# INSECURITY AND EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

The Context and Challenges

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION FOR PEACE BUILDING AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

IAF
IA - FOUNDATION
Enabling through Education

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This report stands as a testament to the collective efforts of all those involved, and we are deeply grateful for their contributions.
**Thank you.**

# About
# PSJ UK

The International Organisation for Peace-building & Social Justice (PSJ UK) is a UK registered charity that seeks to promote peace, social justice, and sustainable development in Nigeria and beyond. PSJ UK engages a global network of partners to act as a voice for marginalised communities and to create a model for active diaspora advocacy and positive impact for voiceless people in Nigeria. PSJ UK is non-political and committed to highlighting as well as addressing the scale of underreported and undocumented killings and other atrocities engulfing Nigeria and Nigerians.

We seek to transform the future outlook for African countries to ensure that these nations have peace and that all their people become positive contributors to peaceful, prosperous, and productive societies across the globe.

We currently have a specific focus on the nation of Nigeria. For years, the people of Nigeria have been suffering from an increase in attacks on the educational system and the young citizens who should be in peaceful and productive learning environments. Nigerians also suffer from religious extremism & persecution, terrorism, violent attacks, and various forms of criminality e.g, banditry.

We believe that these multiple nodes of insecurity and terror can lead to an implosion in Nigeria. If this is allowed to happen, then it will result in much broader implications for the region as well as for both the UK and Europe. It will also result in the unleashing of a wave of refugees desperate to find refuge in neighboring countries and continents.

Aside this, a stronger foothold of terrorists in Nigeria and neighboring countries will give these extremist groups command over massive resources which will empower them to fight the West. A nation with such a great population, resources and talents, like Nigeria cannot be allowed to collapse.

This is why PSJ UK is passionate about every effort to Stop the Killings and other atrocities, and to highlight the consequences.

In 2020, PSJUK joined PSJ Nigeria and the International Committee on Nigeria (ICON) to publish a 310-page study entitled 'Nigeria's Silent Slaughter' which shone a spotlight on the systemic attacks disproportionately impacting Nigerian civilians. In March 2022 it conducted a fieldtrip to the Middle-Belt of Nigeria in conjunction with The Humanitarian Aid and Relief Fund (HART) from which it produced the report 'Breaking Point in Central Nigeria?', in July 2022, it collaborated with the Legatum Institute and other partners to publish 'Nigeria - On the Brink' Report and in 2023 it focused attention on Food Insecurity in Nigeria when it published 'Hunger in the midst of plenty'.

The thrust of this current report highlights our concerns around the future implications for Nigeria if illiteracy and out-of-school children continue to grow. It is a privilege for PSJUK to collaborate with The IA Foundation to call attention to this very important challenge that is begging to be addressed.



Join the
movement for a
**Safe & Secure
NIGERIA**

# About
# IA-Foundation

IA-Foundation is a UK and Nigerian registered Charity working to reduce the number of out-of-school children in Nigeria by providing education for less privileged children in slums and under-served communities. In alignment with Sustainable Development Goal 4 which seeks to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all, IA-Foundation has continued to increase access to formal education for children from indigent backgrounds in low-income communities, orphans, physically challenged children and the girl child across Nigeria. IA-Foundation is driven by the underlying philosophy that education can be used as a tool to curb various social issues confronting Nigeria and other developing countries. As an organization, we are committed to our mission to remove barriers to accessing quality education including financial and non-financial impediments. Our goal is to enable, empower, equip, and enhance people's lives through strategic exposure to education.

The Foundation was established on January 30th, 2019 by Mrs. Ibironke Adeagbo, a chartered accountant and passionate education advocate who had insights into the impending threats to the future of Nigeria, and the African Continent at large if the number of out-of-school children kept increasing, with no urgent and strategic efforts to curb the menace. The Activities and Programmes of the Foundation are developed around 5 Key thematic areas; Advocacy and Education Awareness, Bursary and Scholarship, Scholastic and Learning Material Supply, Education Partnership and Mentorship and Capacity Development.

The Foundation have helped 105 children across 9 states in Nigeria to access quality education, and we have distributed over 5,000 school materials.

**Removing Barrires to Education**

# Stolen Futures:
## The Devastating Impact of Insecurity on Education in Nigeria

Education is the cornerstone of a nation's development, fostering critical thinking, opportunity, and a brighter future. However, in Nigeria, this cornerstone is under siege. Schools once regarded as safe havens for learning have become targets of violence and terror.  Over the last 10 years, since the 2014 Chibok school girl's abduction, Nigeria has been grappling with a pervasive and deeply troubling phenomenon: the alarming escalation of insecurity within its education sector.

This report unveils the chilling reality of insecurity's stranglehold on the Nigerian education sector. Virtually every year since 2014, hundreds of innocent children in primary and secondary schools across the nation are snatched away, their dreams held hostage for ransom.  Children have become victims to a harrowing cycle of kidnapping and ransom demands.  Tragically, many die and never return. The weight of this fear has forced numerous schools to close their doors, leaving a generation in the shadows of an uncertain future.

Amidst this backdrop of fear and uncertainty, IA- Foundation, a UK-based educational charity which was setup to reduce the number of 'out-of-school' children in Nigeria and PSJ-UK, a UK-based advocacy NGO of diasporans and friends of Nigeria who are committed to peacebuilding and social justice in Nigeria, have joined forces in a collaborative endeavour to encourage positive change in this area . Together, we have undertaken a comprehensive examination of the detrimental role that insecurity plays within Nigeria's education sector. This report represents the culmination of our collective efforts so far — a bold and unyielding attempt to shine a light on the pressing challenges faced by Nigerian students, educators, and communities alike.

The current Nigerian situation is indicating that our nation's schools and students have increasingly become soft-targets for violent attacks and security breaches.

In the following sections, we will delve into the multifaceted dimensions of insecurity within Nigeria's education sector, we examine the root causes, the devastating impact on students and communities, and the urgent need for coordinated action to address this pressing issue. Through rigorous analysis, first-hand accounts, and evidence-based insights, the report seeks to galvanise stakeholders at all levels to take decisive steps towards safeguarding the fundamental right to education—a right that lies at the very core of Nigeria's collective aspirations for a brighter tomorrow.

The report exposes the harrowing impact of kidnappings, violence, and fear on students, teachers, and the entire educational ecosystem and beyond. As the findings will attest, the repercussions of insecurity within the education sector are profound and far-reaching. The consequences extend far beyond the immediate trauma inflicted upon the victims and

their families. They strike at the very heart of our educational system, jeopardising the future of its youth and undermining the foundational pillars of societal progress, resulting in the closure of numerous schools across swathes of Nigeria.

In more specific ways, insecurity is crippling education, the human cost on students, teachers, and families is incalculable. In the face of this crisis, successive Nigerian governments have appeared helplessness, indecisiveness and lacking in commitment to sustained redeeming action. This remains baffling to many. The report serves not only as an indictment of the current situation, but also as a clarion call for urgent solutions from all stakeholders. We all have a moral and legal responsibility to keep children safe in schools.

Together, in this report, we propose concrete recommendations aimed at safeguarding schools, restoring a sense of safety, and ensuring that every child in Nigeria has the chance to learn and thrive. The Nigerian people share the common and collective resolve to confront these challenges head-on, and forge a path towards a safer, more secure future for all.

The future of Nigeria hinges on the education of its youth. Let us not allow insecurity to steal their potential and their future.

**Ayo Adedoyin**
CEO PSJ-UK
March 2024

**Ibironke Adeagbo**
Founder / CEO IA-Foundation
March 2024

# Foreword

In the annals of Nigeria's history, few challenges have posed as formidable a threat to the nation's future as the pervasive insecurity in virtually every region of the nation and in every sector of our lives as a people.  Insecurity within the education sector is one sobering reality of this crisis: every year, countless innocent children fall victim to the ruthless grip of violence and terror, their dreams of a brighter future shattered in an instant.

As a result, the promise of education – a passport to opportunity, a catalyst for progress, a foundation for a brighter future – is under brutal assault in Nigeria.  Nearly on a daily basis, news headlines scream of school kidnappings, acts of violence that not only steal children away from classrooms but also steal hope from their hearts.

Today, the nation of Nigeria stands at a critical crossroads—one defined by the urgent imperative to confront the root causes of this crisis and chart a course towards lasting peace, stability, and prosperity. The report represents a crucial milestone in this ongoing journey—a testament to the unwavering commitment of the PSJ-UK  and the IA Foundation to shine a light on the pressing challenges facing Nigeria's education sector.

Within these pages, you will find a comprehensive analysis of the complex interplay between insecurity and education. The report is a call to action – a call directed at policymakers, educators, community leaders, and every citizen who dreams of a brighter future for Nigeria.  In it, you will discover a roadmap for solutions – practical steps that can be taken to ensure the safety of our children, the sanctity of our schools, and the continuation of learning.

Yet, let us be under no illusions: the road ahead is fraught with obstacles, and the task before us is daunting. The scourge of insecurity within Nigeria's education sector demands a concerted and coordinated response—one that transcends political divides, ethnic differences, and ideological disagreements. It requires the collective efforts of government officials, community leaders, educators, parents, and students themselves to forge a path towards a safer, more secure future for all.

The education of our youth is not a luxury; it is a necessity. It is the bedrock upon which a nation builds its future.  It is incumbent upon each and every one of us to heed the call to action contained within these pages—to stand in solidarity with the victims of insecurity, to advocate for their rights, and to work tirelessly towards a future where every child can pursue their dreams without fear or hindrance.

By working together, implementing the recommendations outlined in this report, and prioritising the safety and well-being of our students and educators, we can ensure that no child's education is sacrificed at the altar of insecurity.

insecurity.
Together, let us rise to meet the challenges before us, fortified by the power of knowledge, the strength of solidarity, and the unwavering belief in the transformative potential of education. Let us reclaim the promise of education for every child in Nigeria.

**Richard Ikiebe Ph.D**
Co founder/Director PSJ-UK

# Executive Summary

The last two decades have seen an increase in insecurity globally including ongoing interstate conflicts, intra-state conflicts, coups and terrorism. Nigeria, like many other countries continues to grapple with a multiplicity of security threats, with kidnappings and banditry on the rise nationwide. Boko Haram, a terrorist organisation based in Nigeria, has been a major driver of insecurity in the country, perpetrating violent attacks and causing widespread displacement. As of 2022, there were an estimated 3.6 million internally displaced people and in a four-year window period between 2020-2023, a total of 14,437 abductions and 16,558 deaths were recorded across the whole of Nigeria.

The education sector in Nigeria faces significant challenges, including limited access to quality education, inadequate infrastructure, and a shortage of qualified teachers.The consequences of insecurity in Nigeria are far-reaching, affecting social cohesion, economic development, and political stability. In particular, insecurity exacerbates the already precarious state of the education sector, disrupting learning environments, displacing students and teachers, and hindering educational attainment. Nationwide, many schools are being shut down as a result of repeated attacks which has subsequently led to a substantial proportion of children out of school. Nigeria is presently host to one of the largest proportions of out of school children accounting for 15 percent of the total global population. In the Northeast alone, the number of out of school children currently stands at 1.6 million.

In light of the above, this report set out to demonstrate the intrinsic relationship between insecurity and education in Nigeria. First, by providing an overview of the rising insecurity in the Nigerian context and the drivers of these security threats. Second, by highlighting the ways in which insecurity has disrupted the educational landscape and the ensuing hindrances to the development process in Nigeria. Third, by presenting a brief section on the current responses to both the insecurity and the subsequent education challenges in Nigeria. It ends with a set of recommendations for both national and international stakeholders on how to effectively tackle these crises, learning from past failures.

The report finds that these intertwined crises are deleterious and will have dire consequences for Nigeria's overall development with a generation of individuals left with poor or no education, limited skills and unable to effectively compete with their peers at a global level. These crises will also have subsequent impacts on the wider West African region and the wider world with the issue of migration a core concern.

Despite efforts by national and international actors to address both insecurity and education challenges, progress has been limited. Responses to insecurity have included military operations, peace negotiations, and counterterrorism initiatives, while efforts to improve education have focused on policy reforms, infrastructure development, and capacity building.

It is however, evident, that across the board, collective efforts have failed to provide sustainable and lasting solutions to the problems. It is further evident from findings in the report that Nigeria has found itself at a critical juncture where there is an urgent need to re-address the problems being caused by the insecurity and education crises. If these issues are not urgently addressed, Nigeria will find itself in a place where a generation of adults will be unable to compete in the job market both at home and at the global level. Worse still, is that this will have serious consequences for the overall development of the country and any efforts to eradicate poverty long term.

To effectively tackle the insecurity and education crises in Nigeria, a comprehensive approach is needed by both National and International actors. Recommendations include strengthening security measures, promoting inclusive governance, investing in education infrastructure, and enhancing access to quality education for all. By addressing the root causes of insecurity and prioritising education, Nigeria can work towards a more stable and prosperous future.

# The Report: Insecurity and Education in Nigeria: The Context and Challenges

## Introduction

For more than a decade, Nigeria has been plagued by worsening security challenges in the form of the Boko-Haram insurgency, kidnappings, armed robbery, ritual killings, banditry and so on. Although the insecurity is spread across different regions, Northern Nigeria and the Middle Belt have been and continue to be the worst hit. This insecurity has widespread effects including implications for the economy, destruction of infrastructure, instilling fear in and displacing individuals from their communities, and death among other things. The education sector in particular, has borne the brunt of insecurity's pervasive impact. From attacks on schools and students to the destruction of educational infrastructure, the direct link between insecurity and education across parts of Nigeria has become a pressing concern as it has deeply affected access to quality education, worsensend existing inequalities, and posed a barrier to the nation's socio-economic development. It has also led to a substantial number of out of school children.



The total number of out of school children nationwide stands at an estimated **18.3MILLION** where in the Northeast alone, the number of out of school children stands at **1.6 MILLION**

The importance of education for development is not lost, as education has been linked to both the developmental progress of individuals and societies. Education is also key to the eradication of poverty and hunger as it equips individuals with the knowledge and skills required to live better lives and more importantly to be able to participate in the workforce. It is noted to be a human right, powerful driver of development, one of the strongest instruments for reducing poverty and improving health, gender equality, peace, and stability. The President of the African Development Bank Group, Akinwunmi Adesina aptly notes that a 'well-educated citizenry is critical for technological growth and development, for fostering creativity, innovation, entrepreneurship and global competitiveness'.

Omirin Olatunji (2023). 1.6m Children out of School In North East- UNICEF. Daily Trust [online] ; UNICEF Nigeria (2022) Nigeria Cheat Sheet: Out of School Children.
Education overview, The World Bank 2023 [online]. See more: https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/education/overview
Adesina, A.A., (2024). Making a New Nigeria: Welfarist Policies and People Centred Development. Lecture for the Obafemi Awolowo Prize for Leadership
Institute for Economics and Peace (2023)  Global Peace Index 2023.
Sadiq I.R. (2013) The role of education in promoting national security.

Globally, where insecurity has manifested in various forms, it has set-back development in many contexts, this is no different in Nigeria.

Top 10 most peaceful countries in the world as indicated on the Global Peace Index (GPI), the top 7 have a literacy rate of **99%** with the other 3 having between **96** and **98%.**

There is however, a converse relationship between education and literacy and the level of insecurity in a country. Looking for instance at the top 10 most peaceful countries in the world as indicated on the Global Peace Index (GPI), the top 7 have a literacy rate of 99 percent with the other 3 having between 96 and 98 percent. On the other hand, of the 10 least peaceful countries, 4 of them are ranked amongst the countries with the lowest literacy rates in the world, whilst another two have a literacy rate of below 60 percent. Whilst there are several factors that contribute to how peaceful a

country is, it appears that the higher the literacy rate in a country, the more likely it is for the country to be relatively peaceful. This is most likely due to the fact that education promotes national security by inculcating values such as honesty, patriotism, selflessness, innovation and other similar traits. Lower literacy levels are also linked to poverty, which is one of the major causes of insecurity, thus reinforcing this cyclical relationship. It is also widely noted that countries with higher literacy rates are likely to have made better progress with their human and economic development.

> "
> Many children (in Nigeria) cannot go to school, have no education whilst their families are being torn apart by insecurity and fear.

BARRONESS CAROLINE COX
Crossbench Peer, UK House Of Lords Speaking In A House Of Lords Debate On Uk foreign Policy In March 2024

With the educational system becoming increasingly impacted by the ongoing insecurity in Nigeria, it is imperative that all concerned actors continue to keep this and the fight against insecurity on their agendas, as it will not only stagnate the overall development of the nation but will have implications for the international community as well. If not well managed, these ongoing security threats will destabilise the entire region, disrupting trade routes and regional integration efforts. It will also have severe implications for migratory patterns causing a rise in migration outflows as Nigerians leave the country to seek safety and better educational opportunities.

World Vision 2023. Why is education important and how does it affect one's future?
Adebayo S. (2023) 'The Nigerian dream is to leave Nigeria'. Africa is a Country
UK Office of National Statistics (2023) https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration
Institute for Economics and Peace (2023) Global Peace Index 2023.
Sadiq I.R. (2013) The role of education in promoting national security.

As it stands, 45 percent of Nigerian adults were said to be planning to leave the country in the next five years according to a 2019 study undertaken by the PEW Research Centre. Current figures already reflect this mass migration to countries such as the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and other countries in Europe.

**According to the UK Office of National Statistics for instance, the number of Nigerian students who migrated to the UK on student visas grew from 6,798 in 2017 to 59,053 as of December 2022.**

Finally, failure to address the education crisis will severely undermine the achievement of frameworks including the Sustainable Development Goals SDGs (specifically SDG 4 which addresses quality education).

Against this backdrop, this report provides a picture of the intricate dynamics of the relationship between insecurity and education in Nigeria, first by providing an overview of insecurity in the Nigerian context and the drivers of insecurity. It then highlights how insecurity manifests within the education sector, examining its far-reaching implications on the educational landscape and overall development process in Nigeria. It provides a brief section on the current responses to both the insecurity and the subsequent education challenges in Nigeria and ends with a set of recommendations on how to surmount the identified challenges.

# Report
# Context

Over the past 15 years, Nigeria has grappled with a significant rise in insecurity and in particular terrorism, marked by the emergence of various insurgent groups and criminal activities. This rise can be traced back to the emergence of Boko Haram in the early 2000s, a jihadist group advocating for the establishment of an Islamic state in Nigeria. Boko Haram gained international notoriety for its brutal tactics, including bombings, kidnappings and attacks on civilians, particularly in Northeast Nigeria. Since its inception, the group has expanded considerably, even splitting into factions and joining forces with other militant groups such as the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) further strengthening its hold on the region. According to the 2022 Global Terrorism Index, Nigeria ranks third in the list of countries most impacted by terrorism in Sub-Saharan Africa and is the sixth most impacted country in the world.

In addition to the rise of the Boko Haram insurgency, there has been an emergence of other sources of insecurity in Nigeria, spreading beyond the northeast into central and northwestern, and parts of southern Nigeria. These include militant islamist groups, criminal gangs, bandits, militant biafran separatists, piracy and security sector violence against civilians. These threats, while all significantly detrimental to Nigeria as a whole, are not centralised, as each region finds itself battling with a different form of insecurity.
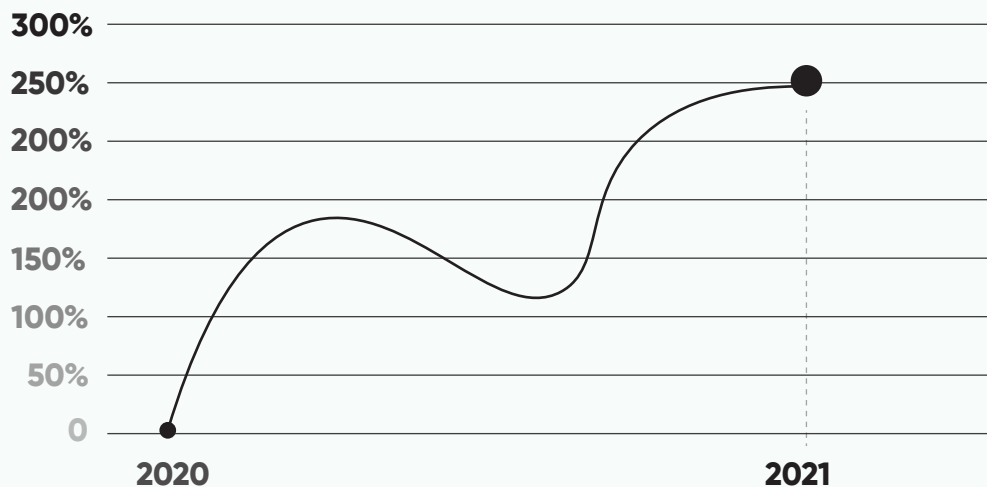


# 2600
## KILLED

The terrorist insurgencies are still contained to the North East, banditry is increasing in the Northwest and North Central regions, where in 2021, more than 2600 people were said to be slain by armed bandit groups making it an increase of 250 percent from 2020.

Institute for Economics and Peace [online] Global Terrorism Index 2023
Duerksen M., (2021). Nigeria's Diverse Security Threats, Africa Centre for Strategic Studies
Akinyetun, T.S. (2023). Fighting from the Bottom Up: Community Mobilisation as a viable Strategy in Combating Banditry in Nigeria. ACCORD
Ijaseun D, (2023). Catalogue of killings under a general. Business Day [online]
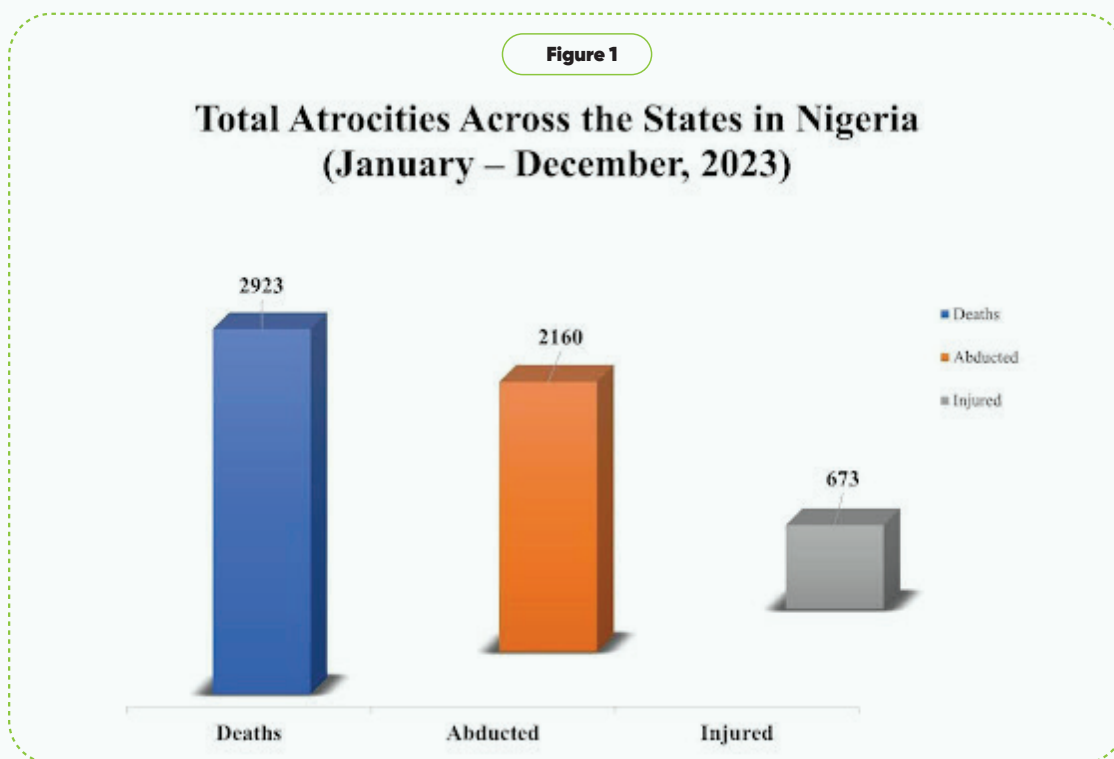PSJ End of year Report 2023

Between (2020-2023), The International Organisation for Peace building and Social Justice (PSJ) has verified and recorded at least **16,558 deaths**, **14,437 abducted** victims and **2078 injured** victims across Nigeria

In the Southeast, they continue to grapple with violent secession agitations. Across the nation, pockets of extra-judicial killings and communal wars also seem to be on the rise. As a result, widespread displacement, loss of lives, and economic disruption continue to occur in Nigeria.

According to data from the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), Nigeria experienced over 80,000 deaths related to insecurity between 1999 and 2022. In the past four years alone (2020-2023), The International Organisation for Peace building and Social

Social Justice (PSJ) has verified and recorded at least 16,558 deaths, 14,437 abducted victims and 2078 injured victims across Nigeria due to violent atrocities.

Figure 1

## Total Atrocities Across the States in Nigeria
### (January – December, 2023)



- 2923 Deaths
- 2160 Abducted
- 673 Injured

Deaths · Abducted · Injured

SOURCE: PSJ REPORT 2023

Figure 1 above indicates the total number of atrocities recorded across all the states in Nigeria with the number of deaths recorded being significantly higher.

**Figure 2**

### Atrocities Rates (Deaths & Abduction) per Month in Nigeria
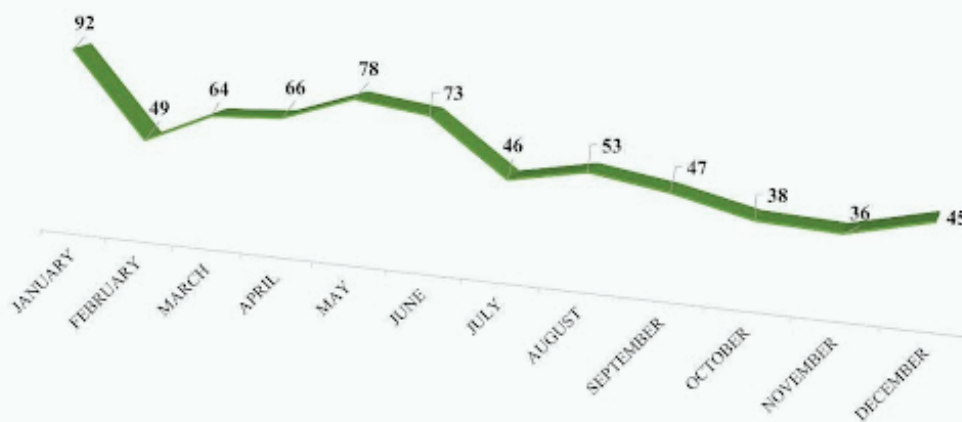### (January – December, 2023)

SOURCE: PSJ REPORT 2023

Figure 2 above, highlights the number of abductions and death rates in 2023 showing an upward trend from the beginning of the year to the end of the year. The festive period is particularly noted for an uprise in abductions and deaths.



**Figure 3**

### Frequency of Attacks in Nigeria per Month
### (January – December, 2023)

SOURCE: PSJ REPORT 2023

The frequency of attacks noted in 2023 while indicating a downward trend between January and December, still continues to be high as seen in Figure 3. These trends continue to persist, where for example, in January 2024 alone, Nigerian news outlets such as Punch and Guardian Newspapers reported **153 deaths, 110 abductions and 22 injuries across the country.**

# Drivers of Insecurity

The manifestation of insecurity in Nigeria is fueled by a number of underlying causes which continue to drive its spread. Some of which include:

**Ethnic and Religious Tension**

With over 350 ethnic groups and religions, Nigeria's diversity has historically been a double-edged sword. On one hand, the richness of culture has had several advantages in fostering unity, on the other hand, deep-seated rivalries and grievances between the different ethnic and religious groups often escalate into violent clashes, exacerbating tensions and fueling insecurity. Between 1999 and 2021, there have been reports of at least 2811 incidences of ethnic conflict with 18,132 fatalities, 3703 incidences of religious conflict with 29,957 fatalities, and 117 incidences of ethno-religious conflict with 2420 fatalities in Nigeria. These conflicts have had negative consequences not just for security but for development, political stability and national unity.

> Between 1999 and 2021, there have been reports of at least **2811 incidences** of ethnic conflict with 18,132 fatalities, **3703 incidences** of religious conflict with **29,957 fatalities**, and **117 incidences** of ethno-religious conflict with **2420 fatalities** in Nigeria.

PSJ (2023)

Adenuga G.,Olajubu A.,Oyewole S. & Shola Omotola J. (2023) Ethno-religious Conflicts and the Challenges of National Security in Nigeria's Fourth Republic, South African Review of Sociology

## Socioeconomic Inequality

Although recognised as one of the biggest economies in Africa, Nigeria grapples with widespread poverty and inequalities. For instance, in 2018/2019 before the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, approximately 40.1 percent of (82.9 million) Nigerians were noted to be living in poverty. Additionally, in 2018, Nigeria overtook India as having the highest percentage of citizens living in extreme poverty. As of 2022, the Poverty Index released by the Federal government points to 130 million Nigerians being poor.

> As of 2022, the Poverty Index released by the Federal government points to **130 million** Nigerians being poor.

A World Bank 2022 report, further indicates that 4 in 10 Nigerians live below the national poverty line of 1.90 USD per day. In addition to poverty, the vast inequalities that exist between social classes are equally as noticeable. According to the World Inequality Report 2022 for example, the ratio of income inequality between the top 10 percent and the bottom 50 percent of Nigerians is 1:14. This means that, on average, an individual in the top 10 percent income bracket in Nigeria, earns 14 times more than someone in the bottom 50 percent. The gap is even wider when looked at in reverse, where the bottom 50 percent compared to the top 1 percent has a ratio of 1:37.

This widespread poverty coupled with a lack of economic opportunities continues to fuel social tensions and contributes to the proliferation of criminal activities such as robbery, kidnapping, and banditry. The glaring wealth gap between the rich and the poor also breeds resentment and disillusionment, driving marginalised communities towards criminality.

## Insurgency and Terrorism

As previously discussed, Nigeria faces challenges with insurgent and militant groups. From ethnic militia such as Oodua Peoples' Congress (OPC); The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger-Delta (MEND), the Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) to terrorist groups such as Boko Haram and the splinter group Islamic State in West Africa (ISWAP).The origins and perpetration of these groups have been linked to religious extremism, poor socio-economic conditions, institutional weakness of the security forces among others.These groups exploit grievances, religious ideologies, and economic disparities to recruit members and perpetrate violence, destabilising entire regions and undermining national security.

World Bank Report, A better future for Nigerians:Nigeria Poverty Assessment 2022. [online]

Wakili-Effin, S.,(2022). FG Releases 2022 Poverty Index, Says 130m Nigerians are poor. Channels [online]

Ibid

Chancel L. et al, (2022). World Inequality Report 2022, [online]

## Proliferation of Arms

The widespread availability and circulation of small arms and light weapons also contributes to Nigeria's current insecurity. Several networks which engage in the trafficking of illicit weapons seem to operate with relative ease, supplying weapons to non-state actors and criminal syndicates across the country. It has been reported that out of over 8 million small arms found in West Africa, a substantial proportion is found in Nigeria. According to the Institute for Security Studies, the number of small arms and light weapons in the hands of non-state actors and civilians in Nigeria is estimated to be around 6,145,000, compared to 586,600 firearms in the hands of the armed forces and law enforcement agencies.

By the middle of this century, Africa will be home to 1 billion children, in places such as northern Nigeria where half of girls are out of school. Ensuring universal girls' education would end child marriage, halve mortality, and drastically reduce early childbearing.

Unicef article titled Transforming Nigeria: How 1.5million girls found their way to school.

Preet Kaur Gill, Former Shadow Secretary of State for International Development

## Weak Governance and Corruption

Persistent corruption within government institutions undermines the rule of law, erodes public trust, and hampers efforts to address insecurity effectively. Inadequate governance, including weak law enforcement, judicial inefficiency, and political instability also create an enabling environment for criminal elements to thrive with impunity. Poor delivery of services by the government can also lead to this rise in insecurity as different groups emerge to fill these gaps, oftentimes with deleterious effects.

# Consequences of Insecurity

Insecurity in a country can have devastating consequences with subsequent impacts for all aspects of society from the economy and public health to social cohesion, education and the environment. Countries that have suffered an insecurity crisis at one point or another have had to deal with the ripple effects of these crises. According to the World Bank for example, the conflict in Syria caused an estimated $226 billion in lost GDP between 2011 and 2016, with significant damage to infrastructure, businesses, and agriculture. In Sudan, the ongoing conflict has similarly led to devastating economic and humanitarian implications for the country with 80 percent of the hospitals said to be out of service while the 'destruction of its economic foundation has set the country's development back by several decades'. It additionally cost Sudan an estimated loss of $1billion in foreign assistance in 2021. Insecurity also fuels political instability, environmental degradation and public health crises. For example,the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) undermined efforts to control the Ebola outbreak of 2018-2019, leading to widespread transmission and subsequently thousands of deaths. In the same vein, the conflict in Colombia, has resulted in deforestation and illegal mining, threatening biodiversity and undermining conservation efforts.

Most importantly are the ensuing impacts of this insecurity for the global level. The fight against terrorism has become even more pertinent given the extent to which these groups have spread and built alliances with other similar groups. If ill-managed, these ongoing security threats will destabilise the entire West African region. The implications of the Boko Haram crisis are clear as it has already caused major disruptions in the Lake Chad Basin and to an already fragile Sahel region. It has exacerbated existing deep-rooted vulnerabilities, triggered a severe humanitarian crisis and disrupted economic activities in the area. There are also implications for migratory patterns for the region and beyond, as people continue to make the perilous journey within Africa and to the wider west including the United Kingdom. Given Nigeria's population size, these movements will be detrimental for smaller states who do not have the capacity to house additional people.

The effects of the security crisis in Nigeria is not unlike that which has been suffered by other countries with long term and wide ranging impacts, affecting millions of people and impeding socio-economic development. Below are some key consequences:

Alimba C. (2017) Controlling the Proliferation of Small Arms in Nigeria: Emerging Issues and Challenges.

Institute for Security Studies cited in Yusuf A., Mohd S. (2022) Growth and Fiscal Effects of Insecurity on the Nigerian Economy. The European Journal of Development Research, 35, pp 743-769

Syria Country overview, World Bank 2022, [online]

Sudan Country overview, World Bank 2023; Report-Sudan economic update: Missed Opportunities amidst Deepening Fragility, World Bank 2023, [online]
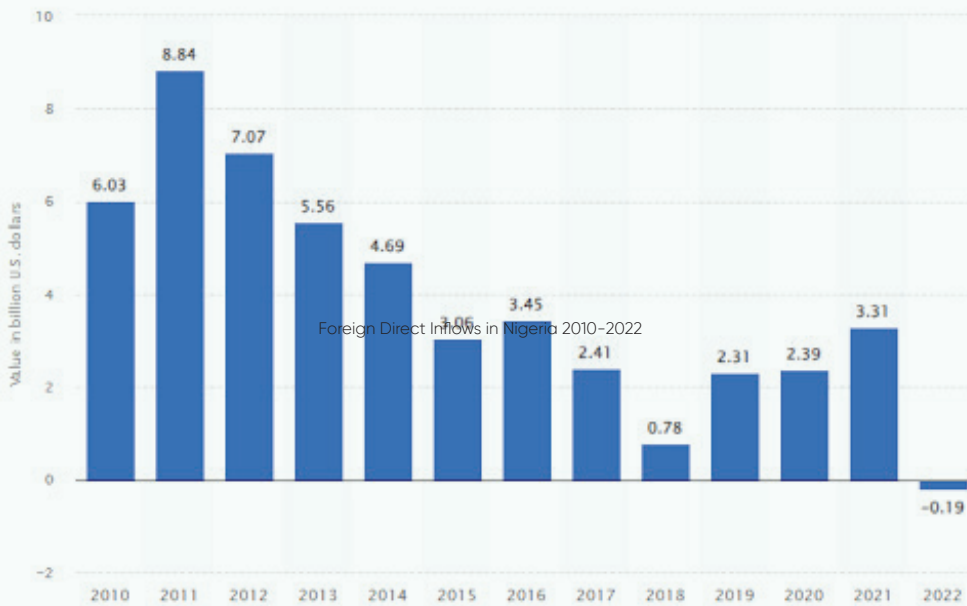
## Economic Consequences

Insecurity inadvertently leads to a disruption of economic activities subsequently leading to loss of livelihoods and income. Perceived risks of instability also leads to a loss of confidence by potential investors thereby impeding economic development. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into Nigeria has taken a major hit, due in part to the insecurity crisis. While FDI figures seemed to be on a steady decline from a high of $8.84 billion in 2011 things got even worse in 2022 when Nigeria recorded a negative FDI figure of $-0.19 billion, one of the lowest on record till date as seen in figure 4 below .

Education has an extra role to play in peace by teaching and instilling values. Without peace, there will be no development...

CMDR. RAJI, CIVIL DEFENCE CORP – FORB CONFERENCE, ABUJA

**Figure 4**



Foreign Direct Inflows in Nigeria 2010-2022

| Year | Value |
|------|-------|
| 2010 | 6.03 |
| 2011 | 8.84 |
| 2012 | 7.07 |
| 2013 | 5.56 |
| 2014 | 4.69 |
| 2015 | 3.06 |
| 2016 | 3.45 |
| 2017 | 2.41 |
| 2018 | 0.78 |
| 2019 | 2.31 |
| 2020 | 2.39 |
| 2021 | 3.31 |
| 2022 | -0.19 |

Value in billion U.S. dollars

SOURCE: STATISTA 2023

The cumulative cost of conflict to Nigeria was between **$90** to **$113 billion.**

Research undertaken on the economic cost of conflict on Nigeria in 2023 indicates that as a whole between 2008-2021, the cumulative cost of conflict to Nigeria was between $90 to $113 billion. It has also been argued that Nigeria's GDP in 2021 was (US$12.6bn to US$15.4bn) lower in comparison to what it could have been in been in the absence of the conflict.

The disruption of economic activities is not limited to monetary losses as the crisis has led to severe disruptions in agricultural activities, undermining food production and birthing a separate crisis of food insecurity and malnutrition. The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), on its part, estimates that about 26.5 million Nigerians will face food insecurity in 2024, due to several factors including continued conflict, climate change, inflation and rising food prices.

## Social Consequences

One of the direct impacts of the ongoing insecurity, is that it has led to a large number of internally displaced people. In the Northeast for example, those affected by the Boko Haram insurgency have been forced to flee their homes, villages and towns which has led to deep humanitarian crises with many people having to live in refugee camps. Across the country other forms of conflict, in addition to climate related disasters have led to many being displaced from their homes and communities.



As of 2022, nationwide, there were an estimated **3.6 MILLION** internally displaced people as a result of conflict and violence while a further **854 000** were displaced as a result of climate related disasters.

In addition, the Boko Haram insurgency has led to the disruption of critical services such as healthcare and education, denying access to those who need it the most. It has further meant that the affected Northeastern states in comparison to the wider country have suffered significant set-back to their development.

Knack and Keefer (1997) cited in Blanco, L., and Ruiz, I. (2013). The Impact of Crime and Insecurity on Trust in Democracy and Institutions. American Economic Review: Papers & Proceedings, 103(3); 284-288
Hassan, I., and Vines, A. (2023). Nigeria: Trust and turnout define 2023 election.

## Political Consequences

Insecurity heightens political instability and undermines democratic processes and the rule of law. This ultimately leads to weaker state institutions, poor governance and the erosion of public confidence. Trust in political systems and institutions is important as it has been linked to the level of social capital in a country, which subsequently is a determinant of economic growth and development. The inability of the Nigerian government to decisively address the Boko Haram insurgency in the northeast has raised questions about its capacity to maintain security and protect citizens' lives and property. In states affected by widespread insecurity, such as Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa, the conduct of elections, governance, and service delivery has been severely affected, leading to challenges in maintaining political stability and legitimacy. Similar patterns have also been noted across other parts of the country especially during elections. During the 2023 elections for instance, there were increased reports of voter intimidation and suppression, and violent outbreaks in some instances by hired thugs, leading to decreased voter turnout in some areas.

Breckenridge, A., et al (2023). The Economic Cost of Conflict in North East Nigeria.

Breckenridge, A., et al (2023)

Country Profiles: Nigeria, FAO (2024)

Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2023 Global Report on Internal Displacement

Knack and Keefer (1997) cited in Blanco, L., and Ruiz, I. (2013). The Impact of Crime and Insecurity on Trust in Democracy and Institutions. American Economic Review: Papers & Proceedings, 103(3); 284-288

Hassan, I., and Vines, A. (2023). Nigeria: Trust and turnout define 2023 election.

# Insecurity and Education

The current security crisis in Nigeria has also had profound implications on the education sector both directly and indirectly. Prior to the rise of insecurity, the sector was already grappling with its own fair share of challenges from inadequate funding to poor infrastructure and access between urban and rural areas. The crisis in recent years has however caused a rapid deterioration of an already ailing sector.

The education system in Nigeria has a  curriculum that is modelled after that of the United Kingdom. The inability to sustain this curriculum, however, has led to several policy changes over the years, which has seen the system undergo numerous changes, all still rooted in this British curriculum. This has led to an inconsistency in the delivery of quality education in Nigeria. The Nigerian education sector currently faces a two-pronged issue of quality and quantity. As highlighted earlier, Nigeria has one of the highest numbers of out of school children globally as a result of both limited access and capacity issues. One of the biggest issues facing this sector is the inadequate amount of funding diverted to this area. Asides from this, it struggles with other issues such as poor infrastructure, inadequate sanitation facilities, lack of relevant materials and unqualified teachers among other things. At the university level, these factors, in addition to faculty strikes, have led to prolonged periods of time where students are kept out of school.  As a result, Nigeria struggles with high illiteracy rates as the quality of education has declined over the past couple of decades. Moreover, the Nigerian curriculum is argued to have failed to keep up with the realities of the day, including the fact that it does not present graduates with the relevant skills for 21st century workplace needs.

## Impact of Insecurity on Education

Boko Haram which translates to 'western education is forbidden' is opposed to the western system of education introduced to Nigeria by the British during the colonial period.  As such, a trend has emerged where educational institutions such as secondary schools especially in the North have been targeted by Boko Haram, gunmen and other groups. Schools are reportedly seen as soft targets by insurgent groups, considering that key government institutions and agencies have beefed up security in recent years, making access difficult for these groups.

Alimba C. (2017) Controlling the Proliferation of Small Arms in Nigeria: Emerging Issues and Challenges.

Institute for Security Studies cited in Yusuf A., Mohd S. (2022) Growth and Fiscal Effects of Insecurity on the Nigerian Economy. The European Journal of Development Research, 35,  pp 743-769

Syria Country overview, World Bank 2022, [online]

Sudan Country overview, World Bank 2023;  Report-Sudan economic update: Missed Opportunities amidst Deepening Fragility, World Bank 2023, [online]

Schools on the other hand, are seen to have weaker security with fewer or no fences and poorly trained security guards. This is especially true in government run schools. Insurgents also take advantage of the fact that mass abductions of children gain more local and international media coverage, making it more likely that demands will be met in exchange for the release of those abducted.  According to a 2016 interview with a school proprietor and head teacher, by Human Rights Watch, the first recorded incidence of a major school attack occurred in 2009 at a private school in Maiduguri, where several buildings and classrooms were set on fire by suspected Boko Haram insurgents.

Between January and September 2021, another **20** attacks on schools in Nigeria were reported, where over **1,400 children were abducted, 16 killed and over 200 still reported missing.** In March 2024, Gunmen were reported to have carried out an attack on a primary school in Kaduna State abducting a total of **227 students** alongside several teachers and the headteacher.

Since then, several news outlets have reported scores of attacks across several schools, even beyond the north. These attacks have become even more brutal with the destruction of school buildings, fatal attacks and abductions of hundreds of teachers and thousands of students and killings. Two cases were particularly highlighted because of the nature of the attacks and the scale at which they happened: the Chibok kidnapping of school girls in 2014 and the 2018 Dapchi kidnapping of young girls. Between January and September 2021, another 20 attacks on schools in Nigeria were reported, where over 1,400 children were abducted, 16 killed and over 200 still reported missing. In March 2024, Gunmen were reported to have carried out an attack on a primary school in Kaduna State abducting a total of 227 students alongside several teachers and the headteacher.

As a result, a large proportion of students are now found to be out of school. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Nigeria has the highest number of out-of-school children in the world, despite education being legally free and compulsory

It has also been reported that the insecurity crisis has caused the **closure of 11,536 schools in Nigeria since December 2020**

in the country. UNICEF estimates that 1 out of every 5 out of school children can be found in Nigeria.  This number currently stands at approximately 18.3 million. A substantial number of these individuals can be found in Northern Nigeria as a result of the Boko Haram insurgency. It has also been reported that the insecurity crisis has caused the closure of 11,536 schools in Nigeria since December 2020 affecting the education of 1.3 million children in less than two years.

When communities do not have access to state services, including access to justice that resolves and redresses grievances, it fuels vigilantes, bandits and revenge attacks. It creates a sense of abandonment and discrimination, which is fertile ground for the recruitment narratives of terrorists. When young people have no decent access to jobs, and families are without education for their children or food to keep them from going hungry, there is a push towards alternative economic models, such as crime. It is the same the world over, but in Nigeria, that might include kidnapping for ransom, livestock rustling, or, appallingly, even recruitment into the terrorist groups that continue to wreak such utter carnage on innocent communities.

LYN BROWN MP
MP for West Ham, Shadow Minister for Africa

The relationship between the UK and Nigeria is built on shared history, Commonwealth co-operation, people to people connections and educational links. As Africa's largest economy and democracy, Nigeria is a priority partner. By 2050, Nigeria will be the world's third most populous country. Ensuring Nigeria is stable, secure and prosperous, is critically important to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. (February 2024)

ANDREW MITCHELL, MINISTER OF STATE (FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE)

## Tinubu launches student loan Thursday, foreign scholars seek inclusion

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## Naira devaluation fuelling massive regional export – Govs

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# The PUNCH

MONDAY, MARCH 11, 2024 VOL. 49 NO. 23,190 WWW.PUNCHNG.COM   The Punch Newspapers  @mobilepunch  @punchnewspapers   N250

# Schools in 14 states, FCT risk attacks, says FG

- Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Katsina, FCT, others affected, 465 pupils, women in kidnappers' den
- FG receiving US support to free victims, Presidency alleges sub-regional forces behind kidnappings

There is no doubt that Nigeria is a deeply troubled country, for all the reasons we have talked about today. It has also been a big recipient of ODA. However, it is possible to measure the impact of the investments wehave made. Our assessment, which has already been cited, is that we haveprovided £140 million in bilateral ODA to Nigeria since 2021, and since 2015 we have supported more than 2 million Nigerians to improve their incomes and jobs sustainably. Since 2009, education has been reaching more than 8 million children in 11 states, and since 2012 more than 1.5 million additional girls have been accessing schooling in six states as a result of our funding. In fact, there are many other areas in which we have measurable success as a consequence of our support.

LORD GOLDSMITH OF RICHMOND PARK, MINISTER OF STATE (FOREIGN,COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE)
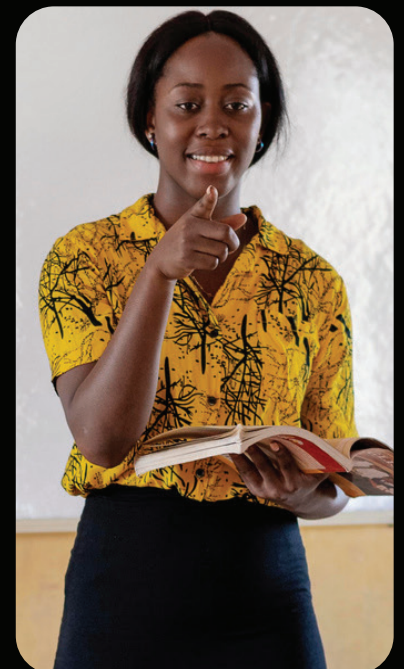
# 10 Years
## of Attacks on Education!
### Timeline of prominent school kidnappings in Nigeria since 2014

**April 14**
**20 14**

Members of the Islamic militant group Boko Haram abduct **276 female students** in a nighttime attack at a government secondary school in the **Borno State** town of Chibok, prompting international outrage. More than 90 of the students are still missing, Amnesty International says.

**Feb 19**
**20 18**

A Boko Haram faction abducts **110 schoolgirls** from a girls' science college in the **Yobe State** town of Dapchi in northeastern Nigeria. Nearly all were later released, but five of the girls were killed.

**Dec 11**
**20 20**

Gunmen on motorcycles attack a government science secondary school in the **Katsina State** town of Kankara and abduct **more than 300 boys.** The state government announced their release six days later, following negotiations. The mastermind of the attack, Auwwalu Daudawa, accepted a government amnesty deal but later returned to the bush where he was killed by a rival gang

**Feb 19**
**20 18**

Gunmen wearing military fatigues attacked a science college in the **Niger State** town of Kagara at night and abducted **27 students**, three staff members and others. Following what the state government described as negotiations, the abductees were released more than a week later

**Feb 26**
**20 21**

Gunmen abduct more than **300 schoolgirls** in a nighttime raid on a government secondary boarding school in the **Zamfara State** town of Jangebe. In early March of that year, all abductees were released after apparent payment of ransom.

PSJ UK (2022).On the Brink- Addressing Nigeria's Security Crisis
Gunmen Abduct 227 Pupils alongside Headteacher and Teachers from Nigerian School: examining the Implications for National Security and Child Safeguarding and protection. Children info Bank 2024 [online]
UNICEF 2022, Education Opportunities for Out of School Children (OOSC)', [online]
UNICEF 2022, UNICEF Calls for safety of learners in schools to encourage girls' education

# 10 Years
## of Attacks on Education!
**Timeline of prominent school kidnappings in Nigeria since 2014**

**March 11**
**20 21**

Gunmen abducted **39 students — 23 females and 16 males** — from the Federal College of Forestry Mechanization in the **Kaduna State** town of Afaka. The students were released in batches between April and May

**April 20**
**20 21**

Armed men attacked the private Greenfield University in **Kaduna State** and abducted at least **20 students.** Most were released, but five were killed apparently because ransom negotiations were taking too long.

**July 5**
**20 21**

Gunmen kidnapped more than **100 students** from the Bethel Baptist High School in the Chikun area of **Kaduna State**. Bandits released the students over the course of several months.

**March 19**
**20 24**

Gunmen riding motorcycles kidnapped **287 students** at the government secondary school in the **Kaduna State** town of Kuriga. Security forces searched forests in northwestern Nigeria for the latest victims.

**March 9**
**20 24**

Armed men broke into a boarding school in Gidan Bakuso village in **Sokoto State** and seized **61 children** as they slept. One woman also was abducted from the village, which also is in northwestern Nigeria.

These attacks have led to several unfavourable consequences for the education sector as a whole including:



### Decline in Literacy Rate

As a response to increasing attacks, state governments in at least six Northern states have ordered the closure of several public schools for varying lengths of time from weeks to months, leaving an estimated one million children with no access to education. The closure of schools presents a huge setback for the progress of education as even when schools are reopened, it takes several weeks or years to get attendance back to pre-closure levels, either due to staffing problems or the general apprehension of returning to school after an attack. In parts of South East Nigeria, the 'sit-at -home' mandate ordered by IPOB in 2021 will also have long term implications for education in those areas. With Mondays declared to be movement free, many businesses and schools alike have closed their doors for fear of being attacked or punished. .

Prolonged periods of insecurity leads to a decline in the overall literacy rates in the country. All factors including school shutdowns, destruction of school buildings and infrastructure, fear for safety on the part of both students and teachers are major barriers in attaining universal access to quality education

UNICEF 2021, 1 million children in Nigeria could miss school-VOA,, [online]

## Widening Inequalities

The security crisis has made existing inequalities more pronounced, especially amongst marginalised groups such as children living in rural communities, with girls disproportionately affected. To begin with, these groups already have difficulty gaining access to quality education, even when there are no security concerns. This is due to other factors such as economic hardship and cultural beliefs that girls are not worth educating. Coupled with the insecurity concerns, access to education is made even worse for these groups as they are often the targets of abductions and other atrocities committed by insurgents. There is also sometimes an unwillingness to return to school after suffering or witnessing an attack, as the students no longer feel safe and feel that school is no longer worth risking their lives for.

⊙ From a survey undertaken by PSJ across parts of Nigeria, findings speak to some of these issues

## 99% AGREED
of **417 participants** that took part in the survey in a rural area of Benue State, agreed that insecurity has negatively affected the education of the girl child as some of them have dropped out after several attacks.

## 97% AGREED
of **417 participants** that took part in the survey in a rural area of Benue State, also agreed that some students are no longer willing to go back to school due to insecurity and fear for safety and their lives.

The effects of this are clear, as Nigeria, in the coming decade, will be home to a generation of people who are unemployable because they have not been able to learn and gain access to the required skills that will be required to succeed on the job market.

Olowolagba, F.,(2022).IPOB Sit-at-home: Nigerians debate impact on school children. Daily Post [online]
PSJ Benue State Survey 2023
See more at https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/NGA/nigeria/education-spending
ibid

## Poorer Funding Due to Budget Shifts

The United Nation prescribes that the optimum allocation of a nation's budget to education should be 15-20 percent of public expenditure. Prior to the insecurity crisis, Nigeria was already lagging behind with education making up only about 9 percent of the national budget as of 2014, for example. As the crisis worsened, so did the percentage of the national budget allocated to education. From 2016 to 2021, there was a steady decline, year on year, of the percentage allocation, going from 6.65 percent in 2016, to 5.86 percent in 2019 and to 5.14 percent in 2021 as seen in figure 5 below.

**Figure 5**



Education spending (% of national budget) vs. Year
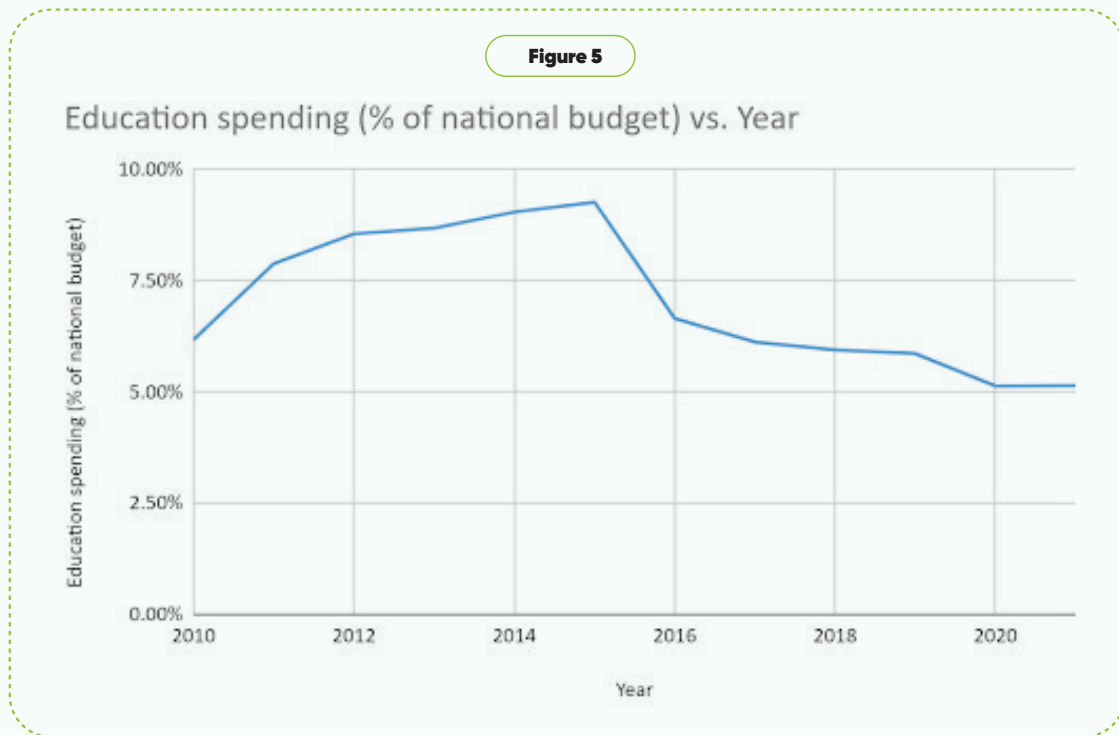
⊙ SOURCE: MACROTRENDS 2024

Nigeria ranks among the worst  when compared to other countries both in Africa and around the world when it comes to budgetary contributions to education.

Nigeria ranks among the worst  when compared to other countries both in Africa and around the world when it comes to budgetary contributions to education. For example, **Cameroon allocates 14.89 percent of its budget to education, while the Republic of Congo allocates even more at 17.88 percent.**

On the other hand, comparing the percentage of the budget allocated to defence over the years, there has been a steady year-on-year increase over the past few years with a massive jump in 2020 of 52 percent. This is following the passing of the Anti-Terrorism Act in 2011, that prescribed measures for combating terrorism. Resources that could have been allocated to the education sector have thus arguably been redirected to fight insecurity.

These impacts and subsequent figures have significant implications for Nigeria meeting its commitment to the SDGs among other development goals. In terms of its overall success with meeting the SDGs, Nigeria currently has a score of 54.2 over 100 which leaves it in a low ranking position globally at 146 of 166 countries who have signed to this commitment. Looking specifically at the SDG 4 which looks at Quality Education, Nigeria is classified as having major challenges remaining in meeting this goal. With access to education and the quality of education in Nigeria still significantly worse off, there are detrimental consequences for the overall development of the country and the wider world. Poor access to education and low literacy rates taking the context of the Northeast means that those areas will continue to be worse off economically and developmentally with spillover effects for the overall country. As it stands, Africa is home to the youngest population globally, with Nigeria housing a large proportion of these youth. If the educational challenges are not mitigated, it means that these youth will be significantly and disproportionately worse off compared to their peers and will not be in a position to compete at the global level.

NIGERIA IS STILL A EXPERIENCING LEARNING CRISIS, and one of the most vital ingredients that any state or government can do, is to supply qualified, motivated and adequately supported teachers.

The UK is delighted to see the progress being made across board, under the leadership and vision of Governor Namadi (Jigawa State).

IAN ATTFIELD, BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION'S SENIOR EDUCATION ADVISOR

Writing in premium times - November, 2023

# Responses to
# Insecurity

The responses to insecurity and especially terrorism in Nigeria have been multifaceted. Efforts have included re-assessing the financial commitments towards this, providing military support and collaborating with a wide range of actors. Below, the responses nationally, regionally and internationally are briefly set-out.

# National Responses

The key way in which the Nigerian government has dealt with the insecurity crisis across board has been to 'throw' money and military power towards the problem. As earlier mentioned, a substantial amount of the national budget has been diverted to fight the war on terrorism. For instance,the proposed allocation to the Ministry of Defense in the 2024 budget is set to be around N78.5 billion for personnel and overhead costs.

> In 2022 a total of **N2.98 trillion** was allocated to defense and security while in 2023 in the supplementary budget they received an additional **N605 billion**.

In 2022 a total of N2.98 trillion was allocated to defense and security while in 2023 in the supplementary budget they received an additional N605 billion. It has equally been noted that between 2019 and 2023 Nigeria's defense budget rose by 134.80 percent.  Military responses have focused majorly on repressive instruments (airstrikes, ground operations, arrest and detention). In 2011, a Special Military Joint Task Force (SMJTF) comprising the Nigeria Police Force, the Department of State Security, the Nigerian Immigration Service and the Defence Intelligence Agency was created to respond to the problem. There have also been non-lethal mediums through which the issue has been addressed (community engagement, offer of amnesty, reintegration, deradicalisation, demobilisation among others).

The Nigerian government achieved a level of success albeit limited between 2015-2016 in quelling Boko Haram's hold, especially through major military campaigns. Beyond this, the response of the government has waned especially with regards to the humanitarian crisis that terrorism has created in the northeast. Moreover, efforts to reintegrate and deradicalise combatants have not yielded any significant results.  It has also been noted that Nigerian, security forces have been responsible for several human rights violations, including using excessive force such as 'extrajudicial killings, rape, torture and arbitary detention', targeting not only perpetrators but civilians in those areas. In response to other security threats, the response of the government is also very limited, with little to no focus being given to some of these other threats which continue to be rampant across many parts of the country.

Ogundapo A, 2023. 2024 Budget: Defence minister says allocation to ministry inadequate, wants increase. Premium times  [online]

Admin 2023. Where is the Security Amidst Huge Budget Allocations? Daily Trust '[online]

Onapajo, H. (2017) 'Has Nigeria defeated Boko Haram? An appraisal of the counter-terrorism approach under the Buhari administration', Strategic Analysis, 41(1), p61-73; Nnam, M.U., Arua, C., Sorochi, M. (2018) The use of women and children in suicide bombing by the Boko Haram terrorist Group in Nigeria. Aggression and Violent Behaviour 42, P35- 42

# Regional and International Responses

The response to terrorism in Nigeria has also seen support from and collaboration with regional and international actors due in part to the fear of the terrorism spreading. For example, a Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTP) was established in 2014 composed of Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria to respond to the Boko Haram crisis. Responses have also seen the Lake Chad Basin Commission and African Union Commission adopt a regional stabilisation strategy. Moreover, responses to the kidnappings, especially in the case of the Chibok girls, saw the United States (US) and other Western governments provide technical assistance and intelligence sharing with the government. The US State department in addition, formed a Nigerian Planning and operations group in response to the crisis.

In 2018, as a response to the security crisis, the UK-Nigeria Security and Defence Partnership was signed to tackle shared threats, bolster regional stabilisation efforts and support Nigeria's peace-keeping capabilities. A dialogue on the partnership was held in 2022 and more recently in February 2024 to establish and re-affirm areas of cooperation to establish the areas of cooperation which included countering terrorism and violent extremism, new lines of defence engagement, multi-agency kidnap response, policing and civil-military cooperation amongst other things.

> UK also provided over **£38 million** of humanitarian assistance over a 12-month period between 2022 and 2023 in the Northeast

The UK also provided over £38 million of humanitarian assistance over a 12-month period between 2022 and 2023 in the Northeast and has also funded projects in Kaduna, Plateau and Benue states, aimed at promoting tolerance and understanding, strengthening links and dialogue between civil society groups and advocating for responsible journalism.

It is unclear at this stage whether these programme have been effective as insecurity continues to rise in the region.

The US is reported as the single largest donor for the humanitarian response in Nigeria, having provided nearly $505 million in Fiscal Years 2020 and 2021. The funds have gone towards providing support to affected communities through food, health, water, shelter sanitation and humanitarian coordination programme amongst other things. The US government has also provided guidance and technical assistance in conducting a comprehensive response to Boko Haram, including providing Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) to aid in locating the girls who were kidnapped in Chibok. The US Department of State also provides Nigeria with International Military Education and Training (IMET) allocations, and Foreign Military Financing to support maritime security, military professionalisation, and counterterrorism efforts. Whilst the donations have been extensive, it is tough to measure how much success has been achieved by these interventions.

Nigeria, Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect 2024. https://www.globalr2p.org/countries/nigeria/

Brechenmacher, S., 2019. Stabilizing Northeast Nigeria After Boko Haram. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
Gov.UK (2022) UK and Nigeria strengthen security and defence partnership to tackle terrorism and build regional security [Online]
Gov.UK (2023) UK's £38 million aid making a difference in Nigeria – Foreign Secretary James Cleverly [Online]
USAID (2021) United States Announces Nearly $104 Million in Additional Humanitarian Assistance in Response to the Ongoing Crisis in Nigeria [Online]

# RESPONSES TO INSECURITY

Donor programme have also been key to restoring basic infrastructure and services. Asides from government responses, many international and non-governmental organisations have played a role in responding to the humanitarian crises emerging in Nigeria. For example, NEEM Foundation, which is based in Nigeria works with these marginalised communities in Northeast of Nigeria especially Borno, Adamawa and Yobe. It offers programme that assist with reintegration and works with the communities to build capacity on signs of radicalisation. They additionally provide mental health support and psychosocial services in these conflict affected areas. Other organisations such as the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and Danish Refugee Council (DRC) have also been present in these states. The former has a food security programme set up through which 30,065 people have benefitted, including women and youth who have been supported to generate income from small business startup kits. Additionally, **NRC has provided shelter to 26,862 people.** On their part, the Danish Refugee Council also provides assistance through capacity building to individuals to help them generate income and through Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) for people to be able to meet basic needs. Care International, in addition to providing assistance through similar areas, also responds in the area of gender based violence and provides sexual and reproductive health services in the area. What is clear, is that there is a need for many of these interventions to also be replicated across other parts of the country where security also continues to persist.

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# Responses To
# Education

Turning to the educational concerns, much effort is also being made to address the gaps that have emerged in the educational sector as a result of insecurity and other factors. With the acknowledgment of the failing state of the Nigerian education system, a workshop was held in 2023 with members from the Federal Ministry of Education, Universal Basic Education Commission, The Nigeria Governors Forum, UNICEF among others round the table. During this workshop, there was commitment to 'take decisive measures'. Out of this, a 'Framework of Action' was created to address educational quality, access and so on. Moreover, where there has been limited response from the government on this crisis, international and non-governmental organisations have been central to these efforts.

The White House Office of the Press Secretary (2014) FACT SHEET: U.S. Efforts to Assist the Nigerian Government in its Fight against Boko Haram [Online]

US Department of State (2024) U.S. Security Cooperation with Nigeria [Online]
See more  https://neemfoundation.org.ng/mental-health-psychosocial-support-training/

See more on the various organisations Norwegian Refugee Council  https://www.nrc.no/countries/africa/nigeria/; Danish Refugee Council https://pro.drc.ngo/where-we-work/west-north-africa/nigeria/; Care International https://www.care-international.org/our-work/where-we-work/nigeria
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Between 2014 and 2018, Creative Associates International, International Rescue Committee (IRC) and Florida State University, implemented the Education Crisis Response (ECR) activity. The project aimed to expand access to quality and relevant non-formal education (NFE) opportunities for out-of-school children ages 6 to 17 from communities in Adamawa, Bauchi, Gombe, Yobe and Borno states that had been affected by the insecurity crisis. A total of 80,341 out-of-school children and youth benefited from the programme which provided structured literacy, numeracy and other lessons in 1,456 non-formal learning centres. Additional life skills training and psychosocial support was also provided. At the end of the activity's 3-year lifespan, 38 percent of learners were mainstreamed into formal schools.

The Norwegian Refugee Council provides access to education for out of school children both formally and informally, and has in addition provided capacity building for teachers, erected temporary learning centres in camps and existing government schools. UNICEF has lent its support in various ways, for instance, through donor funds, it is collaborating with the Government of Nigeria to protect childrens' right to education in a safe and inclusive learning environment. This involves building the capacity of School-based management committees (SBMCs) on school safety and security and strengthening community resilience. Education Cannot Wait (ECW) is yet another organisation present in the northern states of Nigeria. It undertook a multi-year resilience programme where they have worked with out of school children providing safe and protected spaces for learning, learning and teaching material,and sanitation and hygiene facilities that are gender and disability sensitive

To date, ECW has reached **439,370 children** of which **59,115** are IDPs and **1882 refugees.**

To date, ECW has reached 439,370 children of which 59,115 are IDPs and 1882 refugees.

One effort that should not be discounted, is the specific diaspora engagements that continue to occur. Across many countries where insecurity is rife, the diaspora has been a key source of support to their communities not least in Somalia, Ethiopia and so on.

In the case of Nigeria, where there are evident gaps across many sectors including the economy, the diasporas' remittances have been vital for sustaining family livelihoods. They have also provided tuition sponsorships for children of school age. In some instances, the contributions have been directed towards the infrastructure of these educational institutions. A study undertaken by SOAS highlights the various ways in which the Nigerian diaspora have played a role including support to alma maters. In- kind contribution of materials including computers. Sports equipment, books and so on.

It is again evident that much of the responses to this crisis have been curtailed to the northeastern part of Nigeria (understandably). However, there are huge gaps in the responses to the educational crisis across other parts of the country which require concerted and sustainable efforts.

# Conclusion

The state of insecurity in Nigeria has reached an all time high, the number of deaths and the rampant kidnapping that continues to take place have brought the country to a critical point and the need for urgent response is clear. The context painted and the findings shared in this report indicate that the situation is far from improving. The impact on the education system is particularly concerning as it has exacerbated existing challenges and hindered progress towards achieving universal access to quality education. This will have implications for the country as a whole. With a large number of children barred from accessing quality education, Nigeria will find itself in a place where a generation of adults will be unable to compete in the job market both at home and at the global level.

Worse still, is that this will have serious consequences for the overall development of the country and efforts to eradicate poverty among other issues will stall significantly. Responses to these challenges, thus requires a multi-dimensional approach that addresses the root causes of insecurity, invests in education infrastructure, and prioritises the safety and well-being of both the students and the educators. The crisis also has far-reaching implications for international communities, requiring coordinated efforts to address regional security challenges, provide humanitarian assistance, counter terrorism, and support economic stability and diplomatic relations.

# Recommendations on Addressing the Security Crisis

As discussed above, there have been several responses to the security crisis over several years by various stakeholders tackling the problem from different angles, but it appears that there is a disconnect between what the responses have aimed to achieve and the current reality of the crisis. There needs to be greater commitment, coordination and effectiveness.

At a national level, to be more effective, responses to the insecurity crisis should consider the following:

**A system of accountability:** The government must cultivate a system that promotes transparency and upholds the rule of law. They must seek to protect human rights, and ensure accountability for security forces implicated in human rights abuses. Judicial institutions must be strengthened and access to justice enhanced. More effort must also be directed towards combating impunity for perpetrators of violence and corruption.

**Security Sector Reform:** The Nigerian government has initiated security sector reforms, including training programme and equipment upgrades for security forces. Progress has however been slow and tainted with issues such as corruption and allegations of human rights abuse which continue to undermine the effectiveness of security forces. There is an urgent need to accelerate the implementation of reforms, prioritise anti-corruption measures, and ensure adequate funding and oversight to enhance the professionalism and accountability of security agencies.

**Coordination among security agencies:** The Nigerian government has launched military operations and counterterrorism initiatives which have recorded very little success as the insurgency persists, and attacks on civilians, schools, and infrastructure continue. To enhance their efforts, there is a need to encourage intelligence-sharing and coordination among security agencies to counter the threat posed by terrorist groups. The government should also invest in community-based counterterrorism strategies that actively involve local communities in preventing radicalization of youth and violent extremism.

**Regional cooperation:** The Government should consider collaborating with neighbouring countries and regional organisations to address transnational security threats, border security, and cross-border criminal activities. There is also a need to strengthen regional mechanisms for intelligence-sharing, joint military operations, and border management.

**Coordination among security agencies:** Some of the government's responses have been criticised as being counterproductive and heavy-handed, exhibiting little distinction between Boko Haram fighters and populations who have had to endure its rule. In particular, 'Operation Safe Corridor' which was launched in September 2015 aimed at de-radicalizing, rehabilitating and reintegrating repentant Boko Haram insurgents into society has been criticised for promoting impunity and moral hazard. The program has also not been well implemented as it was reported that as at February 2018, 96 men who had completed the deradicalisation and rehabilitation process have not left the Gombe camp facility where the program was delivered, due to reasonable concerns that they may face violent retribution from militias and communities upon reinsertion into the community. The current safe corridor program as it is, is defective and needs careful reconsideration to achieve its aims.

**Addressing root causes:** The government should focus its efforts on addressing the underlying drivers of insecurity in Nigeria by adopting initiatives aimed at poverty reduction, school enrolment and job creation, to mention a few. Until adequate attention is given to these root causes of insecurity as a complement to other ongoing efforts, the tendency to relapse to conflict even after the restoration of peace and security will remain high.

# Recommendations on Addressing the Education Crisis

At a national level, efforts should be directed in the following ways:

**Tighten up Security in Schools:** The safety of students and teachers must be prioritised. This can be achieved by deploying security personnel to schools in conflict-affected areas to provide better protection for students, teachers, and school premises. The government can also invest in the construction of perimeter fences, security walls, and other physical barriers to deter attacks on schools. Efforts should also be made to collaborate with local communities, traditional leaders, and civil society organisations to enhance community policing and intelligence gathering to prevent attacks on schools.

**Quick responses to ensure continued access to education:** The security crisis has prompted a few state governments to order the closure of schools after attacks in certain areas. While this might seem like a protective measure, it affects overall access to education in the long run. Instead, state governments should consider ways to ensure minimal disruptions in access to education, even after attacks. This can be achieved by implementing alternative learning programme such as distance learning and radio broadcasts, to reach children who are unable to attend traditional schools due to insecurity. They should ensure prompt rehabilitation of damaged school infrastructure or even establish temporary learning centres and mobile schools in displacement camps and host communities to provide education to internally displaced children.

**Psychosocial support:** The government should invest in training teachers, counsellors, and community volunteers to provide psychosocial support and trauma counselling to students who have experienced violence, displacement, or loss to promote resilience and emotional well-being among students. Psychosocial support services should also be incorporated into the school curriculum and extracurricular activities to ensure that students can receive counselling and support when they need it.

# International Responses to the Insecurity Crisis

**Security Sector Reform:** Efforts from international communities should be targeted at very specific issues which are capable of having adverse ripple effects on the international communities. For example, one major consequence of insecurity in Nigeria is mass migration to destinations such as the UK, US, Canada and Australia. For example, between 2017 and 2022, the UK recorded an exponential increase in the number of Nigerian students applying to migrate to the UK on student visas. On the other hand, the UK announced in December 2023 that it is looking to make significant cuts to Net Migration. Achieving this goal might be aided by directing resources to target migration at the source, rather than adopting a reactive approach.

**Oversight Mechanisms:** International communities such as the US and the UK have provided security assistance, including training, equipment, and intelligence support to Nigerian security forces. Concerns have however been raised about the misuse of aid, human rights abuses by security forces, and the effectiveness of counterterrorism efforts. Monitoring and oversight mechanisms must be strengthened to ensure that security assistance is used appropriately and in accordance with human rights standards. There is also a need to provide targeted support for capacity-building and reform efforts within Nigerian security institutions.

**Embracing Collaborative Approaches:** The international and regional communities such as the African Union (AU), the European Union (EU), the United States of America (USA), the United Kingdom and other concerned stakeholders should consider establishing an International Commission for Nigeria and the sahel to determine how best to pool resources and tackle the insecurity crisis, leveraging on each of their strengths to achieve sustainable results.

**Diplomatic Engagement:** While there has been some effort by international communities to engage diplomatically with the Nigerian government and regional partners to address security challenges and promote stability in the region, the efforts seem to have yielded little results as they have been hampered by political divisions, competing interests, and limited progress in resolving the underlying drivers of conflict. Diplomatic engagements and dialogue with the Nigerian government, regional organisations and other stakeholders need to be intensified to build consensus strategies for addressing insecurity. There should be a focus on conflict prevention, mediation and peacebuilding efforts to reduce tensions.

# International Responses to Education Crisis

**Invest in Innovation:** International efforts can focus on supporting innovative approaches to education delivery, including the use of technology, distance learning, and community-based education models, to reach children in insecure areas who are worst affected by the security crisis.

**Advocate for Education Rights:** International stakeholders are encouraged to call for the implementation of international legal frameworks, such as the Safe Schools Declaration and the Guidelines for Protecting Schools from Military Use during Armed Conflict, to safeguard education in conflict zones. They can also support efforts to hold perpetrators of attacks on schools accountable for their actions through legal and judicial mechanisms, including international criminal tribunals and domestic courts.

# THE UBEC CHALLENGE

The Universal Basic Education Programme was introduced in 1999 by the Federal Government of Nigeria as a reform programme aimed at providing greater access to, and ensuring quality of basic education throughout Nigeria. UBEC stands for Universal Basic Education Commission. It's a Nigerian government agency created to help improve basic education (primary and junior secondary school) across the country.

## Here's a breakdown of what UBEC does:
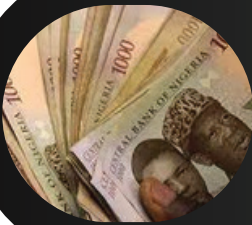
### Provides funding:
UBEC allocates funds from the government to states and local governments to support basic education. This money helps schools with things like building classrooms, buying textbooks, and paying teachers.

### Sets standards:
UBEC sets national standards for basic education in Nigeria.This includes things like the curriculum, teacher qualifications, and student-to-teacher ratios.

### Monitors progress:
UBEC monitors how states and local governments are using the funds they receive and tracks the progress of basic education in the country.

**Essentially, UBEC is like a team working to make sure all children in Nigeria have access to a good quality basic education.**

**I**n early 2023, the United Nations Children Emergency Fund estimated the total number of out-of-school children in Nigeria to be 20.2 million. The UNICEF report disclosed that one in three children in Nigeria is out of school, totalling 10.2 million at the primary level, and 8.1 million at the junior secondary school level. It said one in every five out-of-school children in the world is in Nigeria. And, over 60 per cent of the country's illiterate are in the North. The report has confirmed that Nigeria has the highest number of out-of-school children in the world.

Disturbed by the figure of out-of-school children, we requested the Universal Basic Education Commission to furnish us with information on access to UBEC fund by the 36 state governments and the Federal Capital Territory. In its prompt reply to our letter, the UBEC disclosed that the **total unaccessed matching grant funds (N68.7 Billion)** from all states of the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory stood at N68,737,873,073. 52 as of **11th December 2023.**



In view of the fact that state governments have failed to comply with section 3 of the Education Reforms Act which mandates them to contribute half (50 per cent) of the total cost of projects to be executed in the state as its own commitment in the execution of the projects, we are compelled to call on the UBEC to disburse the fund directly.

This call is in line with the combined effect of sections 12 and 17, which have saddled the Commission with the responsibility to ensure effective implementation, evaluation and monitoring of the Universal Basic Education programme of the Federal Government and help teachers, schools managers and other stakeholders in Basic and Secondary Education institutions in Nigeria to identify areas of deficiencies in achieving curriculum goals and help to remedy these deficiencies.

As a matter of urgency, we call on the Federal Government, State Governments, and the 774 Local Governments to adopt remedial measures to ensure the immediate registration of the 20 million out-of-school children in schools.

**Femi** Falana
Nigerian lawyer and human rights activist,
Patron, IA-Foundation

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