

BOKO HARAM INSURGENCY AND THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF SECURITY SECTOR REFORM IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Western governments, donors and institutions of global governance often promote security sector reform SSR as 'populist' peacebuilding model in transitional societies thereby deconstructing local ownership from securitisation. Dominant discourses and practices of neoliberal orthodoxy led SSR often overlooked at the complex historical and structural challenges undermining security restructuring in conflict torn parts of Africa. This article aims to problematise the adoption of SSR model in post-military context drawing on Nigeria 1999-2015 as a case. It points to a need for donors to understand in more depth the emerging conflict dynamic in Nigeria and the country's current security challenges are deeply rooted within its turbulent global-historical postcolonial relations with the international political economy. Focusing more on an analysis of the recent Boko Haram violent insurgency in the northeast region the paper locates securitisation and /or (de) securitisation as embedded in the dynamic of the

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Nigerian political economy - in particular the construction of a prebendal and patrimonial state, politicisation and ethnicisation of the security apparatus in the postcolonial era and the beleaguered criminal justice system.

Key words: security; reform; terrorism; peacebuilding; Nigeria; neoliberalism

Introduction

The trio of security, peacebuilding and development constitutes the major challenges of most post-colonial states in Africa - Nigeria in particular. Recent paradigm shift in Africa's security environment ostensibly from the need for development aid to a terrorist hub continue to espouse Africa's "crises of security" structurally inherited from the turbulent history of colonialism and the incorporation of the continent into the international capitalist system (Ayers 2010; Cephas 2008; Davis 2016). Bedevilled by the emerging threats from violent non-state actors particularly violent insurgency from Boko Haram since 2009, Nigeria has on 29 April 2014, adopted a UN Security Council Resolution 2151 on Security Sector Reform SSR reaffirming the central role of SSR in conflict prevention, peacebuilding and development. The UN was to support and coordinate sector wide SSR including: coordinate support to reform national Army and Police institutions and train a special counterterrorism force (Oluwarotimi, 2014).

The aim of this article is to examine the problems and prospect associated with applying the (neo) liberal security sector reform SSR in Nigeria. It narrows the gap that has existed in the theory and practice of SSR in post-conflict context. The concept of SSR project in the Nigeria has been pursued as a viable security policy framework by successive post-military regimes. Restructuring the security sector is regarded as a core national security agenda in the midst of rapidly changing domestic security context—in particular growing threats of militant Islam in the northeast and growing political instability following democratisation since 1999. The narratives

underlying this strategy of the post-military security reform 1999-2015, hinges on achieving democratic reforms focusing on effort to transform or reconstruct the security sector to allow the development of good governance on democratic principles. Despite monumental efforts under democratic rule, successive governments from Olusegun Obasanjo's era 1999-2007 to Yar' Adua-Jonathan regimes 2007-2015 have failed promises of security reform and proved largely rhetoric (International Crisis Group 2016).

The conceptual and normative content this approach represents is the country's commitment to contextualise SSR within the ambit of democratic reform. The security reform approach largely formulated by Western donors in particular key players like the UN and DFID placed emphasis on 'good governance' valorisation of security reform, which is an approach, builds upon neoliberalism as an ideological endpoint (Ball and Fayemi 2004). This security narrative also serves to legitimise action whereby the international community assumes responsibility for countries that are incapable of restoring enduring peace. More specifically, SSR agenda seeks to liberalise the Nigerian security sector through external donor assistance. The article attempts to critique this approach for its overarching emphasis on state security as opposed to human security. In addition to military training and equipment, donor's mandate and conditionality for restructuring the Nigerian security sector also includes: down sizing of the military, legislature oversight, civil-military relations focusing on increased oversight of elected civilian institutions, and police and judicial reforms (Abiodun 2003:9) Theoretically this measure for security restructuring sounds plausible, in practice it is problematic and illustrative of the disconnect between state security policy and human security. As Richard (2015) has noted, a number of serious structural obstacles need to be overcome before a sound SSR can be applied in countries like Nigeria (Richard 2015:75).

Rejecting this neoliberal theory of peacebuilding will locate securitisation and or (de) securitisation discourse within the ambit of the Nigerian political economy. It argues that, Nigeria's current security challenges are structurally and historically embedded within the context of legacies of colonialism

and process of post-colonial state building - in particular the politicisation of ethnicity (Mamdani 2005; Mustapha 2004: 257); the construction of neo-patrimonial and prebendal state (Lewis, 1996: 79); and the adoption of Structural Adjustment Programme SAP underpinned by neoliberal economic dogma (Olukoshi 1998: 229) highly politicised, ethnicised and corrupt security apparatus (Ihonvbere 2008; Darren and Lewis 2012: 188) underdevelopment, particularly in the peripheries all leading to incubation of radicalisation and neo-*Salafisation* of the Northern region (International Crisis Group 1015: 11). The central assumption of this paper is that these are ahistorical processes and structural conditions that created the African - (Nigeria is of course a case in point) security predicament. Such historical events are often ignored and decontextualised in the mainstream literature on development aid and the neoliberal peacebuilding project (Jerven 2015: 11).

In this context, it is problematic to situate the current SSR in Africa within the prism of neoliberal peacebuilding project given the historical failure of neoliberal economic reform package anchored on market reform and political liberalisation consequently shattered the entire post-colonial state formation project with implications to peace and security. In the midst of severe economic crisis in the 1980s, Nigeria was plagued by plethora of 'crises of insecurity' in which communal and sectarian violence and now violent extremism and environmental militancy exacerbated (Egwu 1998: 103). Thus, the paper contends that the major failure of this 'populist' approach to peacebuilding is that it rests on a faulty understanding of the causal processes - historical and structural conditions for insecurity in Africa (Pugh 2004: 39).

The article is divided into five sections: the first section contextualises the key narratives and conventional explanations underpinning SSR. The section also attempts to make a diagnosis of the security situation in Nigeria and seek to explain the factors that make the adoption of SSR project problematic. The second section provides a brief background about the Boko Haram conflict in northern Nigeria. The section also offers theoretical insights into a better understanding of the various explanations that have emerged to account for the conflict—largely scholarly discussions that

highlight the political, environmental and economic aspects of the conflict. Section four highlights both the external and internal challenges of SSR in Nigeria. The section moved the debate away from the ‘populist’ view of development aid-securitisation nexus to a historical and structural factors embedded in the politics of post-colonial states in Africa. In the concluding and final section, attempt will be made to suggest some alternative pathway of overcoming the current challenges for peacebuilding and SSR in Nigeria.

Contextualising SSR: the Conventional Wisdom

The study of SSR as against the traditional focus on civil-military relations is a rapidly growing field that sits at the nexus of earlier developed fields of study such as development studies, security studies and more specifically the ‘new aid paradigm’. SSR has evolved into an increasingly popular approach to address some security challenges experienced in transitional societies. An emerging body of literature on SSR has focused on improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of security sector actors and the need to situate their roles within the prism of democratic governance (Ball 2005:25; Bellamy 2003:101). The theoretical underpinning of SSR is the liberal peace—the normative idea that certain kinds of liberally constituted societies will tend to be more peaceful than illiberal states are (Bendix and Stanley 2008: 22).

In the literature the wide usage of the concept of security sector reform SSR is synonymous with neoliberal ‘aid paradigm’ project or development aid associated with the practice of Western donors (Bendix and Stanley 2008: 28). The dominant peacebuilding model underpinning the Western imposed SSR in countries in transition is recognised as having three main areas: first, security sector reform, including disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration and strengthening of law and order practices. Second, economic reform focused on liberalisation of the economy. Third, political reforms and periodic elections through enhanced political participation. In many respects, this model is conceived as a state-building neoliberal project (Bendix and Stanley 2008: 33).

Neoliberal peacebuilding: Imperialism’s New Disguise

After decades of peacebuilding theory and practice, there emerged a colossal volume of literature critiquing the dominant liberal peacebuilding model (Duffield 2010: 53). A body of deeper, more philosophical critique on SSR argues that Western (neo) liberal peacebuilding project is simply a form of neo-colonialism or (neo) liberal imperialism (Duffield 2004: 63). Thiessen stated that (neo) liberal peacebuilding is primarily anchored to promote political stabilisation in “war-torn” developing countries as a tool of security to manipulate developing populations to secure the (neo) liberal agenda of the West. In this way, the (neo) liberal peace project is situated within the context of consolidating (neo) liberal goals operating on the norms they are trying to instill e.g. democracy, good governance, equality, transitional justice etc (Thiessen 2011: 119). Pugh (2004) further argues that neoliberal peacebuilding serves as a ‘management device’ to maintain the current version of unequal global politics and economics. As such peacebuilding is viewed as securing a narrow purpose—to doctor the dysfunctions of the global political economy within a framework of (neo) liberal imperialism (Pugh 2004). As Richard (2015) observed:

Recently SSR has widely been criticised for its one-size-fits all template which is applied in every single case, regardless of local context and history; its ideological roots in, and commitments to neoliberalism, and consequently, its neo-imperialistic character, its ideological consequences in relation to production of liberal subjects, governability and its external imposition, elite-level focus and lack of concern to partner with local communities affected by the conflict; its roots to conflict management and conflict resolution models, rather than conflict transformation approach; its stabilisation, its poor record of implementation, lack of adequate resourcing, coordination failures and short-term commitment by donors; its imposition of Western values particularly in relation to transitional justice and its poor record of success (Richard 2015: 76).

Building on this critiqueing perspective above, I shall argue that in the African context the philosophical underpinnings of SSR i.e. promotion of good governance, free markets reforms and rule of law, and human rights bear a significant resemblance with the normative idea of SAP, and

development aid which are inline with the neoliberal ideological ‘end point’ (Harrison 2005: 1303). Paradoxically, this suggests that like SAP, the SSR agenda reflects a ‘rebranding’ of neoliberal reform package that dominated into the security domain (Harrison 2005). This illustrate that neoliberal reforms in Africa have targeted the reshaping and restructuring not only of the economy but also the security sphere (Richard 2015). SSR introduced a structural turning point premised on perpetuating the ideology of neoliberalism. Notably, a neoliberal reform that targeted the restructuring of the security sector characterised by the destructive norms and practice of Western imposed governance based on development aid. Perhaps the most important principle of development aid is the use of aid conditionality to promote neoliberal agenda. As Richmond (2009) argues that contemporary (neo) liberal peacebuilding project is in many ways flawed. He contends that this project essentially involves transplanting and exporting conditionality and dependency, creating a mix of institutional regulations and liberal freedoms that constitutes liberal peace (Richmond 2009: 392).

For instance, the efforts to spread “good governance” on the part of the UN and the international community appears to embody a range of positive and powerful qualities attractive to all. However, as with development, the reality is more complex, as “good governance” can be used to justify a whole series of very different and perhaps inconsistent, projects and initiatives. In fact, the apparent neutrality of the idea of “good governance” acts to conceal a specific agenda on the part of the Global North to mould in its image (Frewen 2011: 34). Therefore, the main motive behind the West’s peacebuilding interventions appeared to be about ensuring that the state concerned is directed, more or less forcefully, into adopting a ‘market-based’ capitalist economic system, twinned with a political regime that is willing to promote and defend free market capitalism. Given this objective, the criteria for assessing the success or failure of peacebuilding efforts revolve around the level of success in establishing compliance in the country receiving peacebuilding support to exogenously establish principles for setting in place a market economy, good governance and liberal democracy (Frewen 2011: 38). Thus, from this spurious ideology of SSR we see other forms of recolonisation, which in different ways seek to discipline

society and produce liberal subjects (Adedeji 2002). The cases of Sierra Leone and Liberia are illustrative of the inability of the state to provide basic security reform under donor terms of conditionality (Frewen 2011: 3).

Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria: the historical context

The Boko Haram insurgency emerged out of a radicalized neo *Salafi* Islamist youth in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State in the 1990s. The group leader Mohammed Yusuf established the *Shababul Islam* meaning Islamic Youth Vanguard that was critical of the Nigerian government. The sect calls itself *Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad*, or people committed to the propagation of the Prophet's teachings and jihad is widely known as Boko Haram loosely meaning, "Western education is sin" for its rejection of Western concepts such as evolution and Big Bang theory. It began its terror offensive against the Nigerian government since 2009 and is bent on the creation of a theocratic Islamic state *Caliphate*—a doctrinaire moves for the Islamisation of the entire northern part of Nigeria (Sergie and Johnson 2015).

Boko Haram's hundreds of followers, also called *Yusuffiya*, consist largely of impoverished northern Islamic students and clerics, as well as professionals, mostly unemployed. In July 2009, Boko Haram members refused to follow a motorbike helmet law, leading to heavy-handed police tactics that set off an armed uprising in the northern state of Bauchi and spread into states of Borno, Yobe and Kano. The army suppressed the protests, leaving more than eight hundred dead (Human Rights Watch 2014). The sect leader Mohammed Yusuf was later killed outside police headquarters in Maiduguri. In the aftermath of the 2009 unrest, fractionalisation eschewed under a splintered leadership of Abubakar Shekau who focused on fighting the Nigerian government in Borno while other units expanded their attacks across international frontier (Sergie and Johnson 2015).

Attacks by the Boko Haram insurgency as well as counter-insurgency measures have displaced more than 2.5 million people across the Lake Chad region resulting into one of the largest complex humanitarian crises

in Africa (IRIN 2014; Walker 2014). The Jihadist group is also notorious for the systematic abduction of children, many of whom are often forcefully conscripted into its ranks and /or used as human shields, child soldiers, porters, sex slaves, etc. On 14 April 2014 the abduction of over 250 schoolgirls from Chibok village sparked an international outcry (O'Grady 2015). To expand its jihadist frontier, on March 2015 Boko Haram officially declared allegiance to the Islamic State ISIS naming itself the Islamic State's West African Province (Oputu and Lilley 2015).

Mapping the theoretical context of the conflict

In the literature various explanations have emerged to account for the post-1999 upsurge in political violence and violent terrorism in Nigeria—explanations that have been largely internalised (Sergie and Johnson 2015). Dominant narratives focused on factors such as: the resource abundance or ‘resource curse’ model (Ross 1999: 297); and the World Bank led neoclassical economists account of internal political violence based on the ‘greed and grievances’ claim (Berdal and Malone 2000: 91). The ‘environmental security’ literature underpinned by Malthusian perspective posited that inter-group conflict emerges as result of population growth and resource scarcity, which force migration, thus increasing contact and competition between groups of differing identities (Homer-Dixon 1994: 40; Reuveny 2007: 656).

However, an alternative explanation based on identity politics and the politicisation of ethnicity also holds considerable sway (Horowitz, 2000; Fearon and Laitin 2000). Lake and Rothschild attribute inter-ethnic conflict to insecurity and ‘collective fears of the future’. They distinguish between primordialist, instrumentalist and social constructivist views on ethnicity (Lake and Rothchild 1998: 3). The primordialist perspective is laid on the assumption that conflict between two ethnic groups is inevitable and that ethnic violence results from antipathies and antagonisms that are enduring properties of ethnic groups; the instrumentalist approach sees ethnicity as a tool manipulated by elites to further their interest and control state apparatus as the gatekeeper for state resource, whereas the constructivists have argued that ethnicity and ethnic identity is ‘socially constructed (Fearon and Laitin 2000: 847). Related to this, is the presence of rentier-patronage

in an oil economy (Omeje 2006: 199) as well as explanations based on rising levels of poverty and economic marginalisation of the North, a history of being only peripherally included in the process of governance which feeds into radicalisation of subaltern social groups (McGregor 2015: 2). Implicitly or explicitly, the ‘problem’ with Nigeria is essentialised.

It can be argued that these superficial explanations do provide the precipitating structural conditions for political violence and terrorism in Nigeria as elsewhere in Africa but yet they are insufficient and analytically one-sided. At this juncture, the focus is not to engage in an exhaustive critique of orthodox narratives of political instability in Africa. Rather, it attempts to address the poor inferences about what causes political violence and terrorism in Africa. The generic problem associated with these narratives is that it tends to over-simplify a fairly complex, multilayered and nuanced process. The current spate of political instability in Nigeria can only be understood through committed engagement with the country’s history, its economic structure, state-society relations and the nature of political power, all of which are almost absent in the dominant discourse. Such theorisation basically ignored how the ‘internal’ structures that are tied to the ‘external’ – i.e. global historical structures that constituted social relations in particular the current unequal economic relations under imperialism. Following Ayers the paper contends that this limited account of conflict has failed to graps with the complex organic set of social relations that constitute the global political economy (Ayers 2010: 155). Thus, orthodox account of political violence is predicated on the highly problematic conception of the state as a ‘dominant entity’ with interests and analytically separate from the totality of global social relations within which state inhere.

On the contrary, it can argued that the sources of political violence and terrorism have deep historical roots and are not only situated in the ‘internal’ characteristics of states but also in their globally and historically constituted social relations. As Zeleza posits that:

It is analytically difficult to separate ‘internal’ and ‘external’ dynamics behind Africa’s challenges and crises, for what appears

as ‘internal’ already embodies the ‘external’ and vice versa (Zeleza 2009).

Thus, in historical depth, political violence is rooted within the conundrum of imperialism, widely understood as the unequal global power relations that characterised the international system for centuries in which the subaltern is governed through which surplus is extracted and accumulated. This global power relations has continued to be codified in various regimes of governance, military power, humanitarian intervention, good governance, democratisation, human rights and peacebuilding as legitimating function in the long history of imperial recourse to moral obligation (Grosvogui 2002:315).

In view of the foregoing analysis there is the need for an in-depth analysis of the global-historical constitution of conflict and terrorism in Africa. In doing so the paper advanced arguments broadly along five lines on the causes of political violence and terrorism in Nigeria, which are neglected in the literature: (1) the legacies of colonialism in producing group identities i.e. ethnicity, religion and its subsequent politicisation in the course of reinventing the post-colonial Nigerian state; (2) colonialism bequeathed a highly politicised and ethnicised security apparatus, i.e. military and police, which eroded their objectivity as guarantors of national security. This in turn presents huge challenges to security sector reform; (3) the incorporation of Nigeria into the capitalist global economy, which is characterised by the dynamics of accumulation, based on primitive accumulation and aid dependence; (4) the major role of imperialism through constituted neoliberal development agenda such as the imposition of neoliberal reform packages epitomised as structural adjustment programme SAP and; (5) descend to politics of patrimonialism and elite kleptocracy undermining governance reform.

Colonialism and conflict dynamics

Nigeria’s contemporary structural and institutional systems reflect complex intersections of the legacies of colonialism, neo-colonialism and the deformities of postcolonial political culture (Zeleza 2009). The process of state formation has not only generates political economy of violence but

also elite-driven political identities with implications for growing tendency for violence. In this perspective, Mamdani's interrogation of the colonial underpinnings of the postcolonial state and its legacy of bifurcation under the rubric of indirect rule system along binary native and settler identities provides a useful point of departure from the constructivist view and understanding of the complex violent conflict in Africa (Mamdani 2002: 24). He argues

‘the experience of indirect rule should alert us to the relationship between culture and politics. When the raw material of political identity is drawn from the domain of culture as an ethnic and religious identity, it is the link between identity and power that allows us to understand how the cultural identities are translated into political identities and thus to distinguish between them. At the same time to historicize political identity by linking it to political power is to acknowledge that all political identities are historically transitory and all require a form of state to be reproduced’ (Mamdani 2002: 7).

Although, ethnicity in Africa predates colonialism, it existed only as a cultural identity. However, it was the colonial policy of divide and rule through native administrative system that led to construction of political identities. Politicised identities then became a foundation of postcolonial institutions bequeathed and continue to be reflected in contemporary state institutions. It is these artificial political identities that need to be challenged in order to build a more sustainable political institutions for enduring peace in Africa (Mamdani 2005).

Others see this account i.e. ethnic identity as one-sided and insufficient. For example Campbell argues that religious ethos also saturates all aspects of Nigerian public and private life, whether Christian or Muslim (Campbell 2014). Moreover, cooperating and competing elites that run Nigeria exploit religious sentiments for their own purposes, while individuals and groups protesting against the elites also draw religion to promote their own vision for Nigeria. Religious conflict is thus both a symptom and driver of conflict

in the country. National identity remains underdeveloped, and to some extent religion—or religiosity fills the void (Campbell 2014: 2).

Neoliberal economic restructuring: from structural adjustment to persistent instability

As noted above, the colonial machination is crucial to the understanding of the nature and dynamics of the emerging post-colonial specter of violence in Nigeria (Zack-Williams 2014). More over, the adoption of the Western imposed neoliberal reform package of structural adjustment policies SAP promoted by the International Monetary Funds IMF and the World Bank in Nigeria as elsewhere in Africa by the then military regime in 1986 deepened the crisis of state formation (Olukoshi, 1998: 63). The reason for entering the Faustian deal of the SAP was the financial crisis caused by the collapse of the world market price for oil in 1981, at a time when Nigeria largely depended on oil for 90 percent of its revenue coupled with mounting debts and corruption (Egwu, 1998). By the 1990s, the catastrophic consequences of this bargain had become all too evident. Implementing SAP in Nigeria has led to devaluation of currency, liberalised the economic sector in favour of multinational corporations

Thrust upon Nigeria and many other African countries by international lenders in the 1980s and 1990s, SAP became the invasive means by which neoliberalism found its way into the country. In Nigeria, SAP has not only become the orienting templates for socio-economic management for 30 years but also a vehicle for social engineering that undermines meaningful reforms and its effects have been debilitating (Harrison 2010). Instead, of economic recovery, SAP has deepened economic stagnation and increased inequality and marginalisation (Catherine 2012: 194).

SAP not only exacerbated disengagement of the fiscal crisis of postcolonial Nigeria, but also eroded the legitimacy of the state because the country immediately sank into poverty, which destabilised state-society relations. It hardened the boundaries of ethnic, religious and regional identities as communities turned to these social networks as safety nets and shelter from the increasingly inept postcolonial state. Therefore, as political

liberalisation started in the 1990s, the stage was set for the eruption of violent conflict (Abubakar 2010: 65-86). Thus, Egwu argues that SAP became a catalytic factor in the explanation of trend of the violent politicisation of ethnic identities and domestic political polarisation in Nigeria. Economic crisis precipitated by SAP intensified poverty and social polarisation, instability and conflict (Egwu 1998: 103-106).

State and the dynamics of securitisation: challenges for SSR

As argued earlier my central critique against the neoliberal led SSR is that there are clearly a number of important challenges. In this section, the focus is on a political economy analysis of challenges for a security reform in Nigeria. It points to the internal dimensions of structural challenges of governance as precursors for generic political economy of reform failure in Nigeria. First, Nigeria's security sector has both structural and institutional problems, which is deeply rooted in the legacies of colonialism.

This particular historical genesis of the state in Nigeria helps to account for a number of specific features that still colour the provision of security. Both the armed forces and the patterns of civil-military relations that began to emerge during the post-colonial era were mirror images of their former colonial security institutions and structure (Allen 1995:65). This was compounded by the unresolved post-colonial politics of clientelism that paved the way for political break down and endemic violence (Military coup 1966 and Biafran war). Allen (1995:305) further stressed that "the introduction of clientelist politics in the early 1950s as a device for dealing effectively with the imposed decolonisation strategies of Britain, lead over the next decade and half to the phenomenon known at the time as 'political decay'; the rapid growth of politicised communalism, political conflict and violence and abuse of political and human right and corruption.

This crisis of clientelism later delegitimizes and saturated the post-colonial democratic space leading to military intervention (the 1966 coup) and the subsequent politicisation and ethnicisation of both the Nigerian military and the police force in an attempt to correct the structural imbalance cultivated by colonialism. Given the highly personalistic character of the military politics, patron-client relationships flourished. The military pattern

of organisation with a strongman at the top and echelon of subordinates below in a pyramidal relationships spread throughout Nigerian political culture. Having been politicised and divided by these patron-client relationships, the military was structurally weakened during its prolonged years in power. For instance during Babangida and Abacha, the military establishment was transformed from an instrument that guarantees national defence and security into a predatory apparatus (Darren and Lewis 2012:217). In the post military democratic transition 1999-2015, political elites use security forces to secure position (Ball 2005: 26). However, the political interference by the military establishment did not go uncontested by officer cadre as manifested in numerous coups and counter coups (1966, 1975, 1983, 1985, 1993) as well as the Biafran civil war. Ironically, it was during the post-colonial era – when the military and the police force increasingly began to reflect the country's social composition that the military also came to reflect schisms among the political elites based on their ethnic or religious convictions. Thus, loyalty challenges are surmountable with better training not only physical but rigorous training on nationalism and rule of law (Darren and Lewis 2012:119).

Second, endemic corruption in governable spaces, which fed a kleptocratic elite, has undermined governance reform in Nigeria. Albeit, in much of the development literature, corruption in the security sector has been treated as though it was exclusive to emerging market economies and poorer developing economies (Willet 2009; 335). There is a growing body of evidence, which suggests that misgovernance and corruption in the security sector are more widespread than the neoliberal institutions have acknowledged. In the aftermath of the structural adjustment programme, descent to corruption and neo-patrimonialism has deepened an impasse that stalled governance reforms in Nigeria and has directly trickled down to the security apparatus and reduced its performance (Kauffman, 2004). Aid dependence security sector reform is constantly threatened by opportunistic forces capable of overturning it as a tool for accumulation. As Sindzingre (2013) noted, reforms are 'filtered' more according to the domestic political calculations of elites in power than the objectives of development.

Thus aid dependence reforms foster neo-patrimonialism. In such situations the credibility of donors erodes due to recurrent inefficiency of reforms (Sindzingre 2013: 90). In particular the prevalence of ‘conflict elites’ that is the military and their civilian collaborators who can easily exploits violence to foster corruption and patronage or even direct dissipation of ‘security votes’ and aid from donors meant for reforming the security sector as lootable resources. The elites often articulate series of key narratives including threat and emergency requiring self-defense and urgent military action to protect the community (Richard 2015: 78). Since the return of democracy in 1999 billions of unaccounted funds vanished in the hands of Nigerian elites in the guise of enhancing national security leading to the social media hashtag #Dasukigate which symbolises how the former Nigerian National Security Adviser Colonel Sambo Dasuki got embroiled in a \$2.2 billion arms deal fraud currently under investigation by the Economic and Financial Crime Commission EFCC (Charles 2015).

Arms procurement is illustrative of how corruption thrives in the security sector (Adekanye 199: 34). A number of factors have contributed to the rise in corruption in arms procurement in Nigeria. On the one hand, lack of transparency and accountability mechanisms in defence budgetary process allows for the systematic manipulation of military account by corrupt officials. The manipulation of military accounts and opacity that surrounds military procurements has arisen to hide graft and mismanagement of resources from public scrutiny. On the other hand, the payment of ‘commissions’ by arms companies to individuals in defence procurement forms a basis for primitive accumulation (Willet, 2010). This problem is compounded by the lack of legal and institutional mechanisms that ensure and enforce accountability in the security sector. Oversight of the military budget is plagued by weak control of the ministry of defence, a lack of coherent defence policy, weak parliamentary control and limited involvement of civil society (Willet, 2010: 344). Nigeria spends \$6 billion annually on defence and security services but the rank and file in the army often mutiny or desert, in part because senior officers loot money for kit and pocket the lower ranks’ wages (The Economist 2015). Demoralisation to the point of mutiny linked to insufficient training and a failure to pay salaries

and poor leadership that blames under-trained and under-equipped troops for their failure to fight the Islamist Boko Haram (The Economist 2015).

Systematic corruption and misrule have fed Islamic radicalisation and militancy across Nigeria (The Economist 2015). For instance, radicalised groups like Boko Haram found fertile ground and grew in the Northern region embittered by lack of governance in particular due to corruption and predation in which state funds meant for development are diverted for personal interest. Persistent corruption undermined development and foster marginalisation and exclusion of the poor which feeds into political violence and instability. For instance, the jihadist movement turns to violence to challenge the state legitimacy for its failure to provide succor. Boko Haram therefore gradually evolved from militant Islam—ideologically driven social movement into political Islam—seeking governance space through Sharia form of rule by attempting to carve out a territory in Nigeria (Igoni 2012).

Fourth accounts of civil-military relations have been marred by sporadic human rights abuse. The role of the security apparatus i.e. military and police in initiating and perpetuating conflicts in the context of human rights abuses is frequently overlooked. One of the main obstacles to sustainable peace and security in Nigeria is the exploitation and predatory relationship between security institutions of the state and the general population in which the latter are more victims than beneficiaries of ill-motivated, ill-trained and ill-governed security institutions. In June 2015, Amnesty International report indicted the Nigerian military including senior commanders for committing war crime under international law. In the course of security operations against Boko Haram in the northeast of Nigeria, the military forces have extra-judicially executed more than 1200 people and arbitrarily arrested and detained at least 20, 000 people mostly young men and boys and have committed countless acts of torture. Amnesty International research also showed that people captured and executed presented no threats to the state in violation of International Humanitarian Law (Amnesty International Report 2015).

Finally, Nigeria's police force and criminal justice system also craves for reform. The Nigerian police are one of the most dysfunctional,

underperforming institutions in sub-Saharan Africa. Their primary interest is in protecting the government in power rather than serving the public. Police corruption and unprofessionalism erode people's faith in criminal justice system (Richard 2015). Lack of quick dispensation of justice and the piecemeal approach to transitional justice reforms has weakened the judiciary undermined SSR. The judiciary, which is meant to prevent excesses and human rights abuses by security agencies, is a useful tool for extortion. Reforming the police and the judiciary beyond narrowly security interest focusing on tackling the structural challenges blocking reforms such as lack of political will and undue political interference is key to democratic reform in Nigeria. These domestically institutionalised spectres of problems consistently undermined governance reforms in Nigeria (Musa 2013).

Lack of ownership

It can be argued that sustainable peace should spring organically from the agency of the people involved. One of the key factors that underpin the problems surrounding SSR is lack of ownership. Mahuku and Mbanje noted that the SSR is emerging concept that has no established policy position in Africa (Mahuku and Mbanje 2012). As it stands there is no officially articulated African theory that explains SSR. According to Giustozzi 'there is a growing consensus that SSR efforts have little chance of success in the absence of local ownership, understood here as the ability to define and control processes and shape them according to interests of indigenous stakeholders (Giutozzi 2008: 215). On the surface, local ownership discourse is present in the orthodox (neo) liberal peacebuilding project. However, in practice (neo) liberal goals have by necessity re-shifted local ownership to domestic elites and their cooperation with the overall peacebuilding scheme (Thiessen 2011: 120). The agenda for security reform is articulated and directed by international donor agencies and governments. At the same time many post-conflict countries do not have the resources to manage SSR without external support. This is evident in the implementation of SSR in both Liberia and Sierra Leone (Adedeji 2002).

The problem, which often arises then, is one of lack of convergence between the interests of local actors and international sponsors and donors. Nigeria is clearly one example of such divergence of interests where reform efforts based on donor conditionality were carried out on the surface, leaving patrimonial and patronage relations to dominate the core of the security establishment. Thus, the (neo) liberal peacebuilding project has been unable to transcend its top-down bias. Thus, a rigorous and strategic indigenisation of the concept is crucial in Africa, if any semblance of local ownership is to be achieved and if any potential discrediting of the concept from opportunistic political elites is to be avoided.

Conclusion: towards reforming the Nigerian security sector

The slow response to Boko Haram insurgency underscores the need for robust security sector reform in Nigeria. Highlighted earlier, the move for a security sector restructuring in Nigeria is undermined by a combination of powerful domestic and external centrifugal forces. The current security sector restructuring policy in Nigeria is premised on the need for institutional reforms and good governance as preconditions for development aid. Whilst democratisation and peacebuilding are essential to sustainable development, but this generic prescription for security reform neglects the circumstances and trajectory of Nigeria's political economy and history. Security reforms needs to be developed spontaneously focusing on strengthening democratic security sector governance in post-conflict situations. This involves developing new structures for enhancing governance and security that includes mapping out the entire security challenges and defence management spectrum; a new defence and security policy and institutional mechanisms to address them; improving leadership oversight, administration and accountability across the security sector.

The eroded professionalism, operational efficacy and accountability in the security sector need reforms. For instance, Army and Police reform will deal with favoritism and ethnically based appointments and recruitment practices, which ease relatives or ethnic member of high-ranking officers into its ranks as main mechanisms of patronage. This practice endangers

social cohesion. Patronage-based recruitment into the Nigerian Army and Police Force also serves as basis for primitive accumulation. Sustainable peacebuilding project in Nigeria must be guided by local ownership by promoting broader dialogue with civil society groups and local communities where dissenting local voices can be heard in the decision making process of rebuilding the security sector. In this context, inclusiveness and transparency are crucial for security restructuring.

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