

Peacebuilding: Meeting the Challenges of Sustainable Entrepreneurship Development in the Post-Boko Haram Conflict in North Eastern Nigeria

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Abstract: *All societies and nations need peace to exist and develop. However, peace is often violated due to conflicts, violent extremism, terrorism and insecurity arising from youth unemployment, poverty, gender imbalance, economic and political exclusion, faith-based intolerance, low level of education, ethnicity, corruption, inadequate room for creativity and innovation among others. These vices have brought negative consequences on economic development of many African nations including Nigeria. The North Eastern region of Nigeria is in a post-conflict situation after it has been devastated by conflict, violent extremism and terrorism occasioned by the insurgent activities of Boko Haram since 2009. How can this area return to peace? This is where the problem lies. The objective of the paper therefore is to link peacebuilding to entrepreneurship development theoretically using youth empowerment and the contributions of local entrepreneurs as examples. To accomplish this objective, the paper uses secondary data sourced from the works of Galtung, Ayuba and the United Nations. Literature review indicates that youth empowerment and local entrepreneurs can contribute in sustaining peace in this region. It recommends among others that government and other organizations should continue to assist in empowering youth while local entrepreneurs should actively support entrepreneurship development in order to reduce poverty, increase house hold incomes and sustain peace in the area.*

Keywords: *Boko-Haram, Conflict, Empowerment, Entrepreneurship, Peacebuilding, Poverty, Terrorism*

I. Introduction

There is no gain in saying that the world has become generally less peaceful in recent times. The decrease in peacefulness has reversed a long time trend in peaceful coexistence since the end of the Cold War. Many countries of the world are engulfed in one form of conflict: violence, terrorism, civil unrest, insecurity and insurgency resulting to deaths and increase in the number of refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs). The number and intensity of the high profile conflict extremism, violence, terrorism and civil unrest has had a detrimental effect on peace and development in many developing countries including Nigeria. Conflict extremism, terrorism etc are capable of destroying both human and physical capital as well as economic and financial institutions. Further, it can lead to disruption in consumption, investment, business and trade, production and divert investment from productive areas of development including entrepreneurship development, education, infrastructure, and health into areas of violence containment: security, high prison population etc. The cost of conflict extremism, violence and terrorism on a society and a nation is significantly very high (Galtung, 1969).¹

Peace is therefore an essential prerequisite because without peace, it will not be possible to achieve the level of cooperation, trust and inclusiveness necessary to solve our challenges and empower our institutions and organizations. In post-conflict societies and nations like the North Eastern region of Nigeria, peacebuilding offers itself as an important option for rehabilitation, integration and economic recovery. Peacebuilding and entrepreneurship development has been evolving as the dynamics of the global environment dictates. While entrepreneurship on one hand has offered employment to many people, increase income of many households and adds value to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of many nations, peacebuilding on the other hand has expanded beyond the United Nations popularized definition of “action to solidify peace and avoid relapse into conflict” (Evans et al, 2013)² to a holistic understanding of the needs for security, justice, political stability, socio-economic recovery and sustaining peace. There is now a growing awareness both at the national and global levels that to establish a lasting and objective peace and sustainable development requires marshalling more activities that cut across many domains. Entrepreneurship development is one of such emerging domains especially in Africa where violent extremism, conflicts, insecurity, insurgency, youth unemployment, dependency syndrome, corruption, economic inequality and poverty have already taken the centre stage and destroyed not only the economic but also the political, cultural and social fabrics of many countries.

Taking the North Eastern region of Nigeria, this paper therefore provides a framework that is intended to show how peacebuilding is linked to sustainable entrepreneurship development. Since Boutros-Ghali’s

(1992)³ Agenda for Peace, peacebuilding as a process has continued to evolve to encompass state-building activities and those activities that aim at strengthening the socio-economic aspects of the society. To this the United Nations definition could be expanded to include actions and principles that seek to address the root causes of conflict, insecurity, insurgency and violent extremism in order to build or rebuild social relationships and structures capable of sustaining peace (Brabani, 2010).⁴

Conflict, violent extremism, insecurity and terrorism affects to socio-economic development of nations. Peace therefore becomes inevitable for sustainable economic development including entrepreneurship. Literature indicates that regions and countries with high profiles of violent extremism and insecurity experience low economic activities and lack sustainable livelihood opportunities including entrepreneurship development. As a result these countries are poor compared to those that do not experience conflict, insecurity and violence (World Bank, 2011)⁵ and Barnett et al (2007)⁶ like Japan, the USA, Korea, Britain etc. The 2009 UN Secretary General's Report on Peacebuilding set out five priority areas for interventions in post-conflict contexts: establishing security, building confidence in a political process, delivering initial peace dividends, and expanding core national capacity (UN, 2009).⁷ Explicitly, economic and entrepreneurship dividends fall under priority three: delivering initial peace dividends.

Since then a lot of researches have been carried out linking peacebuilding to education, gender, community development, security, human rights and children (World Bank, 2011).⁸ However, as stated earlier, few of such researches link peacebuilding to sustainable entrepreneurship development. Peacebuilding efforts have impacted positively on the economy of some African nations like Mozambique, Burundi, Rwanda, Bourkina Fasso, Liberia, Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo etc

In Nigeria, conflict, violence and insecurity occasioned by the activities of Boko Haram insurgency in the North Eastern region appear to be the primary challenge in recent time and a very significant factor militating against development including sustainable entrepreneurial activities that would have reduced poverty in the region. The challenge of development has been further compounded by the following drivers of conflict, extreme violence and insecurity: youth unemployment, lack of empowerment (dependency syndrome), poverty, political exclusion and corruption, inadequate room for creativity and innovation, gender inequality, high rate of illiteracy, ethnic diversity and religious intolerance. These drivers are certainly responsible for the woes in this region.

At present peace is gradually returning to North Eastern Nigeria and peacebuilding becomes inevitable to restore enduring peace and kick-start development. Peacebuilding as use in this context is anchored on activities that seek to address the root causes or potential causes of violence, creating a societal expectation for peaceful conflict resolution and of course, stabilizing the society socio-economically, religiously and politically (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peacebuilding>), Galtung (1975),⁹ Boutros-Ghali (1999),¹⁰ Michael, (2001)¹¹ and Sandole (2010)¹².

II. Statement of the Problem

Conflict and violence including insurgency have led to the collapse of political, social, cultural and economic structures in many parts of the world including Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Sudan, Central African Republic and Democratic Republic of Congo. Economic and political activities would have collapsed completely in these countries but peacebuilding helped in restoring peace. In Nigeria, insecurity, conflict and violence due largely to the activities of insurgents have already taken the centre stage. In the economic structure for example, there is no gain in saying that business and entrepreneurship activities are badly affected. The North Eastern Nigeria appears to be worst affected because there is no peace in the sub-region. Since peacebuilding deals with complex of issues it requires a holistic understanding of the need for peace comprising security, youth empowerment, gender equality, religious tolerance, education, self-reliance, poverty eradication and other socio-economic, cultural and political recovery measures. While the relationship between conflict and development in general is recognized, the impact of peacebuilding and entrepreneurship development is not fully appreciated and realized. The North East Region as it stands today requires peaceful coexistence for business and entrepreneurship to thrive. The destruction of economic structures would further escalate conflict and violence.

Peace as a dividend for entrepreneurship development offers itself as an alternative to conflict, violence and insurgency. However, the dimensions of peace that may contribute to entrepreneurship development in North Eastern Nigeria have been neglected in a number of frameworks and plans. The problem of this research lies in finding solutions to ensure peace so that entrepreneurship may develop in the sub-region. In summary therefore, the problem this paper attempts to investigate is how the drivers of conflict would be addressed to avoid a relapse of conflict and to sustain peace. The problem also bothers on how peacebuilding activities could be linked to entrepreneurship development with the hope of reducing unemployment and gender inequality, increasing self-reliance, poverty reduction, managing diversity, religious tolerance and ethnic differences in Nigeria with specific reference to North Eastern Nigeria.

III. Research Objective

The general objective of the paper is to examine how youth empowerment and the contributions of local entrepreneurs would facilitate sustainable peace in the post-Boko Haram conflict in North Eastern Nigeria.

IV. Premise of the Paper

Since 2009, Boko Haram insurgency and associated conflicts have claimed over 50,000 lives, properties worth billions of dollars destroyed, displaced over 1.6 million people with physical and mental trauma are living in camps and crippled socio-economic activities in North Eastern Nigeria. This is therefore premised on the following significant issues:

Peacebuilding differs from other components to peace: peacemaking and peacekeeping. It is a post-conflict situation, reconstruction, rehabilitation and in order to sustain peace, peacebuilding is considered as an emerging concept in peace process. Since it aims to forestall the occurrence of future conflict, the paper would seek to determine the root causes that usually bring about conflict in this region focusing on two outcomes: to increase the inclusion of conflict reduction variables as mentioned above into peacebuilding and conflict reduction strategies, analysis and implementation and to increase institutional capacities to enhance entrepreneurship development in the area under consideration (or investigation). Towards this end, the paper will project peacebuilding variables and show how they could be strengthened for entrepreneurship development namely: youth empowerment, women, faith-based institutions, educational institutions and local entrepreneurs and so on. Emphasis would be placed on youth empowerment and the contributions of local entrepreneurs as stated in the research objective above.

Peace as a dividend for business and entrepreneurship development offers itself as an alternative to conflict, violence and insurgency. However, the dimensions of peace that may contribute to entrepreneurship development in this zone have been neglected in a number of frameworks and plans. This paper therefore is significant in finding solutions to ensure and sustain peace after the Boko Haram conflict so that entrepreneurship and business activities may develop and prosper in the sub-region.

The choice of North Eastern Nigeria is significant. This is because the region is endowed with abundant and natural resources that can be tapped for entrepreneurship development. There are numerous business opportunities in agriculture: cattle rearing, fishing, and farming but it is very backward in entrepreneurship development compared to other geo-political regions in Nigeria. Since Nigeria is moving from oil to agriculture sector as a source of revenue, a research on peacebuilding and entrepreneurship development would challenge individuals in this region to see opportunities for poverty reduction and self-reliance to become entrepreneurs.

The research is also significant in the sense that it is coming at a time the Federal Government has set up a committee to reconstruct, rehabilitate and integrate the over 1.6m Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the region. This task is actually challenging. However, the committee could integrate the findings of this research in the task of rebuilding the region and bringing peace to the region since peacebuilding and development are intrinsically linked. It would also assist the committee in sourcing and applying funds effectively and efficiently. By so doing peacebuilding and development in general can be implemented jointly by parties that are involved for greater synergy and faster reconstruction, rehabilitation and reintegration. Further, considering the adage that "an idle man is a devil's workshop", the research is significant in the sense that peacebuilding efforts would improve household income as people especially youths and women would become entrepreneurs in agricultural products which are produced in large quantity in this region. They will no longer be completely dependent, become armed robbers and be available tools to be used and dumped as political thugs. This will further reduce the dependency syndrome which is a common phenomenon in the region.

V. Literature Review and Citations

Generally, the research proposal advances a case for peacebuilding as an emerging strategy for entrepreneurship development in North Eastern Nigeria (Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe States). Specifically, it targets certain outcomes including sustainable entrepreneurship development, poverty reduction, youth empowerment, gender equality, religious/diversity tolerance, formal training in educational institutions etc which have positive correlation to peacebuilding in post-conflict areas. Helping a region or society to rebuild and prevent future conflict, violence extremism and insecurity is an essential and effective part of peacebuilding in addition to traditional development activities that may be involved in peacemaking and peacekeeping, (Charles, 2000)¹³ and (Atack, 2004)¹⁴.

VI. Peace building

Peacebuilding is multidimensional. It is an overarching concept useful for describing a range of interrelated activities aimed at bringing peace: before, during and after a conflict. For this research, it is defined as a process that facilitates the establishment of durable peace and tries to prevent the reoccurrence of violence by addressing root causes and effects of conflict through reconciliation, institutional building and political as well as economic transformation. Peacebuilding activities address the root causes or potential causes of violence, create a societal expectation for peaceful conflict resolution and stabilize society politically and socioeconomically, Galtung (1969 & 1990).¹⁵ Paul Lederach sees peacebuilding from the perspective of engaging grassroots, local, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international and other actors to create sustainable peace process (Sandole, 2010)¹⁶ and (Schirch, 2013)¹⁷. Today peacebuilding can be defined as ‘‘the community of practice that includes actions and principles that seek to address the root causes of conflict in order to build social relationships and state structures capable of sustaining peace’’ (Brabant, 2010)¹⁸. From whatever perspective, peacebuilding is essential after a conflict has taken place as in the case of Boko Haram in North Eastern Nigeria.

6.1 Theoretical Framework

Within the broad and diverse field of peacebuilding process, there exist numerous underlying theories including the root causes/justice theory which seeks to address the underlying causes of conflict (war) such as injustice, oppression, lack of security and threat to social identity. There is also the individual change theory which seeks to transform individuals’ attitudes, behaviours and values that will lead to peace. Both theories are relevant for this research. A good model of peacebuilding should consider an integrated approach to peacebuilding: security, socio-economic foundations (entrepreneurship development), political framework and reconciliation/justice (Evans et al, 2013).¹⁹

6.2 Post-conflict peacebuilding in North Eastern Nigeria

This refers to non-military or civilian dimensions of both local and international efforts to support countries (regions or states) emerging from conflict. It is indeed the full range of non-military commitments undertaken by the international or local community to assist countries or regions to achieve self-sustaining peace and socioeconomic development. These dimensions may include designated units: Office of Transition Initiatives (USAID), Conflict and Human Affairs Division (DFID), Emergency Response Division (ERD) etc, new policy instruments and special funding mechanisms.

6.3 Boko Haram Conflict in North Eastern Nigeria

Boko Haram conflict (insurgency or terrorism) began in 2009 when a jihadist rebel group of young people started a rebellion against the inclusion of western curriculum in educational institutions in Nigeria and proceeded to launch series of attacks against the Nigerian government in Maiduguri, Borno State. Prior to these attacks, Nigeria has witnessed religious disturbances in the past like Maitatsine but the emergence of Boko Haram was clearly an armed conflict between the sect and the Nigerian Security Forces as exhibited in the intensity, sustainability, seriousness, geographical spread, the number of personnel involved on the side of Boko Haram and the Nigerian military, movements of arms, frequency of attacks and the number of innocent people killed by Boko Haram terrorists in the North Eastern part of Nigeria. Due to the intensity of Boko Haram the International Criminal Court (ICC) had to declare that the conflict was more of a civil war (ICC, 2013)²⁰.

Between 2009 and 2015, Boko Haram carried out deadly attacks on the peace loving people of North Eastern Nigeria. According to Global Terrorism Index (GTI), the number of deaths attributed to Boko Haram insurgency increased by 317percent in 2014 representing the largest increase in terrorist deaths recorded by any single country (GTI, 2014)²¹. By 2015 the number of deaths in the region was well over 50,000 people with over 1.6 million people displaced majority being women and children. While the attacks lasted, places of worship were destroyed; schools, markets places, motor parks, business centres, prison yards, police and army formations, palaces and personal houses were also destroyed in the process. Over 2000 people were massacred in Baga town and its environs within two days in Borno State, 276 school girls were abducted from school in Chibok, children were used as human shield while girls were used as suicide bombers! Bridges were cut off and travellers ambushed and either killed or taken to unknown destinations by Boko Haram. Some Nigerian military equipment was also seized by the insurgents. Many towns and villages were overrun and declared as Boko Haram territories with their head quarter in Mubi, Adamawa State. These deadly activities continued until after the elections of 2015 when these deadly activities started to slow down.

In his inaugural speech, President Muhammadu Buhari, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria reinstated his commitment to end the era of Boko Haram. Through assistance from armies from neighbouring countries: Chad, Cameroon and Niger it was obvious that Boko Haram would be pushed out of many towns they had captured in the region. The President started by relocating the military command centre to

Maiduguri, Borno State, the epicentre of Boko Haram and gave the military three months order (deadline) to 'wipe out the terrorist from Nigeria'. Strategically, counter-insurgency operations against Boko Haram focused on destroying the camps and safe havens such as the notorious Sambisa Forest where Boko Haram stored weapons and kept captives. With the enhanced United States of America (USA) and other international military and technical support and cooperation of other nations, several key and top Boko Haram commanders were killed or captured. By the end of 2015, the National Emergency Management Agency announced that there were no community that remained under the control of Boko Haram in North East region of Nigeria (UN, 2015)²² and NEMA (2016).²³

At the beginning of 2016, President M. Buhari declared that Boko Haram was "technically defeated" and went further to inaugurate a committee to reconstruct, rehabilitate and integrate the displaced people. One can safely say that the North Eastern region of the country is now a post-Boko Haram conflict area and relatively peaceful. This is the point and place where peacebuilding becomes essential to avoid a relapse into another conflict and for peace to rein once again. Peacebuilding is vital in this region especially when one considers the fact that in 2015, Nigeria was placed at 151 out of 162 countries surveyed on Global Peace Index Report (GPI, 2015)²⁴ and so need optimum environment for peace and for human potentials to flourish. As earlier stated, the North Eastern geo-political region of Nigeria is made up of six states: Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe. The principal occupation of the inhabitants is agriculture. There are over 100 ethnic groups. The religion of the people is Islam and Christianity. There are few tertiary institutions compared to other regions in the country. The region is well connected with a good net work of roads and is bordered externally by Chad, Niger and Cameroon Republics.

Since the region recovered from conflict as a result of Boko Haram terrorist activities, the Federal Government has set up a committee to reconstruct, rehabilitate and reintegrate the IDPs so that the region will be peaceful. It is against this backdrop that peacebuilding becomes imperative. After the end of violence, conflict and terrorist-related insecurity, ravaged infrastructure must be rebuilt, security and rule of law must be re-established, citizens' basic needs must be met and the economy must be restructured or revitalized in order to support long-term peace. Capital flights during conflicts of this nature result in an economy that has been lacking in investment over a long time. Many private investors are unwilling to invest in politically uncertain times that are characterized by continued physical insecurities, macro-economic instability, pervasive corruption, and weak governance and regulatory environments. Poor health resulting from improper health services, degradation of human capital during conflict, inadequate nutrition and physical and mental trauma sustained from conflict present further challenges to economic growth and development.

One of the key actors in post-conflict peacebuilding is entrepreneurship development that may result from the cause/justice and individual change theories of peacebuilding. As noted earlier, conflict may result from youth exclusion, gender inequality, religious intolerance, illiteracy, ethical diversity, poverty, unfair distribution of the "national cake" etc. Conflict destroys infrastructure, disrupts trade, distorts markets and can reverse decades of development. Drawing largely from the theories of change (Mercy Corps, 2011)²⁵, this research holds the view that: if private sector investment increases, support for peace will grow because the people who benefit economically from increased trade and business will have an incentive to maintain a peaceful enabling environment and if for example, young people are employed, they will be less likely to join violent movements for economic benefits.

Literature indicates that young people, women, faith-based organizations, traditional rulers, government officials, effective communication, community leaders, civil societies groups, educational institutions and local businessmen/entrepreneurs have played vital roles in peacebuilding and entrepreneurship development of post-conflict nations like Kenya, Uganda, Somalia, Rwanda etc. The research seeks to use specific methods of peacebuilding on which the progress of developing entrepreneurship after conflict can be premised.

VII. Entrepreneurship Development

Enterprises are crucial engines of economic growth and development. Without enterprise and entrepreneurs, there would be little innovation, little productivity growth and few jobs. With the challenges in the North Eastern region of Nigeria in particular and the global economy in general, entrepreneurship is one strategy that is deemed critical to enduring peace. Entrepreneurship is becoming increasingly important in the development of many countries' economic sectors. Many countries now prioritise the development of policies aimed at encouraging entrepreneurship (Drucker, 1999)²⁶ and Dugguh, (2012)²⁷ Dugguh (2013a 2013b, 2013c)²⁸. As a process of using private initiatives to transform a business concept into a new venture or to grow and diversify an existing venture or enterprise with high growth potential, entrepreneurs identify an innovation to seize an opportunity, mobilize resources, management skills and take calculated risks to open markets, new products, processes and services that would earn more money. It involves the destruction of the existing economic order by introducing new products and services, by introducing new methods of production, by

creating new forms of organization, or by exploiting new raw materials with value, Schumpeter, (1934),²⁹ Ayuba, (2012),³⁰ Bygrave & Zacharakis, (2010).³¹

Entrepreneurship development therefore is the process of enhancing entrepreneurial skills and knowledge through structured training and institution-building programmes. The major objective of entrepreneurship development is to enlarge the base of entrepreneurs in order to hasten the pace at which new ventures are created so that employment will be generated to foster economic development. Its main focus is on individual, who wishes to start, expand or innovate a business venture (Lalkaka & Lalkaka, 1999).³²

In Nigeria, studies have been carried out on effect of entrepreneurship development on the problem of high rate of unemployment, high poverty rate, slow economic development and so on, Adejumo, (2001)³³, Oyela et al., (2013)³⁴ and Salami, (2013)³⁵. However, none of these studies appears to be directed specifically towards using entrepreneurship development to foster peace after post-conflicts in any part of Nigeria. However, at the international level, entrepreneurship development has been used as a strategy for peace in Dafur, Somalia, Rwanda, Uganda, Tajikistan, Guatemala, Central African Republic, and so on (Peace & Justice, 2015)³⁶. Entrepreneurship development has been generally slow in Nigeria compared to countries like Uganda and Kenya. However, the Nigerian Government has demonstrated over the years the need for programmes for the development of entrepreneurship for the benefit of all Nigerians and encouragement of indigenous enterprises. Some of the programmes and institutions include: Small and Medium Industries Equity Investment Scheme, Bank of Industry, Nigerian Agricultural Cooperative Rural Development Bank, Microfinance Bank, National Directorate of Employment, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria, Establishment of Entrepreneurship Development Centres, Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria etc (Idam, 2014)³⁷.

In addition, other entrepreneurs like Aliko Dangote, Tony Elumelu and other international agencies have encouraged entrepreneurship development in Nigeria either through training or funding. However, none of these programmes and funding is specifically directed to peacebuilding in North Eastern Region of Nigeria where Boko Haram has ravaged economic development. Entrepreneurship theories applicable for this research include those of Hagen: converting a problem into profit making venture, Schumpeter: innovator and a 'game changer', and Weber: hard work. Applying these theories will contribute to sustainable entrepreneurial activities.

VIII. Peacebuilding and Entrepreneurship Development: Integration

Generally, peacebuilding has been achieved through economic development. Conflicts cause a lot of damage to different levels of development including entrepreneurship. Development generally refers to social, economic and political processes which aim to better the quality of life for humans. Essential to providing basic infrastructure and social cohesion at all levels, development initiatives aim to ensure that basic needs are being met and that sustainable livelihood opportunities are being offered including entrepreneurship skills: ability to convert a problem into an opportunity to make money, innovation and creativity, hard work, risk etc.

Entrepreneurship development issues become increasingly complicated during conflict. Lack of entrepreneurship development opportunities, poverty, unemployment are some of the risks associated with conflicts. Countries that have good entrepreneurship development programmes like Japan, Korea, USA, Britain etc are relatively peaceful when compared to those that do not have good entrepreneurship development culture. Conflict and entrepreneurship development can be connected in a feedback loop. Conflicts are threats to entrepreneurship development. Conversely entrepreneurship development helps to reduce conflict through peacebuilding interventions. As stated earlier, two aspects of conflict drivers: youth empowerment and local entrepreneurs will be discussed to support the linkage of peacebuilding to entrepreneurship development.

IX. Youth Empowerment

This is a process where children and young people are encouraged to take charge of their lives by addressing their situation and then take action in order to improve their access to resources and transform their consciousness through their beliefs, values and attitudes Ledford & Lucas (2013)³⁸. It is also regarded as the outcome by which youth, as change agents, gain the skills to impact their own lives and lives of other individuals, organizations and communities. At the individual level, it means exercising power over one's life by being skilled, critically aware, and active in creating community change. At the organizational and community levels, it is the implementation of a culture, vision and system that supports youth empowerment at the individual. They are further distinguished between youth development: developing the capacity of the individual youth and youth empowerment: creating greater community change that relies on the development of individual capacity.

Youth empowerment as a model is a three-way approach that engages young people in work that challenges them to develop skills, gain critical awareness and participate in opportunities that are necessary for creating community change. The model attempts to connect individual well being with the larger social and

political environment, and suggests that people need opportunities to become active in community decision making in order to improve their lives, organizations and communities. This can be achieved through:

- a. Skill Development: the process of strengthening the skills of youth so that they know how to effectively make decisions, positively interact with their peers, and as community advocates.
- b. Critical Awareness: The process of providing youth with the information and resources necessary for analyzing issues that affect their lives and environments as well as strategies on ways to act as change agents in their communities and
- c. Opportunities: the process of providing youth with platforms for decision-making and encouraging their active participation (involvement) in creating community change ([www.youthempoweredolutions](http://www.youthempoweredolutions.org))³⁹

In Nigeria, youth face challenges in terms of access to equal opportunities to jobs and exclusion in decisions which affect their lives. In order to address these challenges: meaningful civic, economic, social and political participation, a number of strategies are hereby suggested in line with the UNDP's Youth Strategy especially those geared towards poverty reduction and employment. These strategies aim at equipping vulnerable youth with marketing skills and supporting activities aimed at improving employment opportunities for youth and include:

- a. Food processing
- b. Tailoring/Knitting
- c. Auto mechanic
- d. Masonry
- e. Electronics repair
- f. Carpentry
- g. Metal work
- h. Computer skills
- i. Handset repairs
- j. Solar panels installation and maintenance
- k. Literacy and numeracy
- l. Hairdressing and barbing
- m. Pedicure/nail polish

The youth empowerment and skills training programs have been successfully carried out by Havoyoco: Horn of Africa Voluntary Youth Committee (www.havoyoco.org)⁴⁰

X. Contributions of Local Entrepreneurs

The contributions and importance of local entrepreneurs could be seen in the following perspectives:

- a. By assisting to the production and distribution of goods and services to satisfy certain needs at the community level. To this end, businesses have to be flexible and constantly seek new ways of satisfying consumer demands in the society. People get what they want 'around' them without necessarily going to distant markets for their needs.
- b. Local entrepreneurs also create jobs opportunities for people to be employed by business ventures and real goods and services. Such jobs include sales, processing, farming, teaching, transportation, fabrication, hairdressing, laundry etc.
- c. Local entrepreneurs also help to provide household income by paying salaries and making the whole community go round and so contribute to peace in a region. Workers spend the money they earn from entrepreneurs buying goods and services and further promote the development of other business ventures in the community. When people are employed, they spend money in other local businesses which in turn keep their local business flourishing. The new entrepreneur will also establish relationships with local suppliers, vendors and other businesses. New businesses will in turn spur new job creations and opportunities.
- d. Local entrepreneurs contribute to peacebuilding by their charitable contributions. These are social entrepreneurs (Dugguh, 2013)⁴¹. They provide, for example, invaluable advice to members of the community who are in doubt on what type of business to do.
- e. Local entrepreneurs can also contribute to peace by encouraging and mentoring members of the community and possibly assisting them with start up capital. Aliko Dangote, Tony Elumelu and other entrepreneurs have shown examples at the national level by providing funds for entrepreneurship development. Local entrepreneurs can copy from these gestures to assist potential as well as start-ups. One of the major challenges to entrepreneurship development in this region is start-up capital. Since the region is poor compared to other regions in the country, assisting aspiring young entrepreneurs with funding will help the growth of entrepreneurial activities. Providing useful information is also very important.
- e. Local entrepreneurs can also contribute in enlightening, educating and encouraging people to further personal growth. This could be achieved through involvement in the process of learning and developing their personal qualities: creativity, determination, communication skills and vision for new business opportunities.

XI. Methodological Approach

This paper is intended to link two fields: peacebuilding and entrepreneurship development within the context of North Eastern region of Nigeria in a way that derives a useful roadmap to ensure entrepreneurship development and lasting peace. To this end therefore, the paper uses secondary data in arriving at literature findings. Relevant literature on peacebuilding, entrepreneurship development, Boko Haram conflict, youth empowerment, contributions of local entrepreneurs to community development etc were widely consulted for findings.

XII. Discussion

From the review, the paper finds that majority of the population do not have access to formal western education. For example as at 2015, 52.4 percent of males in this region do not have formal western education. 83.3 percent of males from Yobe State and 63.6 percent males in Borno State do not have formal western education. (<http://.naij.com/71>)⁴²

It becomes pertinent that entrepreneurship development seems to be the way out of poverty, employment, increase household income and youth empowerment in the region. When people are busy doing one form of small business or the other, the possibility of using them by few individuals to ferment trouble that brings about conflict in the region would be reduced. The adage that an idle person is a devils' workshop is relevant in this case. Entrepreneurship training centres and incubators could be established to train potential entrepreneurs. Both individual and community needs can be determined and appropriate business activities directed toward satisfying those needs as quickly as possible.

The Kenyan and South African philosophy of 'Ubuntu' (human kindness or human-ness) humanities towards others can be encouraged. Literally translated, Ubuntu means "I exist because you exist" and "I am because you are". If people in this region are conscious of the fact that a person exists because other people exist, they will learn to tolerate and accommodate others people's views. By so doing, there would be enduring peace. This is the belief in a universal bond of sharing that connects all humanities. In essence Ubuntu involves building mutually beneficial relationships among civil societies, the private sector and the public sector in order to empower men and women (Tutu, 1999)⁴³ and prevent conflict Dzurgba (2010)⁴⁴. Again, in countries like Rwanda, Mali, Dafur, Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo etc entrepreneurship development is contributing to restore peace in the conflict-affected regions.

XIII. Conclusion

Peace is necessary for mutual co-existence and economic growth. Countries that are developed are relatively peaceful. In Africa, conflicts, terrorism, civil wars, insurgency and violent extremism are prevalent. The result is that these countries are not only among the poorest nations of the world but also the most unfriendly business countries, the most corrupt, the most educationally backward, the most unstable in terms of governance, very low on Global Peace Index and the least developed. Youth unemployment, gender inequality, religious intolerance, ethnicity, low level of education, social and political exclusion, high level of dependence, corruption among others do result to conflicts.

The Boko Haram conflict negatively affected all aspects of development in North Eastern Nigeria. People were killed in thousand, properties worth millions of dollars were destroyed, children were used as human shield, many people were displaced while business and entrepreneurial activities came to a halt. Peacebuilding therefore appears to be the only solution to sustaining peace in this region by addressing the drivers of conflict including youth empowerment and contribution of local entrepreneurs. Peacebuilding is most effective when it addresses the root causes of conflict in order to avoid a relapse into another conflict. If the drivers of conflict are examined and appropriate solutions taken, it will go a long way in sustaining peace in this region.

This paper suggests the establishment of training centres for youth empowerment and continuous assistance in terms of funding and encouragement from local businessmen and entrepreneurs in order to boost entrepreneurship development. By so doing, youth would not only be self-employed but also employers of other youth in the area. This would further contribute in increasing their house hold incomes. As they engage in business activities, they will no longer be used as conflict agents thereby sustaining peace in the region. As earlier stated, there are many drivers to conflict but for this paper considers only two: youth empowerment and the contributions of local entrepreneurs.

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