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**Boko Haram:** Defining A Path to Reintegration

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A project at Yale University’s Jackson Institute for Global Affairs working for the United Nations Counter Terrorism Executive Directorate (UNCTED).

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Since the early 2000s, Boko Haram – also known as Jama’atu Ahlus Sunnah Lid Da’awati Wal Jihad, or People Committed to the Prophet’s Teachings for Propagation and Jihad – has been a constant source of instability in northern Nigeria. Emerging in 2002 under the leadership of Mohammed Yusuf, the group began its resistance movement against the Nigerian government largely through proselytization and other non-violent means, interspersed with occasional “hit-and-run attacks” on police stations and other security outposts throughout the northern states.[[1]](#footnote-0) Following a strong government crackdown in 2009, resulting in Yusuf’s death, Boko Haram has increasingly shifted strategies “adopt(ing) the tactics of global Salafi Jihadist groups, including targeted assassinations, suicide bombings, and hostage taking.”[[2]](#footnote-1) Beginning in 2011, the frequency and severity of the group’s attacks continued to grow, reaching its peak in 2014-2015.[[3]](#footnote-2)

Multiple compounding factors have complicated the Nigerian government and international community’s response to the Boko Haram insurgency. Dismal socio-economic prospects in northern Nigeria have left citizens feeling neglected and resentful of what they perceive to be a corrupt southern government;[[4]](#footnote-3) environmental degradation has created a humanitarian emergency for thousands in the region;[[5]](#footnote-4) and perceptions of Muslim marginalization have potentially increased the number of insurgency sympathizers.[[6]](#footnote-5) Meanwhile, the Nigerian military has been criticized for its lack of tact in handling the conflict - accused of numerous human rights abuses against Nigerian civilians in its attempts to weaken the insurgency.[[7]](#footnote-6) Internal dissention within Boko Haram has also complicated the response, resulting in numerous splinter factions with competing ideologies, vying for authority in Nigeria’s northern states.[[8]](#footnote-7)

Since 2015, government forces have been steadily reclaiming land in the northeast, leading many experts to assert that Boko Haram is on the defensive.[[9]](#footnote-8) Hundreds of former combatants are said to have voluntarily defected, leaving the Nigerian government with the difficult task of now upholding justice and peacefully reintegrating former Boko Haram militants into local communities, while simultaneously continuing to put pressure on existing combatants to lay down their arms. Despite previous experience with reintegration and amnesty programs in Nigeria - e.g. in the Niger Delta region - the government has sought out guidance from international actors regarding transitional justice strategies that may be well suited to address the Boko Haram challenge.

The following analysis was produced as part of the Yale University Jackson Institute for Global Affairs course “Boko Haram: Defining a Path to Integration” during Fall semester 2016. Prior to the start of the course, Professor Casey King met with representatives from the United Nations Counter-terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (UNCTED), to solicit input on the current barriers to ending the Boko Haram insurgency. UNCTED requested that the class focus on providing recommendations on how the Nigerian government should reintegrate former Boko Haram combatants into Nigerian civil society, based on successes and failures in other countries under similar circumstances. In contrast to more traditional survey courses, the course was structured as a consulting engagement, with UNCTED serving as the “client” and the class as an interdisciplinary team of consultants. Early on in the course, we learned that UNCTED was preparing to meet with Nigerian government officials in Abuja on December 13th-14th, 2016, to present recommendations on reintegration and facilitate a discussion with a panel of international experts. This gave the class a clear objective: to provide insight and analysis to support UNCTED’s recommendations to the Nigerian government.

The class divided into teams to investigate different “models” for reintegrating former insurgents. Having completed our preliminary research and consulting with the client, we decided to focus on the following models for our final report:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Country** | **Model Title** | **Time Period** |
| Sri Lanka | National Framework Proposal for Reintegration of Ex-combatants into Civilian Life | 2009-present |
| Colombia | FARC |  |
| Indonesia | Aceh, Indonesia: Post-Conflict Reintegration of the GAM | 2005-present |
| South Africa | Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) | 1995-2002 |
| Somalia | The *Xeer* Model | 2009-present |
| Algeria | Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation | 2005-present |
| Mali | Mali Reinsertion of Ex-Combatants Project | 2012-present |
| Nigeria | Niger Delta |  |
| Nigeria | Operation Safe Corridor | 2013-present |

In addition to researching these eight reintegration models, the class also addressed factors contributing to the rise of Boko Haram in northern Nigeria. In particular, we focused on the interrelated consequences of climate change in the Lake Chad region and food insecurity in northern Nigeria.

Through our research, several themes emerged regarding the key challenges and impediments to reintegration. In many cases, we saw little to no progress toward reintegration prior to a formal peace deal including disarmament between the government and the insurgent group, which is concerning given that there has not been progress toward a political settlement in Nigeria. Additionally, lack of public trust in the government and military, often explained by a history of human rights abuses by those parties, created additional barriers to reintegration. Lastly, DDR programs which emphasize punitive measures without offering a path to a productive life in civil society can restart the cycle of disenfranchisement which often precedes violent insurgency.

However, studying these reintegration models also illuminated a wide range of opportunities for the current conflict in Nigeria. Reintegration allows countries to formally involve underrepresented and disenfranchised groups and repair relationships with non-governmental community leaders. Reintegration models can offer economic incentives to ex-insurgents and communities alike, building job skills and stimulating the economy. Because of the increasing interdependency of nations, reintegration creates an “all hands on deck” approach where countries can leverage the expertise of neighbors and the international community to create a sustainable solution.

**Other themes for recommendations discussion:**

* Difference between targeting individuals and communities
* Lack of women’s participation
* Forgiveness / truth-telling / restorative justice
* Presence/lack of peace deal between gov’t and insurgency
* Government/military human rights abuses
* Lack of strong judicial system in place
* Deradicalization strategies - Bringing in external Islamic leaders to preach non-radical Islam (also used in Algeria - and OSC)
* Insurgency arose in area of neglect (similarities between Mali and Nigeria)

[Need to leave space for recommendations after we’ve decided as a class]

**SRI LANKA**

**Sri Lanka: Reintegration of the LTTE**

**Marie Sophie Pocha**

***Abstract:*** After the civil war in 2009 came to an end with the government forces defeating the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, Sri Lanka decided to reintegrate former LTTE combatants back into the communities. The government set up 24 PARCs across the country where over 10,000 fighters have been reintegrated since 2009. The Sri Lankan Model is considered one of the most successful approaches to reintegration, because there has been no resurgence of violence since the conflict. However, the lack of strong transitional justice measure remains a reason for criticism and is still a polarizing topic in Sri Lanka and globally. Other parts of the reintegration program, however, can be considered useful examples, namely the community-based approach, the relevance of recreational and social activities as well as the active participation of private companies in the training efforts for ex-combatants. When it comes to the reintegration of Boko Haram combatants, Sri Lanka does offer some parallels to the conflict, as the LTTE also recruited child soldiers, kidnapped members of the local communities in the North East and committed suicide attacks. On top of that, the Sri Lankan government faced the issue of few financial means to fund the reintegration program. Still, the Sri Lankan civil war ended with the defeat of the LTTE combatants, which constitutes a significantly different power balance between the parties as a basis for a reintegration program.

***Model Name****:* National Framework Proposal for Reintegration of Ex-combatants into Civilian Life in Sri Lanka

***Time Period***

The Sri Lankan Civil War lasted over 25 years and officially ended in May 2009. The government of Sri Lanka began the process of designing their national plan for the reintegration of ex-combatants in March 2009, completing by the end of July 2009. The government determined that reintegration and reinsertion efforts should take, up to one year, preferably within 10-12 months[[10]](#footnote-9). The reintegration program officially started in October of 2009 with the first ex-combatants coming to the Protective Accommodation and Rehabilitation Centers (PARCs) set up by the government.

***Insurgency Description***

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) fought for the independence of northeastern Sri Lanka to establish their own Tamil state. Their insurgency was a reaction to the increasing discrimination of the Tamil minority by the Sinhalan majority in the 1950s through 70s. The insurgency was comprised of approximately 10,000 fighters in the 1980s and 1990s. They participated in direct armed conflicts with the sizeable Sri Lankan army and also gained notoriety for their suicide attacks. The LTTE suicide bombing force is widely acknowledged to have invented the suicide jacket and carried out several hundred suicide attacks. The Sri Lankan civil war is considered an ethnic conflict rather than a religious conflict, though there is debate on the relevance of religion in the hostilities.

***Civilian Agency Involvement***

The *National Framework Proposal for Reintegration of Ex-combatants into Civilian Life* in Sri Lanka was developed by a committee that counted participants from the Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights, the Ministry of Defence Public Security, Law and Order, the Ministry of Constitutional Affairs and National Integration and the Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare. The International Labour Organization lent both technical and financial support to the framework development process. On top of that previous efforts to develop rehabilitation strategies by the ILO and the Sub-Committee on Livelihoods of the Consultative Committee on Humanitarian Assistance (CCHA) and the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources and the ILO as well as the Ministry of Employment and Labour were also taken into account when developing the framework in 2009.

***Military Involvement***

The military had recently defeated the LTTE. The role of military in the reintegration process was mainly focused on disarmament efforts, including the collection and destruction of weapons in order to increase public safety and security. Even in the economic reintegration in terms of employment, combatants could not be employed the military.

On top of that security forces also were to contribute to reconstruction and development in the war-struck areas. The Lessons Learnt Commission found later, however, that security forces continued to be involved in industries such as private businesses and agriculture, that were not part of their mandate.

***International Agency/Expert Involvement***

The International Labour Organization lent their technical and financial assistance to the reintegration framework development process. Several UN agencies also participated in the reintegration process.

The framework considered international best practices, including lessons learned from Saudi Arabia and Singapore. Several experts from Singapore weighed in and high-level functionaries travelled to Singapore to learn from the program. One of the fundamental parts of the model are the six modes of rehabilitation that Sri Lanka adopted and then adapted to their local circumstances[[11]](#footnote-10). These six modes included (1) education, (2) vocational reintegration, (3) psychosocial and creative therapies, (4) social, cultural and family reintegration, (5) the spiritual and religious modes and (6) recreational measures. Sri Lanka added one additional mode to the Singaporean model, community rehabilitation, which is why the Sri Lankan model is often called the “6+1 model”.[[12]](#footnote-11)

***NGO Involvement***

NGOs were initially only part of the government’s agenda on a rather limited basis. One of the reasons for this decision could be, that NGOs did not enjoy the full trust of the people during the conflict and that people had only little confidence in the NGOs’ abilities to effect positive change and actually stay in the village communities on a long-term basis. In addition to that, NGOs were often perceived as partisan during the conflict and considered allies of the LTTE, which lead to even more distrust by the Sinhalese and Muslim population.[[13]](#footnote-12)

International agencies were restricted from participation and access, which was criticized widely[[14]](#footnote-13) and may have contributed to lower funding for the government’s program.

***Impetus for Reintegration***

The reintegration program in Sri Lanka started towards the end of the civil war between the LTTE insurgency and the Sri Lankan government (and their security forces). Sri Lanka claimed victory and the LTTE declared defeat in May 2009, after which several thousands of ex-combatants were captured and “surrendered”. On top of that, several other paramilitary groups had developed over the 25 years of the civil war. These groups were also considered in the reintegration and rehabilitation efforts of the Sri Lankan government.

***Criteria for Reintegration***

The reintegration efforts in Sri Lanka targeted both combatants that were captured as well as those who surrendered. Even though the program did differentiate between the two groups and recognized that each group needs different program designs, captives and those who had surrendered were granted the same rights to participate in the reintegration program. While the program primarily targeted ex-LTTE-combatants who were the largest group of people that were to be reintegrated, the program also targeted other paramilitary groups in the region that had emerged during the civil war.

***Prosecution/Punitive Component***

Transitional justice and punitive aspects of the reintegration process of LTTE combatants and other paramilitary groups have been a major object of criticism over the past seven years. While the framework itself gave the responsibility of designing a transitional justice process that would be tailored to the Sri Lankan experience to the Attorney General, the framework already stated that “[I]t has to be highlighted that, except in cases where a failure to prosecute violates a treaty obligation, the granting of amnesties in appropriate cases to perpetrators of egregious human rights violations is most likely not precluded by international law“[[15]](#footnote-14). This already signalled that the Sri Lankan government was not likely to prosecute human rights abuses of the Sri Lankan military. Up until today no credible process has been initiated. President Rajapaksa, who was president from 1995 through 2005 neither allowed that those responsible for alleged crimes were prosecuted or punished nor that an independent investigation was initiated, disappointing the expectations he had raised with his promises[[16]](#footnote-15).

Forced disappearances have played a major role in the Sri Lankan civil war, especially in the last four years of the conflict. The northeastern parts of Sri Lanka as well as the Colombo area were particularly affected by enforced disappearances by the LTTE-combatants. Until mid-2016 no sincere action had been taken by the government to establish a transparent domestic process[[17]](#footnote-16). In August 2016, the Sri Lankan parliament voted in favor of a bill to create an independent Office on Missing Persons (OMP) comprised of seven members with experience in human rights and humanitarian law, whose mandate is to look into the large number of disappearances in Sri Lanka, specifically the Sri Lankan civil war[[18]](#footnote-17). It is too early to judge at this point, how effective the office is going to be.

***Community Engagement***

Community Engagement played a significant role in the reintegration program in Sri Lanka. Due to the need to save costs, the community received a relevant role not only to make reintegration more effective, but also out of necessity. A variety of private companies have participated, particularly in the economic reintegration efforts.

***Reconciliation, Social & Political Elements***

The Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Committee initiated by the government in 2010 and that released its report one year later, has by many been deemed a

***Psychological Elements***

Ex-combatants were profiled before beginning their reintegration program. They were evaluated and classified based on their crimes and their roles in the organizations and had to undergo psychological counselling upon profiling. The ex-combatants were assessed again at the end of the program.It was also very important during the process to differentiate between investigation and rehabilitation to establish trust with the beneficiaries.[[19]](#footnote-18)

***Education, skills, and job training***

Upon arrival at one of the 24 PARCs that the government installed in the Northern and North-Eastern part of Sri Lanka, the ex-combatants were profiled psychologically and socio-economically. Based on their profiles, they were put into different groups that then focused on vocational training and skill development as well as spiritual and moral classes that would further advance the social reintegration. In a way this also constituted the de-radicalisation efforts of the program

In general terms, the government found that rural areas would offer better environments for the reintegration and reinsertion of ex-combatants due to better employment perspectives there compared to the cities. The framework emphasized that ex-combatants should have the freedom to choose which type of training they wanted to pursue. These choices included the option to found their own businesses and receive micro-loans.[[20]](#footnote-19)

The main employment opportunities for direct employment of ex-combatants identified by the framework were agriculture and livestock development, rural industrial development, fisheries, tourism, construction activities, micro-businesses, foreign employment and “green jobs” – meaning agricultural and manufacturing jobs[[21]](#footnote-20).

The training within the PARCs allowed ex-combatants to get both, vocational training as well as higher education. They also received language courses to make them more attractive for the labour market. Once ready for reinsertion into society, the beneficiaries were equipped with basic needs kits that held a variety of non-cash resources, like household items, hygiene product, clothing etc. On top of that cash payments were also made to the beneficiaries so that they would not return home empty-handed and that they would have some freedom of choice.

***Incentives***

Beneficiaries of the reintegration program received cash payments for the rehabilitation period on a similar level as IDPs and resettled communities received cash grants. On top of that, the assumption that ex-combatants might have extra costs due to disabilities was taken into account as well when calculating the amount paid to ex-combatants. There is no further financial given to ex-combatants after the rehabilitation program[[22]](#footnote-21). ***Follow-up***

One measure that was taken in order to be able to have a better understanding of the number and the status of ex-combatants was that they were given basic legal documentation and identification cards. While this also had beneficial psychological effects in terms of giving people a sense of belonging, it was an instrumental part to monitor the implementation of reintegration efforts.

***Cost Estimate***

According to statistics published by the Bureau of the Commissioner General of Rehabilitation (BCGR), the program accumulated costs of USD 9,136,370 between January 2009 and September 2012 in order to manage and run the rehabilitation centres in Sri Lanka. The annual cost fluctuated depending on the number of ex-combatants in the rehabilitation program.[[23]](#footnote-22)

***Financing***

Due to the fact that the government was lacking resources in order to finance a resource-intense program like the rehabilitation program, collaboration with the private sector was fundamental for the government. The BCGR closed over 40 partnerships with private companies in Sri Lanka that helped with custodial rehabilitation and community reintegration. A variety of companies offered vocational training programs for LTTE ex-combatants. The funding issues that the government was facing actually led to a stronger involvement of the community in the reintegration program and to a program with lower cost.[[24]](#footnote-23)

***Results/Metrics***

The Lessons Learnt Commission’s report was released in 2011 and showed that there were still several areas of concern regarding the execution of the rehabilitation programs. One issue that had already been anticipated to cause problems, was the lack of teachers that were able to provide the necessary training in the PARCs. On top of that the demand for permanent shelter and the availability of it[[25]](#footnote-24). The education in the camps is not perfectly tailored to the background of the ex-combatants. Regarding the role of security forces the report found that security forces still intervened with civilians’ private and public life, even during the reconstruction after the war.

Kulatunga (2015) surveyed a range of ex-combatants in order to determine the success of the reintegration efforts by the Sri Lankan government. Using the sample of the northern cities Jaffna and Kilinochchi and Kulatunga, the report found that 90% of the ex-combatants felt that they were being well-recognized in the villages. In the villages the rate of ex-combatants was at most 25%[[26]](#footnote-25).

Furthermore, Kulatunga found that males integrated well back into society and while some faced problems finding permanent employment, this was mainly due to external factors. The unemployment and low level of income of ex-combatants is still an area of concern. However, this is merely due to the environmental economic situation. Women on the other hand, faced bigger challenges to reintegrate into society[[27]](#footnote-26).

Kulatunga’s work also showed that leisure, free time and social events were highly relevant factors to make the reintegration process successful. The beneficiaries of the program attended a variety of social events.

***Lessons Learned***

A considerable area of improvement is the transitional justice process in Sri Lanka and the prosecution of those responsible for human rights abuses during the civil war. The new president that was elected in 2015 still faces pressures to actually implement a credible process.

Security has greatly increased in Sri Lanka, where there has been a high level of post-war stability with no act of terrorism since the end of the civil war in 2009[[28]](#footnote-27).

Since several ex-combatants have had problems with unemployment and with setting up their own businesses, it can be derived that a better economic climate could have helped combatants find employment. If one were to accompany reintegration programs with investments into economic growth, both community reception of former combatants and economic reintegration would be helpful.

The reintegration program in Sri Lanka had substantial issues finding qualified personnel that was proficient in the languages of former combatants. Finding suitable and qualified personnel for the reintegration facilities is thus crucial and a big challenge.

***Applicability to Boko Haram***

There are several parallels between the nature of the insurgency and the potential reintegration efforts, that can be drawn between Sri Lanka and Boko Haram. However, there are also some crucial differences.

The Sri Lankan civil war ended with the government forces defeating the LTTE combatants, while the conflict between the Nigerian security forces and Boko Haram is still ongoing. Given the different power balance the attitudes towards reintegration of both, the affected population and the combatants, might be substantially different in each case.

A similarity between the two cases is that both countries only have limited funding at their disposal to fund a reintegration program. Here, Nigeria can learn from Sri Lanka’s strategy to involve the private sector and the community strongly in the reintegration and rehabilitation efforts, which could help lower costs or receive funding from private enterprises for education and training programs and also help sensitize the population for the rehabilitation program. On top of that, if there were to be positive spillover effects for the local population resulting from the economic reintegration, measures would potentially be substantially more effective.

An additional parallel between the Sri Lankan conflict and the Boko Haram insurgency is the presence of child soldiers and the commitment of suicide attacks, which add further complexity to the conflict. In Sri Lanka, child soldiers were taken from local families, which further lowered the willingness of the local population to accept former combatants back in their communities.

***Colombia’s Peace Accords and Reintegration of FARC combatants - Applications for Boko Haram and Cautions to Take***

**Lauren Wyman**

***Abstract:*** Looking at the peace process between the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia and the government of Colombia can shed light on appropriate paths to take when thinking how to reintegrate Boko Haram combatants into Nigerian society. The Colombian peace agreement aims to build peace from the bottom-up and top-down, fostering a culture of peace and reconciliation, which could inform the Nigerian path to reintegration of Boko Haram fighters. The Nigerian government should take caution and assess public opinion prior to reintegration.

***Time Period -* 1964 - present**

Since the 1960s, the civil conflict between the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC-EP), the government and paramilitary groups have resulted in over 6 million displaced and 220,000 dead throughout the country.[[29]](#footnote-28) The government of Colombia has launched numerous peace talks with the FARC, starting in 1982, but each has crumbled.[[30]](#footnote-29) The latest, fourth, round of peace talks, launched in 2012 by President Juan Manuel Santos, were ratified by the federal government and by the FARC, but were rejected by the public through a national referendum on October 2, 2016. Many Colombians opposed the peace deal for being too conciliatory towards the FARC, criticizing the lack of jail time and the guarantee of seats in Congress to the FARC political party.[[31]](#footnote-30)

The opposition to the peace agreement was spearheaded by former President Alvaro Uribe, whose hard-line stance on the FARC is well-known in Colombia.[[32]](#footnote-31) The government and the FARC returned to the negotiating table in Havana, Cuba after the treaty was rejected and on Saturday November 11th, a revised peace agreement was produced that incorporated the opposition’s suggestions. It is not clear if the agreement will only have to be ratified by Congress or go through another national referendum.

***Insurgency Description***

The FARC (in Spanish: *Fuerzas Armadas Revolutionarios de Colombia, Ejercito del Pueblo*) is a Marxist-Leninist militant organization formed in the 1960s to institute land reform and redistribution in the countryside.[[33]](#footnote-32) It emerged as an offshoot of the Colombian Communist Party and was violently repressed by the right-wing government starting in 1964, through an military attack on the group in the Tolima department in May of that year.[[34]](#footnote-33) The FARC emerged after a particularly violent stage in Colombian history known as *La Violencia -* the Violence - in which Conservative and Liberal politics ballooned into a rural war and land grab. [[35]](#footnote-34)

The FARC fueled its operations through kidnapping and demanding ransom for targets like politicians and social elites. In its early years, the FARC often provided medical care, education and defense services for marginalized communities in areas where government was lacking. The organization started to link to narcotrafficking in the 1980s as well as illegal mining and oil extraction to fund operations.[[36]](#footnote-35) At its heyday in the late 1990s and early 2000s, there were nearly 20,000 FARC soldiers; currently the number is around 7,000, including 3,000 women. There is a network of FARC sympathizers throughout the country.[[37]](#footnote-36) It’s important to note that people living in the Colombian countryside, especially indigenous communities, have been victims of attacks by the FARC, paramilitary groups/ bacrimes and by the Colombian military.[[38]](#footnote-37)

***Civilian Agency Involvement***

On a federal level, the National Victim’s Unit (UARIV) keeps track of IDPs and connects conflict victims to social services, like healthcare and education.[[39]](#footnote-38) This organization works also with local governments to implement Law 1448 of 2011, which recognizes the rights of people - particularly displaced persons (DPs) to settle in land that was taken from them by the FARC or paramilitary groups.

Other civilian agencies involved include the High Commission for Post-Conflict, Human Rights and Security, which was formed in anticipation of the peace accords being ratified by the public, is intended to facilitate the national transition to peace. Other governmental agencies supporting social protection programs in conflict zones include the National Planning Department, the Department of Social Prosperity, the Institute for Family Welfare and the National Department of Health, which provide services for conflict victims, including food assistance, emergency healthcare, school feeding programs and land redistribution. Additionally, other federal agencies like the Ministry of the Environment have oriented towards peace-building and are developing agricultural and environmental projects to promote peace and climate change adaptation.

***Military Involvement - Plan Colombia, aerial spraying***

During the 2000s, under the presidency of Alvaro Uribe, the Colombian military launched a massive offensive known as Plan Colombia. This was a $9 billion influx of military aid, primarily from the US, to bolster Colombian counter-FARC military capacities, as well as intelligence. Through Plan Colombia, dozens of high-level FARC leaders were killed, which significantly weakened the group. [[40]](#footnote-39) In recent years, the government has targeted coca plantations and sprayed them with herbicides, destroying the crops to reduce the sources of FARC funding. However, human rights groups decried the practice for causing illnesses (cancer) and for disproportionately impacting indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities.[[41]](#footnote-40)

Within the proposed peace accords, the Colombian military are to be stationed around concentration zones, where FARC members will demobilize and hand in their weapons to the United Nations. However, it’s also important to note that the military was accused of war crimes as well during the 52-year long conflict, including the false positive scandal.[[42]](#footnote-41) Due to the tension and the history of human rights abuses on both sides, the Colombian government asked the UN to accompany the turning in of arms during the peace process and run the concentration zones.

***Impetus for Reintegration***

The above military campaign severely weakened FARC; by taking out FARC leadership, this military offensive reduced the social cohesion of the group, putting them on the move frequently, leaving them to resort to defensive tactics like explosions, rather than offensive attacks. In recent years, linked with the hard-line military campaign and with national advertising campaigns, the FARC had experienced a rush of desertion, reducing their numbers to less than half of their peak and providing the federal government with intelligence on the group.[[43]](#footnote-42)

President Juan Manuel Santos made it a priority of his administration to finalize a peace agreement with the FARC, and he was backed by the international community to do so. With hardline national policy on narco-trafficking, profits from coca and cocaine production were decreasing. The FARC had also proclaimed that it hoped to transition to bring its battle to the political sphere and enter as its own political party.

***Criteria for Reintegration***

All FARC combatants will be eligible for reintegration under the current peace agreement, as long as they hand in their weapons, help identify missing persons, and confess their crimes to a peace tribunal, through a truth and reconciliation process. Those who admit to their crimes are eligible to alternative sentences and restorative justice to make amends to victims - by working on community farms, demining, reforestation, substituting illicit crops, etc. However if the ex-combatants lie or do not turn in their weapons, they will be subject to up to 20-years in prison. As of now, the FARC is demobilizing in its entirety; there are no known FARC dissidents who are refusing to hand in their weapons and accept peace. Certain crimes disqualify ex-combattants from amnesty, including sexual violence, kidnapping, torture, extrajudicial killings, forced disappearances and recruitment of minors. The original peace agreement received a lot of backlash for its ‘soft’ stance on the FARC - specifically that most soldiers would receive no jail time.

In terms of the reintegration of child soldiers, within 15 days of the signing of the new agreement, the government will develop a special program for their effective reintegration. The National Reincorporation Council will be in charge of this program.[[44]](#footnote-43)

***Reconciliation, Social & Political Elements***

The approach that the government has taken to negotiations has been that the FARC should make reparations for the damage caused by the prolonged conflict and contribute to making the post-conflict society better. The agreement recognizes the differential needs of LGBTI and women ex-combatants and the psycho-social needs of victims of sexual and gender based violence. The agreement emphasizes that in post-conflict society, it’s important to create spaces for communities to express their suffering and reconcile with ex-combatants.[[45]](#footnote-44) Additionally, in the new agreement, the FARC will turn in all of its assets to the government, to compensate victims.

For the sake of this brief, I will go into two key elements of the reconciliation process outlined in the peace agreement, that can inform our recommendations on Boko Haram: *concentration zones* and political participation.

*Concentration Zones -*  After the peace agreement is signed, demobilizing FARC soldiers will migrate to 23 concentration zones, which are located in isolated regions of the country. The concentration zones will serve as a halfway zone for the FARC, where they were officially demobilize and transition to civilian life. Unarmed civilians can enter the concentration zones to provide social services like healthcare and education; the military is not allowed within one-kilometer of each zone. Within 180 days of the signing of the peace agreement, the FARC must turn in all weapons to the United Nations. Once the final peace agreement is signed, fighters will go to these zones for up to six months and then will be able to move on a restricted basis throughout the country. A monitoring and verification mission made up of UN, FARC and Colombian governmental officials have access to each zone to ensure compliance.[[46]](#footnote-45) Demobilized FARC soldiers, after leaving the concentration zones, are eligible 90 percent of minimum wage for two years as well as grants to start businesses.[[47]](#footnote-46)

*Political Participation -* After demobilization, FARC leaders will be able to run for office and thus participate in the Colombian political sphere.[[48]](#footnote-47) Over the next two election cycles, the FARC will have non-voting seats in the national Congress, after which they will be subject to the normal electoral process. Under the new peace agreement, the FARC political party will receive less government funding than in the original agreement.[[49]](#footnote-48)

***Community Engagement***

Public opinion on the peace agreements was polled frequently and captured in a national referendum on October 2, 2016. As mentioned above, the public rejected the peace agreement 50.2 percent to 49.7 percent - primarily in zones that are linked to former President Alvaro Uribe, specifically the Antioquia department. While the polls suggested for months that the peace would win by a landslide - in fact the international community was already congratulating Colombia on achieving peace before the referendum - many people throughout the country had deeply opposed it. It’s important to note that many of the communities that were most impacted by the conflict were the ones who most strongly supported the peace.[[50]](#footnote-49)

***Lessons Learned***

Colombia’s peace is an ongoing process- the agreement has not been signed into power as of 15 November 2016. However, along the way primary lessons learned about the process of forming a peace agreement are the following:

1. Engage with opposition parties when developing the peace agreement so that it is amenable across the political spectrum. The ‘No’ campaign, spearheaded by former President Alvaro Uribe, was a stronger voice politically than Santos’ team had originally imagined. That the government and the FARC took the opposition’s suggestions into consideration while revising the peace agreement shows the strength of the process.
2. Consider how the agreement is being marketed on a national level. Through the peace negotiations, several fears surfaced in the public mind about what would happen post-conflict - specifically that Colombia would turn into a Chavista state, ruled by left-wing rebels. Many Colombians are extremely familiar with the recent economic turmoil in Venezuela, thus that the agreement was being marketed as turning Colombia into the next Venezuela worked against them.

***Applicability to Boko Haram***

The nature of the militancy in Colombia is quite different to Boko Haram - not only did it start as a left-wing, non-religious political movement in the rural areas of the country, its links with the drug trade and other militant groups throughout Colombia distinguish it from the pseudo-religious Boko Haram institution. FARC has been active since the 1960s and has suffered high rates of abandonment in recent years whereas Boko Haram only began in earnest in the last six years.

However, there are parallels between the groups, including the recruitment of child soldiers, kidnapping, attacks on military and government infrastructure, heavy military repression by the national government and people joining these organizations, at times, for socio-economic reasons - lack of opportunity. Additionally, in both instances the national militaries also committed human rights abuses.[[51]](#footnote-50)

The following are key recommendations that the Nigerian government can extract when thinking about how to reintegrate Boko Haram combatants:

1. **Accompaniment by external verification missions -** Any reintegration and demobilization program should be accompanied by external verification missions due to the history of human rights abuses by both the Nigerian military and by Boko Haram.
2. **Assessing public opinion before reintegration is vital -** As with the national referendum on the peace agreement showing that many Colombians were not ready for peace, it will be important for the Nigerian government to survey and address public opinions on reintegration of Boko Haram combatants - to see if the time is right.
3. **Open up alternate routes for dissident voices to be heard -** Boko Haram, like the FARC, were heavily repressed by the national government. Opening up routes for peaceful participation in national politics is a key aspect of demobilization and reintegration - ex-combatants need to have a stake in the society they are reintegrating back into.
4. **Incorporate a cross-sectoral approach -** While the Colombian peace agreement has yet to be implemented, its cross-sectoral approach to reintegration may prove to be highly effective. That the agreement emphasizes rural development and infrastructure as well as political participation and psychosocial support through a gender and LGBT sensitive approach means that peace will be implemented at the individual, local and national levels simultaneously.
5. **Consider environmental conservation as a tool for a sustainable peace-building-** Both northern Nigeria and Colombia are vulnerable to the impacts of environmental degradation, unsustainable natural resource use and climate change. By building and maintaining healthy environments, both the Colombian and Nigerian governments can enhance local livelihoods and local economies - reducing the incentives of ex-combatants to rejoin guerrilla groups. A healthy environment can help maintain a long-lasting peace.
6. **Open up spaces for people to talk about the conflict and reconciliation.** The Colombian government is opening up campaigns to create spaces on the local level fo rpeople to come together and talk about their experiences and seek reconciliation. By doing so, the government hopes to foster a national culture of forgiveness and peace, which the Nigerian government could look to as a positive example.

**Aceh, Indonesia: Post-Conflict Reintegration of the GAM**

**Marisa Lowe**

***Abstract:*** The Free Aceh Movement and Boko Haram share similar underlying grievances, but the circumstances for these two post-conflict reintegrations are incomparable. While program efficacy may not be transferrable, Aceh’s programmatic challenges and lessons learned should inform the logistics of any reintegration program for Boko Haram in Nigeria. The difficulties of

***Insurgency Description***

The Free Aceh Movement (GAM) was formed in 1976 with the objective of self-determination and implementation of Shari’a law for the Aceh region. Since then, GAM-related violence and corresponding violence by the Indonesian military has come in waves. Military campaigns launched in response to GAM activity killed thousands and resulted in human rights violations. Following the 2004 hurricane that killed 167,000 in Aceh, the GAM and Government of Indonesia (GoI) reached a peace agreement, the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), signed in 2005.[[52]](#footnote-51) Reintegration efforts have spanned from 2005 to the present.

***Causal Elements***

GAM’s grievances included economic marginalization, especially with consideration of Aceh’s oil and gas resources, lack of cultural and political autonomy, especially with consideration of the practice of a more conservative Islam, and human rights abuses by the military.[[53]](#footnote-52) These expressed grievances were reflected in the Acehnese people’s perception of the conflict’s causes.[[54]](#footnote-53)

***Civilian Agency Involvement***

In accordance with the MoU, the Aceh Reintegration Agency (BRA) was formed under the Governor of Aceh.[[55]](#footnote-54) Since 2005, BRA itself has seen variations in structure, form and activities.[[56]](#footnote-55)

***International Agency Involvement***

International agency support flooded Aceh following the destructive 2004 tsunami.[[57]](#footnote-56) The international agencies involved in reintegration included the International Organization of Migration (IOM), European Union (EU), World Bank, and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The participation of these organizations in reintegration efforts varied from funding to monitoring to technical assistance to establishing and running programs. IOM was invited by the Government of Indonesia (GoI) to oversee the release of political prisoners and provide for the reintegration of former combatants. IOM also facilitated critical public information sharing by printing and distributing copies of the Helsinki MoU to the public. IOM also managed the Village Prosperity Through Peace Program (*Makmu Gampong Kareuna Damē)* for quick-impact projects and traditional reconciliation activities for communities.[[58]](#footnote-57)

The World Bank began the Kecamatan Development Project in October 2006, which was transformed into the Kecamatan-Based Reconstruction and Reintegration Program (KDP) in order to aid BRA with their economic empowerment efforts.[[59]](#footnote-58)

The UNDP’s Strengthening Sustainable Peace and Development in Aceh (SSDPA) Program provided technical assistance to BRA, as well as programs for livelihood improvement of ex-combatants and victims of conflict.[[60]](#footnote-59) The UNDP, in conjunction with the EU, also created the Strengthening Access to Justice for Peace and Development project, which aimed to clarify legal framework for customary law, support transitional justice, and increase awareness and access to legal counsel.[[61]](#footnote-60)

***NGO Involvement***

Civil society representatives were given initial seats at the BRA table, although their roles and continued representation remain unclear.[[62]](#footnote-61) International aid organizations often funded civil society organizations to provide services, such as the UNDP’s Gender-Responsive Approach for Reintegration and Peace Stabilization, which provided funds to support the reintegration of female ex-combatants and women left out of the official DDR process.[[63]](#footnote-62)

***Criteria for Reintegration***

The three populations for reintegration identified in the MoU were former combatants, political prisoners, and affected civilians.[[64]](#footnote-63) Through political negotiations, BRA’s Economic Empowerment program also came to include GAM non-combatants and Pembela Tanah Air (PETA) pro-Indonesian militants.[[65]](#footnote-64) Beyond individual programs, community-based programs broadened the addressed populations.

It was expected that GAM would provide a list of 3,000 combatants to be served by BRA’s ex-combatant reintegration efforts. The creation of such a list did not occur. First, the number of GAM combatants was far greater than 3,000; Second, GAM feared that the peace process would collapse and former combatants would be punished; Third, GAM’s desire to control the reintegration process. Instead, BRA provided allowances to GAM that were spread more widely among its network.[[66]](#footnote-65)

GAM, BRA, and Acehnese civil society agreed on a 10-point criteria for “affected civilians.” The criteria included loss of life, physical damage, loss of wealth, displacement, injury, illness, and loss of employment.[[67]](#footnote-66) Unfortunately, these criteria had little effect on the actual distribution of assistance.[[68]](#footnote-67)

BRA solicited victim applications and was inundated with over 50,000 applications covering 600,000 individuals.[[69]](#footnote-68) As a result, BRA turned to the WB-funded KDP project to facilitate victim assistance. KDP provided community-based assistance to villages, using facilitators to help identify conflict victims and their needs. Villages were required to hold four community meetings in order to identify, propose, and address their needs with a project. These meetings were meant to emphasize community ownership and the last meeting was devoted to accountability reports after project completion. Allocation size was based on a village’s level of conflict, history of successful KDP grants, exposure to violence, village size, and conflict victims’ needs. Following the first round of village funding, KDP reverted their program to individual allocations.[[70]](#footnote-69)

***Prosecution/Punitive Component***

In accordance with the MoU, GAM combatants were given amnesty and political prisoners were released with the exception of “disputed cases” and continued violence. Article 2.2 and 2.3 of the MoU mandated the creation of a human rights court (HRC) and a truth and reconciliation commission (TRC). Article 1.4.5 held that military personnel who had committed civilian crimes would be tried in Aceh civilian court.[[71]](#footnote-70)

The implementation of the human rights court and truth and reconciliation commission outlined in the MoU stalled. For ten years, victims and activists sought the creation of HRC and TRC institutions for justice, in addition to the public release of official government reports on human rights abuses by security forces.[[72]](#footnote-71) In November 2015, the Aceh provincial parliament announced the selection of a team for the TRC to operate between 2016 and 2021.[[73]](#footnote-72) There have been no reports of the commission’s commencement.

***Community Engagement***

Prior to reintegration the community acceptance level of former combatants was approximately 90 percent.[[74]](#footnote-73) Through KDP, communities were engaged in discussions to determine funding for community-based projects.

***Reconciliation, Social & Political Elements***

Official BRA funds focused on economic development and did not include allocations for social reintegration.[[75]](#footnote-74) International aid organizations like IOM facilitated some traditional reconciliation ceremonies, although the extent and effect of such ceremonies is unclear.[[76]](#footnote-75)

The MoU provided Aceh with special autonomy and the formation of local political parties. Since then, two GAM-affiliated Aceh governors have been elected.

***Education, Skills, and Job Training***

BRA provided economic assistance and capital to former combatants, political prisoners, and affected civilians without much training for the use of such capital. Given this criticism, in 2009, BRA began providing limited vocational training in certain districts. Aside from BRA, IOM has provided vocational assistance to amnestied former prisoners and combatants.[[77]](#footnote-76)

***Incentives***

The allocation of cash to former combatants, political prisoners, and affected civilians provided incentives for participation, inundating BRA beyond its capacity.

***Cost Estimate***

Cost numbers vary widely, based on program, agency, and timeframe inclusion. BRA’s pool for allocation totaled to $150 million.[[78]](#footnote-77) Another report from the Asia Foundation estimated that $365 million was spent between 2005 and 2009 by GoI and international donors on peacebuilding.[[79]](#footnote-78)

***Financing:*** GoI, Foreign Governments, and International Organizations

***Results & Metrics***

Data on Aceh includes household perception surveys, case studies, aid and donor reviews, economic surveys, violence incident reports, and more.[[80]](#footnote-79)

***Challenges***

*Defining the Target Population:* The MoU was seen as pioneering in acknowledging victims as a target population for reintegration. Between former combatants, political prisoners, and “affected civilians,” however, the line between the target population and community for reintegration into was difficult to define. Damages could be calculated as lives lost, monetary losses, unemployment, physical destruction, and psychological harm. Approximately 15,000 individuals lost their lives and damages exceeded $10.7 trillion.[[81]](#footnote-80) A Harvard University medical team found that 33 percent of Acehnese suffered from depression and 48 percent from anxiety.[[82]](#footnote-81) Forty-nine percent of the Acehnese population considers themselves to be a victim of the conflict.[[83]](#footnote-82) This made the task of verifying individual allocation targets challenging and even impossible.

*Individual Allocations vs. Community-Based Projects:* BRA-KDP experimented with both individual allocations and funding community-based projects. Individual allocations were challenging because of verification and coordination between different allocation programs. The Multi-Stakeholder Review of Post-Conflict Programming in Aceh (MSR) results suggested that individual allocations did not have a significant effect on economic welfare.[[84]](#footnote-83)

Community-based projects, on the other hand, had more widespread and measurable impacts on perceptions of welfare. Communities that received KDP saw an 11-point decrease in “poor” populations perceived by village heads. The community-based programs were more likely to include marginalized and minority groups, although there was no evidence of stronger social cohesion or government relations as a result.[[85]](#footnote-84)

*Holding Government Forces Accountable for Human Rights Abuses:* The Acehenese NGO Coalition for Human Rights registered over ten thousand cases of human rights abuses during the conflict.[[86]](#footnote-85) Despite mandates in the MoU for a HRC and TRC, neither transitional justice system has been created.

***Successes***

The Aceh peace and reintegration process has been viewed as a success, primarily because of the lack of large-scale violence and return to civil war since the signing of the MoU in 2005.

*Program Impact :* Community-funded projects had a greater measurable effect on economic welfare than individual allocations, although the measured effect was small.

***Similarities to Boko Haram***

Both GAM and Boko Haram espoused literalist Islamic ideals, although the differences in how they use religion to drive their organization and shape their communities are significant. GAM and Boko Haram shared many similar grievances, including abuses perpetrated by the military, the abundance of oil resources and widespread poverty in the region.

***Differences to Boko Haram***

*Tsunami:* The 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami Aceh drastically affected the circumstances for post-conflict reintegration. First, the utter devastation caused by the tsunami inflicted widespread injury to fighters and non-fighters alike. Second, the tsunami’s destruction spurred a massive outpouring of international aid to Indonesia. Post-conflict rehabilitation thus coincided with post-tsunami rehabilitation, and it is hard to distinguish between the effects of the two.

Aside from GoI’s official reintegration agency BRA, international aid organizations provided tremendous supplemental support to the post-conflict reintegration process. While BRA focused on financial allocations and economic development for the target populations outlined in the MoU, international programs extended aid to psychological elements, traditional reconciliation ceremonies, skills training, and victim populations unacknowledged by the MoU and BRA.

*Community Attitudes:* The majority of Acehenese were ready and willing to welcome GAM fighters back into their communities. This stands in stark contrast to the situation with Boko Haram in Nigeria.

*Peace Agreement & Political Representation:* The conflict between the GAM and GoI experienced multiple failed peace processes before the signing of the MoU. The peace negotiation processes were intensive and compromising. Among the many assessments of Acehnese peace and reintegration, there is some consensus that the predominant factor for peace was the political representation granted to Aceh in the MoU. The designation of Aceh as a special province provided the region and its people with greater political access and influence in Jakarta, and long-desired cultural, social, and political autonomy for Aceh. From Jakarta’s perspective, this autonomy has had its drawbacks, including the implementation of Shari’a law in Aceh, which has corresponded with human rights violations like the caning of women and fears of increasing violent extremism in Indonesia.[[87]](#footnote-86)

**South Africa: Reintegration and Reconciliation in the Post-Apartheid Era  
Aprille Knox**

**Model Name**: Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)

**Time Period**: December 1995 – 2002[[88]](#footnote-87)

***Abstract:*** From 1948 until 1990, South Africa’s apartheid system “legally enforced racial segregation” through policies that denied civil and political liberties to black South Africans.[[89]](#footnote-88) Initially peaceful black opposition movements were met with violent repression by the state, leading to an increasingly unstable and brutal political environment. After decades of unrest, the apartheid system finally began to crack under the weight of international sanctions and economic decline.[[90]](#footnote-89) During the period from 1990-1994, numerous negotiations were held between the National Party - the perpetrators of apartheid - and the African National Congress - the primary liberation movement - in order to establish a unity government, paving the way for a peaceful power transition. Armed forces were consolidated under the newly established South African National Defense Forces and a conditional amnesty program was put in place through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, established as a fact-finding and truth-seeking body responsible for holding accountable all perpetrators of human rights abuses throughout the apartheid era. The South African model remains highly contentious in terms of its efficacy. Nevertheless, as one of the most frequently cited examples of transitional justice, there are many lessons to be learned and applied towards the reintegration of former Boko Haram combatants. This paper provides an overview of the context, programs, and outcomes of the South African model, including recommendations of how and why some of its components may be applicable to the Nigerian context.

***Background***

The apartheid system began in earnest in 1948, when the National Party (NP) came to power, establishing a whites-only political system.[[91]](#footnote-90) As time went on, the NP increasingly enacted ethnically divisive policies – including the Group Areas Act (establishing physical separation of racial groups); the Bantu Authorities Act (forcibly displacing black South Africans to their “native homelands”); and the Natives Act (requiring all black South Africans to carry identification at all times), to name just a few.[[92]](#footnote-91)

“Intensification of repressive, discriminatory laws and practices under segregation and apartheid prompted growing black protest and resistance.”[[93]](#footnote-92) In response to the NP’s racist policies, the African National Congress (ANC) (see insurgency description) initially promoted non-violent demonstrations to gain greater political representation and rights for the black South African majority.

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| ***Insurgency Description***  *African National Congress (ANC)*: The ANC was established in 1912, initially as an organization of black, mission-educated elite. Although its composition and tactics have shifted over time, its overall objectives have remained constant: 1) to overthrow white supremacy and 2) to establish a truly democratic government in South Africa.[[94]](#footnote-93) The ANC initially embraced peaceful forms of protest - strikes, sit-ins, and other forms of non-violent demonstration. However, as time went on, the organization adapted in response to the NP’s repression, starting by targeting state infrastructure and eventually developing a militant wing - Umkhonto We Sizwe (MK).[[95]](#footnote-94)  *Pan Africanist Congress (PAC):* The PAC was established in 1959 as a splinter group of the ANC. While the group espoused many similar values and desires, it did not support the pan-racial movement. The PAC supported black nationalism - building a country for and by black South Africans alone, thereby most notably excluding the large Indian population that had, largely, been supportive of the ANC’s cause.[[96]](#footnote-95) The PAC may be most known for its involvement in the Sharpeville Massacre of 1960, “when policemen killed at least sixty-nine defenseless people - many of whom were shot in the back - during a peaceful PAC demonstration against pass laws.”[[97]](#footnote-96) It was after this event that the apartheid government banned both the PAC and ANC. After being banned from South Africa, the PAC also established a militant arm - the Azanian People’s Liberation Army (APLA).[[98]](#footnote-97)  *National Party (NP):* The NP, a whites-only government party that ruled South Africa from 1948-1994, were the perpetrators of apartheid. Under their rule, black South Africans were stripped of their rights as formal segregationist policies were imposed on the population.[[99]](#footnote-98) The NP employed the South African Defense Forces (SADF) to violently contest any signs of political opposition, through whatever means necessary.[[100]](#footnote-99) |

However, peaceful protests were met with violent opposition from the apartheid government. “Bannings, detentions, and harassment of liberation movement leaders and activists became commonplace,” leading the ANC to eventually move underground in the 1960s.[[101]](#footnote-100) It was during this period that armed resistance began to grow in the form of the ANC’s militant wing – Umkhonto We Sizwe (otherwise known as “Spear of the Nation” or MK).[[102]](#footnote-101)

The 1970s and 1980s saw growing agitation and violence across all sectors of society. The NP increasingly used hit squads, often killing innocent civilians, and pursued a divide-and-rule strategy,[[103]](#footnote-102) sparking divisions amongst black opposition parties, which the apartheid government used to frame conflict as “black-on-black” violence.[[104]](#footnote-103) Fortunately, the international community was able to see through the NP’s façade, and increasingly pressured the apartheid regime to relinquish power – largely through the imposition of economic sanctions and verbal condemnations.[[105]](#footnote-104) By the late 1980s – as the Cold War was coming to an end – the apartheid system was finally beginning to crack under international pressure. Negotiations between newly elected NP president, F. W. de Klerk, and ANC leader, Nelson Mandela, led to Mandela’s release from prison in 1990, as well as the development of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA), which was tasked with negotiating a new constitution and peaceful government transition.[[106]](#footnote-105)

Yet, violence continued. The period between Mandela’s release from Robben Island in 1990 and South Africa’s first truly democratic elections in 1994, was the bloodiest period in apartheid’s history.[[107]](#footnote-106) It was only after democratic elections were held that the apartheid era, and the violence and racism associated with it, started to come to an end.

***Impetus for Reintegration / Reconciliation***

In the years between Mandela’s release and South Africa’s first democratic elections, numerous negotiations were held between all factions - though primarily the NP and ANC - in order to successfully put the conflict to rest and ensure a smooth political transition. Chief among these were negotiations between the SADF and MK regarding disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration procedures for former armed combatants.[[108]](#footnote-107)[[109]](#footnote-108) The major result of these negotiations was the establishment of the South African National Defense Forces (SANDF), which formally incorporated all previously existing armed forces.[[110]](#footnote-109) It was agreed that in total, 17,000 MK troops, 6,000 APLA members, 10,000 homeland militia fighters, and 85,000 SADF and staff would comprise the new SANDF, which began formal integration in 1994.[[111]](#footnote-110)

Meanwhile, the newly elected South African government faced the difficult task of coping with the collective human rights abuses of the past, while paving the way forward for a more peaceful and productive future. Despite the election of a “national unity” government in 1994, South African society needed more to “make unity a reality” - “the transition (from) a past marred by human rights abuses to one based on the principles of democracy and respect for human rights could not be had simply by a transition in government.”[[112]](#footnote-111)

The peaceful democratic transition was not the result of military victory. Instead, “the ANC (recognized that it) could not impose its peace; this would only ever come about if they managed to persuade the National Party to give up the reins of power voluntarily.”[[113]](#footnote-112) During negotiations, the NP advocated blanket amnesty for all party members, which the ANC wholeheartedly rejected.[[114]](#footnote-113) Instead, the ANC advocated “conditional amnesty” - which was predicated on truth-telling for politically justified acts.[[115]](#footnote-114)

What emerged, as a result of the National Unity and Reconciliation Act, was the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) - a three-chambered body tasked with tackling justice, truth-telling, and reparations. The TRC was divided into three committees:

1. The Human Rights Violations (HRV) Committee - “responsible for conferring victim status on those individuals who qualified under the Act and came forward to the Commission to make a statement.”[[116]](#footnote-115)
2. The Amnesty Committee - “responsible for fulfilling the imperative contained in the interim Constitution that ‘amnesty shall be granted in respect of acts, omissions and offenses associated with political objectives and committed in the course of the conflicts of the past.’”[[117]](#footnote-116)
3. The Reparation and Rehabilitation (R&R) Committee - “responsible for making recommendations to the government regarding the provision of reparations and rehabilitation of victims.”[[118]](#footnote-117)

The TRC was seen as “the price the liberation forces had to pay in order to secure a peaceful transition to a majority rule.”[[119]](#footnote-118) But in addition to appeasing the NP’s demands, it was also used as a tool for “creating a collective memory for the society, establishing and nurturing a culture of human rights … , transforming the society, and enhancing reconciliation.”[[120]](#footnote-119)

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| ***Civilian Agency, Military, International Agency, and NGO Involvement***  *Civilian Agency*: Initial reintegration and reconciliation discussions were primarily led by leaders of the competing factions - largely the ANC and NP. The TRC was intentionally formed as a stand-alone body outside of the government court system. It was established by the passing of the National Unity and Reconciliation Act by the South African Constitutional Court.[[121]](#footnote-120) Although it “operated outside of South Africa’s domestic legal system, … (its) amnesty decisions were binding on domestic courts.”[[122]](#footnote-121) The TRC itself was chaired by Archbishop Desmond Tutu and led by 17 commissioners - nine men and eight women - who were supported by a staff of approximately 300.[[123]](#footnote-122)  *Military:* The SADF and MK were integral in defining South Africa’s disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) strategies for former combatants. All armed factions were required to submit a roster of enlisted personnel to the Department of Defence, which used this “Certified Personnel Register” to monitor the DDR process and integration of SANDF forces.[[124]](#footnote-123) This proved challenging in that not all units had sufficient personnel record systems in place and much debate was had regarding who should be considered a combatant. No military units were directly involved in the implementation of South Africa’s TRC. However, former combatants from all militant (and non-militant) forces were eligible for participation.  *International Agency:* International agencies and governments were highly involved in helping put an end to the brutal apartheid regime through the imposition of sanctions, sports bans, and other forms of global condemnation.[[125]](#footnote-124) However, reintegration and reconciliation strategies were largely homegrown.  *Non-governmental Organization* - The South African government has been widely criticized for its limited inclusion of non-governmental and civil society organizations throughout the 1990s, in both the design of the TRC and ex-combatant reintegration programming.[[126]](#footnote-125) |

***Criteria for Reintegration and Reconciliation***

*The SANDF & Ex-Combatant Reintegration*

The Joint Military Coordinating Council of the Sub-Council of Defence of the Traditional Executive Council (JMCC) - comprised of representatives from the SADF, MK, APLA, and homeland militias - facilitated the integration of new SANDF forces.[[127]](#footnote-126) Former-combatants age 16 and older, including women, were allowed to participate, many of whom first needed to be repatriated from abroad.[[128]](#footnote-127) All ex-combatants — according to the Certified Personnel Register (see military involvement above) — were brought before the SANDF Placement Board for psychological and physical examination. “Those with psychological disabilities, suffering from ill health, without sufficient military training or without the minimum military or educational qualifications were demobilized.”[[129]](#footnote-128)

In addition, in 1995 the SANDF began a policy of voluntary release, allowing any newly enscripted SANDF soldiers to voluntarily leave the service, without retribution.[[130]](#footnote-129) Demobilized ex-combatants received a small “gratuity” - usually between $3,500 and $11,000 USD, based on the amount of time served - prior to reentry into South African society.[[131]](#footnote-130) Demobilized ex-combatants were also given the option to participate in voluntary counselling, as well as an 18-month vocational training program.[[132]](#footnote-131)

Generally, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants was viewed as an afterthought - receiving secondary importance compared to the establishment of the SANDF. According to scholars Motumi and McKenzie, “demobilization (was) poorly planned, badly executed and wholly inadequate in meeting the needs of ex-combatants. It ... failed to take into account some of the lessons learnt from demobilization processes in other developing countries and, in fact, repeated some of the more obvious mistakes.”[[133]](#footnote-132)

*The Truth and Reconciliation Commission*

Both victims and perpetrators had to apply for benefits from the TRC. All individual victims of the apartheid regime were required to submit applications to the HRV committee in order to receive victim status - which thereby entitled South African citizens to reparations.[[134]](#footnote-133)Similarly, to prevent blanket amnesty, the TRC required all perpetrators of violence throughout the apartheid era to individually apply for amnesty for specific acts committed.[[135]](#footnote-134) Amnesty applications were required for all parties implicated in violence throughout this time period - NP and ANC alike.

In order for amnesty to be granted, applications had to meet the following criteria:

* The act “must have been committed in pursuit of a political objective”[[136]](#footnote-135);
* The act must have occurred within the designated timeframe (1960-1994);
* Applicants had to agree to “full disclosure of the facts surrounding the abuse”[[137]](#footnote-136);
* Applicants had to admit fault[[138]](#footnote-137); and
* The application must have been received prior to the deadline (originally set at December 1996).[[139]](#footnote-138)

Only acts considered “violation(s) of human rights”[[140]](#footnote-139) - including abductions, torture, and killings - were considered for amnesty.[[141]](#footnote-140) Less serious crimes were not prosecuted, though neither were they forgiven.

***Prosecution / Punitive Component***

Given the sheer size and scope of atrocities committed under apartheid, the South African government realized that not all perpetrators could or should be held accountable through traditional courts of law.[[142]](#footnote-141) Rather than focusing on punitive, criminal justice, the TRC’s conditional amnesty model embodied a form of “restorative justice” - “a justice that would direct attention to the needs and participation of the victim and, in that way, help repair the damage done.”[[143]](#footnote-142) In applying for victimhood status, all victims intentionally “(gave) up the right to later prosecute perpetrators in courts of law.”[[144]](#footnote-143) In exchange, the acknowledgement of crimes would be followed by reparations.

Furthermore, by requiring all perpetrators to apply individually for amnesty, no group at large was absolved of responsibility for its actions throughout the apartheid era.[[145]](#footnote-144) All parties were culpable for their actions - whether crimes were committed by the state or by liberation movements.[[146]](#footnote-145) However, the TRC did decriminalize “the actions of the majority of those who opposed the former state.”[[147]](#footnote-146) Those who had previously been sentenced for crimes including arson, public violence, and attempted murder were released.

***Reconciliation***

The TRC’s truth-seeking agenda was intentionally designed to promote reconciliation.[[148]](#footnote-147) The South African government aimed to eliminate the possibility of collective amnesia by tackling the atrocities of apartheid head-on, thereby establishing a nationally-recognized and agreed upon history.[[149]](#footnote-148)

Reconciliation consisted of four sub-dimensions:

1. “Interracial reconciliation (rejection of interracial stereotypes or prejudice);
2. Political tolerance (willingness to allow one’s political foes full rights of political contestation);
3. Support for human rights principles (and, in particular, the rule of law); (and)
4. The extension of legitimacy to the political institutions of the new South Africa (Parliament and Constitutional Court).”[[150]](#footnote-149)

***Community Engagement***

All South African citizens were eligible to participate in the TRC process - either by submitting victim statements or amnesty applications. In addition, TRC hearings were made public and broadcast on national television.[[151]](#footnote-150)

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| ***Cost Estimate & Financing***  To achieve its lofty goals, the TRC had an annual operating budget of USD$18 million, funded by taxpayers and international donors.[[152]](#footnote-151) Initially, reparations to victims and their families were projected at USD$640 million[[153]](#footnote-152) - “the commission proposed that each victim or family should receive approximately $3,500 USD each for six years.”[[154]](#footnote-153) Reparations were to be funded through a ‘wealth tax’ - drawing taxes from industries that unduly benefited from apartheid.[[155]](#footnote-154) However, this program did not come to fruition. “Instead the government established a reparations fund with money from the State and from donors; using this fund, it paid a lump sum of R30,000 each to about 23,000 persons who registered with the TRC as ‘victims’.”[[156]](#footnote-155) |

***Results***

In total, 135,927 former combatants were integrated into the newly established SANDF.[[157]](#footnote-156) “Close to 6,000 soldiers were formally demobilized from the SANDF in 1995, the majority of which were originally from the MK or APLA.”[[158]](#footnote-157) The demobilization process continued into the late 1990s and early 2000s, when an additional 30,000 former combatants were demobilized.[[159]](#footnote-158)

As part of the TRC, more than 20,000 victim statements were submitted, of which approximately 2,000 were heard publicly.[[160]](#footnote-159) In total, more than 7,000 applications for amnesty were received, of which 849 were granted and 5,392 were rejected.[[161]](#footnote-160) “The most common reason for denying an application (was) that no political motive was attached to the action for which amnesty was sought.”[[162]](#footnote-161) In the end, no group escaped without blame for its actions, including the ANC.[[163]](#footnote-162)

When formal proceedings ended in 2002, the TRC published a seven-volume report, detailing the findings of the seven-year process.[[164]](#footnote-163) However, some issues remain unresolved - particularly in the case of reparations.

***Lessons Learned***

As one of the most widely studied transitional justice models to date, the South African model’s efficacy has been hotly contested. Irregardless of whether South Africa can be deemed a wholehearted success or not, the country’s trials and tribulations have helped pave the way forward for similar programs, reinforcing the following lessons:

* *Need for Bottom-Up Reintegration*: South African reintegration and reconciliation strategies have been criticized for their top-down nature. In the case of reintegration, critics argue there was lack of sufficient coordination with former combatants or civil society organizations prior to implementing reintegration programming.[[165]](#footnote-164) The government did not sufficiently engage ex-combatants or their families in order to fully understand the needs of these populations. Similarly, many believe that the “TRC did more to isolate NGOs from the process than to draw upon them.”[[166]](#footnote-165) Rather, more voices should have been brought to the planning table, to ensure all civil society voices and perspectives were addressed.
* *Increase Female Involvement:* When analyzing the outcomes of the TRC in particular, it is clear that women’s needs were not fully addressed. Women only accounted for one percent of all victim statements submitted throughout the TRC process - despite being highly involved in the liberation struggle - leaving the extent of sexual violence largely unknown.[[167]](#footnote-166) Additional outreach, specifically targeting underrepresented minorities, may have been an appropriate strategy for addressing this gap.
* *Address Community Grievances*: Rather than viewing apartheid as a system that worked against communities, the TRC “individualized” victims - categorizing apartheid as an action of the state against individuals.[[168]](#footnote-167) Given that not all victims came forward with statements, this limited both the TRC’s ability to hold accountable all perpetrators, as well as its acknowledgment of systematic racial discrimination and oppression.
* *Challenge of Holding All Perpetrators Accountable*: Initially, the majority of amnesty applications received came from former MK and APLA combatants - many of whom were at that time imprisoned for crimes committed during the apartheid era.[[169]](#footnote-168) With time, more SADF forces came forward with applications, largely spurred by the successful prosecution of SADF strongman, Eugene de Kock - “a notorious apartheid assassin who, during his trial, provided extensive information about other senior state operatives who were involved in gross human rights abuses.”[[170]](#footnote-169) Without the imminent threat of successful prosecution, many perpetrators of human rights abuses sought to avoid involvement in South Africa’s reconciliation process.
* *Need for Appropriate Financial Planning*: Although the TRC promised reparations to victims and their families, the commission failed to deliver on these commitments in a timely fashion - or to the level originally suggested.[[171]](#footnote-170) Thus, failure to adequately meet the needs of victims has been seen as one of the South African model’s greatest failings.

***Applicability to Boko Haram***

Given the size and scale of apartheid atrocities, South Africa’s relatively peaceful transition to democracy in its aftermath, and international support for the ultimately “victorious insurgency” group, the South African model is generally inappropriate for reintegration and reconciliation of former Boko Haram combatants. However, while this model may not be suited for wholesale replication, there are certainly components that may be applicable to the Nigerian context, if appropriately adapted.

1. *Truth Telling and Dialogue:* The TRC’s truth-seeking agenda exhibits wide potential across varying country contexts. It provides an opportunity to bring multiple parties together in dialogue, to discuss the collective atrocities of the past. Given accusations of human rights abuses by both Nigerian military forces and Boko Haram combatants, incorporating a space for open and honest dialogue, addressing the grievances of both sides, may be beneficial for the reintegration process and assist in preventing collective amnesty.
2. *Reparations:* Although relatively unsuccessful in the case of South Africa, reparations provide an opportunity to acknowledge community suffering and losses. Reintegration programs that focus solely on perpetrators - often providing financial assistance as ex-combatants transition back into normal society - may be met with resentment by local populations who have suffered at the hands of soldiers who are now reaping financial benefits. Community-level reparations may provide the necessary incentive for community members to accept former Boko Haram combatants back into their villages. Furthermore, the more limited scale of the conflict in Nigeria may be better suited for these financial incentives.
3. *Conditional Amnesty:* Based on numerous conversations with experts on and from the region, it appears evident that Nigerian civilians are largely unwilling to accept former Boko Haram combatants back into their communities without some form of punitive justice. While blanket amnesty cannot, and arguably should not, be promoted, it may be possible to adapt South Africa’s conditional amnesty model for use with Boko Haram. According to this model, all former combatants would have to fully acknowledge past acts and a fact-finding judicial body would need to be created, with authority of subpoena, search, and seizure to corroborate perpetrators’ accounts. All findings should be made public, thereby holding perpetrators accountable, while limiting the strain of criminal proceedings on a currently weak Nigerian legal system.

**Somalia: The *Xeer* Model & Its Reintegration Applications for Boko Haram**

**Ellen Chapin & William Wright**

***Abstract:*** The resilient chaos in Somalia provides a rich subject for analysis, particularly with regards to the reintegration of a violent insurgency. Al-Shabaab’s movement and the Somali government response shares many common themes with those of Boko Haram and the Nigerian government. Of note, both are brutally violent insurgencies that are located in profoundly underdeveloped regions, seeking to leverage their brands of extremist Islam as a source of stability in the face of ineffectual government institutions. However, while the conflict in Nigeria has its roots in religious divisions, disenfranchisement, and heavy-handed government backlash, Somalia is an entirely Muslim nation that is fractured along clan lines. Somalia has been successful in reinvigorating and galvanizing some traditional, pre-Al-Shabaab mechanisms, specifically the *xeer* justice framework, that may be a useful model for incorporation into a solution for Boko Haram reintegration and transitional justice. While an incomplete solution for reintegration of Boko Haram, the authors of this paper strongly recommend the empowerment of a *Xeer*-like traditional justice system made of community leaders in northern Nigeria to address the unique needs of a population who have felt under-served by the Abuja government and abused by the Nigerian military. *Xeer* has been far from a panacea in Somalia; as insurgent violence continues, metrics that specify the degree of its success are nearly impossible to ascertain. The incorporation of a *Xeer*-like system, while perhaps a critical component of any strategy, must be implemented in concert with a Nigerian whole-of-government approach to addressing both the consequences of Boko Haram as well as the conditions that precipitated the violence and empowered the terrorist insurgency.

***Time Period***

The United Nations has called the current situation in Somalia the “world’s worst humanitarian disaster.”[[172]](#footnote-171) Since 1991, clan warfare has plagued the country, and with the emergence of al-Shabaab, stability peace and prosperity remain distant prospects. At the end of January 2009, Sheikh Sharif Ahmed was elected President of Somalia with the hope that his administration will bring steadiness a degree of stability to Somalia, but thus far, violence has continued unabated. At the end of 2009, nearly 700,000 Somalis were under the responsibility of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, constituting the third largest refugee group in the world after war-afflicted Iraq and Afghanistan, respectively.[[173]](#footnote-172)

***Insurgency Description***

Since the ouster of President Mohamed Siad Barre in 1991, approximately 300,000 Somalis have died due to violence, famine and disease.[[174]](#footnote-173) The formerly allied rebel groups, which banded together to destroy Barre’s administration, split off and declared a civil war.[[175]](#footnote-174) This resulted in a humanitarian catastrophe, with hundreds of thousands of deaths and Internally Displaced pPeoples (IDPs). Inter-clan and intra-clan fighting and looting hasd decimated the Somali landscape: the entire economic infrastructure has been destroyed and political institutions no longer exist.

To this day, violence remains ongoing, due to the 2006 ascension of the notoriously violent Al-Qaida-affiliate al-Shabaab to the forefront of the battered Somali landscape. Al-Shabaab is an offshoot of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), which splintered into several smaller factions after the ICU was defeated by Somalia's Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the TFG's Ethiopian military allies.[[176]](#footnote-175) Al-Shabaab describes itself as waging jihad against the broadly defined “enemies of Islam.” As a result, Al-Shabaab is currently engaged in combat against multiple parties on multiple fronts. Specifically, Al-Shabaab continues a battle with the Federal Government of Somalia and the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM).[[177]](#footnote-176) Due to their penchant for piracy and attacks upon civilians, Al-Shabaab has been designated as a terrorist organization by Australia, Canada, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and the United States.

***Causal Elements***

The insurgency has roots in Somalia’s clan-based society, the ousting of Said Barre in 1991, and the ramifications of subsequent political decisions. The Unites Somali Congress (USC) announced Ali Mahdi as the interim president after the toppling of Barre in 1991, which had many unexpected results.[[178]](#footnote-177) Immediately, given ideological differences, the USC split along sub-clan lines. The Habar Gedir-based faction, led by General Mohammed Farah Aideed and the Abgal-based group led by Ali Mahdi thus began a brutal intra-clan struggle for power.[[179]](#footnote-178) While Aideed and Mahdi, the major forces in the capital Mogadishu, were undoubtedly the two most powerful players, thirteen other clans and sub-clans are also engaged in the struggle.

Al-Shabaab capitalized on this clan system to rise to power, and their intentions remain to rule Somalia under Sharia Law. Al-Shabaab's predecessor was al-Ittihad al-Islami (AIAI), which worked to create an Islamist emirate in Somalia and was partially funded by former al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden.[[180]](#footnote-179) Gaining power after the Ethiopian forces invaded Somalia, both groups leveraged the various levels of religiosity, and the faithfulness of different clan groups to build a coalition of followers. They still ascribe to this—their new leader, Ahmad Umar, is understood to represent al-Shabaab’s more nationalist branch, which aims only to rule Somalia.[[181]](#footnote-180) Its appetite for global attacks is limited.

***Civilian Agency Involvement***

Largely as a result of the destruction of Somalia’s existing infrastructure, the collective efforts of federal, state, and local agencies have failed to slow the spread of al-Shabaab’s influence. No individual group has had success in quelling violence, so the military has been the primary instrument of Somali national power. Unfortunately, the Somali military has yet to demonstrate neither the capability nor the willingness to address the grievances social, economic, and cultural factors that led to Al-Shabaab’s rise.

***Military Involvement***

In 2007, the Ethiopians were joined by AMISOM, a U.N.-backed African Union mission that was tasked initially with little more than protecting Somalia’s fledgling transitional government. But the early deployment of 1,500 Ugandan troops quickly grew into the African Union’s largest-ever peace-support mission, encompassing contingents from Burundi, Sierra Leone, Djibouti, Kenya, and Ethiopia, among others, and embracing an aggressive peace-enforcement mandate centered on taking the fight directly to al-Shabaab.[[182]](#footnote-181)

The most recent insurgency began in early February 2009, with the conflict between the forces of the Federal Government of Somalia assisted by African Union peacekeeping troops and various militant Islamist groups and factions.[[183]](#footnote-182) The violence has displaced thousands of people in the southern part of the country. The conflict has also seen sectarian violence between various types of Islamic groups, including al-Shabaab versus more moderate Sufi coalitions.

Within the last year, Al-Shabaab in January, “killed more than 100 Kenyan troops [from the African Union] and drove off with their trucks and weapons,” according to the New York Times. After high-profile piracy operations and the 2013 Westgate Mall hostage crisis in Nairobi, Al-Shabaab has maintained international relevance.[[184]](#footnote-183) The US appears to have escalated President Obama’s standard ‘light-footprint’ warfare, characterized by surgical strikes against Al-Shabaab leadership and US special operations training of Somali troops. For the past several months, as Al-Shabaab has continued terrorist attacks in Somalia and neighboring Kenya, the more globally-oriented Islamic State (IS) has created an “insurgency within an insurgency” and battled with Al-Shabaab to establish the IS brand of Sharia Law.[[185]](#footnote-184)

***International Agency & Expert Involvement***

International agencies have been largely involved in the humanitarian crisis created by the insurgency—but have been hugely impacted, both in terms of casualties and development stalls. In the nineties, feeling public pressure, U.S. President George H.W. Bush ordered emergency airlifts of food and supplies to Somalia.[[186]](#footnote-185) The UN Security Council similarly approved a military mission, “Operation Restore Hope,” led by the United States to try to help the starving country by protecting food shipments from the warlords.[[187]](#footnote-186) Not long after though, the United Nations declared that it would be pulling its international staff and aid workers from Somalia because of the dangerous fighting conditions and attempts at kidnapping. Then, in 2005, food shipments began being hijacked off the coast of Somalia by rebel forces. Food aid programs, including the UN’s World Food Program (WFP), were suspended.[[188]](#footnote-187)

Following these efforts, the violence only continued. In 2008, the UN Security Council approved the sending of other countries' warships to Somalia’s territorial waters in order to combat the threat of Somali pirates, who had begun hijacking ships regularly. That same year, the head of the UN Development Program in Somalia was killed by gunmen in Mogadishu. In response, American military began flying drone aircraft from a base in Ethiopia. Most recently, in July of this year, the Council adopted resolution 2297, which extended the African Union Mission to Somalia’s (AMISOM) authorization until May 2017 with no major changes. Ongoing efforts continue, but as insurgency prevails, economic development and social reconciliation continue to struggle.

***NGO Involvement***

In the wake of disintegration of the Somalian state in 1992, numerous NGOs were formed. Research has shown that NGOs experience a number of common problems and dilemmas, including internal decision-making processes, recruitment, retention of staff, layoffs, and accountability, evaluation, structural growth, and fund raising activities. Thus far, none have been able to make progress in transitional justice.

***Impetus for Reintegration***

While there is ongoing hostility and active al-Shabaab groups remain in power, sociologists have recognized an increasing number of children and young adults laying down their arms. As within similar terrorist groups, the members cycle out as new recruits become available. Consequently, many have worked to identify best practices for reincorporating these men and women back into society.

The most commonly discussed model is the *Xeer* system. Despite the lack of a functioning government, local structures within Somali society have served to maintain a minimum level of stability, rule of law, and justice. Mostly unique up to this point to Somali culture, the *xeer* serves as a dispute settlement mechanism based on clan/family customary law and elements of Sharia law, the body of law derived from the Koran and from the teaching and examples of the Prophet Mohammed. Given that the al-Shabaab insurgency forced local leaders out of their traditionally powerful roles, *xeer* seeks to empower those leaders again. Tribal leaders can thus unify their community, and solidify the relationships between citizens and ex-combatants.

***Prosecution/Punitive Component***

While reintegration is a critical component of post-Somalian insurgency, the African Union emphasizes the importance of a balance between disarmament and prosecution. In order to make any model relevant, the best practices for AU integration emphasizes “the need for complementarity between the international tribunals, hybrid courts and domestic legal systems with regards to prosecutions and investigations.”[[189]](#footnote-188) Like in Rwanda, there are too many defendants to try fairly and appropriately— domestic courts simply lack the necessary financial and human resources to try all cases. Because of the ongoing insurgency as well, many judges and educated people have fled the region, continuing the cycle of unprosecuted cases. Moreover, “many legal codes were literally burnt by the Islamic Courts—as a result, there is a general lack of trust in the ability of the national courts to assure a fair and transparent trial.”[[190]](#footnote-189)

The *Xeer* system is still the most commonly used and reinforced justice mechanism—so punishment is an incorporated component of *xeer*. Somalis use *Xeer* to solve approximately 80-90% of all the controversies involving crimes, especially in rural areas where lack of transportation and tradition prevent people from using other justice mechanisms.[[191]](#footnote-190) This ensures that all citizens have access to the justice system, and that ex-combatants are able to make amends in the eyes of all those in their returned home.

***Community Engagement***

One of the most important aspects of the *Xeer* system is the involvement of local community members. The clan elders, acting as judges, lead *Xeer* processes. There is also an effort to incorporate differing tribes in some cases, so that a lack of bias is ensured—in those instances, “the *Xeer* is an unwritten agreement created bilaterally between two clans.”[[192]](#footnote-191) Clan members transmit these agreements from generation to generation—this type of tradition sets precedent, thus forms part of customary law.[[193]](#footnote-192) As a result, community members know that they have and will be heard in existing law. Additionally, *Xeer* hearings are held in public, usually under a tree within the village or in rural areas.[[194]](#footnote-193) This type of inclusion facilitates group participation, and allows those who are prosecuted be publicly punished, then publicly forgiven.

One of the more problematic aspects of *Xeer*, though, is that it marginalizes and excludes other members of the community. Some of these exclusions involve efforts to maintain objectivity—much like in Western systems, persons with close family relationships with those involved in the controversy, individuals who have a personal grievance against one of the parties, and persons who have already sat in judgment of the same case are not allowed to attend *Xeer* hearings or processes.[[195]](#footnote-194) But given the religious roots of the system, women are also not permitted to participate in the discussion and judgment.[[196]](#footnote-195) This merits further discussions in applicability beyond Somalia, but regardless, it is an ingrained portion of the existing structure of Xeer.

***Reconciliation***

The *Xeer* system is associated with the idea of restorative justice. One of its main goals is to reestablish the social order—therefore, any punishment or penance is designed with reintegration in mind. The ultimate end goal, for both ex-combatants and beyond, is for the community to be satisfied with justice and to seek to move forward after the proceedings. Often, victims are compensated through a Diya (blood compensation), which consists of either money or livestock—any kind of payment from them, or from their families.[[197]](#footnote-196) Those who are involved in the practice speak highly of the way in which *Xeer* promotes reconciliation. According to one ex-combatant, “in the clan justice, the decision is made to stop the violence: the aim is to make peace and set up an agreement.”[[198]](#footnote-197) Considering the importance, acceptance and legitimacy that the clan system and customary practices have had throughout Somali history, the traditional *Xeer* system ought to be considered a primary means to bring accountability to the people, all while facilitating forgiveness and acceptance of those accused.

***Cost Estimate and Financing***

In terms of application in other contexts, *Xeer* is particularly compelling for its cost-effectiveness and ease of start-up. Beginning any new program, especially one being funded by international NGOs, or through supranational organizations, can be complicated financially and logistically. But Somalia, a country of tradition, can simply continue and revive the existing cultural norms as soldiers lay down their arms. The system is already in place, so no major new structures are needed, such as the construction of courts and the election of judges. No incentives are needed to ensure that local leaders and tribal elders exercise this process—it is one of the few that gives them the opportunity to reclaim their local status, which al-Shabaab has worked to dismantle. Additionally, an unintended consequence of the application of *Xeer* to ex-combatants is the possibility of banding different tribal groups together. By creating further commonalities and cooperation among groups, the number of recruits for al-Shabaab may decrease, given the lack of clan fighting and proximity to returned soldiers. Combined with the lack of financial cost, *Xeer’s* integration into the social fabric of Somalia makes the use of such a system ideal.

***Lessons Learned/Applicability to Boko Haram***

Somalia’s model holds tremendous potential for Nigeria, should a system like *Xeer* be implemented or introduced. While Islam is not nearly as prevalent in Nigeria, and the Islamic system of law is not a part of the federal, or even local system, procedures like *Xeer* are a crucial component of small villages, and the politics therein.[[199]](#footnote-198) Nigerian traditional rulers often derive their titles from the rulers of independent states or communities that existed before the formation of modern Nigeria. Although they do not have formal political power, in many cases they continue to command respect from their people and have considerable influence.[[200]](#footnote-199) Given the influence of these rulers, there is tremendous potential in empowering them to act as adjudicators in reintegration. Additionally, provided that the *Xeer* system has no root in religion in Nigeria, a *Xeer*-like model would circumvent some of the problematic aspects of *Xeer*—most importantly, the lack of women’s participation. Including the entire community in such a proceeding will further allow reintegration by all—mothers, sisters, wives, and beyond for those who are seeking reconciliation.

While there is a punitive aspect to *Xeer*, its most important aspect is one of forgiveness. This could be especially beneficial in reintegration non-traditional ex-combatants—specifically women who have been kidnapped by Boko Haram, and child soldiers. With many Chibok girls returning to their villages, and others choosing to stay with their husbands, both would benefit from a transitional justice system that inherently reaffirms the culture of their villages, and does not punish them for being kidnapped. The same principle applies to child soldiers—as of 2016, the United Nations verified the recruitment and use of 278 children (143 boys and 135 girls) by Boko Haram (225) and the Civilian Joint Task Force (53).[[201]](#footnote-200) The same report cites that “twenty-one girls were used in suicide attacks claimed by Boko Haram, 11 of which were documented in the fourth quarter.”[[202]](#footnote-201) Additionally, “of the 1,010 children (422 boys and 588 girls) encountered or rescued during the course of military operations in north-east Nigeria, 204 (117 girls and 87 boys) had been recruited and used by Boko Haram.”[[203]](#footnote-202) All of these children would benefit from the *Xeer* process—some are still children, and returning to their families will be a struggle. But with the community’s forgiveness and support, reintegration is possible. The best way to do so, as opposed to simply mandating their return, is to involve those who are receiving them—their families, and their communities.

**Algeria: National Reconciliation**

**Daniel Edwan**

***Abstract:*** Analysis of the Algerian civil war (1991-2006), known in Algeria as the ‘national tragedy,’ for the purpose of gaining insights into reintegration models is limited at the national policy level. In sum, the conflict is a case study of reconciliation and deradicalization policies. However, reconciliation is a pretext and an assumed condition of reintegration and deradicalization policies are both preventive and conflict termination strategies.[[204]](#footnote-203) The implication is clear in the United Nations (UN) definition of reintegration as “the process by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status and gain sustainable employment and income. It is a political, social and economic process with an open time-frame, primarily taking place in communities at the local level.”[[205]](#footnote-204) This places the responsibility on the government to provide legal and economic means for ex-combatants to contribute to the society they were previously fighting against. The UN also assumes the government is morally and legally inculpable. This was not the case in Algeria, due to the government’s repressive policies and repeated human rights atrocities committed by security forces during the conflict.

Faced with this strategic problem, on September 2005, the Algerian people overwhelmingly approved President Bouteflika’s proposed *Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation*, which granted amnesty for all individuals, whether Islamists, civilian militia, or national security forces, from prosecution for crimes committed during the war with a few exceptions. Despite its critics, the *Charter* provided a legal framework that began a national reintegration process that depended on current institutions to implement. Following the *Charter*, the Algerian government applied revised and new deradicalization policies and strategies in order to suppress further Islamist radicals.[[206]](#footnote-205) The net effects of these approaches over time successfully ended the civil war and significantly reduced violence and threats of terrorism.

There are contextual similarities of the Algerian case study and the Nigerian Boko Haram conflict that may support the need for a national referendum to support a legal basis for reconciliation and reintegration. The Algerian reintegration model is defined as comprehensive national amnesty, followed by the regional distribution of the reintegration process to existing institutions and the harsh implementation of deradicalization policies across the country’s religious infrastructure.

***Insurgency Description***

From 1992-2006, Algeria was locked in a protracted brutal civil war in which armed Islamic radical groups, pro-regime militias and government security forces fought for power. The armed insurgency consisted of four distinct groups: the Armed Islamic Movement, MIA; the Islamic Salvation Army, AIS, (the self‐declared armed wing of the FIS); the Armed Islamic Group, GIA; and, later, the Salafi Group for Preaching and Combat, GSPC. Although all groups launched violent campaigns against government forces, they appeared at different times and varied in their ideology and motives.[[207]](#footnote-206) The MIA and AIS were moderate and targeted government forces for limited objectives to restore the FIS validate the elections. The GIA and GSPC, jihadi-Salfis, with true intentions of establishing the caliphate, attacked government forces and civilians not loyal to the Islamists indiscriminately.[[208]](#footnote-207) The period between 1995 and 1998 was characterized by a series massacres that were directed against civilians in rural and isolated communities. The massacres were intended to terrorize the population that was hostile to the Islamists, or those who formerly supported the Islamist cause but who had withdrawn their support.

The members of these groups were generally classified as “those ill‐treated by the security forces who were looking for revenge; and the ideologically driven devout activists or self‐proclaimed ‘defenders of Islam.’”[[209]](#footnote-208) Many young men were the product of poverty, boredom and repression, and engaging in the *jihad* was a way of gaining wealth and prestige in their community. The war was a period of tremendous brutality, but for many it also offered chances to progress in society and improve their livelihood.

***Causal Elements***

Algeria’s brutal civil war (1991-2006), in which an estimated 200,000 were killed, was the result of inadequate post‐French colonial power structures, a secular authoritarian regime and the rise of Islamic radicalism. Characterized by a history of political violence, Algerian conflicts “evolved from resistance against the French occupation during the independence struggle (1954-1962), to small‐scale violence against state personnel during the 1980s, to a full‐scale war against the Algerian state and civilians during the 1990s.”[[210]](#footnote-209) Since gaining independence from France in 1962, the National Liberation Front (FLN), formed around a core of military elites, has remained in power as an authoritarian regime, in which Pluralism and opposition were not tolerated. The Algerian national identity is both Arab and Muslim, in which latent ideological tensions between Arab secularism and Islamic Fundamentalism would slowly surface. Islam was reduced to ‘official Islam’, and Islam in the public sphere was virtually abolished causing the development of extremist religious narratives.[[211]](#footnote-210)

Violent resistance emerged for the first time in the 1980s, the decade during which “militant Islam in Algeria was promoted by a new post‐ independence generation, who rebelled against the FLN’s monopoly of power.”[[212]](#footnote-211) To this generation of Muslims under the age of 25, “political Islam was an attempt to restore the values that they advocated: social justice; the redistribution of political power; and the ‘threatened’ Islamic identity.” [[213]](#footnote-212) Contributing to these factors, was social inequality and poor economic growth in which 72 % under the age of 25 were unemployed.[[214]](#footnote-213) The deteriorating socio-economic circumstances culminated in widespread protests and a a series of violent attacks on government offices that were violently suppressed by security forces. In 1988, as an effort control further Islamic radicalization and stabilize the country, President Benjedid supported political reforms to the Constitution “based on three principles: a) the separation of power between the state and the FLN, which would function as an independent political party; b) free participation in municipal and legislative elections; and c) more room for associations and social movements to express their ideas.”[[215]](#footnote-214) The FLN’s attempt to appease the Islamic movement underestimated the size, scale and mobilization of its political power that would backfire with the rise of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS).

The FIS founded shortly after the constitutional amendment in 1989 called for a return to the values of equal opportunity, justice and accountability. Mobilizing its political message of “Neither National Charter nor Constitution: Islam is the Solution,” through an urban network of mosques and social services, the FIS won “188 of the 231 seats in the first round of the general elections held in December 1991, compared with only eighteen seats won by the governing party, the FLN.”[[216]](#footnote-215) In January 1992, The FLN military Higher State Council seized power, declared a state of emergency, compelled President Benjedid to resign and cancelled the elections. The FIS was dissolved and the military detained over 18,000 former FIS members and suspected Islamic sympathizers without trial in concentration camps.[[217]](#footnote-216) The FLN justified it actions to supporters by stating the FIS would not uphold democratic principles because “Islam and democracy are incompatible.”[[218]](#footnote-217) The FLN’s hostile actions and outright hypocrisy of justifying their actions to uphold democracy while suppressing the Constitutional mandate for free and public elections was the tipping point of the Algerian civil war.

***Civilian Agency Involvement***

The Algerian military armed civilians and encouraged the organization of self-defense militias in order expand government control.[[219]](#footnote-218) The Algerian government mobilized all civilian agencies in the execution of the civil war.

**International Agency Involvement**

The IMF, US, France and UN Funds provided outside material support the government during the conflict.

***NGO Involvement***

NGOs were marginalized during the conflict and their support was not government sponsored .

***Criteria for Reintegration***

Exemption of individuals, whether Islamists, militia, or security forces, from prosecution for crimes committed during the war. Supported national amnesty.

***Prosecution/Punitive Component***

In 2005, the *Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation* was proposed as a public referendum. The prevailing ideas was for the country to look forward without declaring winners or losers while the regime would remain blameless for the conflict.[[220]](#footnote-219) “According to government figures the charter was supported by 97 per cent of the voters in a popular referendum with a turnout of 82 per cent.”[[221]](#footnote-220)

Key measures of the *Charter* included:

Measures ending state prosecution against individuals implicated in instances of terrorism;

Reduced or commuted sentences for individuals condemned and not eligible to release;

Care for the families of individuals in the battle against terrorism;

Exclusion of individual who committed rapes, set off explosives in public places, or carried out assassinations from the benefit of those measures.[[222]](#footnote-221)

Besides the exemption of individuals, whether Islamists, militia, or security forces, from prosecution for crimes committed during the war, it also provided harsh punitive measures against those that attempt to discredit the regime or security force involvement.[[223]](#footnote-222) Specifically anyone that attempts to “undermine the good reputation of its agents,” or “tarnish the reputation of Algeria internationally, shall be punished.”[[224]](#footnote-223) These measures are in effect today, and significantly affect government transparency and limit international agency efforts to investigate human rights abuses and provide support. Specifically, the Algerian government announced that the names of Islamist terrorists or the reports of rape or massacres would not be made public.[[225]](#footnote-224)

***Community Engagement***

Another significant aspect of the *Charter* that brought skepticism about the regime’s desire and capacity to facilitate a transparent reconciliation and reintegration was the issue of the disappeared, or the victims of terrorism. Families of the disappeared formed associations “demanding information on the fate of their loved ones and insisting that truth must precede reconciliation.”[[226]](#footnote-225) An Algerian National commission was formed, uncommon due to the government's use of existing ministerial structure, to adjudicate the claims of the disappeared. After four years of deliberation, the vast majority of the 13,541 applications were denied due the regime’s claims of a national state of self-defense and the admission of “no records, no witnesses, the court cases would never lead to convictions,” and it would be “impossible to settle all the unresolved cases in court.”[[227]](#footnote-226) These comments present the stark reality that the Algeria judicial system was incapable of conducting a fair trial for the thousands involved, another reason for amnesty.

***Reconciliation, Social & Political Elements***

The *Charter* provided the legal framework for the government to pursue an underlying strategy to “isolate the mainstream Islamists from the violent ideologists, and to reintegrate them in society.”[[228]](#footnote-227) Additionally it provided a means for an acceptable amnesty for the regime and its security forces. The FLN elite were faced with the dilemma of creating vindicating their adverse actions of 1992 against the FIS while creating a publically accepted revised and more pervasive set of laws and policies to suppress dissent over the conduct of the civil war and the rise of Islamic radical groups. The regime was not only successful at achieving this goal, but it found a means in counterterrorism doctrine to remain a viable international partner, despite significant human right skepticism from many aid organizations.[[229]](#footnote-228)

***Education, Skills, and Job Training***

Available research materials indicate that the Algerian government did not constitute or direct additional reconciliation or reintegration infrastructure such as special designed camps to support the reintegration that provided ex-combatants employment, education and income support. The *Charter* provided the means for ex-combatants to regain their civil liberties. Otherwise in pursuit of subverting Islamist radicalism, national measures in the form of deradicalization strategies were implemented. In the pursuit of an ex-combatant’s economic concerns, it is inferred that this burden was on the communities.

Government deradicalization strategies were designed to support a management of religious affairs through the propagation of a moderate less politicized form of Islamic teachings. (1) The government publicized renounced Islamic radical leader’s testimony to appeal to jihadists to reintegrate. (2) The government sponsored hundreds of external Muslims preachers to Algeria to convey a moderate non-violent version of Islam.[[230]](#footnote-229) (3) The government heavily monitors sermons, religious school curricula, and appoint imams as civil servants through the Ministry of Religious Affairs. (4) The government conducts FLN elite and scholars for strategies that promote a peaceful and tolerant Islamic teachings. (5) The government sponsors a non-political variant of Islamic Salafism as a means to undermine radical Salafism.[[231]](#footnote-230)

***Cost Estimate***

The secrecy of Algerian government financial distributions and their outright claim that the conflict was a civil war make the study of Algerian community reintegration models unfeasible. Cost estimates reference Algeria’s reintegration program are negligible since the government used a national reconciliation process with existing governmental institutions as the implementer.

***Financing***

Armed groups in areas under their control collected taxes. In other areas, armed group extorted businesses and established roadside checkpoints. There were significant links across borders to transnational and organized criminal organizations. The government was on the verge of bankruptcy in 1993 and able to utilize debt rescheduling and SAP to reverse its financial situation increasing the funds available to defeat armed groups.[[232]](#footnote-231)

***Results & Metrics***

***Challenges***

The most significant challenge is on the Algerian regime itself. The idea of national reconciliation negotiated by many of the same military leaders that started the conflict and the attempts at absolving human rights atrocities perpetuated an adverse international image of the country.

The *Charter* provided the regime renewed authority to suppress Islamic radical political parties from assembly and participation. Specifically, article 26 “excludes from political life anyone who committed acts of terrorism or manipulated Islam for political purposes.”[[233]](#footnote-232) The suppression of political rights is contrary to democratic processes and can serve as a future grievance.

The use of local militias in the Algerian civil war, declared as ‘Patriots’ by executive decree created a set of problems and human rights abuses. In some cases, militias were involved in assassinations, extortion and excessive force.[[234]](#footnote-233)

Although national reconciliation was declared the lack of implementing guidance to the local level regarding employment created significant issues among former militants who were denied jobs and passports. The idea that a blanket policy of reconciliation would permeate to the local level after over a decade of conflict proved false and the consequences were significant in President Bouteflika’s dealings with former militant leaders.[[235]](#footnote-234)

***Successes***

The *Charter* proved to be an effective end of the civil war, in which the Algerian government claims that an estimate of 6,000 former combatants, not including security forces, utilized the amnesty program.[[236]](#footnote-235) The Algerian, Ministry of Foreign Affairs claims, “thanks to this policy, thousands of repented agreed to surrender of their own free will, thereby allowing the Nation to spare hundreds or even thousands of lives, as well as to enable the return and reintegration into society of a large number of repented.” [[237]](#footnote-236) Despite significant international criticism, sustained violence in Algeria has diminished since 2006 indicating that the country was able to move forward and significant residual grievances have not threated stability.

***Similarities to Boko Haram***

There are numerous contextual similarities between the Nigerian Boko Haram and the Algerian civil war. The most fundamental similarity is that both conflicts contain an Islamist radicalization element in competition against a secular regime. Due to this, Algeria’s de-radicalization strategies could provide implementation value to Nigeria’s reintegration process. In both conflicts, there are alleged governmental security force human right violations. Additionally, both conflicts appear to be characterized the lack of judicial infrastructure and/or prosecutable evidence. Due to these similarities, Nigeria may ultimately require a more comprehensive national reconciliation effort that is supported internally to resolve grievances among all parties and supported externally in order to prevent barriers from international engagement. Additionally, both elements involved the arming of civilian militias. Lessons from Algeria indicate that a government sponsored civilian force left unaccountable may act in accordance with their own interests rather than the government's.

***Differences to Boko Haram***

The Algerian regime although secular was Muslim in contrast to the significant cultural differences in Nigeria. This is important in that the cultural divide between the ruling Nigerian government and the Islamist areas in Northern Nigerian may be a barrier to reintegration. The Nigerian government has established local reintegration agencies to support policy implementation at the local level. This is important in efforts to de-radicalize and integrate the former militant into society, rather than a heavy reliance on current institutions in which the expertise is not centralized or coordinated.

**Mali: Lessons from the Reinsertion of Ex-Combatants Project**

**Gertrude Ansaaku & Garret Nash**

***Abstract:*** The insurgency in northern Mali represents notable geopolitical similarities to Nigeria. However, DDR is yet to happen. This section provides an overview of the Mali conflict and DDR strategies outlined in the 2015 peace agreement between the Mali government and rebel groups. Strategies for overcoming challenges to DDR in Mali and Nigeria are also provided.

***Model Name***

Mali Reinsertion of Ex-Combatants Project, short for Mali Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration and Security Sector Reform.

***Time Period***

Armed conflict began in March 2012. Although a peace agreement was brokered in May/June 2015, no timelines for a successful DDR were established. Currently, disarmament is yet to happen and conflict remains sporadic. Progress is expected to be slow but steady until stability is attained.[[238]](#footnote-237)

***Background***

Mali, a landlocked West African country, is a product of European colonialism. Like most African territories, it fell under French colonization in the late 1800s together with the area now called Senegal. Its current form, boundaries, institutions, systems and structures reflect a colonial heritage distinct from its pre-colonial nature characterized by trade and nomadic movements. It gained independence the same year as Nigeria in 1960. Its population is estimated at 17.5million. About 90% of Malians are Muslim, with traditionalists and Christians in the minority.

The Republic of Mali has experienced some rebellions, coups and 23 years of military dictatorship until democratic elections in 1992. Although Mali is self-sufficient in food and one of Africa’s major cotton producers, its chronic foreign trade deficit makes it heavily dependent on foreign aid and remittances from Malians abroad.[[239]](#footnote-238) About 30% of its population is unemployed. Although agriculture is a major backbone of its economy, Mali faces recurring droughts, dust-laden harmattan haze especially during the dry seasons, occasional Niger River flooding, deforestation, soil erosion, desertification, and inadequate supplies of potable water. There are issues of physical insecurity, high population growth, corruption in government and public service, weak infrastructure and low levels of human capital which hinder sustained economic growth.[[240]](#footnote-239)

The following sections looks at the nature, scope and causes of Mali’s northern insurgency and how the DDR process in Mali is progressing after a peace agreement was reached. The aim is to identify similarities and differences with the Boko Haram case in Nigeria in order to determine the applicability of the Mali DDR model to Nigeria. The last section proffers some policy recommendations for the reintegration of Boko Haram into the Nigerian society based on the challenges and lessons learnt from Mali.

***The Northern Insurgency***

Mali’s northern insurgency dates back to the Tuareg insurgencies of 1963, 1990-91 and 2006 in which demands were made on Mali for northern secession amidst the declaration of an independent Azawad. Peace settlements reached were not adhered to leading to built-up distrust, suspicion, anger and frustration on the part of the northerners. In particular, provisions on the grant of some autonomy to the north were violated several times until January 2012 when another northern rebellion erupted.[[241]](#footnote-240)

The 2012 insurgency was sparked by widespread built-up dissatisfaction and frustration over the deprivation and marginalization of the North, and unfulfilled promises made by the Government of Mali to resolve earlier rebellions. Unlike the past, this insurgency has taken a more radicalized form. A Tuareg rebel group called the Mouvement Nationale pour la Liberation de l’Azawad (MNLA) started attacks in the northern towns of Menaka, Tessalit, and Aguel’hoc in January 2012. The rebellion also spread to Gao, Kidal, and Timbuktu, all in the north. Most of the rebels were returnees from Libya, after serving in Muammar Gaddafi’s army before the civil war which led to the collapse of the Gaddafi regime. A military coup which ensued in March 2012 after a military encounter with the rebels gave room for a take-over by a loose coalition of jihadist groups linked with the Al-Qaeda and the Tuareg rebels. The major among them were the Ansar Dine and the Mouvement pour l’unicite et le Jihad en Afrique de l’Ouest (MUJAO). The insurgency differed from earlier ones in the way it was radicalized with religious (Islamic) undercurrents and involved well-armed cohorts of rebels. The rebels considered their insurgency as a jihadist mission.[[242]](#footnote-241)

***International Involvement and Peace Settlement***

An apparent jihadist move by the Ansar Dine and MUJAO to the capital, Bamako, triggered a French-led intervention. French and Chadian troops drove them away from major towns in the North and restored the territorial integrity of Mali. Subsequently, a ceasefire agreement was reached in Ouagadougou in 2013 with the rebel groups paving the way for the democratic elections which brought the new president, Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, and a new legislature to office.[[243]](#footnote-242)

Later, an African Union (AU) mission established there was rehatted as the United Nations Multinational Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). There was also a European Union (EU) training mission and security assistance from the United States (US) and France in the form of a counter-terrorism campaign (Barkane) which targeted cross-border jihadist movements in Mali and four other Sahel countries.[[244]](#footnote-243)

Mali’s peace talks experienced several deadlocks due to disagreements between the government and key rebel groups over the creation of a Malian federation and ambiguities and rivalry among the various diplomatic initiatives led by MINUSMA, ECOWAS, AU, Algeria (as the key facilitator of peace negotiations and the choice of Mali’s government), Burkina Faso (the MNLA’s preferred choice as mediator), and Morocco. In the course of the peace talks, fighting erupted occasionally between the MNLA and the Malian Army, particularly in Kidal, the headquarters of the main rebel group. Both sides had successes and failures and several lives were lost. A peace agreement was finally reached in Algiers in June 2015, two years after the ceasefire agreement.[[245]](#footnote-244)

The Algiers agreement was signed between two coalitions of several Tuareg rebel groups; the Coordination of Azawad Movements (CMA) and the Platform of armed groups (the Platform). Thus, the major jihadist groups were left out of the peace talks and the signing of the agreement. The Accords provided for direct elections of local representatives to enhance local participatory governance, disarmament, demobilization and reinsertion (DDR), security sector reform (SSR), and establishment of conditions for restoring stability and economic recovery in Northern Mali.[[246]](#footnote-245) Areas which have seen new administrations – prefects and sub-prefects – are in the regions of Gao, Kidal, Menaka, Taoudenni, and Timbuktu.[[247]](#footnote-246)

***Civilian Agency Involvement***

Although yet to be put into practice, the “Accord pour la paix” outlines several roles for civilian agencies (albeit no specific organizations are mentioned). These functions include organizations being involved in human rights advocacy. Attention is accorded to justice officials who are well trained in violence against women and girls, the aim being to respect of the rights of women, children and other victims of conflict.[[248]](#footnote-247) Leaders of Malian society, especially women and youth, are to help influence dialogue between communities and help to reconcile Malians. Civil society and law professionals are to be enlisted to help reduce corruption and impunity in the justice system.[[249]](#footnote-248)

***Criteria for Reintegration***

Although exactly how many combatants will be integrated into the security forces and at what time is unclear, a World Bank grant will finance 10,000 cases of ex-combattants.[[250]](#footnote-249), [[251]](#footnote-250) Additional funds are allocated to reintegrate 7,500 of these ex-combattants.[[252]](#footnote-251). There seems to be substantial pressure both from within Mali and the international community for disarmament to happen, as against voluntary disarmament.

***Prosecution/Punitive Component***

A Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (CVJR) was established in January 2014 to replace the former Dialogue and Reconciliation Commission (CDR). The CVJR is responsible for investigating crimes committed between 1960 and 2013 (since independence) and make recommendations to the government for prosecution. Its mission is to contribute to peace consolidation and national unity.[[253]](#footnote-252)Transitional justice processes have intermittently been marred by violence from sections of the rebel groups.[[254]](#footnote-253) Perpetrators of the most heinous crimes are to be taken to the International Criminal Court (ICC).[[255]](#footnote-254) There would be no amnesty for those suspected to have committed some named crimes, as per the Algiers Accords. However, to be able to get some rebel groups to sign the peace agreement, arrest warrants against fifteen suspected criminals who were to face charges of sedition and terrorism were lifted. Some others were also released from detention in Bamako.[[256]](#footnote-255) One top rebel named Ahmad Al Faqi Al Mahdi was held in trial from August 22 to 24, 2016. He was charged with the war crime of destroying religious and historical artefacts in Timbuktu, Mali in June/July 2012. He pleaded guilty, and asked that his people in Timbuktu and Northern Nigeria forgive him for the harm caused. On September 27, 2016, the ICC sentenced him to a nine-year imprisonment.[[257]](#footnote-256)

***NGO and Community Involvement***

The Accord invites the involvement of humanitarian agencies and organizations to aid in in returning, repatriating, and reintegration all persons displaced by the conflict.[[258]](#footnote-257) No specific organizations are mentioned nor is a timeline for their involvement given. Outlined in the 2015 peace accord are provisions for a semi-autonomous Northern Mali and direct elections.[[259]](#footnote-258) However, no guidelines for community involvement in reintegration of ex-combattants is given.

***Financing and Cost Estimate***

The DDR is funded by the Government of Mali and international donors, including the World Bank. In April 2016, the World Bank voted a $15 million grant for the DDR project in Mali.[xvi] Technical, logistical, training and supervisory support have also come from the United Nations, European Union, ECOWAS, African Union, France and Chad.

***Challenges to DDR***

Although Mali’s reinsertion programme is progressing, it faces a number of daunting challenges which could mar the entire process if not addressed. The following are some of the hindrances to a steady and faster DDR in Mali:

* Implementation of the Peace Agreement is behind schedule.[xvii]
* Getting the rebels to lay down arms.
* Leaders of the rebel groups have insisted on having a say in who is qualified to join the Cantonment and who is included in the DDR Commission.
* There have been occasional hostilities and human rights violations by armed groups by the Mali armed forces.[[260]](#footnote-259)
* There are no statistics on the number of people to be cantoned and reintegrated and there is no clear eligibility criteria to prevent clientelism in choosing beneficiaries.
* There are also uncertainties about who among the various groups is to be mobilised and reintegrated into civilian economy and who has to be integrated into the Malian security forces.
* It is not clear which procedures are in place to identify leaders of armed groups who are not eligible for reinsertion due to human rights violations.

***Applicability of the Mali Model to Boko Haram***

The Mali case has some similarities and differences with Nigeria’s Boko Haram case. Both Mali and Nigeria are in the West African sub-region. Both are products of colonialism and share the challenge of having to keep their constituent parts together within their states. The two share most of the conditions under which conflict and violent extremism thrive in their northern parts: poverty, poor education, unemployment, ungoverned spaces, exclusionary politics, marginalization and neglect by government. The two also share the problem of unfavourable climatic conditions which make nomadic and farming activities difficult, if not impossible. Both cases have jihadist (Islamic) undercurrents, although at different levels. Again, Nigeria’s Boko Haram is said to be working in collaboration with the Ansar Dine and MUJAO in Mali.[[261]](#footnote-260) Mali’s DDR is ongoing and could be a contemporary of Nigeria if the latter is ready to go the way of the former, and to speed up processes for a peace settlement. In that case, the challenges faced by the former could serve as lessons for the latter to learn from.

It appears that the extent to which religion plays out significantly in the Nigeria case is minimized in Mali. While Nigeria’s population seems to be evenly divided between Islam and Christianity, Mali has over 90% for Islam. Although in the latter, there are jihadist fighters alongside Tuareg rebel groups, the Boko Haram and its splinter groups in northern Nigeria are mainly jihadists. Also, Mali’s DDR seems to be focused on the Tuareg rebels who went into the negotiations and signed the peace agreement. It appears the jihadists groups are yet to be captured in the entire process. However, if Nigeria is to undergo peace negotiations and a DDR process, it would have to do so with jihadists.

Again, in Mali, both the government and rebel groups agreed to the peace settlement, however reluctantly. It is not clear in the Nigerian case whether the government is ready for a political settlement. Also, although the military is not neutral in the conflict, it seems to be playing a role in initial efforts to disarm and demobilize ex-combatants who have voluntarily surrendered to the Operation Safe Corridor. If Nigeria is to go the Mali way, it would first have to be ready to negotiate with the Boko Haram, make compromises, and agree to have the pressing issues driving the insurgency addressed.

***Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations for Nigeria***

Mali, like most African states, suffers from most of the postcolonial challenges of nation-building. Like Nigeria, it has been through some years of civil wars and insurgencies, particularly in the northern parts. The inability of successive governments to adhere to the provisions of peace agreements, coupled with marginalization and neglect of the north have been a major cause of instability in the north. Northern Mali battles with unfavourable socio-economic conditions, political exclusion, and poor climatic conditions. The result has been built-up dissatisfaction, distrust, and suspicion leading to a series of rebellions. Mali’s northern insurgency has ethnic, and like northern Nigeria’s, religious undercurrents. For the fourth time, Mali is on the road to peace, after the signing of a peace agreement between the government and rebel groups. Jihadist fighters were not included in the negotiations, although they were also visible actors in the northern insurgency. If the Accord is strictly adhered to and the DDR process goes well, with its many challenges addressed, Mali could be on a steady road to lasting peace.

Nigeria has some similarities with Mali. Therefore, it can learn from the latter’s experiences. Although the DDR in Mali is on-going, a study of the successes, failures and challenges so far can inform a better reintegration process in Nigeria. If the latter is to go the Mali way, there would have to be an agreement between the Government of Mali and the Boko Haram for a peace settlement. Some compromises would have to be made both ways and issues driving the insurgency would have to be addressed. It would be a sure way to put reintegration efforts in Nigeria within the right framework.

From the Mali example, the following recommendations are worth considering for Nigeria:

* Establish a policy for Boko Haram fighters to disarm before going into peace talks;
* Set hard deadlines for the entire peace process and follow them judiciously;
* Facilitator(s) should be acceptable to all parties;
* For the DDR, establish clear criteria for eligibility and estimates of people to be reintegrated;
* Set up a known fund for the DDR process and proper financial monitoring for the entire project;
* Establish working follow-up mechanisms for tracking the progress of reintegrated ex-fighters;
* Constitute a DDR Commission whose members are acceptable to all parties to oversee the project;
* Add a security sector reform component to the DDR;
* Involve civil organizations in human rights advocacy and justice officials trained in the rights of women, children and victims of conflict. There should also be civil society organizations and law professionals who will check corruption and impunity in the justice system. Leaders of Nigerian society, especially women and the youth, should be made to help in reconciliation by influencing dialogue within the communities.
* Although some amnesty could be given some groups, especially child soldiers, perpetrators of some serious crimes, both in the Nigerian security services and the Boko Haram should be brought to justice.

**Niger Delta, Nigeria**

**Operation Safe Corridor: Nigeria’s Attempts to Reintegrate Boko Haram**

**Justin W. Crocker**

***Abstract:*** Nigeria’s conflict with Boko Haram, ongoing since 2002 and reaching its peak of violence in 2014-2015, has caused over 20,000 civilian deaths and the displacement of nearly 2.7 million refugees.[[262]](#footnote-261) As recent successes by the Nigerian military and Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF)[[263]](#footnote-262) continue to reduce much of the area once dominated by Boko Haram, the Nigerian government in Abuja now struggles with ways in which surrendered or captured insurgents are handled. In September 2015, the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) established Operation Safe Corridor (OSC), a program designed to rehabilitate surrendered Boko Haram insurgents and eventually reintegrate them back into Nigerian society. This paper will further explore OSC, will outline the FGN’s goals for the program, and will end by identifying both challenges and potential and solutions with OSC as a potential model to rehabilitate and reintegrate members of Boko Haram back into Nigerian society.

***Background of Boko Haram in Nigeria***

Discovery of commercial-quantity oil in the Niger Delta in 1956 quickly propelled Nigeria’s economy, which today is the largest in Africa and one of the fastest growing in the world.[[264]](#footnote-263) Most Nigerians, however, are getting poorer. According the data from Nigeria’s National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), poverty rates rose from 42.7 percent in 1992 to 65.6 percent in 1996 to a staggering 69 percent in 2010.[[265]](#footnote-264) Using the dollar-a-day measure, the number of those living in poverty rises to 71.5 percent. NBS statistics also show that northern Nigeria is disproportionately affected by poverty and unemployment, the heartland of Boko Haram and rising Islamic fundamentalism.[[266]](#footnote-265) It was this socioeconomic backdrop that prompted Islamic cleric Mohammad Yusuf to establish the Ibn Taimiyyah Masijid (Mosque) in Borno state’s capital of Maiduguri in 2004.[[267]](#footnote-266) Yusuf, a charismatic and energetic Salafist Muslim cleric, drew a large following by preaching against the oppressive Nigerian government, blamed Western education for corrupting Nigeria’s leaders and advocated for an Islamic society based on sharia law. Yusuf’s messages resonated with many northern Muslims, and young, illiterate and unemployed men proved to be particularly susceptible. By 2007, Yusuf’s followers numbered in the hundreds of thousands and included people from neighboring Niger, Chad, and Cameroon. Yusuf and his followers remained relatively quiet until July 2009, when clashes with police over a period of four days resulted in over 800 people killed, including Yusuf, whose extrajudicial murder by police became a catalyst for future violence.[[268]](#footnote-267)

Boko Haram withdrew into the shadows but reemerged in mid-2010 with a much more violent identity under a new leader, Abubakar Shekau. In September 2010 the group conducted a well-planned attack on a prison in Bauchi in northern Nigeria, freeing more than 700 inmates, many of whom were Boko Haram members. Seven separate bombings on Christmas Eve in 2010 in Jos—a major city in Nigeria’s central region—killed at least 32 churchgoers. The violence continued to escalate and spread throughout Nigeria, with an attack on the UN compound in Abuja in August 2011 that claimed 23 lives and another 87 wounded marking one of Boko Haram’s first suicide attacks. The group’s kidnapping of 276 girls from a school in Chibok, a remote town approximately 70 miles south of Maiduguri, in April 2014 propelled Boko Haram into international notoriety and prompted the EU and the UN to place the group on their respective terrorist organization lists. By early 2015, Boko Haram controlled most of Borno state and many areas in neighboring Yobe and Adamawa states in northeast Nigeria.

***What is Operation Safe Corridor?*[[269]](#footnote-268)**

While the program was approved in concept under the Goodluck Jonathan administration in as early as 2013, significant movement toward establishing OSC--location, cadre, structure of the de-radicalization and trade training--did not occur until mid to late-2015. Through research in Nigeria and a series of interviews with a member of the OSC staff, we have learned that specific goals of OSC include:

1. Provide members of Boko Haram with an alternative to fighting.
2. Assist the FGN in implementing a formalized disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) program in Northeast Nigeria and the greater Lake Chad Basin.
3. Provide surrendered Boko Haram insurgents with de-radicalization counseling and trade training, thereby providing Nigeria with a trained and productive labor force.
4. Assist in ending hostilities in Northeast Nigeria.

Operation Safe Corridor is physically located in a Nigerian military camp in Borno state’s capital of Maiduguri. Currently, approximately 1,000 former Boko Haram militants are said to be in the program, of which approximately 80 percent are males and 20 percent are females. The average age of the participants is said to be approximately 30 years old. OSC consists of a 12-week de-radicalization and vocational training program in which 37 different Nigerian agencies are involved. These agencies include but are not limited to: Department for Counter Violent Extremist at the Office of the National Security Adviser, National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), National Orientation Agency, National Youth Service Corps, Nigeria Identity Card Management Commission, Federal Ministry of Health, Ministry of Interior, National Directorate of Employment, and Nigeria Prisons Services. While the program’s de-radicalization and trade training programs are run predominantly by civilian agencies, OSC’s leadership and security mechanisms are controlled by the Nigerian military. Additionally, participation in OSC is reserved for those who surrender to Nigerian authorities. Captured Boko Haram militants--defined here as those who do not physically surrender--are placed in other detention facilities and are currently not eligible for OSC enrollment. Specifics on how Nigerian security forces differentiate surrendered militants from those who are captured were not disclosed during research in Nigeria or from our interviewee.

The de-radicalization portion of OSC consists of psychological counseling and religious training. Newly surrendered militants are given initial psychological assessments in order to determine the extent of treatment required, particularly for younger militants and those who were forcibly conscripted or kidnapped into Boko Haram. During the course of our research, specific psychological counseling methods could not be determined. Interestingly, OSC authorities claim to have incorporated religious leaders and scholars from the international community, notably Pakistan, into religious de-radicalization efforts. De-radicalization training narratives focus on countering many of the distorted teachings of Salafist Islam used to incite Boko Haram militants, often using Salafist clerics and leaders to speak directly with former militants.[[270]](#footnote-269) The OSC authority we spoke with indicated that the primary component of OSC is religious de-radicalization. However, we could not discern specific metrics that OSC authorities use to initially evaluate surrendered participants and subsequently evaluate at the end of his or her 12-week program.

The vocational portion of OSC involves training in predominantly low-skilled trade: agriculture, wood- and steel- working, and textile manufacturing for instance. This training is intended to provide former militants with skills necessary to become self-reliant once they are deemed de-radicalized and prepared for reintegration back into Nigerian society. Additionally, vocational training provides former militants with a trade that will make them productive members of the communities in which they are reintegrated, as many northern Nigerians have indicated resistance to accepting former militants. Finally, vocational training will provide militants with the skills necessary to earn a living, which theoretically addresses a few of the socioeconomic drivers for initially joining Boko Haram.

From what could be discerned, surrendered militants are psychologically evaluated at least twice during their 12 weeks in OSC; once during their initial entry into the program and once at the culmination of the program to determine whether or not they are prepared to reintegrate back into Nigerian society. We could not discern specifically how OSC officials determine whether or not a former militant is effectively de-radicalized. According to the authority we spoke to, approximately 30 percent of the militants currently entering OSC are deemed to not be completely de-radicalized after the 12 weeks. Those determined unfit for reintegration are placed back into the program, but it is unclear whether they complete the 12 week program again or are inserted into a follow-on program on a case-by-case basis. Those who are determined to be prepared for reintegration are sent to different areas from which they originated in an effort to provide former militants with a “fresh start” and opportunity to reestablish themselves in a community in which they did not participate in hostilities. Specific numbers of those who had been effectively rehabilitated and reintegrated through OSC could not be discerned. Additionally, each community's willingness to welcome former militants into their society was also unclear.

***Challenges with Operation Safe Corridor***

Although much regarding OSC is still publicly unknown, we were able to develop enough of an understanding of the program to identify some of its potential challenges and pitfalls. While most Nigerian civilians understand the merits of a program like OSC, many more have displayed strong resistance to the program. Most northern Nigerians believe that the harms caused by Boko Haram should be addressed before former militants receive treatment and vocational training. Others fear the risk of recidivism to be too high to reintegrate former insurgents back into communities in the near term. How the FGN addresses these concerns will be vital in ensuring OSC or a similar program is successful; without support from those citizens and communities charged with ultimately reintegrating former militants, any such program will undoubtedly fail.

Boko Haram’s insurgency ravaged northeastern Nigeria and dramatically altered the lives of millions of Nigerians. As mentioned earlier, nearly 3 million Nigerians have been forced from their homes, many of whom are forced to live in under resourced internally displaced persons (IDP) camps or “host communities”—essentially shantytowns with extremely limited means of life support—and are draining already scarce resources. Additionally, as more areas of northeast Nigeria become accessible, a growing humanitarian crisis is emerging. The latest report from the United Nation’s Office for the Coordination of Human Affairs (OCHA) estimates that over 7 million people are in need of emergency life-saving assistance, of which an estimated 4.4 million remain in unsecure or inaccessible areas due to ongoing violence.[[271]](#footnote-270) An estimated one million northeast Nigerians suffer from severe acute malnourishment, including 250,000 children under six years of age. Médecins Sans Frontières and UNOCHA officials warn that unless immediate steps are taken to improve security and access in northeast Nigeria, 50,000 children will likely die.[[272]](#footnote-271) For many northern Nigerians, these problems created and perpetuated by Boko Haram must be addressed *before* surrendered militants benefit from a program such as OSC. To do otherwise, in the eyes of many Nigerians, would amount to rewarding former Boko Haram militants for their violence while simultaneously punishing the millions of Nigerians affected by the conflict.

During a discussion among community and government leaders from Borno state in Maiduguri in June 2016, many of the participants exhibited concern about the high risk of recidivism among militants deemed de-radicalized by OSC authorities and reintegrated into their communities. Specifically, most were skeptical of OSC’s ability to determine whether or not a former militant no longer held radical religious views and would subsequently resist rejoining Boko Haram or similar violent extremist groups such as Ansaru and Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). Most participants believed reintegration in the near term was dangerous and called for a ten-year period to pass before reintegration should begin in northern communities, allowing the population to heal first after such a long period of sustained violence. While the feasibility of a ten-year period is likely unrealistic, the stakeholders’ sentiment and strong resistance to reintegration in the near term displays a strong lack of Nigerian community acceptance of the program. Therefore, we believe that OSC must be implemented in conjunction with similar programs aimed at developing vocational skills and access to jobs for the millions of IDPs affected by Boko Haram. Psychological counseling and rehabilitation must also be afforded to those who have been witness to Boko Haram’s violence and security force operations, as many Nigerians have become radicalized against Boko Haram and will prove to be a significant inhibitor to the public accepting OSC’s legitimacy. Establishing a rehabilitation and reintegration program in which both former militants and civilians can participate is critical to receiving public support for OSC and ensuring the desired outcomes of the program are realized.

Another challenge of OSC is that, while 37 different civilian agencies are involved, the program is perceived to be a military-run initiative. OSC is commanded by a Nigerian Army Brigadier General, has a predominantly military officer staff, and it is physically located on a military camp that is guarded by Nigerian soldiers. Nigeria’s military has been widely criticized for its brutality and disregard for human rights, particularly during its fight with Boko Haram. In a highly critical report on Nigerian security force war crimes and human rights violations, Amnesty International documented 27 incidents of extrajudicial killings committed by security force members in 2013 and 2014 alone. The report claimed that at least 1,200 people, mostly men and young boys, had been killed and another 7,000 had died in under-resourced and overcrowded detention facilities.[[273]](#footnote-272) The most notorious of these incidents occurred in March 2014 after Boko Haram attacked a detention facility at Giwa Barracks in Maiduguri and released an estimated 700 prisoners. In the days that followed, Nigerian soldiers and members of the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) began house-to-house searches of local residences in an effort to recover the released prisoners. Amnesty International’s investigation presented overwhelming evidence that at least 640 men and boys, most of whom were released during the Giwa Barracks attack, were extra-judicially killed by soldiers and CJTF volunteers.[[274]](#footnote-273)

Given this history of abuse, it is a fallacy to assume that many Boko Haram militants will willingly surrender to Nigerian security forces. The benefits of surrendering and participating in OSC must outweigh the potential cost of continuing to fight under Boko Haram’s banner. Due to the Nigerian security forces’ violent history, OSC is likely not attractive to militants who would otherwise be prone to surrender. Thus, it is important for OSC’s future that military involvement be limited, with the ultimate goal of being completely removed in the near future. Physical security for OSC’s camp should be transferred to Nigeria’s National Police Force, Civil Defense Corps, or other security agency run and operated by Nigerian civilians. Additionally, the OSC camp should be immediately removed from a military base and transferred to an area deemed acceptable by the new agency responsible for physical security. These changes will display Nigeria’s sincere commitment to rehabilitating and ultimately reintegrating surrendered militants back into Nigerian communities and not simply deceiving militants into overcrowded and under-resourced prisons.

The legal status of surrendered Boko Haram members is another issue that OSC officials will eventually need to address. Public support for OSC is limited due in large part to northern Nigerians demanding justice for many of the harms perpetrated by Boko Haram. Amnesty for militants, even those who are surrendered or were forcibly conscripted, is nearly unanimously rejected by most Nigerians. Prosecuting thousands of militants, however, will prove difficult due to the lack of clear evidence on individual fighters and the FGN’s limited legal resources. Certain punishment, regardless of the extent of each militant’s involvement in the insurgency, will also play a factor in the number of those willing to surrender. Many low-level fighters and supporters of Boko Haram, particularly those forced into the group or coerced into directly supporting the group’s activities, may be unwilling to surrender if their punishment is equal to that of mid-level leaders or those who took part in rape, murder and other war crimes. The FGN must develop a robust method for delivering prosecutorial justice to Boko Haram militants while simultaneously avoiding a homogenous approach that disproportionately alienates low-level fighters and supporters. Without striking this careful balance, both public support and militant willingness to surrender and participate in OSC will likely prove inadequate.

***Conclusion***

Operation Safe Corridor has many egregious flaws that must be addressed if the program is to be successful. However, OSC also represents a positive step forward for the FGN, which just two years ago seemed completely incapable of defeating Boko Haram militarily. The inauguration of President Muhammadu Buhari in May 2015 ushered in a reinvigorated effort against Boko Haram and reversed six years of the group’s gains. However, Boko Haram will not be defeated with military force alone. Similar to other successful counterinsurgencies, Nigeria will have to incorporate a way for Boko Haram militants to lay down their arms and eventually return to Nigerian society. We believe OSC represents the beginning of such a program and should be built on using lessons learned from conflicts throughout the world. With assistance from international governments and other non-state actors, OSC could prove to be the program most responsible for bringing Boko Haram’s seven-year insurgency to an end.

**Climate change, violence and Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Region**

**Abdul-Majeed Ibrahim & Lauren Wyman**

***Abstract****:* Lake Chad is a source of life and livelihoods for 30 million people in Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon and Niger. However, anthropogenic stressors compounded by climate change have shrunk the lake in recent decades, contributing to over-exploitation, resource scarcity, loss of livelihoods and conflict over land and water. This fragile humanitarian situation exacerbates the risks posed by the Boko Haram militancy, as already vulnerable populations are forced off of their land and flee. This vulnerability also contributes to strengthening Boko Haram, as soldiers may be tempted to join out of economic necessity. Any policy intending to reintegrate Boko Haram fighters into civilian society must consider the humanitarian and ecological context at play: livelihoods are drying up in northeastern Nigeria, along with the lake.

***Key words:***climate change, adaptation, desertification, livelihood loss, gender, Lake Chad, violence

***Background and context***

Lake Chad is the largest lake in Central and West Africa, bordered by four countries – Nigeria’s northeast, Cameroon’s far north, Chad’s Lac region (western Chad) and Niger’s southeast.[[275]](#footnote-274) The Lake Chad basin encompasses 966,955 km2 of floodplains, wetlands and aquifers.[[276]](#footnote-275) The population in the Lake Chad region has more than doubled over the last decade and about 30 million people in the basin depend on the lake for their livelihoods.[[277]](#footnote-276) Subsistence fishing, agriculture and livestock farming are the primary economic activities in the region, which is a hub for trade and commerce.

In the last six decades, the lake has been shrinking, and along with it the lives and livelihoods of the region’s population. The lake presently covers 1,350km2, only one twentieth the area it covered in the 1960s.[[278]](#footnote-277) The United Nations Environmental Programme attributes 50 percent of the lake decrease in size to overuse by humans for irrigation and the rest from changing climate and rainfall patterns.[[279]](#footnote-278) Historic data shows that the lake has recovered from shrinking on multiple occasions, but scientists doubt this will occur due to anthropogenic stressors and climate change.[[280]](#footnote-279)

***Impact of anthropogenic stressors and climate change***

Over the last half-century, Lake Chad has been shrinking due to over-exploitation and manipulation by national governments and by local populations (see Figure 1). In particular, damming of source rivers like the Chari River and the Komadugu-Yobe for irrigation and fresh water use have interrupted the lake’s natural flow regime. Additionally, overgrazing, land-clearing for agriculture and poor farming practices have reduced basin soil quality and water retention, thus putting undue pressure on the basin’s natural resources.[[281]](#footnote-280) An over reliance on extractive practices like fishing has led to biodiversity loss in the lake and decreased system resilience. As the population living around the lake has increased rapidly over the past decade, due to normal population growth as well as forced migration, competition for the lake’s resources has made it nearly impossible for the lake to recover on its own.[[282]](#footnote-281)

Climate variability, shocks and long-term changes compound the human-derived environmental degradation in the Lake Chad basin. Specifically, the Lake Chad Basin is one of the most climate-sensitive regions on the African continent. There is high inter-annual rainfall variability, and the average yearly rainfall has decreased over the last century.[[283]](#footnote-282) The region alternates between periods of high rainfall and flooding and drought, which makes agriculture and pastoral livelihoods highly vulnerable. Temperature increases in the region over the last forty years have reached up to 6 degrees C during the dry season.[[284]](#footnote-283) This is compounded by desertification, which is encroaching in the northern part of the lake.[[285]](#footnote-284) Over the course of this century, increasing temperatures and evapotranspiration of the Lake will reduce available water by up to 10 percent.[[286]](#footnote-285) Climate models predict a shift in ecosystem composition around the lake, with arable lands decreasing by up to 135,000 km2 by 2099.

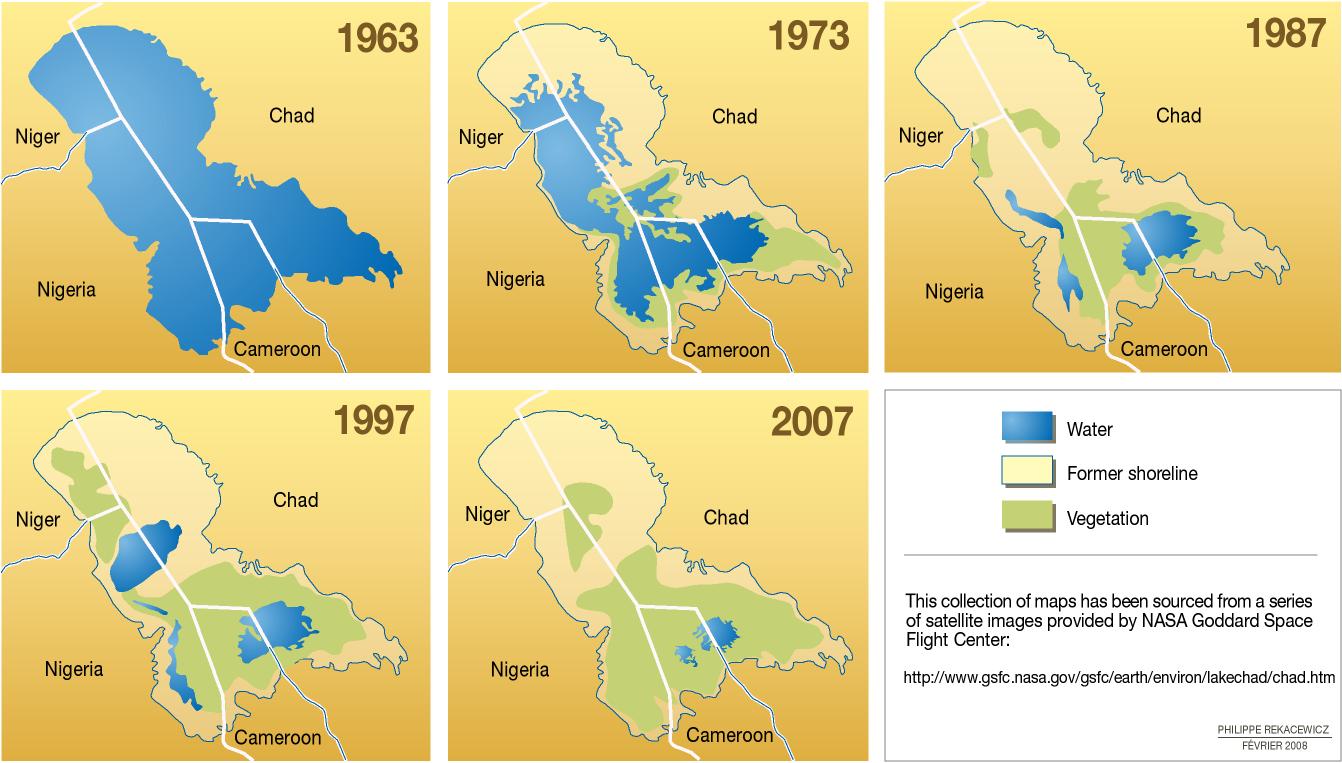


Figure 1: Chronology of Lake Chad variability: 1960 to 2007. Image source: NASA

***Conflict Over Shrinking Natural Resources***

Seasonal fluctuations - recession and inundation of the floodplains - makes the lake a good habitat for fish as well as fertile ground for farming. Lake recession exposes the lake bed’s fertile soils for farming; and during inundation, nutrients are restored to the soil. Flood recession cropping is a major production system in the Lake Chad Basin where farmers mostly cultivate sorghum and bereber.[[287]](#footnote-286)

The shrinking of the lake has created tensions among competing resource users - fishers, farmers, and cattle herders. Farming activities on the exposed lake bed modifies aquatic community in the lake.[[288]](#footnote-287) Specifically, ploughing close to the lake increases siltation and eutrophication, reducing lake depth and causing fish kills from toxic algae blooms.

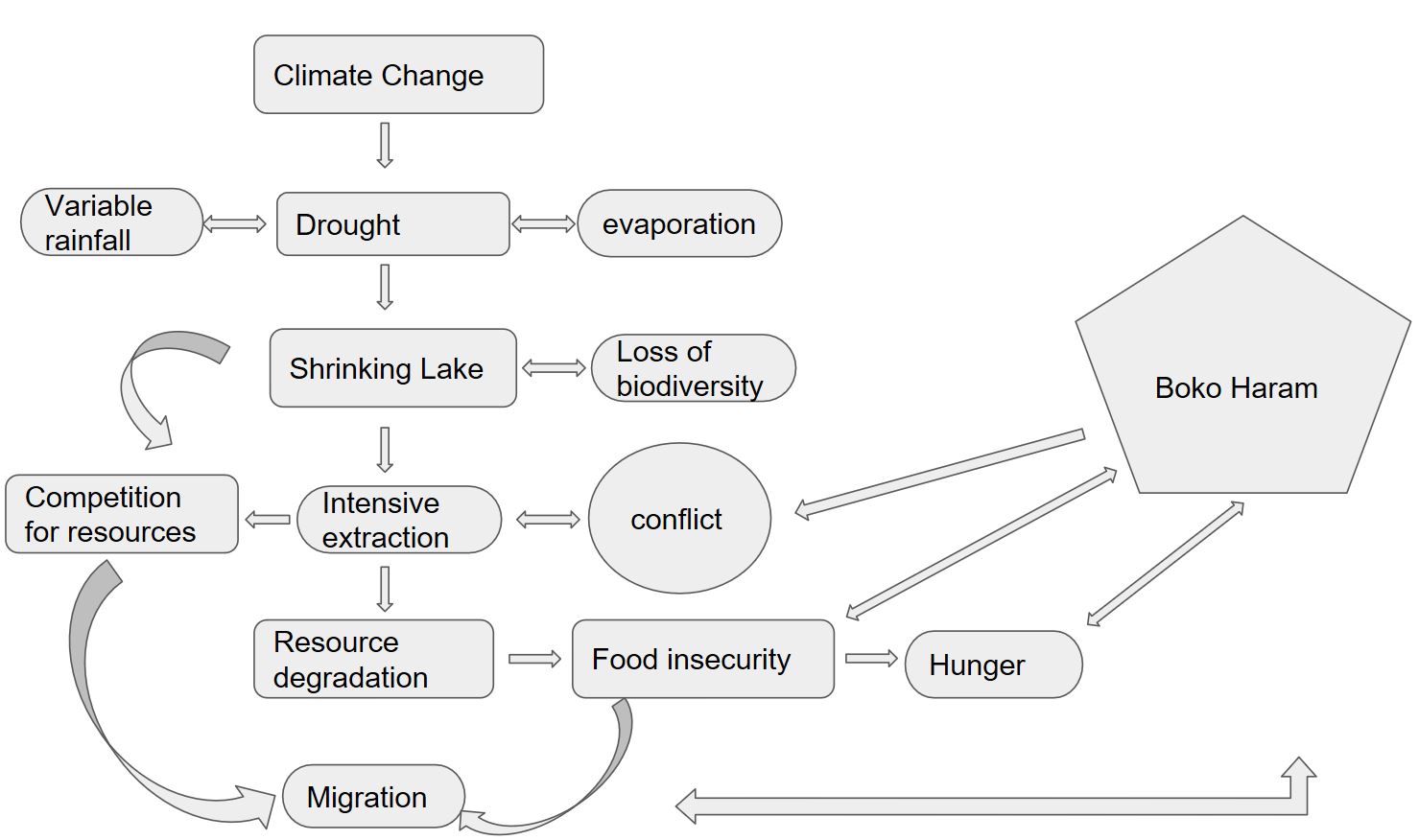
The modified aquatic ecosystem alters species biodiversity and the number fish species that are able to inhabit the lake. Fish are able to evade fishers’ fishing nets by hiding under marshes and tall grasses growing in the lake due to the siltation. Fishing thus becomes difficult and fishermen lose their fishing gear to mash weeds. In response to this pressure, fishermen start to disregard national boundaries and migrate towards other national territories to fish.[[289]](#footnote-288) Some fishermen turn to farming to take advantage of the exposed fertile lakebed, which contributes to competition for farmland with traditional farmers. Adding to the mix, pastoral communities clash with farmers as traditional pasture lands have been encroached by farmers and, likewise, cattle often destroy farmland through trampling when they move to drink water from the lake. Farmers, fishers and cattle herders migrate towards and compete for the shrinking lake’s resources without regard for the imaginary boundary lines. Resource extraction has intensified as a result and crude methods are being used in resource extraction to maximize output.

***Climate Change as a Threat Multiplier for Violent Extremism in the Region***

Boko Haram has taken advantage of porous borders of the Lake Chad basin countries and expanded to Cameroon’s far north, Niger’s southeast, and Chad’s Lac region[[290]](#footnote-289). Suicide bombing and raids on communities have displaced an estimated 2.3 million people (as of November 2016) in the Lake Chad basin region, of which 1.9 million are in Nigeria’s northeast[[291]](#footnote-290). By displacing primarily agricultural populations, the insurgency exacerbates climate-driven food shortages and thus the fragile food and nutrition security situation of the region, where 6.3 million people are food insecure as of August 2016.[[292]](#footnote-291) Boko Haram interferes with markets and transportation infrastructure, thus further complicating food shortages and access of vulnerable populations.

Communities hosting internally displaced persons (IDPs) face resource competition and over-use as the influx of people exacerbates food, shelter and livelihood needs.[[293]](#footnote-292) Forced displacement in this context strips victims of their social and physical capital and networks, undermining their ability to cope to the conflict and also to a changing climate.[[294]](#footnote-293) Women and children are particularly vulnerable in this context, often subjected to sexual and gender-based violence, forced into slavery and marriage.

The impacts of resource scarcity and the humanitarian crises in the region are cyclical, however, as lack of economic opportunity and the prevalence of hunger has led to many Nigerians joining Boko Haram. In fact, some foot soldiers in the Boko Haram sect have been identified as people displaced by severe drought in the regions[[295]](#footnote-294). While Boko Haram started in urban areas, hunger and natural resource competition may have contributed to young Boudouma men joining the group.[[296]](#footnote-295) See Figure 2 for a schematic on how Boko Haram contributes to, and is exacerbated by, the humanitarian and climate situation in the Lake Chad Basin.



***Figure 2:* Variable rainfall patterns lead to drought and lake shrinkages, resulting in biodiversity loss and heightened competition for the lake’s dwindling natural resources and local conflict. Resource users begin to use crude methods to extract resources and migrate across borders. Intensive extraction degrades natural resources, leading to reduced agricultural output and local food insecurity. Boko Haram displaces large swaths of the population, contributing to food insecurity. Young men join Boko Haram for economic reasons (hunger, lack of opportunities). Conflict among resource users leads to unstable region, which is exploited by Boko Haram.**

***National and Regional Environmental Policies and Management Bodies***

President Buhari has made climate change a national priority for Nigeria - promoting sustainable growth while reducing carbon dioxide emissions on the international, federal, regional and local levels, across sectors.[[297]](#footnote-296) However, there are gaps in climate change adaptation coverage, particularly on the local level, and in the security and defense sectors.

On an international level, Nigeria is party to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCC) and signed the Paris Accords in September 2016. On a federal level, Nigeria has a national bureaucratic infrastructure for environmental protection, including Nigeria’s Climate Change Policy and the national development plan, Vision 2020.[[298]](#footnote-297)

On a regional level, the government of Nigeria has partnered with nine West African countries to develop sustainable regional climate change policy and research, through the West African Science Service Centre on Climate Change and Adapted Land Use (WASCAL).[[299]](#footnote-298) The Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) founded in 1964, is a regional mechanism to settle natural resource disputes, promote conservation and regional development and peace and security in the region. However, the LCBC has struggled to carry out its mandate due to lack of funding and technical capacity.[[300]](#footnote-299) Additionally, there is little cooperation between the four countries on lake resource management.[[301]](#footnote-300)

On a local level, there are a variety of adaptation projects spearheaded by regional organizations like the Lake Chad Basin Commission, such as the organization’s Development and Climate Action Plan . However, the implementation of consistent Nigerian governmental climate change adaptation projects in conflict zones, particularly in the northeast, have fallen short due to lack of adequate infrastructure, political will and the presence of Boko Haram. While Nigerian policy recognizes the intersectionality between the current conflict with Boko Haram and natural resource clashes due to climate change, it lacks political impetus to approach defense and security issues with a climate change adaptation lens.[[302]](#footnote-301)

**Concrete recommendations:**

1. **Shift national and international dialogue about counter-terrorism.** Current discourse on counterinsurgencies overemphasizes security, failing to account for local economies, social welfare, education, food supply, and social relations between the governments and the people[[303]](#footnote-302). Currently the Lake Chad Basin is going through a food crisis, with millions vulnerable to food insecurity in the region. **It is therefore vital that any counter-terrorism strategy is adaptive to the humanitarian situation on the ground, promoting food security, local economic growth and livelihood opportunities.**
2. **Build strong institutions.** It’s vital to support good governance and governmental institutions at the local, regional and national levels, to provide social services like education and healthcare, particularly for children, youth and women. Additionally, our recommendation should support institutions to provide psycho-social services, particularly for women victims of sexual and gender-based violence.
3. **Support environmental conservation efforts through the Lake Chad Development and Climate Resilience Action Plan.** It’s important to work with the Lake Chad Basin Commission to implement its *Development and Climate Action Plan,* to support conservation and livelihoods on the basin/watershed level and to build community resilience through the provision of technical assistance on best farming, fishing and grazing practices.
4. **Apply a climate change lens to reintegration programs.** The government of Nigeria should push to further incorporate the climate change lens into conflict and peacebuilding policies and actions in northeastern Nigeria. Failing to consider the impact of climate change on livelihoods when demobilizing Boko Haram fighters and providing them with vocational training - as through the current Operation Safe Corridor model - may drive them back into the organization. **Developing climate resilient livelihoods** for not only ex-Boko Haram fighters but all people in the northeast, which is the most impacted region from climate change and desertification, **is vital to insure a stable, sustainable peace.**

**Food and Nutrition Security in Northern Nigeria**

**Lauren Wyman**

***Abstract:*** Over one million people are struggling with severe food insecurity in northern Nigeria. The World Food Programme estimates that more than 65,000 people in the Borno State are facing famine-like conditions. Rising food prices and loss of livelihoods due to the presence of Boko Haram further limit population food access.

***Key words:*** severe malnutrition, famine, IDPs, emergency, crisis, Borno, Adamawa, Yobe, market access, rising food prices, loss of livelihood, inflation

In July 2016, the Minister of Health in Nigeria declared a ‘nutrition emergency’ in Borno State.[[304]](#footnote-303) Boko Haram activity has impacted the state’s food and nutrition security, as the group’s presence has uprooted agricultural livelihoods, limited market access and prevented the humanitarian community to provide emergency assistance to affected populations.[[305]](#footnote-304)

The number of people struggling with severe food insecurity has quadrupled since March 2016, to over one million people in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states. More than 65,000 people in Borno and Yobe are estimated to be facing famine-like conditions.[[306]](#footnote-305) Particular zones of concern include local government areasnext to the Sambisa Forest and in northern Borno, where a government and UN joint survey found visible malnutrition among adults and children IDPs, food and water scarcity, lack of health facilities and functioning markets. Many areas impacted by Boko Haram are inaccessible to the Nigerian government and the UN for food and nutrition security assessments.

In the last six months, the Nigerian military has made territorial gains from Boko Haram in the northeast. As displaced populations return to their rural homes and find them in many cases uninhabitable, they flood to the cities, where they have to restart their lives and livelihoods, and are often exclusively dependent on external sources of assistance. In greater Maiduguri, the commercial center of Borno State and a hub for regional trade, over half of the 2.5 million people living there are IDPs (1.4 million people).[[307]](#footnote-306) Sixty-five percent of IDP households surveyed were food insecure; of those six percent faced severe food insecurity. Thirty-two percent of IDP households employed negative coping strategies like begging, food rationing and skipping meals.[[308]](#footnote-307)

At the same time, staple food prices have risen by 50-100 percent in northern Nigeria, due to increasing inflation (at 15 percent in May), higher transportation costs due to rising fuel prices, and a rapid decline in local food production due to insecurity, as people flee and leave their land fallow. Millet, maize, pulses and groundnut have increased in price by 151 percent, 142 percent, 16 percent and 4 percent respectively between March and August 2016.[[309]](#footnote-308) Exchange rate depreciation has raised the price of imported items like rice and vegetable oil, which further constrains the food purchasing power of conflict-affected populations. The cost of the household Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB), which represents the basic food requirements of a family, has risen 51 percent between March and September 2016.

**Policy Recommendation:** When developing policies for the rehabilitation and reintegration of Boko Haram combatants, it is vital to consider the current humanitarian situation in northeastern Nigeria. Vast swaths of the population are going hungry, particularly IDPs, who fled Boko Haram activities. The Government may consider instituting a public service component for reintegration, so that Boko Haram ex-combatants can help ameliorate the situation that their organization contributed to. Working on farms to increase crop production, assisting with the transportation of farm goods to markets and re-establishing local markets, will improve local food access and may ease the social acceptability of ex-Boko Haram fighters.

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262. Accurate numbers of deaths, wounded and internally displaced people (IDP) perpetrated by Boko Haram and Nigerian security forces are difficult to come by, largely due to the lack of accurate reporting from the conflict. Most sources indicate the numbers provided in this paper. [↑](#footnote-ref-261)
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