west Nigeria. Routledge Taylor and Francis group, 1-28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17419166.2023.2164924>
16. Oluwole, V., (2022, March 10). Nigeria is no longer the poverty capital of the world but still has over 70 million people living in extreme poverty – the highest in Africa. Business insider Africa. <https://africa.businessinsider.com/local/markets/nigeria-is-no-longer-the-poverty-capital-of-the-world-but-still-has-over-70-million/2txm7g3>
  17. Onoja, A.F (2014). In search of the causes of insecurity in Nigeria: A note on administrations and their agendas. *Journal of criminology*. Pp. 33-42, 5 (1). <http://journal-of-conflictology.uoc.edu/joc/en/index.php/journal-of-conflictology/article/view/vol5iss1-onoja.html>
  18. Ordinoha, B., & Brisibe, S. (2013). The human health implications of crude oil spills in the Niger delta, Nigeria: An interpretation of published studies. *Nigerian Medical Journal*, 54(1). Pp.10-16. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3644738/>
  19. Osuagwu, E. S., Olaifa, E. (2018, May 3). Effects of oil spill on fish production in the Niger Delta. (MPRA Paper No. 112933). [https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/112933/1/MPRA\\_paper\\_112933.pdf](https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/112933/1/MPRA_paper_112933.pdf)
  20. This day online news, “The Northeast in 2017”. Backpage. <https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2016/12/21/the-northeast-in-2017/>
  21. Thisday online (2023, April 16). Learning crisis in the northeast. <https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2023/03/02/learning-crisis-in-the-northeast/>
  22. The Fund for Peace (2017, February) (Briefing). History never quite repeats: Militancy in the Niger Delta. <https://fundforpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/PIND-Briefing-History-Never-Quite-Repeats-Militancy-in-the-Niger-Delta-Feb-2017.pdf>
  23. Ugwuanyi, B. I.; Obaje, I.; Ohaeri, C.S.; Ugwu, C.E. & Ohagwu, C.A., (2014). Militancy in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria: A reflective discourse on the cause, amnesty and imperatives. *Review of public administration and management*. 3 (6), pp. 76-86. [https://www.arabianjbm.com/pdfs/RPAM\\_VOL\\_3\\_6/7.pdf](https://www.arabianjbm.com/pdfs/RPAM_VOL_3_6/7.pdf)
  24. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, (2021). ‘Humanitarian needs overview: Nigeria’. <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/nigeria>
  25. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, (2021) ‘Essential needs analysis – northeast Nigeria, October 2020’. <https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/essential-needs-analysis-northeast-nigeria-october-2020>
  26. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, (n.d) ‘About OCHA Nigeria’. <https://www.unocha.org/nigeria/about-ocha-nigeria>. OCHA (2022) Humanitarian needs overview: Nigeria. <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/ochangahumanitarianneedsoverviewfeb20212.pdf>
  27. United Nations High Commission for Refugees, Government refugee data (2023, June). <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/nigeriasituation>
  28. United Nations (2022, Feb.) Nigeria: Common country analysis. P.64. [https://www.unodc.org/documents/nigeria/Common Country Analysis 2022 Nigeria.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/nigeria/Common%20Country%20Analysis%202022%20Nigeria.pdf)
  29. United Nations Development Programme (2020). Assessing the impact of conflict on development in north-east Nigeria. <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/migration/ng/Assessing-the-Impact-of-Conflict-on-Development-in-NE-Nigeria---The-Report.p>
  30. Zubairu, N. (2020). Rising insecurity in Nigeria: causes and solution. *Journal of studies in Social Sciences*, 19(4), pp.1-11. <https://www.infinitypress.info/index.php/jsss/article/viewFile/1979/776>