Development Administration and the Reconstruction of Northeast Nigeria

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Abstract

Development administration and the reconstruction of Northeast of Nigeria has taken a centre stage in contemporary Nigeria due to the exigencies of Boko Haram insurgency. The destruction of schools, health facilities, bridges, houses, mosques, churches and markets through attacks and bombings by the sect makes it imperative on the government of Nigeria, both Federal and States to administer development programmes to revive areas battered by Boko Haram terrorism. The Presidential Committee on Northeast Initiative, the creation of Northeast Development Commission as well as government’s partnership with foreign donors and humanitarian organizations has gone a long way in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the Northeast. The paper adopts qualitative method and content analysis as its methodology. August Comte (1966) Structural Functionalist Theory is adopted in this paper. The findings of this study indicate that the Federal Government in conjunction with donors and Non-Governmental Organizations have deployed huge resources for the reconstruction of the Northeast. It was also found that sporadic attacks by Boko Haram in certain areas of Borno and Adamawa states are hampering the reconstruction efforts. The paper recommends that the Federal Government should be proactive in the humanitarian and reconstruction efforts in the Northeast, because the displaced people are eager to relocate to their communities.

Keywords: Development, Administration, Development Administration, Reconstruction, Humanitarian, Displacement.

Introduction

Administration of development is a cardinal principle of governments particularly in developing countries. In an attempt to address the socio-economic needs of the people, the Nigerian government utilizes its ministries, departments and agencies to plan and implement programmes and projects for the well-being of its citizens. It was the drive to reduce poverty and enhance the standard of living of the people that successive Nigerian governments embarked on series of national development plans, poverty alleviation programmes, the rehabilitation, reconstruction and reconciliation programme after the civil war in 1970 as well as the execution of numerous agricultural, social and physical infrastructure projects in different parts of the country (Ujo, 1999).

The emergence of Boko Haram terrorist group in the Northeast resulted to the destruction of schools, health facilities, bridges, markets, mosques, churches, houses and displacement of people. The incessant attacks and bombings undertaken by the sect undermined the socio-economic infrastructure of the states affected by the group’s activities. Citizens pursuing their legitimate businesses were either killed or the
business ventures dismantled. Farming activities are impaired, due to the attacks on villages and displacement of farmers (Hassan, 2018).

The Nigerian security forces made frantic efforts in neutralizing Boko Haram ferocious attacks and occupation of towns and villages. Many local governments came under the control of Boko Haram in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states in the period 2013 – 2015. The military made giant strides by taking back areas hitherto occupied by Boko Haram. The military’s victories gave hopes for the displaced to return to their homes to start a new life (Brechenmacher, 2019).

The Nigerian government’s efforts at reconstruction and rehabilitation of the ravaged Northeast began earnestly in 2016 with the establishment of the Presidential Committee on Northeast Initiative (PCNI), this was followed with the creation of the Northeast Development Commission (NEDC) in 2017 (Olaniyi, 2019). The PCNI was subsequently collapsed into NEDC in order to avoid duplication of responsibility. The NEDC is to undertake a holistic approach to revive the Northeast in all areas of needs (Olaniyi, 2019).

The state governments affected by Boko Haram insurgency, particularly Borno state is making frantic efforts in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of areas affected by the activities of the group. The states have contributed immensely in the feeding of the internally displaced persons, rehabilitation of schools, return of refugees from Cameroon to their communities as well as resettlement plans. The Borno State Government established the Ministry for Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Resettlement in September, 2015 with the objective of rebuilding the state ravaged by Boko Haram terrorism (Musa, 2016).

Foreign donors, financial institutions, Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations such as the World Bank, African Development Bank, United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), International Rescue, International Red Cross, Danish Refugees Council, Plan and Save the Children are all collaborating with the Nigerian government to provide relief services to communities affected by Boko Haram terrorism. The peace building initiatives of the NGOs have enhanced the resettlement and reconstruction efforts of the government in the Northeast (World Bank, 2018).

**Methodology**

The paper utilized qualitative data such as books, journals, government documents, documents of nongovernmental organizations, newspapers and magazines. The materials consulted were derived from the library and the internet. Content analysis was adopted to critically examine documents, texts and speeches in support of achieving the mandate of the paper.

**Theoretical and Conceptual Framework**

August Comte (1966) Structural Functionalist Theory is adopted in this paper. Comte is of the view that the society is an organism with a functionally organized system. A system has structures and functions, the components of a system contribute to the continued operation of the system. In a system, there are subsystems that affect the way in which the system functions. A state is an organized system with a government, population, territory and sovereignty. The government of a state has the function to provide social welfare services and public goods to its citizens. The public goods includes: infrastructure, education, defence, public transport and environmental sanitation.

The population in the state expects the government to play a vital role in the development of their lives and communities. The failure of the state to improve the lives of
the people will create dysfunction in the system and lead to disharmony (Comte, 1966).

In relation to the role of the Nigerian State in the reconstruction of the Northeast ravaged by Boko Haram, Comte’s structural functionalist theory provides explanation for the duty that is placed on the Federal and State Governments to reconstruct the Northeast through administration of development in order to restore sanity in the Nigerian system and bring about changes that will enhance harmony in the society.

Development is a concept that has generated a lot of scholarly input because of its fluid nature. According to Rodney (1972, p.9)
“Development in human society is a many-sided process. At the level of individual, it
Development has two interrelated but analytically separate lines of definition. On the one hand, development is concerned with increased production of material goods and services. This is the notion of development as “economic growth”, when the focus is largely on quantitative problems of production and use of resources. On the other hand, development is concerned with change in the distribution of material goods and in the nature of social relations. This is the notion of “social development” where the focus is on basically qualitative and distributional changes in the structure of societies through the elimination of discrimination and structurally determined exploitation, the creation and assurance of equal opportunities and the more equitable distribution of the benefits of economic growth among people (cited in Nwankwo, 2006, p. 19-20).

This definition touched on both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of development in any society. Development can only be meaningful if it provides a basis for the trickle down of resources in such a way that both the rich and the poor feel a sense of belonging in the state. A programme of growth should give equal opportunity to all citizens to contribute their quota to national development and benefit at optimum level from the outcome of government policies.

Administration on the other hand focuses on practices that relates to group activity to produce desired outcome. Adebayo (1982, p.1) defined administration as “the organization and direction of persons in order to accomplish specified end”. Similarly, Hughes (1998, p. 5) is of the view that administration is “an activity that deals with keeping of records and information processing, paper work and activities concerned with applying rules, procedures and policies determined by others”.

These two definitions are similar in scope and objective with little variation in terms of emphasis. They stressed the importance of cooperation and team work in getting things done. Administration therefore is concerned with both theory and practice of policy formulation and implementation as well as proper keeping of records for future reference.

The whole sphere of development administration is centred on public administration. What then is Public Administration? According to Basu (2012, p.2)
“Public administration is the management of the affairs of government at all levels, namely, national, state and local”. So also, Wilson defined public administration as “the detailed and systematic application of law” (cited in Singh, 2001, p. 9).

Public administration as defined by Basu(2012) is all encompassing, that it is the role of government to administer the society at all tiers of governance, while Wilson’s position provides a narrow view of administration which is law enforcement and implementation of policies. Public administration makes policies that cover both the public and private sectors of the society. It is indeed the umbrella administration for the whole society and determines the allocation of scarce resources.

Reconstruction in the context of this paper refers to a whole range of intervention programmes aimed at facilitating recovery in post conflict situation. Reconstruction involves restoring law and order, revamping governance institutions, provision of humanitarian assistance, reviving of the economy and businesses, infrastructure development, poverty alleviation, resettlement of the displaced and revival of education (World Bank, 2018). These components of reconstruction are all being pursued by the federal government, state governments, donor agencies and NGOs in the Northeast.

**What is Development Administration?**

Development administration has received tremendous scholarly attention because of its timing and applicability to the developing countries in the 1960’s and 1970’s. According to Katz (cited in Nwankwo, 2006, p. 16 – 17):

Development administration is generally similar to traditional public administration, it is concerned with how a government implements its rules, policies and norms…it is an innovation, since it is concerned with the societal changes involved in achieving developmental objectives.

So also Collins is of the view that:

Development administration is concerned with the achievement of change under conditions where change is difficult. Its focus is on a range of instrumentalities employed to achieve demands of national social and economic development through the machinery of planning, the role of governmental institutions, the public corporations, marketing boards and administrative reforms at all levels of government (cited in Ujo, 1991, p.8).

Development administration is an aspect of the traditional public administration bequeathed to the third world countries by the erstwhile colonial masters. At independence, many third world countries were eager to achieve development at a rapid pace in terms of industrial development, infrastructure development and improved standard of living for the citizens. The traditional public administration was re-focused to play the role of development catalyst and using the West as model of development trajectory (Basu, 2012).

A more comprehensive definition of development administration was put forward by Riggs (cited in Nwankwo, 2006, P. 17), he defined it as “not only a government’s efforts to carry out programmes designed to reshape its physical, human and cultural environment, but also to the struggle to enlarge a government’s capacity to engage in such programmes”.

Development administration therefore has two aspects, namely, the administration of development and development of
administration. These two perspectives are hereby discussed as follows:

**Administration of Development**

Administration of development is concerned with the execution of development programmes by government; to design and implement policies and plans to meet development needs and objectives of the society. Administration of development is conducted through government institutions; ministries, departments and agencies. The bureaucracy in the third world is central to the execution of government projects and programmes for national development (Nwakwo and Hassan, 2007).

It was a form of social engineering imported from the West and embodying faith in the application of rational scientific principles and the efficacy of the Keynesian welfare economics. In its early days at least it reflected the naïve optimism and ethnocentricism of modernization theory, that there were straightforward technical solutions for underdevelopment and the West possessed it (cited in Hughes, 1998, p. 213).

The path taken by the advanced capitalist countries to socio-economic development was the mirror image that stands out as source of imitation by the third world countries. Western capital, technology and know-how are utilized by the emerging nations to accelerate the development of their respective countries. The Boko Haram insurgency resulted to the destruction of infrastructure as well as the displacement of people. The task of reconstruction of the region is on the Nigerian state. The federal government and state governments in the Northeast have mobilized resources to reconstruct the communities affected by the crisis through Ministries, Departments and Agencies to ensure rapid recovery of the area and restore normalcy.

Development of administration has to do with the strengthening and improvement of administrative capabilities of staff through manpower training and development to cope with the challenges of carrying out present and future development plans of the state. The civil service is saddled with the responsibility of executing government programmes and monitoring the implementation of policies. The singular act of accelerating the efficiency of public administration for conducting and utilization of available resources to achieve national development is the focus of development of administration. The improvement of the qualitative stature of the bureaucracy in terms of procedures and methods in order to be result oriented is the focus of development of administration (Basu, 2012).

Development of administration involves:
A professionally oriented, technically competent, politically and ideologically neutral bureaucratic machinery….institution building and modernization of indigenous bureaucratic machinery to undertake developmental tasks…. (cited in Hughes, 1998, p.213).

In essence, the administration of development cannot be accomplished without a well trained work-force with up to date institutional mechanisms. It is because of the imperativeness of development of administration that make governments in the third world particularly Nigeria to lay emphasis on training and re-training of staff in line with global changes and domestic demands.

The major constraint to development in Nigeria was the lack of skilled and experienced men and women to carryout the required tasks. There is the urgent need for systematic training as a vital means of meeting the manpower shortage in the public sector of Nigerian economy. Nigerians especially those in strategic positions in administration and profession are developed very quickly to carryout their duties and responsibilities with speed, competence and efficiency (cited in Ayeni, 2006, p. 170).

Nigerian Government Efforts towards the Reconstruction of the Northeast

The Boko Haram insurgency and subsequent terror attacks that began in 2009 led to the destruction of infrastructure and economic facilities in the Northeast. In the states most affected by the group’s activities such as Borno, Yobe and Adamawa, the enormity of destruction of schools, markets, health facilities, houses, bridges and farms are colossal. Boko Haram’s most coveted target is education. It is estimated that 910 schools were destroyed by the sect in the Northeast. So also, 2,295 teachers were killed and over 952,029 school age children were displaced. Schools had to be closed down due to Boko Haram rampage, and 19,000 teachers had to flee from their teaching posts (UNICEF, 2019).

In September, 2014, Boko Haram attacked and burnt down Government Day Secondary School Gulak in Adamawa state. Similarly, Yerwa Primary School in Maiduguri built in 1915 was burnt by the sect twice in 2010 and 2013. The group also specializes in burning residential houses and markets in villages and towns. (Amaefule, 2018). The Gadan Shuwa bridge on Mubi-Hong road in Adamawa state was destroyed by Boko Haram in 2014 (UNICEF, 2019).

The counter-insurgency operations embarked upon by the military especially Operation Lafiya Dole drastically forced Boko Haram to retreat in the period 2015 to date. The Federal Government of Nigeria stated that “in 10 years Boko Haram killed 20,000 people and destroyed $9 billion dollars worth of infrastructure” (Amaefule, 2018, p. 3)

It was in view of the successes achieved by the military in dislodging Boko Haram from the towns and villages it occupied that enabled the government in collaboration with NGOs the opportunity to embark on the reconstruction of the Northeast. In a bid to reconstruct the Northeast, the Buhari’s administration established the Presidential Committee on Northeast Initiative (PCNI) in 2016. While inaugurating the PCNI committee, the President stated that:

I urge the committee to approach their task with dedication, commitment, accountability and transparency. The committee should take a quick look at the conditions of the IDPs and
take urgent remedial measures to alleviate their conditions. I also call on all stakeholders to give the PCNI their maximum support to enable it to deliver on its mandate (cited in Punch, 2016, p. 2).

In a bid to deliver with respect to its terms of reference, the Presidential Committee on Northeast Initiative spent N10 billion in two years on feeding for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the Northeast. It also supplied drugs and medical equipments to Bauchi State Specialist Hospital in January, 2019(PCNI Newsletter, 2019). The Bauchi State Governor Mohammed Abubakar while receiving the medical items explained that:

Let me use this opportunity to appreciate the collaboration between the state and Presidential Committee on Northeast Initiative for the provision of essential drugs and consumables, equipment, manpower training and outreach services to mention but few (cited in PCNI Newsletter, 2019, p. 1).

A major pre-occupation of the PCNI was the resettlement and return of IDPs to their home communities. In that regard, the Vice-Chairman of PCNI Alhaji Tijjani Tumsa while speaking at a workshop on return strategy for IDPs held in July, 2018 stated that:

The establishment of the commission was in fulfillment of the pledge of this administration to fast track the development of the region. The Northeast is badly damaged as a result of the activities of insurgent group Boko Haram (cited in Tukur, 2019, p. 1).

The commission is mandated to liaise with other stakeholders for the reconstruction of the Northeast. The financing of the commission shall be from multifarious sources such as the Nigeria Government, African Development Bank, World Bank, United Nations, the European Union as well as local donors (Tukur, 2019).

The federal government in 2018 also embarked on a five year recovery plan for the Northeast. Our concern today is to ensure that we can collectively agree on a plan for the continued safe coordinated and sustainable voluntary return of IDPs to areas that are safe. We acknowledge the overwhelming desire of the people to return to their homes, after being displaced for over 5 years (cited in Abu, 2018, p.2)

The over whelming neutralization of Boko Haram by the military assisted the PCNI to coordinate humanitarian activities in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states with respect to distribution of food items at IDP camps, and return of IDPs to their homes in collaboration with the National Emergency Management Agency(NEMA). In 2018, 35,000 IDPs returned to their homes and communities due to the activities of PCNI and NEMA (Abu, 2018).

In furtherance of the government’s efforts towards the reconstruction of the Northeast, the Buhari administration established the Northeast Development Commission in 2017 which took over the activities of PCNI. The Board of NEDC was inaugurated in May, 2019. President Muhammadu Buhari while inaugurating the Governing Board of NEDC stated that:

The plan referred to as Inclusive Basic Service Delivery and Livelihood Empowerment Integrated Programme (IBSDLEIP) is financed by the African Development Bank (AfDB) to the tune of 179 million US Dollars. The programme shall cover all the states in the Northeast. The programmes under the five year plan includes water supply, skills acquisition, soft loan and the provision of basic amenities (Awaefule, 2018).
In affirming the significance of the Federal Government – AfDB initiative, the Vice President of Nigeria, Professor Yemi Osinbajo said that:

As more people return to their homes, the provision of essential services and job creation in safe locations will play a great role in ensuring that these returnees can get the basic tools and skills that they need to begin to rebuild their lives (cited in Awaefule, 2018, p. 2).

The Borno State Government has also made giant strides towards the reconstruction of the state with the establishment of the Ministry for Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Resettlement in September, 2015. The ministry embarked on the rehabilitation and reconstruction of markets, hospitals, schools, police stations, local government secretariats, courts and building of 20 houses in Boko Haram affected areas such as Benisheikh, Bama, Mafa, Konduga, Ngala and Kawuri. The State Government in conjunction with the State Emergency Management Agency provided food and consumables to over a million people displaced by the conflict who are camped in twelve locations across the state and neighbouring states. (Borno State Ministry for Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Resettlement, 2018).

The objectives of the Ministry are as follows:

i. Identify areas affected by the actions of the insurgency.

ii. Present a strategy and implementation for achieving the objectives of the resettlement policy.

iii. Provide a framework for implementation of the stated strategies to ensure timely resettlement of affected persons.

iv. Reconstruction of houses of all the affected communities.

v. To impart entrepreneurship skills to youths of the affected communities.

vi. Provision of suitable environment and necessary facilities for displaced people.

vii. Coordinate the efforts of the donor agencies with a view to identify areas of intervention to avoid duplication of efforts.

viii. Provide necessary data and useful information to the government and Non-Governmental Organizations willing to assist (Borno State Ministry for Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Resettlement, 2018).

The Borno State Government earmarked N13 billion to the Ministry for Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Resettlement in the 2017 budget. According to Governor Kashim Shettima;

We invested huge sums of money towards the completion of all on-going projects and rehabilitation of public structures and in the process provided employment for over 2,000 youths (cited in Musa, 2016, p. 1).

The Borno State Government’s reconstruction projects are undertaken in seven Local Government Areas namely Bama, Gwoza, Askira Uba, Chibok, Mafa, Damboa and Hawul. The state government in collaboration with NGOs also provided temporary shelter for displaced persons in Bama, Mafa, Gwoza, Damboa among others. There was also the reconstruction of 41 infrastructure by the Ministry in Dikwa, Mainok and Mainta Kakuri model villages (Musa, 2016).

The Nigerian government has been in partnership with donor agencies and NGOs for the reconstruction of the Northeast battered by Boko Haram terrorists. The World Bank provided Nigeria with a loan assistance of $575 million for the purpose of implementing the Recovery and Peace Building
in the Northeast (RPBN). The recovery plan involves financing projects in the areas of health, education, social protection and agriculture (World Bank, 2018).

The World Bank also evolved the Multi-Sectoral Crisis Recovery Project (MCRP) to support the Nigerian government in improving the livelihood of people in conflict zones, and enhancing social cohesion through reconstruction, rehabilitation and delivery of services to communities ravaged by Boko Haram. The World Bank assisted Nigeria with $200 million to implement the MCRP (World Bank, 2018).

As part of its contributions to the reconstruction of the Northeast, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) assisted in the area of education in Boko Haram affected states. UNICEF and its partners enrolled 750,000 children in schools, built 350 temporary learning spaces and distributed 94,000 packs of learning materials to pupils (UNICEF, 2019).

The European Union Humanitarian Aid Operations (EUHO) rehabilitated five boreholes that pump water from Gumsuri to Damboa to alleviate water shortage in the town, which also hosts over 20,000 displaced persons. So also, the European Union trained 70 staff of the Borno State Ministry for Water Resources on skills needed for efficient utilization and management of water networks in the state. The EU in conjunction with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and local donors established Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) which is a rural based social safety net (Jonathan, 2019).

The VSLAs were formed in Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa states in which 4,000 members mostly IDPs benefited from soft loans to enhance their businesses with 80% loan repayment recorded (Jonathan, 2019).

The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and its technical partner the Danish Demining Group have been operating in the three states most affected by Boko Haram in the Northeast since 2015. The Danish Refugee Council depends on funding from donors such as the Danish Government, United Kingdom, European Union, United States, World Food Programme and Switzerland. The DRC is undertaking relief activities in 20 Local Government Areas in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states (DRC, 2019).

The Danish Refugee Council is engaged in assisting IDPs and communities affected by the conflict through the provision of shelter, food, water and sanitation as well as mine detection. It also gave support for empowerment to the tune of $28.5 million to 248,212 persons in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe (BAY) to enhance their economic base and businesses (DRC, 2017).

A foundation known as the Victims Support Fund (VSF) has been in the forefront in efforts to rehabilitate victims of Boko Haram insurgency and reconstruct the region. The foundation is led by Dr. Sunday Ochoche. The foundation’s focus includes agriculture, empowerment programme and infrastructure. The foundation renovated and commissioned the Bulumkutu Rehabilitation Center (BRC) which is a de-radicalization institution for 1,300 Boko Haram repentants (The Guardian, 2018).

The Victims Support Fund also provides medical services to victims of attacks. It gave medical assistance to over 12,000 injured persons in the Northeast. The fund also earmarked N120 million to support 7,000 widows and vulnerable women in Boko Haram affected communities. The fund also donated N2 billion to the Safe School Initiative for the provision of security for schools in the region (The Guardian, 2018).
The drive by the Nigerian government and its partners to reconstruct the Northeast is hampered by sporadic attacks by remnants of Boko Haram especially in Borno and Adamawa states. The resettlement of IDPs in Borno Northern Senatorial District and Adamawa Northern Senatorial District is obstructed by insurgents. This is indeed a serious setback to the reconstruction efforts. The Nigerian security forces should endeavour to secure the areas under terrorists constant attacks in order to give peace a chance. According to the Member Representing Gwoza, Damboa and Chibok in the Federal House of Representatives Ahmadu Jaha:

"Boko Haram insurgents are occupying eight of the 10 local government areas in the northern part of the state. In a local government that has 13 electoral wards like my own Gwoza, only three or four wards are not under the occupation of Boko Haram" (cited in Alkassim, 2019, p. 2).

This scenario frustrates the efforts of Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations in their attempt to rebuild the Northeast. Security concerns to lives pose a great challenge to the reconstruction of the Northeast.

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

The Federal Government of Nigeria and state governments affected by Boko Haram insurgency have instituted state driven programmes and projects for the reconstruction of the Northeast. The efforts of the government is in conjunction with donor agencies and NGOs to fast track the resettlement of IDPs, rebuilding of houses, medical facilities, schools, empowerment programmes and de-radicalization of repentant Boko Haram members. The reconstruction efforts are gaining momentum, but sporadic Boko Haram attacks on some villages and towns is hampering the reconstruction plan.

The paper recommends the following:

i. The federal government should re-evaluate, fund and re-energize the Nigerian military to enable it surmount Boko Haram security challenge in the Northeast.

ii. The federal government should fast track the humanitarian and reconstruction efforts to enable the internally displaced to return to their homes.

iii. The State Governments of Yobe and Adamawa should endeavour to provide funds for reconstruction programmes in their states and not to leave it for the NGOs alone.

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