

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGOS) & BORNO STATE ECONOMY A “BLESSING” OR A “CURSE”

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ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to examine the impact of Non-Governmental Organization on the Borno State economy. Borno state has been bedeviled with the activities of the insurgence since 2009 which has led to loss of lives & properties. The state resources has been overstretched, thus the NGOs came in to assist which can be viewed as the state is now witnessing “NGOs’ Boom”. However, the paper revealed that the activities of the NGOs’ in the state are considered as “two-side of the same coin” which implies that it can be viewed as a blessing and curse’. Amongst such blessing are as thus; job creation, boost to revenue generation, food & cash subsidy, provision of health & educational facilities etc which as their activities is considered as a curse because it has resulted to the following; increased in the price of food stuff, rent, decline in standard of living, hotel accommodation, decline in state productivity etc. The study concludes that the negative aspect is virtually on the same scale or gradually beclouding the positive aspect of NGOs activities in the state due to the fact their purchasing pattern on essential commodities & services has further increase price level. The study further recommends that the BOSG should have a roadmap on the areas where the NGOs’ services is highly required, the state government should make offices available for them, They (NGOs) should work alongside with relevant ministries that tally with their core objectives so that progress report can be easily ascertained on their activities, and they should endeavor to bring in their food stuffs from nearby states so that the supply deficit in food stuff can be filled etc.

Keywords: NGOs, Boko Haram, Borno state, Blessing, Curse

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Borno state popularly called “Home of Peace” was created on 03rd, February, 1976. It has 27 LGAs’ and shares boundaries with Niger, Chad, Cameroon, Adamawa, Gombe, and Yobe. The state has a population of about 5,925,668 with Agriculture and livestock farming as its main stay.¹ The state has witnessed peace in the past apart from the Maitasine crisis of 1980’s. Though, other

minor religious and political crisis or riot was recorded, but they were all contained within a shortest period of time.

But what finally broke the camel’s back was the Boko Haram crisis which started in 2009. Boko Haram is a nickname that was labeled to a militant group which in Hausa means “Western education is a sin”, is a jihadist militant organization based in the northeast of Nigeria’ North Cameroon and Niger. The group original name is “Congregation and People of Tradition for Proselytism

¹ FocusNigeria.com(2008). Borno State-Nigeria. Available at [http: www.focusNigeria.com/Borno-state.html](http://www.focusNigeria.com/Borno-state.html). Retrieved on 16/06/2017. 11:08am

and Jihad” (*Jamā'a Ahl al-sunnah li-da'wa wa al-jihād*). It was founded by Mohammed Yusuf in 2001.²

The Boko Haram crises resulted to the death of about 20,000 citizens, over 1M displaced persons and properties (ies) worth \$5.9b were lost³. All efforts to contain this crisis by deploying all the state security apparatus, it still persist gradually but not as compared to 2009. Though, their strength has been decimated by the security operatives deployed to curb the menace.

Amidst, this crisis and to bring succor to the people the government set up IDP camps in the state so that the welfare of these displaced persons are given urgent attention. To assist the government in this regard, taken into cognizance the burden (funds and manpower), the Non-Governmental Organization which is popularly called NGOs' came in to rescue. However, it pertinent to note, that some NGO's have been existing in the state even before the crises. Though, the concept “NGO” became more popular amongst residents recently and which is considered as “NGO's Boom” in the state.

NGOs' are not for profit organization that is independent from state and international organization. They are usually funded by donations and are run by volunteers. NGO came be in different forms; By orientation (Eg, Charitable, Service, participatory, Empowering Orientation NGOs') and by level of operations (Eg. Community based, Citywide, State, National and International NGO's)⁴.

In Borno state, they have about 126 NGOs⁵ to provide humanitarian services to hundreds of thousands of

the internally displaced persons taking refuge within and outside the government designated camps. That is over 1.7M residents in about 20 LGA's of the state while about 4M are faced with food insecurity which are mostly women and children. With this figure of IDPs, the state is now considered third position globally after Syria and Afghanistan.⁶

Consequently, for every one (1) NGOs equals to about 13,500 and 31,746 for internal displaced persons (IDP's) and those faced with food insecurity respectively. By and large, the NGOs presence in the state is well noticed by all individuals and so also their impacts.

2.0 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Conceptual Review of NGO

There is no conclusive definition of the concept of NGO but an NGO should have the following features; engaging in suffering relief activities, promoting interest of the poor, protecting the environment, providing basic social services and advocating community development⁷.

Halim (1993) gave a broader definition of NGO to refers as associations that are voluntarily formed by individuals for the purpose of rendering welfare and development services outside Government structures; drawing funds from national or international sources; and functioning within the legal frame work of the country. According to World Bank, they defined NGO to include many groups and institutions that are entirely or largely independent of Government and that have primarily humanitarian or cooperative rather than commercial objectives. They are private agencies in industrial countries that support international development; indigenous group organized regionally or nationally; and member-groups in villages.

² Wikipedia (2017). Boko Haram. https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boko_Haram . Retrieved on 30/09/2017. 01:43am

³ Vanguard Newspaper(2016). Borno State: “Counting The cost of Insurgency”. Post Insurgency Recovery & Peace Building Assessment Report Presented by BOSG to World Bank. Available at; www.vanguardngr.com/2016/03/orno-state-counting-the-cost-of-insurgency/ . Retrieved on 16/06/2017. 11:08am

⁴ Wikipedia (2017). Non-Government Organisation. <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Non-governmental-organisation> . Retrieved on 16/06/2017. 11:26am

⁵ DailyTrust (2017). “How 126NGOs make life easy, difficult in Maiduguri”. Available at: <http://www.dailytrust.com.ng/news/feature/How-126-ngos-make-life-easy-difficult-in-maiduguri/185606.html> . Retrieved on 16/06/2017. 11:08am

⁶ Economic Confidential(2016). “Dangote donates N2billion to Borno IDPs. Available at: <https://economicconfidential.com/news/national-news/dangote-donates-n2bn-borno-idps/> . Retrieved on 27/06/2017. 9:25am

⁷ Mansour, E.Z. “Role of NGOs in Development”. Department of Public Administration. Panjab University, Chandigarh. India. Slide 4

2.2 Variations of NGOs

There exist different variations of Non Governmental Organization (NGOs). Amongst such variation include⁸:-

- i. BINGO (Business-friendly International NGO or Big International NGO). Example of such variation is the Red Cross which is considered as the biggest NGO in the world.
- ii. ENGO (Environmental NGO). Example of such is the World Wildlife Fund.
- iii. GONGO (Government operated NGO). This is not an NGO but organizations set up by the government with attributes of an NGO to enable it achieve some agenda.
- iv. INGO (International NGO). Example of such variants is OXFAM
- v. QUANGO (Quasi-autonomous NGO). This type of variant involves governmental members. For Example the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).
- vi. RINGO (Religious International NGO). Example of such variant includes the catholic Relief Services or Islamic Relief Organization.

However, there are other NGO acronyms such as DONGO (Donor Organized NGO), TANGO (Technical Assistance NGO) and MANGO (Market advocacy NGO).

⁸ Magaret, R (2017). "NGO (Non Governmental Organisation)". Available at: <http://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/NGO-non-governmental-organisation>. Retrieved on 27/09/2017. 09:23pm

2.2 Categories of NGOs

NGO are of different categories depending on their objectives or purpose. The categories of NGO are as thus

- i. **Operational NGOs:** This type of NGO primary focus is to plan and execute development associated projects. Eg. Centre for Development and Population activities.
- ii. **Advocacy NGOs:** Their Primary focus is to defend and promote a particular cause and who seek to influence the policies and practices of countries. Eg. Amnesty International
- iii. **Humanitarian NGOs:** This type of NGO primary objective is to provide support in disaster or crisis areas and alleviate suffering from poverty and any outbreak. Eg. Red Cross, Medecins Sans Frontiers, Norwegian Refugee Council, Action against Hunger etc.

2.3 Target of the NGOs

The targets of the NGOs are as thus⁹:- Community health promotion and Education such as hygiene and waste disposals, Managing emerging health crises such as HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis B etc, Community social problems such as juvenile crimes, run-away, street children, prostitution etc, Environmental (Sustainable water and energy resources), Economic such as micro loans, skills training, financial education and consulting, Development such as school and infrastructure construction and Women issues such as women and children rights, counseling, and literacy issues etc.

⁹ Mansour, E.Z." Role of NGOs in Development". Department of Public Administration. Panjab University, Chandigarh. India. Slide 8

2.4 Different NGOs Roles

The roles of NGOs can be coined as 3p's + T which means protection, prevention, promotion and transformation.

- i. **Protection:** This involves providing relief to victims of disaster and assisting the poor which is seen as "Give a man a Fish".
- ii. **Prevention:** This also involves reducing peoples vulnerability through income diversification and savings which can be seen as "Teach a Man to Fish".
- iii. **Promotion:** This comprises of activities that is aimed at increasing peoples chances and opportunities which can be viewed as "Organise a Fishermans' Co-op"
- iv. **Transformation:** this has to do with redressing social, political and economic exclusion or oppression. In other words means protect fishing and fishing right"

2.5 Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) and Economy

Kabir (2013) examine the Impacts of NGOs on the Socio-Economic Situation of the Poor: A Case Study in Rajshahi City, Bangladesh. Data were collected through face to face interview and have been analyzed on a comparative basis. For this, a total of 460 respondents were interviewed from Rajshahi City Cooperation and Puhita Upa Zilla, percentage distribution, mean and STD. Deviation, graph and chi-square test method is used to analyze the data. The study results show that, the socio-economic situations of the poor both in urban and rural area, being developed through the programs taken by the NGOs.

Ime (2014) The Role of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) In Participatory and Sustainable Rural Economic Development in Nigeria. They assert that role played by government has failed at addressing the key issues in rural economic development. It is therefore, the responsibility of the Non-governmental Organisations

(NGOs) who can penetrate the rural communities to engage them in participatory development process for the rapid development of the rural areas. The study recommends that it is the rural dwellers alone who can effectively identify their own problems and adequately identify their perceived needs. It therefore, becomes imperative that they be involved in the design and implementation of development programmes meant to improve their welfare, thus they contributes to sustainable rural development

Neelima (2013) examine the role of NGOs in socio-economic development of Jharkhand An overview. The NGO sector has been recognized as a crucial partner, recognizing the strengths of the NGOs in organizing the community and the potential in saving and credit programmes (both under the linkage programme and other credit delivery innovations. (Laxmi R.Kulshresth et.al - 2002). The voluntary agencies played an important role in developing programmes for the poor, the destitutes, women and children.

Yawa & Andrew (1994) The Role of Non-governmental Organisations in Rural Development: The Case of the Voluntary Workcamps Association of Ghana The study explains how the Voluntary Workcamps Association of Ghana(VW AG) contributes to rural development by mobilising the youth to provide free services during their leisure time. The paper contends that local non-governmental organisations can player pivotal role in rural development as a supplement to the efforts of the movement. The main purpose of this paper was to highlight the role of the Voluntary Workcamps Association of Ghana and the positive contributions that it has made to rural development in Ghana. The study has shown that the VW AG, with no design experts, no field directors and without financing projects, is able to mobilize the youth and rural people to participate in projects initiated, designed and implemented by the rural beneficiaries.

The VW AG has made it possible for local communities with limited financial resources to build capital infrastructure in the rural areas. Through the nature of its membership, cost savings generated by its involvement in rural projects, and the participation of the rural people in their own projects, the VW AG has been able to create a niche for itself in supplementing the efforts of the government in rural development

3.0 NGOS' AND ITS IMPACT ON BORNO STATE ECONOMY

No doubt that the Borno state economy has not felt the impact of the activities of the NGOs. The blessing aspects of the activities of the NGOs' are thus.

3.1.1 Positive Impacts- "Blessings" of the activities of NGOs in the state

The blessings aspect of their activities are as follows:-

i. Employment Creation

Borno state has an unemployment rate of 29.1%¹⁰ and is considered as amongst states with high unemployment rate in the country. However, the existing state structure is very minimal to accommodate this unemployed youth is too minimal, this is largely attributed due to low-economic growth, Low level of industrialization, activities of the insurgence, low level of Human Development Index (HDI), poor governance etc. with the influx of NGOs in the state, No doubt, their activities have created employment amongst the teaming unemployed individuals directly or indirectly in the state. That is they create this employment in two ways. Firstly, they provide employment in their own organization since they also require human resource to operate. Secondly, they provide loans and management assistance to individuals, which create new employment opportunity. Consequently, with the spread of NGOs' across the LGAs of the state now, it will further create more employment as manpower will be required.

ii. Revenue Generation

The presence of NGOs' in the state has also boasted the revenue stream of the government. For instance, they are all expected to remit the Personal Income Tax (PIT) of all their workers to the State Internal Revenue Board and also all their value chain like contractors (Value Added Tax), Landlord

(Withholding Tax from rent) etc are also expected to be remitted to both State & Federal Internal Revenue Boards.

iii. Food & Cash Subsidy

Food is considered as a basic necessity of life because without food, man is likely to die. Thus, NGOs citing the relevance of this commodity has succeeded in distributing staple foods like rice, ugar, maggi and Semovita etc to the people (vulnerable) of the state so as to ensure that the level of hunger is reduce to the barest minimum. In addition, they have also distributed little cash like micro credits or loan via the cash based transfers (CBT) to this category of persons to enable them buy other minor items that they can use to complement the processing of the food items collected.

iv. Provision of Health Services

Borno state belongs to a zone with one of the worst mortality indices in the country. Infant mortality stands at 109/1000LB while under five mortality is 222/1000LB. Mortality ratio is taken as 545/100000LB. The state is also prone to epidemic attacks of bacterial and viral origin such as meningitis, cholera and measles and also it has contributes to the 2-6% North East range of HIV/AIDS prevalence rate.¹¹NGO's have really complement the state government in the provision of health services not only to the Internally displaced persons but also to other residents in the state via the provision of vaccines, drugs, health workers etc. This has assist in minimizing the malnutrition rate and other related illness with a view of improving on the health indices.

v. Provision of Educational services

The literacy rate of Borno state is about 14.5%¹² which implies that about 85.5% are illiterate. This figure calls for concern but with the insurgence it became worse because public schools (Primary & Secondary) within the metropolis were shut down for

¹⁰ National Bureau of Statistics(2011). Report on NBS Harmonized Nigeria Standard Survey-HNLSS. In Eme, O.I (2014). "Unemployment rate in Nigeria: Agenda for Govt. Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary studies.3(4).

¹¹ Borno State Government (2015). Strategic Health Development Plan (2010-2015). Borno State Ministry of Health. "Health Status of the Population" Pp.9-18

¹² UNESCO(2012). High Level International round table on Literacy. National Literacy Action Plan 2012-2015. Paris 6-7 Sept, 2012. Available at:www.unesco.org>multimedia>pdf. Retrieved on 16/05/2017. 8:00pm

almost 2years and while schools located in LGAs was closed for over 3years. Citing this situation, the NGOs has also succeeded in supporting the education of the IDPs providing relevant teaching and learning materials like book, pencils, bags and aid teachers etc however, this gesture is not limited to IDPs' alone as students of public schools are also beneficiaries.

vi. **Boast to Business/Economic Activities**

Borno State is known to be a civil servant state as its only when salaries are paid that the business activities are gingered but with NGOs' flooding of the state, the entire business units is witnessing a boast. For instance, increased patronage in hotel, flight operations, food stuffs, provision stores, taxi and tricycle operations, restaurants etc. In fact a new form of business has emerged like car hire services.

3.1.2 Negative Impacts- "Curse" of the activities of NGOs in the state

Having considered the positive impact of the activities of the NGOs, we shall also look as some of the reasons why we see the activities of the NGOs' as a curse because it gradually beclouding the blessing aspect.

i. **Increased in prices of Commodities (Food Stuff)**

The activities of NGOs has further resulted to an increased in food commodities in the market. This is because most of them purchase these goods in bulk with little or no bargaining not minding that there is a supply deficit in terms of food supply in the state due to the insurgency. Due, to their purchasing pattern, they are now considered as preferred buyers in the market against other buyers as these sellers make huge profit from them.

Consequently, major market dealers prefer to hoard their products for the NGOs no matter how long it will take rather than reselling them to retailers. These scenarios tend create artificial scarcity and which will lead to increase in the prices of such food stuff. Therefore, it will be advisable for NGO's to purchase their food commodities outside the state so that the supply deficit can be filled hence leading to the reduction in prices.

In addition, for instance due to the intermittent supply of power supply in the state, this NGOs sort to

use stand by Generators. But one fact is that due to their bulk purchase of this product it has made the price of diesel not to drop compare to other states. This has also affected other organizations and SMEs in terms of its cost of doing business and this suppliers' believes that if you don't buy, the NGOs will buy it all at their preferred prices. Therefore, this will affect the price of this product produced by the SME's which the ordinary consumer will be meant to bear at the end.

ii. **Increased in Rent/Accommodation**

It is assumed that the NGO's assignment or task in a particular location is temporary; hence there is no need to have their own built offices (Freehold office). With NGOs' flooding the state, it has affected the price of rent. That is, they pay exorbitant amount as rent which now drive land lords crazy. Even banks operating in the state cannot afford to pay such amount. This has resulted to landlord evacuating their tenants from their houses thereby causing an untold hardship on residents with the argument that they want to rent it to NGOs. In the words of Gov. Kashim Shettima" *They make home more expensive than Maitama in Abuja*" .¹³ In addition, most of their rent tenure in which these NGOs pays usually exceed 2 years. This is as if they don't have plans of returning back or is it how we are going to continue or will this insurgence not end in a shortest period of time?

Also, No doubt that their influx into Maiduguri has boasted the hotel business in the state because most hotel in the state are fully occupied for almost a more than a year, hence this tend to affect other visitors coming into the state for official and unofficial businesses or festivities. Consequently, this situation has made the price of other hotels accommodation in the state to rise since the 3 and 5 star hotels in the state are fully booked.

¹³DailyTrust (2017). "How 126NGOs make life easy, difficult in Maiduguri". Available at: <https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/news/feature/How-126-ngos-make-life-easy-difficult-in-maiduguri/185606.html>. Retrieved on 16/06/2017. 11:08am

iii. Reduction in Productivity of Public Institutions

The activities of the NGO's have created many vacuums in key areas like education, health and the civil service in the state because most of the teachers, lecturers, doctors, nurses, civil servant in these public institutions now abandon their primary responsibilities for the NGO jobs taking into cognizance that their working condition is far better than what the state government offers. This as well affects the students and patients in these hospitals and on the overall the state productivity. Hence, the need for these NGOs to review their recruitment strategies so as not create loopholes in the existing state structures.

iv. Reduction in the Standard of Living

With the increased in the price of food stuffs and other services in the state despite the decline in the exchange rate without a corresponding increase in income (Salary which is fixed), this will affect the standard of living of the people because there is a reduction in their purchasing power. Consequently, this will result to an increased in the poverty because those that are above the poverty line (about \$1.25 per day) will be forced to drop below while those below the poverty line will be soaked deeply taking into cognizance that their purchasing power has reduced.

4.0 CONCLUSION

There is no gain saying that the activities of the NGOs have no positive impact on the state economy, though, there are some negative impacts which mostly affects the basic necessitates of the people like Food, shelter etc and its determinant is mostly prices. And the price is now exorbitant because a franchise called NGOs buys in bulk no matter the price at the expense of the little purchase by the poor citizens. This is against the back drop that most of the NGOs are foreign based so also their funding and the exchange rate of the Naira against the major foreign currencies (USD, Euro, Pounds etc) is nothing to write home about, thus make them to have more money at their disposal to spend. Couple with the fact that the major market players in the state are taking advantage of the NGOs' by exploiting from them at the expense of the normal residents, this denies the

normal residents access to this goods & service because of low level of income.

In lieu of that, the NGOs needs to trade with caution in its activities so as not to worsen the market position of the state as this will end up throwing more residents below the poverty line and those below it will fall deeply, thus it will reflect as a double standard from their own part.

In the words of Gov. Shettima" *The huge chunk of what they(NGOs) are budgeting for Borno goes to service overheads" , The NGO are in the habit of using the name of Borno to make money and enrich themselves" , "we have become cash cow" , People are smiling their ways to the bank from the agony of our people. This is unacceptable.*¹⁴

4.1 Recommendations

From the foregoing, below are the recommendations so as to tackle these loopholes in their operations:-

- i. The BOSG should have a roadmap on the areas where the NGOs' services is highly required and also to share tasks according to the objectives of this NGO's. This is done to avoid too much concentration of various NGO on a particular issue.
- ii. The BOSG has a lot of offices or buildings that it can allocate to these registered NGOs so that the huge amount of money had been spent on rent can be rechanneled to address better issues.
- iii. The NGOs should work alongside with relevant ministries that tally with their core objectives so that progress report can be easily ascertained on their activities.

¹⁴ International Centre for Investigative Reporting (2017)." Borno Governor Attacks Aid Agencies, NGOs Again. Available at: <https://icirnigeria.org/orno-governor-attacks-aid-agencies-ngos/>. Retrieved 24/06/2017. 06:32am

- iv. The NGOs should endeavor to bring in their food stuffs from nearby states so that the supply deficit in food stuff can be filled. This will further results to a reduction in price of food items.
- v. The NGOs should ensure that their recruitment requirements or criteria's are reviewed so as to screen out those who are gainfully employed as they want to use the NGOs job for a back up.
- vi. They should also endeavor to recruit more of fresher's so that they can train them to their taste to enable them engage him or her in their job rather than doing a brain drain from other sectors of the state.
- vii. Proper market intelligence needs to be carried out so as to avoid flooding the market with more money and thereby distorting the price position of good & devices.
- viii. The BOSG should ensure proper monitoring of their tax payments so that their Personal Income Tax, Withholding Tax, Value Added Tax are properly remitted.
- ix. The people of the state have culture, so they (NGOs) should ensure that they operate within the arm bit of the peoples culture.

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