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IMPROVING THE SECURITY OF LIVES AND PROPERTY IN RURAL AND URBAN COMMUNITIES OF NIGERIA: THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

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Abstract

Nigeria is currently experiencing serious security challenges. The federal government of Nigeria has embarked on efforts aimed at ameliorating the situation without achieving any significant success. This paper examined the role of local governments in improving the security of lives and property at the grassroots and urban communities in the country with a view to suggesting appropriate policies to address insecurity in Nigeria. Specifically, the paper reviewed relevant literature, identified the causes of insecurity; analysed the patterns of some of the insecurity issues in Nigeria in the last few years (2008-2018); examined how local government can assist in securing lives and property of its citizens; and identified the challenges confronting them in discharging these responsibilities. Secondary data formed the basis of data collection, interpretation and analysis. Data was collected from Armed Conflict Location and Event Data and through a comprehensive review of relevant literature on the subject of inquiry. Table and Trend analysis were used to analyse the data. Findings revealed that violence against civilians was the highest in 2016 with 1928 occurrences. While Farmers/herdsmen clashes were highest (285) in 2017, kidnapping was the highest (703) and the highest suicide bombing (481) occurred in the year 2015. It can therefore be concluded that security of lives and property is central to development at all levels in the country. The paper made some recommendations. Amongst them are revenue allocation formula should be reviewed with improved revenues to local governments being the closest tier of government to the people and, local governments should be granted autonomy. Religious leaders should be involved in the security of lives and property through preaching in the "house of God".

Key words: Insecurity, Socio-economic Development, Citizens, Urban and Rural Areas

Introduction

The statutory role of governments all over the world is to enhance security of lives and property as well as ensure welfare and rights of the citizenry. Security of lives and property in Nigeria is an important issue that should not be treated with levity. The 1999 constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria affirms that Nigeria is a federation of one indivisible and sovereign state consisting of thirty-six states and a Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. The Constitution emphasizes the role of Nigerian State in the protection of lives and property. According to the constitution, “the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government”.

In recent times, it has been discovered that many government officials and political office holders, who were supposed to be responsible for managing security to ensure protection of lives and property, ensure rights and welfare of the citizenry, are not sensitive to the plights of the citizenry. This leads to incessant breakdown of law and order that often result to loss of lives and property.

The level of insecurity in the country nowadays is alarming. It has enveloped the whole nation to the extent that citizens are not even sure of where they can visit and where they should not. Nigeria as a country is currently confronted with myriad of challenges ranging from ethnic, political, economic, environmental, religious to cultural. These have been climaxed by insecurity which poses serious threats to the unity of the country.

Insecurity problem within the country is linked with increase in the socio-economic statistics of unemployment and poverty. The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) reported that unemployment rate in Nigeria was 19.7 percent in the year 2009. This increased from 21.1 percent in 2010 to 23.9 percent in 2011 (Ewetan and Urhie 2014). The current situation of social insecurity is alarming and unacceptable and has increased crime rate in the country. According to Ewetan and Urhie (2014), an Anti-Terrorism Act was passed in 2011 by National Assembly; the Federal Government of Nigeria in 2013 equally allocated a huge amount (N950 billion) and also requested for foreign assistance from some countries in order to combat the insecurity situation in the country. In spite of these, the level of internal insecurity is still very high.

Nigeria as a country has an estimated population of 206,900,336 million which is equivalent to 2.64% of the total world population (Worldometer, 2020). Securing the lives and property of these people becomes an important concern for the government at local, state and federal levels. However, local governments

have more roles to play in this situation than the state and federal governments. This is because the ultimate goal of creation of local governments is to bring government closer to the people at the grassroots (Ozohu-Suleiman and Chima 2015).

Nigeria has 774 local government areas that cut across the 36 states and FCT. The aim of local government reforms is to accelerate development and enable the people at the grassroots participate and hold those in power accountable for their governance roles. Local governments are expected to perform an array of functions to include administrative, economic, social and more importantly security of lives and property. Unfortunately, over the years, local government administration has failed in the area of service delivery. This has made the citizens to lose faith and trust in this third-tier of government in Nigeria (Oviasuyi, Idada and Isiraojie, 2010). Against this background, this paper tends to examine the role of local governments in improving the security of lives and property at the grassroots as well as urban communities with a view to suggesting appropriate policies to address the insecurity situation in the country. In an effort to achieve the objective, the paper reviews relevant literature, identifies the causes of insecurity; analyses the patterns of some of the insecurity issues in Nigeria in the last few years (2008-2018); examine show local government can assist in securing lives and property of its citizens; and identifies the challenges confronting them in discharging these responsibilities.

Conceptual Issues

Security

There is no consensus on the acceptable definition of the concept of security. According to the UNDP (1994), security is the protection of national interests in foreign policy. It stresses further that it means safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression. Secondly, it means protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the pattern of daily life whether at homes, work or in communities. In the opinion of Achumba and Ighomereho (2013), security can be described as stability and continuity of livelihood, predictability of daily life, protection from crime, and freedom from psychological harm. According to Ibidapo-obe (2008), security connotes a situation that exists as a result of the establishment of measures for the protection of persons, information and property against hostile persons, influences and actions. The Human Development Report (HDR) (1994) cited in Kalu et al. (2018) says security is when individuals have access to safe drinking water, food, shelter, employment

opportunities, eradication of poverty, good governance, environmental protection, access to quality healthcare services, social and political inclusion. A citizen can only be protected when he or she is economically, educationally, socially, medically, environmentally and politically protected.

The experience gotten from the two major European wars and the cold war is that security has been perceived primarily as the defense and protection of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of a nation state from external attacks, sabotage, internal instability and crises that threaten the survival of a nation. This definition, however, expanded and broadened to sum up as comprehensive and total security which includes security of lives and property, security of economic and raw material resources, food, health of the people, of the environment and of a national integrity. Security entails a situation when a nation feels free from political pressures, economic coercion, external aggression and situations when the nation can develop and progress freely. Scholars such as Oche, (2001); Igbuzor, (2011); Nwanegbo and Odigbo, (2013) in conceptualizing security have laid much emphasis on the absence of threats to peace, stability, national cohesion, political and socio-economic objectives of a country.

There are two perspectives to human security namely “freedom from fear” and “freedom from want” perspectives (UNDP, 1994). The freedom from fear perspective has to do with limiting the practice of human security for individuals against violent conflict which is strongly associated with poverty, lack of state capacity and other forms of inequality. It further argues that focusing on violence is a more realistic and manageable approach to human security. The freedom from want school perspective advocates a holistic approach to achieving human security. It argues that the threat agenda should be broadened to include hunger, disease and natural disasters because, according to this perspective, these factors kill more people than genocide, war and terrorism.

The dimensions of human security include economic, food, political, health, personal, environmental and community security. According to Raffin and Brassard (2014), human security orientation is purposely protective and people centered in order to account for many challenges faced by individuals and societies. Altogether, security can be defined as total freedom from threats of danger, be it political, economic, social or psychological problems it can also means peace of mind, invulnerable to harm, loss of life; property and livelihood. Hence, traditional security deals with the ability of state to defend itself against external threats while human security is people centered. Insecurity is the antithesis of security.

Insecurity on the other hand is defined as the presence of tendencies which could undermine internal cohesion and corporate existence of the nation and its ability to maintain its vital institutions for promotion of its core values, socio-political and economic objectives, as well as to meet the legitimate aspirations of the people (Abubakar, 2012). Insecurity means lack of freedom from danger. Beland (2005) points out that insecurity connotes a state of fear or anxiety due to absence or lack of protection. Similarly, Achumba et al. (2013) define insecurity from two perspectives. Firstly, it is the state of being open to danger or threat of danger where there is the condition of being susceptible to harm or injury. Secondly, insecurity is said to be the state of being exposed to risk or anxiety, where anxiety is a vague unpleasant emotion that is experienced in anticipation of some misfortune.

Local Government

In the 1999 constitution of Nigeria, local government is referred to as the third tier of government. It came into being as a result of quest for wide spread development in the country. This is based on the belief that grassroots welfare and national development can be achieved through the third-tier government (Okoli, 2005). Local government, according to Adeyemo (2005), is the act of diffusing power in the form of devolution or de-concentration. Devolution is to handover authority to local entities while de-concentration means delegation of power to field units of the same department. Local government is a potent system to mobilize people at the grassroots for local participation in governance. Ezeani (2006:253) posits that “local government is generally seen as a veritable agent of development and grassroots participation in the democratic process”. The function of local government, according to Ahmed (2012), is philosophical commitment to participation in the growing process at the grassroots level. Awa (1981) defines local government as an administrative authority set up by a nation as a subordinate authority with a view to de-centralizing political power.

Therefore, local government can be seen as an avenue for training and inculcating habits of democracy such as mobilization, participation, accountability, responsiveness and self-governability in the grassroots. According to Adetoritse (2011), local governments exist in order to deliver goods and services to the people; mobilize local resources and identify specific areas of needs as well as how these needs can be provided. People's political instrument to participate in resource allocation, distribution and power acquisition is the communal meaning of local government (Ibietan, 2010).

Hence, the local government provides some functions efficiently and in a more cost-effective manner than the higher level of government because of its accessibility to the grassroots (Abutudu, 2011). The United Nations office for Public Administration cited in Adetoritse (2011: 66), defines local government as the political subdivision of a nation state constituted by law and has substantial control of local affairs, including the powers to impose taxes or to exact labour for prescribed purposes. The local government system in Nigeria is about the empowerment of Nigerians at both rural and urban areas for effective and sustainable development which will eventually lead to security of lives.

The National Guidelines for Reform of Local Government (1976:1) defines local government as:

Government at (the) local level exercised through representative councils established by law to exercise specific powers within defined areas. These powers should give the councils substantial control over local affairs as well as the staff and institutional and financial powers to initiate and direct the provision of services and to determine and implement projects so as to complement the activities of the state and federal governments in their areas and to ensure through active participation of the people and their traditional institutions that local initiatives and responses to local needs and conditions are maximized.

Hence, the economic well-being of rural and urban communities depends largely on the ability of the local governments to provide essential services part of which is securing the lives and property of the inhabitants that will enhance development.

Development

The meaning of development could be perceived differently by different people, thus making its universal acceptability difficult. In whichever way it is being perceived, it is a man-centered and a multidimensional phenomenon that often leads to a cumulative increase in the standard of living of the citizens of a nation. It is associated with positive change in every area of life. It can further be defined as sustained increase in the socio-economic welfare of a population. World Bank (2001) defines development as...concerning the well-being of the society in terms of access to safe water, health care services, sanitation, life expectancy at birth, reduction in infant and maternal mortality rate, and the

process of achieving transformation as well as securing lives and property of the society. Todaro (1987:61) says development is a multidimensional process involving the reorganization and reorientation of entire economic and social systems...i.e. it involves radical changes in institutional, social, and administrative structures as well as popular attitudes and, in many cases, customs and beliefs.

Adedayo (1983) and (2012) sees development as a process in which communities actively and freely participate in tasks that will make their collective lives better. Todaro and Smith (2011) posit that development in its essence represents the whole gamut of change by which an entire social system provides diverse basic needs, evolving aspirations of individuals and social groups within that system. It moves away from unsatisfactory condition of life towards a materially and spiritually better situation. Gboyega (2003) is of the opinion that development implies improvement in material well-being of all citizens, not the most powerful and the rich alone, in a sustainable way, such that today's consumption does not imperil the future. It also demands that poverty and inequality of access to the good things of life be removed or drastically reduced.

Furthermore, while defining development, Onyenemezu and Olumati (2013) point out that it involves reorganization and reorientation of the economic and social systems. Hence, factors such as economic, social, political and physical determine the degree of development in an area as they enhance the quality of life. Sustainable development, on the other hand, can be seen as economic, social and environmental growth that ensures human well-being and dignity, ecological integrity, gender equality and social justice at present and in the near future (UN Women, 2015). Therefore, in the context of this paper therefore, development means reduction in inequality, improvement in the overall living standard of people, empowering them to reveal their potentials and capacities economically, socially and politically without fear of any danger.

Hence, the concept and practice of local government is an effective strategy for ensuring development at the local level (Ani et al. 2013 cited by Chukwuemeka et al. 2014).

Local Government and Security of Lives and Property

Local governments are expected to provide security so as to guarantee the protection of lives and property of its inhabitants. Oyediran (2001) evaluates the performance of local government as the third tier of government and discovers that the financial autonomy of local government has been eroded as a result of the

1999 constitution that introduced the State Joint Local Government Account (SJLGA). Allocations by Federal government channeled through state governments are no longer remitted to local governments. This automatically makes service delivery in the area of provision of security of lives and property difficult.

Olagunju (2019) examined the impacts of administrative structure on the functions of Ikorodu Local Government in Nigeria and observes that the administrative functions of Nigeria's local government council are numerous and one of them is security of human lives and property. He, however, concludes that structures of local government are vital to the effective and efficient performance of its functions. Majekodunmi (2012) examines local government and effective service delivery with special reference to Nigerian local governments and observes that despite the strategic measures adopted by local governments to ensure sustainable development through effective service delivery, there has not been much improvement in the area of security of lives and property. Abegunde (2019) examines the challenges confronting local government administration in effective service delivery such as security of lives and property at the grassroots level and concludes that local government leadership must be elected by the rural dwellers and not imposed by the higher authority. Hence, the role of local government in the security of lives and property should be improved upon so as to promote sustainable development in the rural and urban communities of Nigeria.

Insecurity Issues in Nigeria

Nigeria as a country has faced tremendous increase in security challenges. Some of these challenges include weak intelligence poor database, poverty, availability and proliferation of small arms and light weapons (Akpan, 2012). Similarly, Achebe (1983) observes that some of the political and socio-economic security related challenges include leadership, tribalism, lack of patriotism, social injustice, the culture of mediocrity, indiscipline and corruption among others. The Global Peace Index (2012) consistently ranks Nigeria low indicating a worsened state of insecurity within the country. The unprecedented security challenges such as kidnapping, terrorism, violent armed robbery, political assassinations, ritual killings and more recently activities of Boko Haram in the north eastern region of Nigeria impinge on the security of lives and property of both Nigerians and foreigners living or even trying to invest in the country.

Causes of Insecurity in Nigeria

The causes of insecurity in rural and urban communities are numerous and some of these shall be examined. Terrorism as a result of religious fanaticism and intolerance is the most critical source of insecurity in the country. Similarly, one of the major causes of insecurity has to do with failure of government at all level in providing adequate basic needs and delivering public goods and services to the masses. Some of these need include good roads, electricity, pipe borne water, healthcare, and telecommunication among others. This has led to rural-urban migration, increase in crime rate; hence, the security of lives and property remains a challenge.

Another cause of insecurity in Nigeria has to do with uneven distribution and claim over scarce resources, land, power, chieftaincy, councils, control of markets and religious disharmony among other. Ethno-religious conflict is another cause of insecurity which has remained a major security challenge in the country. Adagba, et al, (2012) observe that these conflicts have resulted in violence and killings on a large scale amongst ethno-religious groups in the country.

The approach of media report over the years has also exacerbated insecurity or perception of insecurity in Nigeria. Media practices have always focused on the dramatic and the spectacular view of any given situations. The former president of Nigeria, President Jonathan made reference to the popular axiom that the pen is mightier than the sword. According to him, “the sword is used to kill and destroy but what we use the pen to do is also very critical. When there is a society with unending political conflicts, it is there on the media whether print, electronic or social media and this brings a lot of insecurity to the system” (Bello and Oyedele, 2012).

Furthermore, inadequate equipment for the security agencies, both weaponry and technical know-how, is another reason for insecurity in the country although the present administration (President Buhari) is substantially addressing this. In addition to this, poor attitudinal and behavioural disposition of security personnel have been identified as a major cause of insecurity in the country. To support this, Omede (2011) points out that one of the factors negating the quick apprehension of culprits is the failure of security agencies such as the police, the military, state security services and paramilitary units to share intelligence information.

Loss of socio-cultural and communal value system is also a cause. The old values of endearing and communal spirit have been traded off for western

values such as 'modernity and civilization' Porous frontiers of the country where movements of individuals are not tracked have led to unwarranted influx of migrants and importation of arms from neighbouring countries. These weapons have enabled militants and criminals to perpetrate crime (Hazen and Horner, 2007). Nigeria is estimated to host over 70 percent of about 8 million illegal weapons in West Africa (Edeko, 2011). Another cause of insecurity in Nigeria is high level of unemployment and poverty among the youth who are easily attracted to violent crimes. Governments at all levels have failed to address the problem of poverty, unemployment and inequitable distribution of wealth among ethnic nationalities. All these factors have made Nigeria to be ranked and identified as the least peaceful country in West Africa in the last 3 years (GPI, 2012). Other causes of insecurity in the country include neglect and disconnect between people and government, uneven distribution of political offices, violent resistance to exploitation by government, non-prosecution of perpetrators of violence, conflicting political factions and corporate organizations and cult clashes.

Materials and Methods

This paper examined the role of local governments in improving the security of lives and property at the rural and urban communities in the country with the use of data obtained from secondary source of information. Data were collected from Armed Conflict Location and Event Data. Table and Trend analysis were used to analyse the gathered data.

Results and Discussion

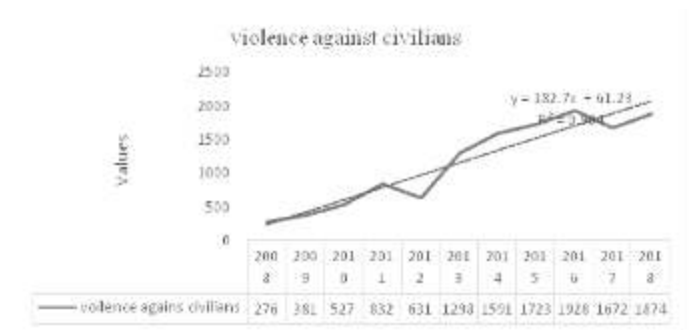
Pattern of some insecurity issues in Nigeria

Table 1 and figures 1, 2, 3, & 4 present the trend of some of the insecurity issues in Nigeria in the last few years (2008-2018).

Table 1: Some insecurity issues in Nigeria (2008-2018)

Year	Violence against civilians	Farmers/Herdsman conflicts	Kidnapping	Suicide bombing
2008	276	26	15	0
2009	381	32	25	0
2010	527	51	63	13
2011	832	36	72	52
2012	631	79	105	83
2013	1298	93	235	261
2014	1591	138	482	281
2015	1723	194	638	481
2016	1928	217	575	93
2017	1672	285	703	72
2018	1874	254	503	43

Source: Armed Conflict Location and Event Data ACLED, (2018)

**Figure1: Trend of violence against civilians**

Source: Author, 2019

From figure 1, the highest number of violence against civilians experienced in Nigeria was in the year 2016 with 1928 occurrences. This was followed by year 2018 (1874) and 2015 (1723) while the lowest was the year 2008 (276). This means an increasing pattern from year 2008 to 2016 before it moved down a bit in the year 2017 (1672) and increased to 1874 in the year 2018. For instance, most of the Boko Haram attacks in the northeastern part of Nigeria include abductions and killings of civilians. Supporting this, is Markovic (2019)'s finding which shows that the majority of the suicide bombings victims in Nigeria are civilians.



Figure 2: Trend of farmers/herdsmen conflicts in Nigeria
Source: Author, 2019

Figure 2 reveals an upward trend of farmers/herdsmen clashes with the lowest occurrence in the year 2008 (26) and highest in the year 2017 (285) until it decreased a bit in the year 2018 (254). This shows a significant variation over the years. This corroborates Gever and Essien (2017)'s report that farmers/Fulani herders' conflict is common in the six states (Benue, Niger, Plateau, Nasarawa, Kogi and Kwara) that make up North Central Nigeria. In a similar view, Christopher and Ndubuisi (2018) report that Fulani herdsman attacked some villages, killed 10 people, and displaced over 4,000 people in January 2013. Also, there was a severe attack in Benue State in February 2016 where thousands of people were driven away from six villages by the Fulani herdsman (Mikailu, 2016). Furthermore, about 40 persons were left dead in another attack by fulani herdsman in 2016 on Nimbo residents in Uzo- Uwani Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria (Abiodun, 2016).

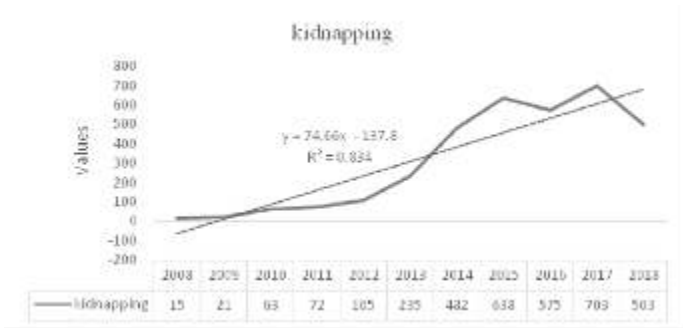


Figure 3: Trend of Kidnapping in Nigeria

Source: Author, 2019

The problem of kidnapping shows an increasing trend from the year 2008 (15) to the year 2015 (638). It started fluctuating between the years 2015 and 2018 but got to the highest level in the year 2017 (703). Confirming this, are the findings of Onifade, et. al (2013); Adekola and Enyiche (2017) which shows that there are repeated cases of kidnapping and other related forms of violence in Abia, Imo, Ebonyi and Rivers States, Nigeria.

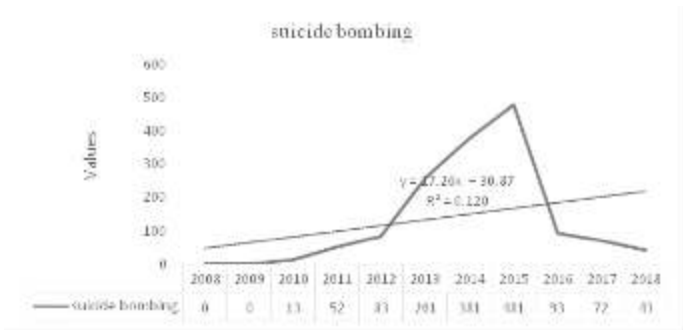


Figure 4: Trend of suicide bombing in Nigeria

Source: Author, 2019

Figure 4 reveals the issue of suicide bombing in the country. The highest number of suicide bombing occurred in the year 2015 (481). After that, it started decreasing. From the analysis, suicide bombing has shown a downward trend in the last few years particularly from year 2016. Corroborating this is Zenn (2017)'s report which shows that the majority of suicide attacks from June 2011 to

the end of 2012 were concentrated in north-eastern Nigeria.

3.3 The Role of Local Government in securing Lives and Property of Nigerian Communities

Quoting from the Constitution:

The functions of a local government council shall include participation of such council in the Government of a state with respects to the following matters (a) the provision and maintenance of primary, adult and vocational education; (b) the development of agriculture and natural resources, other than the exploitation of minerals;(c)the provision and maintenance of health services and (d) such other functions as may be conferred on a local government council by the House of Assembly of the State.

Local government can play fundamental roles in securing lives and property of its citizens in the following ways:

1. By involving the citizens in decision making about matters affecting their lives.
2. Government through the local government needs to accelerate the pace of development socially, economically, politically and physically.
3. Local government chairmen should be elected and not appointed according to the constitution and should be given constitutional power to take care of his area of jurisdiction.
4. Local government administration is to provide information such as enlightenment, development projects, administration, democratic and leadership initiative, maintenance of peace, law and order in the locality.
5. Local government can use the voluntary sector, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), to expand and improve its services to the people (Horste, 2008).
6. Control and monitor people moving into the communities and the fringes by keeping records.
7. Community policing: This involves the local community's security apparatuses like the vigilante and deploying of police officers to some areas in order for them to get familiar with those areas and work in a proactive partnership with citizens to identify and solve problems in the various communities under each local government area.
8. Significant use of discretion or understanding of individuals with detailed local knowledge for efficient performance within the communities.

9. The local governments are supposed to provide social and welfare functions such as education, health, roads, police posts, establishments of military facilities and recreation grounds by collaborating with the appropriate authorities.
10. Involvement of local people in the management of their resources as key stakeholders.
11. Empowerment and employment-generation programmes should be rooted through the local government. This will reduce the number of unemployed youths in the country.
12. Ensuring reduction in poverty and among the citizens
13. Provision of nursery, primary and adult education to increase enrolments and other manpower development institutions that is skilled-based.
14. Monitoring operations of commercial activities and inspection of meat and abattoirs. Also, controlling and regulating outdoor advertising as well as monitoring the sanitary conditions in food processing establishments such as restaurants and bakeries.
15. Control of pollution, grazing and environmental degradation

Table 2 reveals the Nigerian expenditure on various assignments across all tiers of government from federal, state and local governments.

Table 2: Nigerian Expenditure Assignment

Tier of Government	Expenditure Category
Federal only	Defense; Shipping; Federal trunk roads; Aviation; Railways; Posts, telegraphs and telephones; Police and other security services; Regulation of labor, interstate commerce, telecommunications; Mines and minerals; Social Security; Insurance; National statistical system; National Parks; Guidelines for minimum education standards at all levels; Water resources affecting more than one state;
<i>Federal-State (shared)</i>	Antiquities and monuments; Electricity; Industrial, commercial and agricultural development; Scientific and technological research; Statistics and surveys; University, technological and post-primary education; Health and social welfare;

<i>State-Local (shared)</i>	Primary, adult and vocational education; Health services; Development of agriculture and non-mineral natural resources;
<i>Local government</i>	Economic planning and development; Cemeteries, burial grounds; Homes for the destitute and infirm; Markets; Sewage and refuse disposal; Roads, streets, street lighting, drains, other public facilities;

Source: 1999 Constitution and Various Sector Policy Reports. (Adapted from Khemani, 2001)

Challenges Confronting Local Governments in Ensuring Security of Lives and Property in Nigeria

Local governments in Nigeria have made specific efforts in tackling insecurity in our communities. For instance, they have engaged the vigilantes and neighborhood watch in various communities. They are however, confronted with myriads of problems that have affected the sustainable development of the citizens and communities. Some of these include:

1. The local government lacks adequate financial and human capacity to deliver the statutory and shared responsibilities between it and the other tiers of government. Most local governments cannot generate funds internally and there is inadequate fund from the federation. Local government still operates a joint account with their respective state governments thereby making it difficult to discharge their constitutional duties and responsibilities particularly in the area of security of lives and property.
2. Social exclusion is a major problem instigating insecurity in our communities. This is because when there is concentration of poverty, social and economic problems in an area, children growing up in such areas are vulnerable to being involved in drug abuse and other crimes. They are, however, denied of employment, healthcare and safety enjoyed by the rest population. For these residents, there will be increase in the risks of poor health, vandalism, crime, victimization, drugs, pollution, wayward youths and lack of services-all which add to the lack of safety and security of lives and property.

3. Another challenge confronting the local government in discharging their responsibilities has to do with corruption. Corruption in the local government is wide spread in the country. When funds are allocated to some important areas of development, and contracts awarded, people tend to divert such funds to other uses that are personal and the awarded contracts are not usually executed. Corruption in local government is a plague so much that the public interest is now a second priority. Salaries are even paid to some ghost workers in the local government.
4. Grouping of diverse communities into a single local government is another challenge facing local government in the country in terms of security.
5. Lack of programmes that will adequately focus on drop-out youths within the communities.
6. Local governments only make minimal input in the decisions on resource allocations at both federal and state levels.
7. Another challenge bedeviling the Nigerian local government system is poor service delivery and bad governance. Most leaders in the local governments are very conservative and less innovative. They don't allow new ideas and fresh initiatives.
8. Amongst the major constraints to local government service delivery is undue political interference.
9. Undue intervention from the state government. Local government does not have autonomy. It is seen as an appendage of the state governments. Local governments are totally dependent on the federal and state governments who dominate over their administration through the state government offices. Such as the local government service commission and the ministry of local government.
10. Lack of skilled, efficient and effective workers leads to low productivity. The problem of inadequate skilled workers could be linked to lack of incentives.
11. Lack of commitment and cooperation on the part of the stakeholders within each community.
12. Lack of basic social amenities. Most local governments have failed in the provision of basic social amenities such as regular electricity supply, potable water, qualitative healthcare delivery, education, metro-transport, sanitations and rehabilitation of local roads.
13. Inadequate and poor budgetary allocation. Some States governors either

for political reasons or absolute corruption deliberately cut-off of budgetary allocation to the local government. This affects the performance of the local government.

Conclusion

It can therefore be concluded that local government has crucial roles to play in improving the security of lives and property within the country as it is directly linked with the people at the grassroots. Hence, insecurity is a drain on local and national resources at the expense of development and peoples' well-being given its adverse consequences on economic growth and development. Security of lives and property is central to development at all levels; therefore, sustainable development initiatives with respect to insecurity are needed. Hence, effective leadership, transparency, accountability and good governance are recommended as panaceas to solving social, economic and political problems that are the root cause of insecurity within the country. Also, local citizens should be empowered economically, socially and politically. Revenue allocation formula should be reviewed with improved revenues to local governments being the closest tier of government to the people (rural and urban). Religious leaders should be involved in the security of lives and property through preaching in the "house of God". Stakeholders such as community leaders, youth leaders and other leaders of Community Based Organizations should come up with lasting solutions to these insecurity issues in each community. Local government areas should be empowered constitutionally by dissociating them from the state governments thereby making the chairman accountable for the security of lives and property of his local government areas. Also, staff training and retraining should be embarked on. The masses should cultivate the habit of paying levies, taxes, rates and fees. New programmes and mentoring targeted at youths should be introduced through the local governments. Overall, development should be rooted through the local governments in Nigeria.

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