ECONOMY OF VIOLENCE AND SUSTENANCE OF VIOLENT GROUPS IN THE LAKE CHAD BASIN

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Economy of Violence and Sustenance of Violent Groups in the Lake Chad Basin

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The activities of violent extremist groups in the Lake Chad Basin (LCB) have precipitated an unprecedented humanitarian disaster, claiming over 35 thousand lives since 2009 and leading to the displacement of nearly 3.2 million persons, including women and children.

Located in Northern Central Africa, the LCB comprises parts of the far northern of Cameroon, Lac Province of Chad, Diffa region of Niger, and north-eastern Nigeria, with a combined population estimated at 30 million people. The notorious terrorist group, Boko Haram, started waging an armed insurgency against the Nigerian state in 2009, with the aim of creating a fundamentalist Sharia system. Contrary to suggestions in some literature that Boko Haram was initially a pacifist organisation that only became radicalised and forced into violence by extrajudicial measures by Nigerian security agencies, violence was its foundational strategy when Muhammad Yusuf founded the group in Maiduguri, Borno State, in 2003. Although the far north of Nigeria, the epicentre of Boko Haram activities is predominantly Muslim, the group rejects the traditional Islam of the north, which respects secular authority, in favour of an extremist and totalitarian system that could only be pursued and achieved with violence. The term “Boko Haram” reflects the group’s rejection of Western values and the secular society or state.

2. [https://www.unhcr.org/nigeria-emergency.html]
5. Boko Haram founder summarily executed by the Nigerian police after he was captured following the Boko Haram uprising of 2009. He was the father of Abu Musab al Barnawi, leader of the splinter group Islamic State West Africa Province, reported to have been killed in August 2021.
Boko Haram attracted global attention following the abduction of 276 Chibok schoolgirls in 2014. However, the regionalisation of the group’s violent campaign had started the previous year in 2013, following series of attacks in Cameroon (December 2003), Niger (February 2015) and Chad (June 2015). With the attacks spilling over from Nigeria into those neighbouring countries, the urgent imperative to mobilise joint and concerted counter-insurgency measures at the bilateral and multilateral levels among the affected countries grew. In early 2015, therefore, there were military agreements between Nigeria and Chad, and between Cameroon and Chad, even before the Multinational Joint Task Force composed of troops from the LCB countries and Benin, against Boko Haram, was inaugurated. Internationally, there have been policy measures against Boko Haram as well as assistance to the affected countries directly and through the African Union from the United States, France, United Kingdom, Turkey, and the European Union.

Despite the mobilisation of national, regional, and international efforts, however, violent extremism remains a deadly force in the LCB. It did not only spread but has blended with other forms of localised violence such as armed banditry and kidnapping. In a region plagued by historic governance and development crises, the endless and increasingly complex violence, as well as the counter measures to address it, has exacerbated socio-economic difficulties and stalled progress towards meeting pressing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

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8. Ibid
2.0 The Crux of the Paper

Extant literature has shown that countering sources of financing available to extremist groups is one of the major challenges affecting the fight against terrorism. Conceptually, Terrorism Financing, TF, refers to the licit and illicit ways and means through which terrorist groups mobilise resources for their activities. Such sources may include state sponsorship, donations from sympathisers to their cause, money laundering, kidnapping and hostage-taking, narcotics, resource and commodity trading. However, in the context of Boko Haram and the LCB, an adequate analytical anchorage must extend beyond TF, as a criminal aberration involving only terrorists, their sources, and spendings to include the complexity of economic activities, actors, and interactions affecting the conflict during the crisis period. This intricate system is described as the “economy of violence” (EV), or “conflict economy.”

This report attempts to explore the character of the economy of violence thriving in the LCB, focusing on the Nigerian side, as well as the consequential dimensions of counter responses mobilised by the State. Clearly, the economy of violence that drives Boko Haram insurgency and terrorist activities have exacerbated livelihood difficulties and created illicit and unethical yet mutually reinforcing opportunities for the plethora of state and non-state actors in the conflict zone. The report draws secondary sources of data as well as first-hand and extensive working experience in the region as a researcher and journalist to explain how Boko Haram financing and activities nurtured a peculiar economy of violence that ensures the resilience of the group and encourages other illicit and violent activities to thrive. The paper shows that from Boko Haram and other fledgling violent groups such as bandits, kidnappers, and “Shiller Boys,” several other actors involved in the economy include state security and administrative actors, affected community members, NGOs, and development partners. In specific terms, therefore, this paper seeks answers to the following pertinent questions:

- What are the socio-economic activities that are driving but also benefiting from the sustenance/continuity of conflict in the LCB?
- How do actors inter-relate, affect one another, and structure the economies of violence in the LCB?
- Can the economies of violence be addressed without exacerbating livelihood challenges for communities already contending with the BH?

14. Violent young boys, who harm and rob people at night in Adamawa State, using dangerous weapons. They usually target road users and are reported to be boys socio-economically deprived and addicted to illicit drugs.
By pursuing these questions, the Centre for Journalism Innovation and Development, CJID, hopes to contribute to robust debate as well as better-informed policy and programmatic responses that specifically and effectively addresses the economy of violence and de-incentivize participation in the economy without exacerbating social and economic difficulties in conflict-affected communities. Apart from first-hand knowing of working in and reporting on the LCB over a period of time, the paper relied on qualitative approach using a systematic review of relevant literature, media reportage and official reports on Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin.

3.0 Boko Haram in Context: Northern Nigeria, radical Islam, violence, and evolution of Boko Haram

Nigeria’s northwest and northeast, often known as the far north, is dominated by Muslims, with a sizable Christian minority. The far north is home to two of West Africa’s most important Islam-based monarchies of the centuries-old Kanuri Empire and the Sokoto Caliphate that was established by Othman Dan Fodio after the Fulani Jihad. Although the Hausa kingdoms that the Jihad defeated to build Fulani emirates across the north were Muslims, Fodio’s rejectionist campaign condemned them for their wealth, injustice, paganism and perfunctory adherence to Sharia orthodoxy. Since the Jihad, the far north (and increasingly, the north-central region which is largely populated by minority ethnic groups) has been a hotbed of resistance and counter-resistance between the Muslims of different ideological leanings; between Muslim Fulani and Muslim Hausa; and between the majority Muslim and the minority Christian populations in the far North and North-Central. The
schism among the Muslim is particularly complicated: whereas one segment, possibly the bigger, supports the existing orthodox Islamic system and its relationship with secular authorities, the second strand reject secularity and Western ideals believed to be denigrating to Islam, and seek what they deem purity. Significantly, even the latter segment is not uniform as it comprises a variety of orientations ranging from radical Salafism to Shia movements, with peculiar traditions and beliefs.

As a result, there are several examples to show that Nigeria’s north provides a climate conducive to easy recruitment into radical “reformist” Islamic agendas against the “corrupting” forces of the secular government, Western ideals, and even the mainstream Islamic leadership. There is a large populace that shows social and political displeasure by adhering more strictly to Islam and can be readily misled by radical preachers. With the benefit of hindsight, the Maitatsine riots across the north during the 1970s and 1980s should be viewed more or less as earlier precursors to Boko Haram, with a radical preacher and a militant followership, mostly young people, direct violent attacks against mainstream religious establishments and state institutions such as the police and the military. In those riots, thousands of people were killed and displaced. When Nigeria returned to democracy in 1999, following 15 years of unbroken military rule, 12 northern states quickly called for the imposition of Sharia Law, without regard to the Constitution which clearly specified that Nigeria is a secular republic. For a country with a sizable Christian population, the introduction of Sharia created a lot of friction between the two dominant religions, and occasional fatal clashes between 1999 and 2002.


12 northern states quickly called for the imposition of Sharia Law after the 15 year military rule, without regard to the Constitution which clearly specified that Nigeria is a secular republic.
The foregoing context supports the argument that Boko Haram is a result of local history as well as systemic socioeconomic causes like widespread poverty, illiteracy (even of real Islamic doctrines), and social injustice. These underlying factors, in turn, created a cesspool of unhappy youths eager to escape the “immoral and corrupt life” of Nigeria's secular state. According to a history Professor interviewed in Borno that has deep knowledge of the evolution of Boko Haram and its founder, Mohammed Yusuf, there is a parallel between “real life injustice and societal ills like poverty” felt by many youths which led them to believe that Western values and corruption in the Nigerian secular system were to blame for their catalogue of woes. According to the Professor, the followers were also motivated to see how adultery, gambling, and alcohol use permitted by the secular state were impediments to pure Islamic practice, leading them to seek a “rather idealistic Sharia-based pure society where justice would be guaranteed, with no immorality and corruption.”

As a result, towards the middle of 2003, a branch of Boko Haram led by Muhammad Ali resolved to conduct Hijrah and relocated to Tarmowa, a desert community in Yobe State, northeastern Nigeria, in a quest for a “pure” and idyllic domain in preparation for Jihad. Muhammad Ali and Muhammad Yusuf had disputed about the time of the Jihad and the permissibility of living alongside “unbelievers” in Nigeria. Even at that time, state authorities concerned that the group might become a “state within a state” expelled them from Tarmowa between October and December of that year. The group relocated to Kanamma, another village in Yobe State, where they attacked local police stations in the area and in the neighbouring town of Geidam. They also raided the home of a local government chairman and a police officer. The raids on police facilities, which resulted in the death of at least one officer and the theft of weapons, and the home of the local government chairman, where they stole vehicles, foreshadowed the pattern of operation of the terrorists, which basically involved stealing official weapons and engaging in looting and robbery attacks to sustain themselves.

When the government dispatched soldiers to dislodge the group from Kanamma in January 2003, the expedition led to the death of about 20 members of the group. Because newspaper reporting of the event described the Kanamma group as "Nigerian Taliban", attempts have been made to label Boko Haram, in that earliest period, as the Nigerian cell of the international terrorist movement, Al Qaeda. However, based on primary sources and internal documents, Audu Bukarti argues that there was no operational link between the international terrorist movement and

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Boko Haram has since split into at least three factions between the time of its formation and now. The first is the Jama’atu Ahl al-Sunna lid Da’wati wa al-Jihad (JAS), often known as Boko Haram whose members, upset with Abubakar Shekau’s indiscriminate executions of civilians, created a splinter group called Ansaru al-Musulmina fi Bilad al-Sudan, or Ansaru for short, and relocated to north-western Nigeria, specifically to the Birnin Gwari in Kaduna State. According to intelligence reports and sources, Ansaru terrorists were responsible for some of the atrocities claimed by Boko Haram prior to the split, especially the bombing of the UN Building in August 2011. Ansaru, according to sources, declared allegiance to Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, AQIM, in 2020, and it is responsible for some of the most high-profile kidnappings and armed attacks on police in Kaduna State.

In August 2016, another splinter organization, the ISIS-affiliated Islamic State West African Province, ISWAP, led by late Muhammad Yusuf’s son, Abu Musab al Barnawi, emerged. The ISWAP, which is located on the Lake Chad islands, appears to be the most powerful organization in the LCB. In 2021, ISWAP members assassinated Shekau in his Sambisa Forest stronghold. Shekau was a globally infamous terrorist who masterminded the kidnapping of 276 Chibok schoolgirls in 2014, bringing Boko Haram to international attention. He led Boko Haram/JAS from 2009, following the assassination of Muhammad Yusuf, until his death in 2021. Despite their differences, the terrorists share a unifying and patently violent rejectionist objective against secular authorities and commonly have a callous contempt for human rights.
4.0 Conflict economies in the LCB

To comprehend durability and resilience of Boko Haram over time, there is need to look beyond the mainstream terrorism finances narrative into the intricate system of local, cross-border and regional economies around which the movement is closely embedded and foisted. This is because economic incentives and the behaviour of a wide range of state and non-state actors, including state security operatives and community members, have direct as well as indirect impact on Boko Haram. The point was made earlier that economy of violence, or conflict economy, as a concept, defines the licit and criminal economic practices involving transactions, exchange and trafficking were all at work within the epicentre of the conflict zone. These practices involve a diverse set of actors, including affected communities, conflict parties (terrorist groups and security forces), numerous middlemen, and other actors. In this section, the interactions between these actors and how they have affected the resilience of Boko Haram are examined. It also interrogate how counter-insurgency measures affect, for good or bad, socio-economic activities in the LCB communities, and how this development may be further deepening the fertile ground for recruitment into violent and illicit activities.

4.1 Actors, Activities and Cross-Cutting Nexuses

4.1.1 Licit Activities

Most of the inhabitants of the LCB are crop farmers, livestock breeders and fishermen who rely heavily on the Lake Chad ecology for subsistence and economic activities. Nigeria, for instance, is the region’s major hub for cattle trade, attracting pastoralists from across the Sahel to markets in Mubi and Nguroje in northern Adamawa and Taraba States, respectively. Most pastoralists are itinerant herders who use local and international grazing routes in and out of Nigeria during seasonal migrations in search of green pastures and to sell their livestock. However, climate change and resource constraint occasioned by the shrinking of the Lake Chad water body, and the pace of desertification, have exacerbated insecurity. This situation has significant implications for understanding the Boko Haram crisis which thrived on a population of economically vulnerable people recruited into the terrorist group. Other licit economic activities common in the LCB include commercial local and cross-border transportation, trading, civil service, and small unit enterprises. Several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have

also grown in popularity, especially since the region became a focus of massive international humanitarian response due to the ongoing conflict.

4.1.2 Illicit activities

In a region where national borders are very porous and ill-policed, the cross-border activities of drug and arms traffickers, smugglers, armed robbers and kidnappers, terrorist informants, to name a few, have become rampant. While Boko Haram and bandits impose illegal levies on farmers, fishermen and pastoralists, they are by no means the only ones as state security actors also extort local communities. For decades, drugs trafficking and smuggling have become prominent economic activity across the LCB communities due to their closeness to international borders. Traditionally, smugglers have traded food items, motorcycles, and petroleum products across borders. Typically, smuggling has aided the flow of illicit substances across borders, including the supply of pharmaceutics, food, arms, and petroleum products to terrorists in the bush. There is a thriving drug trafficking ring between Nigeria and Cameroon, with youngsters acting as couriers using motorcycles and tricycles. Those who engage in it believe it is the easiest route to be rich or just even to be well off, away from a life of drudgery and foreclosed ambitions.

Illustration: Dominique Mwankumi, GIJN

Evidence shows that several communities within the epicentre of Boko Haram activities have sympathy towards the group. For instance, community sympathisers are known to work as logistics handlers and trading agents for Boko Haram and other violent groups like kidnappers. Much of what they do for such violent groups involve supplying them food items, medicines, and petroleum products in return for payment. They are also known to help Boko Haram sell farm produce in the market.

Another illicit activity with significant implications for the LCB violence is arms trafficking. It is widely speculated, also, that rogue pastoralists help non-state armed groups to conceal and transport arms. Nomadic pastoralists are therefore key actors in the economy of violence in that they can graze their cattle in all areas affected by Boko Haram in the LCB. They are only able to successfully do so because they pay taxes and levies to the different Boko Haram factions linked to ISWAP and JAS. Apart from this, they help Boko Haram spy on positions of state security forces and from time to time feed into the group’s recruitment. However, their lawful economic operations have also been targeted by Boko Haram/ISWAP, who rob them of their animals and execute them on the allegations that they are spying for state security.

In addition to the above is the rising cases of armed robbery, a criminal method Boko Haram is long known for, and kidnapping for ransom. This could be illustrated using the case of northern Adamawa in Nigeria, where informants said the greater threat they now face has come from armed bandits who engage in indiscriminate kidnapping. Between late 2014 and early 2015, for instance, Nigerian forces and local hunters successfully drove Boko Haram from most of northern Adamawa to areas closer to the notorious Sambisa Forest and Borno. Since then, however, Boko Haram has become a lesser threat than kidnappers who, according to intelligence sources, have become bolder in their exploits.

Boko Haram also rob banks and households. In 2014, when they captured northern Adamawa towns from Madagali through Michika to Mubi, they looted all the banks within the vicinity. Earlier, in 2020, they invaded Michika to attack and loot a bank. Several youth gangs, especially the “Shiller Boys” in Adamawa and “Maliens” in Borno, have also emerged, from the rump of young people displaced and/or affected by the Boko Haram crisis. They operate in the evening and use dangerous weapons to injure and dispossess people of their belongings. Their activities
have been so rampant that the government has had to ban commercial tricycles from 7 PM in Adamawa. With all the illicit activities going on in the LCB, the livelihoods of local communities have understandably deteriorated; especially as people struggle to access their farms and engage in productive activities due to palpable fear of being kidnapped.

4.1.3 Corruption among state actors

By far the most worrisome and systemic illicit activity is the role of the state officials, including a retinue of administrators, military, police and customs as well immigration official in the economy of violence in the LCB. Indeed, the protractedness of the conflict has created a need to make large subventions of state resources for kinetic and non-kinetic operations, including responses towards resilience, livelihood recovery and the rebuilding of communities. However, this has become a sort of criminal money-making enterprise for security and administrative officials. One instance that best illustrates this development was the infamous “grass-cutting” scandal in Nigeria, where a high-level state official converted a public bureaucracy for the rehabilitation of devastated communities into an organised kickback scheme. Upon cross-examination, all that the official reported was that the misappropriated fund was spent on cutting grass.

Similarly, political leaders and senior military officials have been indicted in a $2.1 billion arms procurement fraud scandal. Anti-corruption experts and activists monitoring Nigeria’s security spending have concluded that military and administrative officials are taking advantage of the current emergency to flout government procurement rules and to enrich themselves. On daily basis, security officials at roadblocks extort money from road users while allowing, for a fee, the flow of illicit goods, especially hard drugs across borders. Traders moving between towns like Mubi and Michika recall the impunity that accompany their extortion by security personnel at checkpoints. In Mahia, a Nigerian border town to Cameroon, local informants said Nigerian security operatives, including from the police, army, customs, and immigrations services at various checkpoints, allow smugglers to pass after collecting a bribe. There is also report that security personnel forcibly take over or use farmlands abandoned by displaced locals.

This twist of events described above have become a major source of tension and irritation between the security and administrative officials, on the one hand, and between the two and ordinary citizens who are at the receiving end, on the other. Security officials involved in such illicit activities complain of poor remuneration, welfare and reward packages as reasons for their actions. The implications of these myriad illicit activities for the local communities and the resilience options they mobilise are discussed here.

**5.0 Impacts of EV**

An important dimension of the festering economy of violence in the LCB is the contribution to the resilience of Boko Haram as well as other non-state armed and violent groups. Various sources of funds, including bank robbery, donations, ransoms, taxes imposed on traders and primary producers, proceeds of trade in farm produce, have all created an inexhaustible war chest for Boko Haram to carry out its activities. The inability of state actors to counter these sources- but rather engage in activities that undermine the livelihoods of local communities- has made the fight against terrorism in north-eastern Nigeria particularly challenging.

The illicit economic activities and motivations of other actors have also contributed to the resilience of the Boko Haram group. For example, a consequence of state security actors’ involvement in illicit activities such as taking bribes to allow vehicles to pass is also missing the opportunity to conduct proper checks to detect the movement of illicit supplies such as petroleum products, arms, and other items to the terrorist group. Since non-state armed actors depend on material supplies such as food and fuel to sustain themselves, their ability to recruit logistics handlers and suppliers from among community members contributes to their resilience. Where they can carry out successful attacks against state security actors and in local communities, they usually also depend on spies or informants who are economically motivated to help. In such operations against state security actors, they usually capture military hardware, which they use as offensive and defensive instruments.
National and regional counter-insurgency operations have been under way for about one decade to militarily degrade Boko Haram and address the economic drivers contributing to their resilience. Unfortunately, these counter-insurgency measures have resulted in some adverse outcomes that have far-reaching implications for social and economic activities within communities already adversely affected by years of insecurity and instability. First, the heavy and long presence of security state actors has created a new regime of violence in which conflict entrepreneurs and state officials are themselves becoming neck-deep in illicit activities such as bribery and extortion, drugs trafficking and land grabbing. This development not only makes living and trading a difficult chore for local communities but also emboldens those otherwise reluctant to engage in illicit economic activities to embrace them.

Second, measures such as preventing the cultivation of tall crops like maize, banning use of motorcycles, and restriction of movements on certain highways are adversely affecting economic activities within communities. In Madagali, for instance, the military banned growing tall crops to ensure a clear view of movements of Boko Haram, but the locals are long-accustomed to tall crops such as millet, maize and sorghum that banning them only end up creating scarcity and inflation in the local market. This problem is even becoming worse because Mahia farmers, who have supplied crops like maize after the ban in Madagali, are now abandoning their farms due to rising insecurity, especially kidnapping. The ban placed on motorcycles in northern Adamawa on the excuse that they are commonly used by Boko Haram fighters has affected movement...
of persons and goods, especially by farmers who increasingly have to travel far to access their farms. Finally, trading activities have slowed due to the restriction of movement on Michika-Mubi Road to between 8 AM and 3 AM each day. For a town that is the commercial nerve centre for about seven local government areas in northern Adamawa State, the overall impact on Mubi town cannot be underestimated.

### 5.3 Criminality as Coping Strategy?

The LCB was already one of the world’s poorest regions before the advent of Boko Haram and the subsequent counter-insurgency operations mounted by the government to degrade the group. Both options, insurgency and counter-insurgency, have ended up exacerbating people’s social and economic difficulties. In many areas, human capital enhancement services and chances of upward mobility have become rarely or difficult to achieve due to the conflict. Consequently, survival pressure has pushed many community members into illicit activities that directly aid the same non-state armed groups making their lives hell. To survive, community members end up working for Boko Haram as informants, trade intermediaries, and suppliers for some payments. They also have had to pay taxes to Boko Haram in order for them to be able to conduct their businesses without undue interference by the group. Apart from those working directly or indirectly in aid of Boko Haram, there are others involved in illicit activities such as drugs trafficking and working as couriers for smugglers.

### 5.4 Unending and Changing Scope of the Conflict

Asymmetric warfare is typically a difficult one for conventional militaries to win. But in the case of the LCB conflict, analysis of the roles of state security and administrative actors in illicit activities across the four countries suggests some actors have inverted their mission, converting the conflict to a lucrative money-making venture. With this kind of motivation, such actors tend to be invested in having the conflict situation continue and to keep government subventions flowing in in order to mop them up through corrupt and illegal channels. Furthermore, humanitarian and state development programmes that focus on temporary responses and emergency material aids as against tackling structural problems make sustainable livelihood and recovery difficult to achieve in affected communities. These problems, in turn, affect the resilience of local communities to resist the lure to aid violent groups or participate in illicit activities.

Apart from the presence of Ansaru in the north-west, Boko Haram (JAS and ISWAP) has expanded to other parts of the north, most notably Kaduna and Niger states, from their original northeast
In comparison to the peak period of insurgency and violence, it would seem that a semblance of calm is slowly returning to parts of LCB. There is no better time than now to seize the opportunity to begin the necessary efforts towards stabilization and trust building, two key ingredients for making a successful transition from conflict and fragility to resilience and sustainable peace. The major challenge to this pursuit, perhaps, is how to stop the flourishing illicit economic activities and the underlying drivers that motivate them. Because stabilisation processes require a combination of security and development approaches, the pursuit of ineffective and corruption-prone counter-insurgency and development interventions could scuttle or adversely affect stabilisation.

Measures commonly mobilised against Boko Haram and its illicit activities also have adverse effect on social and economic activities of local communities in ways that make stabilisation, resilience and recovery very difficult to achieve in the short and medium terms. Ultimately, the effect of this challenge is the deepening of conditions that create a fertile ground for Boko Haram recruitment, undermine the coping strategies of local communities, erode trust between and state actors and community members. There is also a high risk of perverse incentive and dependency culture as a result of the particular humanitarian and development approach focusing on the delivery of temporary material reliefs.

This study makes a number of key proposals, moving forward. First, is that LCB countries should begin to review the logic and orientation of their counter-insurgency operations against Boko Haram in order to address the negative participation of state security actors in illicit economic activities. This may involve making sure that operatives do not stay too long enough in an area to be able to set up illicit transaction networks. Second, current and future humanitarian and development interventions by state, NGOs and development partners should combine the delivery of traditional relief materials with more robust interventions to build community resilience and livelihood recovery that discourages the lure into illicit activities.

6.0 Conclusion: From Stabilisation to Trust Building

In the new places, also, they have created a conflict economy around illicit mining and collection of sundry fees to grant access to mine sites.
Any form of counter-insurgency measures that substantially hinders the exercise of social and economic liberties, such as restrictions of movement of goods and services can significantly undermine efforts towards stabilisation and recovery, in the short run, and sustainable peace and security, in the long run. Unregulated transhumance activities by nomadic pastoralists outside designated local and international grazing routes (butali) should be discouraged in view of documented cases of inversion along such routes by rogue pastoralists, armed bandits and kidnappers, and agents of Boko Haram.

A special programme, combining security and development efforts, should be implemented towards helping women and young people accelerate progress towards social and economic parity to strengthen community resilience. Bringing young adults in during the stage of planning and implementation should, in the medium term, discourage them from drugs abuse and violent crime widespread in the LCB. Finally, state security actors need better equipment but also improved remuneration, reward and welfare package in order to consolidate the grounds gains in terms of rolling back the presence and activities of violent insurgency and terrorist groups.
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