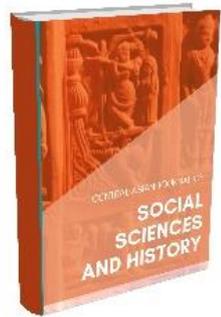




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## International Terrorism and Food Insecurity in West Africa Sub-Region: The Case of Boko Haram, 2017-2022

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### Abstract:

Boko Haram has become one of the deadliest international terrorist groups across the globe. Its activities have also become increasingly alarming following the death of its founder, Mohammad Yusuf, in 2009, while he was in police custody. To this end, this paper investigated international terrorism and food insecurity in West Africa, with a focus on the Boko Haram terrorist group in Nigeria. This study adopted the instrumental theory of terrorism. Oral interviews, documentaries, and historical designs were employed. The study relied on both primary (interview) and secondary data. Content analysis was adopted as its analytical tool. The paper argued that international terrorism has deepened food insecurity in West Africa with the disruptive activities of Boko Haram.

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The paper equally argued that the major implication of international terrorism is that it undermines

farming activities and increases the likelihood of unstable food prices, all of which worsen poverty and hunger. The paper established that Boko Haram has caused serious disruptions in agricultural activities in West Africa. Consequently, millions of farmers have been chased away from their farms and displaced from their ancestral farming communities, while many others have been killed. The study concluded that food insecurity can be addressed, farming or agricultural activities can be repositioned, and the governments of West African countries must collaborate to fight terrorism within the region. The study recommended, among others, that the governments of West African countries should strategize a way of blocking the source of finance for the terrorist groups. And consequently, strengthen and empower the military institutions and other security operatives by sending them abroad for further specialist training to enable them to tackle the activities of terrorism effectively.

## I. Introduction

Boko Haram has been known for its brutality since 2009 and has thus, assumed an international dimension. The group has killed tens of thousands of people in frequent attacks and displaced many people from their homes and therefore becoming an international terrorist group through its affiliation with other global terrorist groups promoting jihadist movements. Boko Haram group is linked with Al Qaeda (Olanrewaju, 2015). The sect ranked the world's deadliest terror group in 2015 (Global Terrorism Index, 2015). In February, 2017, Boko Haram ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> out of the top 10 most dangerous terrorist groups in the world (History Collection, 2017). As at March, 2022, Nigeria ranked 6<sup>th</sup> out of the top 10 most terrorised countries in the world after Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Burkina Faso, and Syria (Lawal, 2022). Boko Haram has contributed to regional food crises (Hilary, 2017). Their activities have transcended to regional and international issues as evident in Chad, Mali, Niger, and Cameroon.

Terrorism is deemed international when it involves more than one country. Its effects is multidimensional and includes among others as it affects peace and stability, food security, and shelter. It leads to limited availability/inaccessibility of food. Insecurity at the farmlands, the inability of farmers to cultivate and plant crops in the farmlands, and high cost of transportation to/from areas affected by terrorists' activities are some of the factors that account for the high food insecurity. Food insecurity is presently a major problem in the West African sub-region and has worsened in recent times. Although the number of people living in hunger has declined for many years, but since 2015, it has started to increase again (FAO, 2019). It has been argued that over two billion people are still living in moderate or severe food insecurity. 820 million of these two billion facing food insecurity are living in hunger particularly in developing countries. Thus, many scholars have studied the factors leading to food security with their direct and indirect impacts on food security (Berhanu & Wolde, 2019; Martin-Shields & Stojetz, 2019; Musemwa, et al., 2015). Obviously, food insecurity in West Africa is threatened by Boko Haram's activities. Not only are farming activities halted, agricultural production is stifled, farming communities are displaced and access to regional market is blocked.

Terrorism has turned out to be a major disturbing global phenomenon. It is a worrying phenomenon which threatens both nationally and international peace and security. West Africa has become one of the most food insecure regions in Africa. This is obviously attributed to the activities of Boko Haram which has been ravaging some rural communities of West Africa with the farmers being the worst victims. Almost 35,000 scholarly works have been published since 9/11 with 'terrorist' or 'terrorism' in the title. That number increases to 635,000 if those works which mention terrorist or terrorism

somewhere in a text are included. It averages at over 100 scholarly works published each and every day since 9/11: books, journal articles, and theses (Silke, 2018). However, the implications of international terrorism to food security in West Africa with recourse to Boko Haram's activities has not received much attention in the empirical literatures. Hence, the major focus of this paper. The paper will provide answers to the research questions below in order to fill the identified gap.

### Research Questions

- i. What is the impact of Boko Haram activities on food security in Nigeria?
- ii. How has international terrorism contributed to food insecurity in West African sub-region?

## II. Conceptual Literature Review

### International Terrorism

Before delving into conceptualising international terrorism, there is need to first explain the concept of terrorism as that would help in understanding the former. The term terrorism lacks a generalised or singular definition. This is because the emergence of terrorism as a phenomenon has multiple reasons. First, there are economic reasons which has to do with the exploitation of wealth by some groups within countries (Wissi, 2011). Such exploitation creates hunger and poverty and aggravates social problems, such as the loss of health care and education, and lack of employment opportunities (Issa, 2017). Secondly, there are ideological reasons related to intellectual obscurity, and lack of awareness and scientific knowledge (Moore, 2003).

Terrorism has been conceived as the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives (Troster, 2009). As posited by Barga (2012), "terrorism is an anxiety inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by semi clandestine individuals, groups or state actors for idiosyncratic, criminal or political reasons (p. 1)." In reviewing Security Council resolutions on terrorism, Mahafzah and Toubat (2020) averred that "it is found that terrorism is an act criminalised under international law, and uses a violent and extremist discourse that could threaten international peace and security (p. 297)." The Security Council pointed out that terrorist acts are criminal offences under international law and that they are unjustified regardless their motivation and whoever committed them, especially if they lead to the killing of innocent civilians, the destruction of property and the undermining of security and stability as stated in Security Council Resolution No. 1566/2004 (United Nations Security Council Resolutions, 2017).

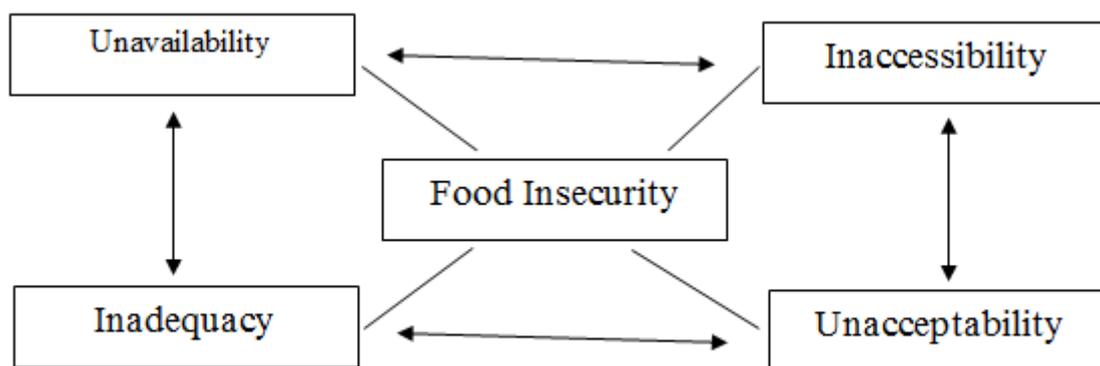
Terrorism is international when it transcends a national territory given the foreign ties of its perpetrators, the nature of its institutional or human victims, the target of its demands, or the execution of its logistics (Enders & Sandler, 2000; Onapajo, et al., 2012). Deducing from the foregoing viewpoints, terrorism could be explained as the activities involving an element of criminality, violence or threats of the use of violence against the government and the civilian populace over a dissatisfaction and/or for the purpose achieving political, religious, cultural, or socio-economic goals or a combination of all. Hence, there is international terrorism when the above activities are cut across two or more countries. It is an extended domestic terrorism. This is because, while domestic terrorism involves the operation of a terrorist group within a particular country, international terrorism cuts across two or more countries as typified by Boko Haram terrorist group whose activities currently cut across Niger, Cameroon, Chad, and Mali.

### Food Insecurity

The issue of food security has become a topical issue. Just like other social concepts, food security has no universally accepted definition. However, several scholars have defined the concept. Food security is simple having adequate supply, availability, and accessibility of food. The above definition explains food security in terms of famine, poverty and hunger, therefore, a global concept of food security can be argued does not guarantee food security at all levels. Nevertheless, simply having a quantity of food available does not prevent people from food insecurity (Ojo & Adebayo, 2012). Food insecurity may however, occur where there is enough food but the household lacks the money or production capacity to get it. Food security therefore means access by all people to enough food to live a healthy and productive life (Pinstrup-Anderson, 2009). In a study by FAO (2003), food security exists “when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (p. 28).”

Food insecurity is an economic and social condition of limited access to adequate food. It is characterised by hungry or risk of hunger. According to Bala (2014), “people that are food secured do not have to live in hunger or have the fear of starvation (P. 154).” Food insecurity is therefore defined as lack of access to safe and sufficient food by all people at all times or uncertainty about acquiring acceptable food in socially acceptable ways (Oyinloye, et al., 2018). It is the shortage in the access to nutritionally adequate and safe food resulting majorly from poverty (Kleinman, 2010). Extreme food insecurity is as a result of lack of resources to acquire and produce food, thereby leading to persistent inadequate diet (Adeoti, 1989). A food insecure situation is said to exit when the demand side is not balanced with the supply side (Egbuna, 2001). As summed by Vahyala et al., (2016), “food insecurity is the result of a confluence of factors (P. 14).” In the context of this present study, food insecurity results from the terrorists’ activities. Based on the foregoing definitions of food insecurity, it can be understood that food insecurity applies to food unavailability, and inaccessibility. Figure 1 below shows the intricate determinants of food insecurity.

**Fig 1: The Intricate Determinants of food insecurity**



**Source: Author’s Designed Framework**

The above factors are inter-related in somewhat. As it is in the figure above, when food is unavailable it becomes inaccessible to people. Impliedly, what is unavailable automatically becomes inadequate, inaccessible, and unacceptable. Practically, unavailability of food in the rural communities reflects on the markets due to the problems of insecurity. Which leads to the inadequacy and inaccessibility of food to the general public.

### 3.3 Boko Haram

Boko haram is a short hand name for Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Liddawati Wa- Jihad, meaning people committed to the propagation of the prophets teaching and Jihad. This is the original name that this fundamentalist are known with but came to be christened as boko haram. The name is a combination of a Hausa (boko,) and Arabic (haram) words. It is hinted that "the word 'boko', derived from the English word 'book', refers specifically to western education and by extension western culture. It also has resonance with the word 'boka' which in Hausa and Kanuri languages means a pagan sorcerer or soothsayer; therefore intimating that western education and culture is intrinsically un-Islamic" (Tanchum, 2012). The Arabic word 'Haram' simply means sin, forbidden or sacrilege.

It is in this context that Pham (2012) submitted that Boko Haram means "western education (and such product that arises from it) is sacrilege (p. 15)." In a related development, Oftedal (2013) argues that "in classical Hausa language, 'boko' literally means "deception", "deceit." It is used to describe formal education system of the colonial period that was associated with Christian missionaries as seen as a disguise for evangelism and western beliefs (p. 5)." Boko Haram's formation origin dates back to 2002, but the group was not formally known as Boko Haram but as a youth group. The group's origins are rooted in an Islamic youth group who study the Koran in Maiduguri. The city, and its political leaders, were declared corrupt by the group and its leader, Mohammad Yusef (Walker, 2012). The group relocated to the city of Kanama near Chad. They were known locally as the "Nigerian Taliban", and the Yusufiyah sect, with many of the group members being sons of wealthy Nigerian families (Walker, 2012; Onuoha, 2014). Boko Haram was listed as one of the twenty most active terrorist groups in 2011, Boko Haram has propelled itself on the transnational terrorism scene (START Consortium, 2012). Boko Haram has gained political support locally, obtaining training internationally and transnationally carries out criminal activity.

### III. Theoretical Framework

This study adopted the instrumental theory of terrorism which was propounded by Crenshaw Martha in 1987. The major assumption of this theory is that terrorism is an intentional act used as a means to an end. The theory interprets terrorism as a response to governmental actions. Terrorism is therefore meant to produce a change in the government's political position, not the destruction of military potential. The instrumental theory is relevant to this study as it helps in explaining and understanding Boko Haram as a terrorist group which engages in direct violent confrontation with the government so as to weaken it and achieve the sect's set goals. As earlier explained, Boko Haram means western education is a sacrilege and therefore forbidden. The sect therefore sees the government as institutor and promoter of western beliefs. With a weak government unable to combat the threat from within, Boko Haram has gained political support locally and internationally, obtaining training internationally, and transnationally carries out criminal activity.

### IV. Methodology

The study made use of oral interview, the documentary and historical designs. A total of 30 respondents were interviewed orally in six different food items markets, three from the South (Port Harcourt), and three from the Northern part of Nigeria. Those interviewed comprises farmers, business men and women, and civil servants. Participants from the North were interviewed with the aid of research assistants and their responses were analyzed using food security line, for the purpose of

knowing the food security status of the study areas. A combination of purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used for this study. This study adopted both primary (oral interview) and secondary sources of data collection while the content analytical model was used as method of data analyses. The study focused on West Africa which is made up of Benin, Côte D'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Togo, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal, Mali, Chad, Cameroon, Burkina Faso, Niger, and Sierra Leone as well as the United Kingdom Overseas Territory of Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha (Akyeampong, 2006). The population of West Africa is estimated at about 362 million people as of 2016, and at 381,981,000 as of 2017, of which 189,672,000 are female and 192,309,000 male (Ham, 2018). Hopkins (2014, pp. 1-2) pointed out that West Africa occupies an area in excess of 6,140,000 km<sup>2</sup>, or approximately one-fifth of Africa. The vast majority of this land is plains lying less than 300 meters above sea level. Below is the map of West Africa.

**Fig. 2:** Map of West Africa



**Source:** Map of World ([www.mapofworld.com/africa/regions/western-africa-map.html](http://www.mapofworld.com/africa/regions/western-africa-map.html))

The main economic activity of the study areas is agriculture and trade. The major crops grown in the areas include rice, maize, groundnut, beans, millets, tomatoes, potatoes, pepper, and watermelon, among others. They also rear animals such as goats, sheep, and cattle. With respect to formal education, the majority of people are literates. Nevertheless; the people have acquired informal knowledge and skills that help them in their daily household activities and in agriculture. Over 80% of West Africa's population rely on agriculture and pastoral activities (European Commission, 2022).

## V. Data Presentation

### Impact of Boko Haram Terrorism on Food Security in Nigeria

Boko Haram's terrorist activities in Nigeria has severe impact on food availability and accessibility. Thus, a major threat to the agricultural activities. It can be said that Nigeria is currently in a vicious circle and it is hard to achieve stable food security. Most of the communities hit by Boko Haram terrorists' activities are known to produce cowpeas, rice, millet, tomatoes, onions, yams, corns and sorghums. Farmers are afraid to go to their farms as a result of fear of being attacked. For instance, some farmers interrogated in Borno and Yobe States of Nigeria lamented, "most of us farmers cannot move a Kilometre due to fear of Boko Haram attack, and most of us have fled our homes to some parts

of the town for security.” Also, some traders interviewed within the border markets of Mubi, Illela, Jibia, and Baga said that “the trade routes between the north east Nigeria, Niger, and Cameroon are disrupted, making access food very difficult. They further noted that major food items which mostly come from the north are in short supply.”

The above scenario has consequently led to inflation in prices of food items. Most of the respondents interviewed orally complained of market fluctuations and constant increase in the prices of food items. Accordingly, they lamented that a big basket of tomatoes which was sold for N6, 000-N8, 000 in the year 2021 is now sold between 12, 000 to 18,000. Also, a basket of pepper which was sold at the rate of N6, 500-N7, 500 in 2021 is now sold between N9, 000 to 13, 000. From interviews, it was gathered that, Boko Haram sect have shifted their terror acts to markets in Yobe and Maidugri being a vital place for food distribution across Nigeria and to the neighboring countries. Ibrahim (2012) reported that, Boko Haram has found markets as fertile grounds of confrontation with military authorities as revealed by the happenings at the three major markets: Monday, Gomboru, and Baga markets. The assaults on these markets have negatively affected trade activities in those markets and that of neighboring countries; as many people have been killed in the series of attacks by Boko Haram in those markets. This has plunged Nigeria into a state of chronic food insecurity. The prices of food has continued to rise and fluctuate thereby making it difficult for individuals and households.

By implication, availability and accessibility to food products to the people is considerably affected. Indeed, some traders and farmers in Gomboru market, known for large stock of vegetable and fruits, lamented that the market, known to be the hub for perishable farm products, has been attacked on many occasions. According to Musa (an interviewee), before, in this market you can get many things like vegetable, fruits, meats, and groundnut oil and other things at cheaper rate. Now no market (sales) like before that I can sell 80,000 to retailers and other customers. People are afraid of coming to the market, me too am afraid. Some of us have abandoned our farmlands and migrated to Niger, Chad or Cameroon for fear of Boko Haram attacks. Many people have been found dead on their farmlands which was suspected to be the attack of Boko Haram. The rising food prices contribute to food insecurity and may worsen the threat to human security (Henk-Jan & Hendrix, 2011). Awodola and Oboshi (2015) rightly captured, “It is obvious that supplies of food become a problem and when you get it you cannot afford to pay for it due to increase in price, what is the essence then? 80% of the people of the state are farmers and the state is surely losing a lot which cannot quantify in monetary terms to further confirm the increases in the cost of food items, our survey respondents were asked to specify possible implication of Boko Haram activities on agricultural sector. About 34.78% mentioned increase in prices of staple food, 19.57% thought food supply, 15.22% felt getting accesses to food; the remaining 30.43% mentioned farming of crops/livestock (pp. 12-16).” The table 1 below shows the increment in prices of food items in Nigeria.

**Table 1: Differences in Food Crops Prices and Percentage Increment in 2022**

| S/N | Food Item    | Quantity   | 2020 Price | 2021 price    | 2022 price |
|-----|--------------|------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| 1   | Irish potato | Per basket | 5,000      | 7000-8000     | 10-12,000  |
| 2   | Soya beans   | Per bag    | 10,000     | 13,000        | 33,000     |
| 3   | Brown beans  | Per bag    | 20,000     | 25,000        | 32,000     |
| 4   | White beans  | Per bag    | 18,000     | 20,000-21,000 | 32,000     |
| 5   | Potatoes     | Per basket | 3,400      | 4,000-5,000   | 7-8,000    |

|    |              |            |            |               |               |
|----|--------------|------------|------------|---------------|---------------|
| 6  | Tomatoes     | Per basket | 3,500      | 6,000-8,000   | 12,000-18,000 |
| 7  | Pepper       | Per basket | 5,000      | 6,500-7,500   | 9,000-13,000  |
| 8  | Onion        | Per basket | 4,500-5000 | 5,000-8,000   | 15,000-20,000 |
| 9  | Water melon  | Per one    | 800        | 1,150         | 1,300-1,800   |
| 10 | Millet       | Per bag    | 5,000      | 9,000         | 15,000-18,000 |
| 11 | Maize        | Per bag    | 5,000      | 7,500         | 11,000-15,000 |
| 12 | Wheat        | Per bag    | 12,000     | 16,000        | 18,000-25,000 |
| 14 | Yam          | Per tuber  | 600-800    | 800-1,400     | 1,200-1,800   |
| 15 | Fish         | Per carton | 21,000     | 27,000-30,000 | 30,000-38,000 |
| 16 | Sweet potato | Per basket | 2-3,000    | 4-5,000       | 6,000-9,000   |
| 17 | Garri        | Per bag    | 4-5,000    | 6,500-7,500   | 13,000-15,000 |

**Source:** Author's Compilation from oral interviews, 2022

### International Terrorism and Food Insecurity in West Africa

Security is vital for the peace and growth of any nation. In the words of Ojo and Adebayo (2012), “food security is a basic human need and fighting hunger is one of the greatest challenges of this century (p. 204).” Food insecurity is closely associated with many of the previously hypothesized or empirically proven causal factors of terrorism such as poverty, low income, lack of economic opportunities, wars, corruption and bad governance (Gassebner & Luechinger, 2011). Terrorism whether domestic or international can bring about food insecurity. Thus, there is a strong connection between international terrorism and food insecurity in West African sub-region which appeared to be food insecure since the last five years due to Boko Haram terrorist's activities. The relationship between international terrorism and food insecurity is established in terms of the former destroying agricultural activities. Adelaja and George (2019) averred that they attack “government storage facilities, fertilizer factories, agricultural input transport systems and farms (p. 185).” Most of the areas occupied by terrorists are rural areas, where agriculture is the livelihood of the population, hereby agricultural lands were destroyed (Pham, 2016; Adelaja & George, 2019). More direct measures of conflict-driven food insecurity include food expenses (Verwimp & Muñoz-Mora, 2018), household consumption patterns, crop and livestock portfolios, and farmers' investment decisions (Arias, et al, 2018). All of these are influenced by Boko Haram terrorist activities which has brought about rises of food price within the West African sub-region. Food price is an indicator leading to food insecurity (Hertel, et al., 2010; Smith, et al, 2017). The rise in food prices is as a result of the downfall of agricultural activities caused by Boko Haram terrorist activities. Terrorism-affected countries have on average higher rates of food insecure people than countries not affected (FAO, 2017).

Terrorist activities affects food security in several ways. Martin-Shields and Stojetz (2019) posited however that, “measuring and categorizing terrorism is not straightforward (p. 151).” Violent international terrorism can negatively impact agricultural production. Often farmlands are ruined by bombs, or it is simply unsafe to work on them (Baumann & Kuemmerle, 2016). Farmers would abandon their lands for fear of being killed, people are forced to leave, flee voluntarily, or become victims. This invariably leads to labor shortage, fewer farmers, crop yield loss and food insecurity (Eklund, et al., 2016; Adelaja et al., 2019). Evidently, farming activities, a critical aspect of food security, is gravely threatened by international terrorists' activities in food producing States such as Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger, and Chad. This has further affected the availability/supply, accessibility, and the affordability of food items in West Africa. Even the available food items become inaccessible and their prices also become excessively high all of which result to food insecurity. There are studies

on the long-term impacts of terrorism on food security and on children that were exposed to terrorism and violence at an early age (Martinshields & Stojetz, 2019; George et al., 2020).

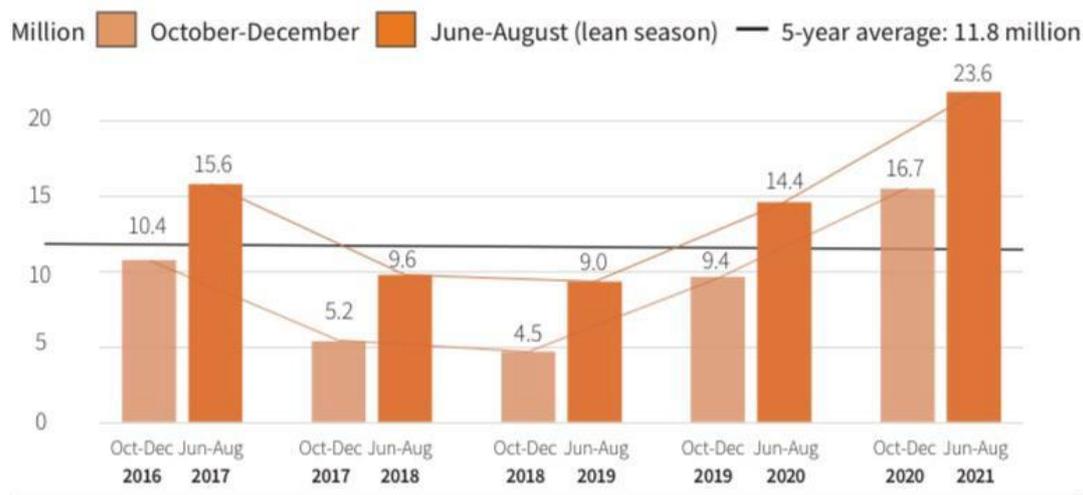
Acute food insecurity in West Africa has increasingly worsened since the last five year due to terrorists' activities. Virtually all the West African countries are affected. Attacks by militant Islamist groups in the Sahel increased by 44 percent in 2020, contributing to the displacement of 1.7 million people many of whom require food assistance. In northeast Nigeria, where nearly 4 million people are acutely food insecure, militants have increasingly attacked highways, reducing food movements and humanitarian access. Many Cameroonians facing acute food insecurity can be found within the country's Anglophone Northwest and Southwest Regions where fighting continues between terrorists and the military. Others have been displaced in Cameroon's Far North Region, driven by escalating Boko Haram attacks (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2021). The table below showed some countries facing acute food insecurity between the year 2019 and 2020. It indicated a drastic increase of 19.5 million people living in acute food insecurity in the selected West African countries in 2020 as against 5.5 million people in 2019. This alarming increase was as a result of increased activities terrorist groups in the region.

**Table 2:** West African countries population in millions facing greatest increase in food insecurity due to conflicts (terrorism)

| Country             | 2019 Population (Millions) | 2020 Population (Millions) | 2020 Increase (Millions) |
|---------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Mali</b>         | 0.6                        | 6.8                        | 6.2                      |
| <b>Chad</b>         | 0.6                        | 5.9                        | 5.3                      |
| <b>Cameroon</b>     | 1.4                        | 4.9                        | 3.5                      |
| <b>Burkina Faso</b> | 1.2                        | 3.4                        | 2.2                      |
| <b>Niger</b>        | 1.4                        | 2.7                        | 1.3                      |
| <b>Sierra Leone</b> | 0.3                        | 1.3                        | 1.0                      |
| <b>Total</b>        | 5.5                        | 25                         | 19.5                     |

**Source:** Author's Compilation from the publications of WFP, FEWS NET, and FAO.

The analysis by Cadre Harmonisé (2021) revealed that the security situation in West Africa has deteriorated significantly, particularly in the Liptako Gourma areas (the three border areas between Niger, Burkina Faso and Mali). It remains a concern in the Northeast, North Central and Northwest of Nigeria and around the Lake Chad Basin. This situation has resulted in loss of life, disruption of livelihoods and trade. It has also led to population movements with nearly 5 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the region, particularly in Nigeria (2.2 million), Burkina Faso (1.4 million), Mali (0.4 million) and Niger (0.3 million) (Cadre Harmonisé, 2021). As at December 2021, West Africa region had approximately 23.7 million people in need of immediate assistance. The figure had been projected to increase to over 33.4 million in 2022 (including 1.7 million in emergency), including 18 million people in Nigeria, 3.6 million in Niger, 2.6 million in Burkina Faso, 1.8 million in Mali, 1.7 million in Chad, and 1.5 million in Sierra Leone (Cadre harmonisé, 2021). The chart below showed the trend.

**Fig 3:** Trend over time of people in a crisis situation or worse from 2016-2021

**Source:** Cadre harmonisé analysis, 2016-20, November data, CILSS.

The current situations of the West African countries in the Sahel region (Mali, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Senegal, and Gambia) and those of Lake Chad Basin (LCB) (Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Cameroon) are crucial for the stability of West Africa since they represent more than half of the sub-region and have been battling insecurity for years. Despite years of interventions aimed at addressing the myriad of structural issues facing the sub-regions, these countries continue to grapple with the issue of violent extremism (terrorism). The stakes continue to rise as vulnerabilities combine to exacerbate as evidenced by the consistently poor Fragile States Index (FSI) ranking of Sahelian and LCB countries year-on-year (Faborode, 2022). Burkina Faso featured as the third most worsened country in 2021 and also as the fourth most worsened country in 2019 in the annual FSI rankings. In line with this negative trend, humanitarian funding for Burkina Faso rose from \$117 million in 2019 to \$311 million and \$384m in 2020 and 2021, respectively (UNOCHA, 2021). While Burkina Faso's neighbours, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Chad, do not feature on the top-five most worsened list, they are also ranked poorly across several indicators, particularly Refugees and IDPs and Security Apparatus. Boko Haram and Islamic State of West Africa Province (ISWAP) activities remain widespread in Nigeria and Niger; Mali continues to be an epicentre of Al-Qaeda and ISWAP affiliated activities; and Burkina Faso has endured spill-over of terrorist activities across Malian borders (Fraym, 2020). The terrorists are strategically capturing natural and economic resources for more control and financial inflows. There are cases of insurgents taxing communities for fishing in the Lake Chad Basin (Institute for Security Studies, 2019), as well as involvement in Burkina Faso's largely informal artisanal gold mining sector (The Nordic Africa Institute, 2021).

## VI. Discussion of Findings

This present study analysed the impact of international terrorism on food security in West Africa. It found that the impact of international terrorism on food security raises two important issues. First, in those countries affected by Boko Haram terrorists' activities, households are exposed to political instabilities and income uncertainties. Secondly, there is evidence that households threatened by terrorism usually shift their crop, livestock and asset portfolios to adopt low-risk, low-return coping strategies to survive. Thus, their access to sufficient and nutritious food are affected by terrorism. Also,

the implications of the Boko Haram terrorists' activities include negative impact on food availability through the destruction of farmland, roads, bridges/border crossing; limited access to markets; and disruptions in the food distribution systems, all of which inflate food prices and reduce food availability/accessibility.

The above findings agree with that of Osagie (2013) who found that a basket of pepper which was sold at the rate of N4000-N5000 (depending on the quality of the pepper) was later sold for N8000 including transport charges as well and people who are lucky to get it earn little or no gain after they have been sold in retails. They equally agree with Arias et al., (2018) who found that households who are victims of armed conflicts usually shift their crop, livestock and asset portfolios to adopt low-risk, low-return coping strategies to survive conflicts. The findings further corroborate the findings of Nwankwo et al., (2022) whose study found that food insecurity was seen as one of the implications of poor border management to Nigerian national security. Additionally, the conflict-driven food insecurity is mainly manifested through lack of food availability.

## VII. Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper argued that international terrorism negatively affect food security in the West African sub-region. The major implication is that it undermined farming activities and increased food prices. The paper further argued that Boko Haram has caused serious disruptions in agricultural activities and reduced food production in West African sub-region. While millions of farmers have been chased away from their farms and displaced from their ancestral farming communities, others are constantly afraid for their lives and as such cannot optimally engage in farming activities. It is the conclusion of this study that for food insecurity to be addressed and for the farming and/or agricultural sector to be repositioned, the governments of West African countries must collaborate to fight terrorism within the region. The paper recommends thus:

- i. The government of West African countries should strategise a way of blocking the source of finance of the terrorist groups, strengthen and empower the military institutions and other security operatives through specialist training to enable them tackle the activities of terrorism effectively.
- ii. The government of West African countries should create job opportunities for the youths. When the youths are gainfully employed, the tendency of them being recruited into terrorist sects and involving in causing mayhem will drop drastically.
- iii. They should develop strategies to combat poverty and hunger which makes for easy recruitment of the youths into the sect. This they can do by providing free seeds to be planted, and providing security to farmers in their farmlands.

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