

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF BANDITRY ON WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN SELECTED AREAS OF KADUNA STATE

Maryam Hamza, PhD

Department of History and War Studies, Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna
maryamhamza2009@gmail.com, maryam.hamza@nda.edu.ng

Abstract

The study investigates the implication of banditry on women and children in Kaduna state with particular focus on four local government areas. This is because of the preponderance and devastating impact of this criminal enterprise in the selected case studies. Banditry in Kaduna state has features like kidnapping, cattle rustling, indiscriminate attacks on communities, destruction of lives and property. In complex security situations like banditry when social services are rolled back, women and children bear the brunt. It is against this backdrop that the study undertakes a micro assessment of banditry with particular focus on women and children. Relying on the use of primary and secondary sources generated from eye witness accounts, newspaper reports, journals and books, the paper adopted the descriptive and narrative method of historical reconstruction. Finding reveals that the changing trend in banditry has direct link to proliferation in small arms, presence of large swath of ungoverned forests, revolution in technology and so on. It also revealed that the activities of bandits have devastating effects on women and children in the area of socioeconomic activities, gender based sexual violence, mental and physical health implication, displacement, increase in the number of out of school children, diseases and so on. The paper concludes that the effect of banditry on women has pushed them to role reversal in their traditional gender roles which has further exacerbated their vulnerability

Introduction

Since 1999, banditry seems to have taken a downward spiral, accompanied by devastating consequences for the citizenry in Nigeria and more so for states that are hotbeds of bandits' activities like Zamfara, Kaduna, Katsina, and Sokoto states. The banditry, which underwent a transformation process, has been characterized by highway robbery, cattle rustling, kidnapping for ransom and indiscriminate killing, which have affected thousands of people directly and indirectly. While factors such as increased socio-economic conflicts between farmers and pastoralists which have transformed into violence and finally criminality, unemployment, poverty, failure of security architecture, government neglect and so on have been proffered as some of the background reasons for the outbreak of banditry. Factors such as the proliferation of arms, the presence of large swath of

ungoverned spaces, a revolution in information technology, the role of informants, drug use and abuse, corruption, political unwillingness to tackle banditry and so on have been identified as reasons for the exacerbation of the phenomenon. From 2011, the dialectics of banditry in Kaduna state, particularly the selected local government areas took a turn for the worse. While the LGAs witnessed an intensification of attacks and bandits' activities, the distress and traumatic effects it had on women, children and the aged were devastating. DO Kusa and A. Salihu asserted that when social services are rolled back, women bear the brunt as they have to carry additional burden in the face of state failure to provide essential services. However, despite the dire situation women and children are constantly thrown into when caught in the web of violence, especially banditry, there is a deep dearth of academic and scholarly works which gave

attention to the vulnerability and the impact of this phenomenon on them. Most of the studies on banditry are much too generalized assessment of the phenomenon and its impact on society in general. This paper, therefore, is a micro assessment of the impact of banditry on women and children in some local government areas in Kaduna state. There is to narrow the gap in the existing literature and to add value to knowledge on banditry. Furthermore, the paper focuses on the four local government areas of Kaduna State which are situated in the central senatorial district of the state these are Birnin Gwari, Igabi, Chikun and Giwa Local government areas. These LGAs were selected because the frequency and intensity of attacks by bandits surpass what has been witnessed in other parts of the state. Therefore, it is against this background that the paper attempts an assessment of the impact of banditry on women and children in selected areas of Kaduna state

An Overview of Banditry in Kaduna State.

Kaduna State with an area coverage of approximately 46,053 square kilometres, is bordered by Zamfara, Katsina, and Kano States to the north, Bauchi and Plateau States to the East and Niger State to the West and FCT Abuja and Nasarawa State to the South West. Going by the 2006 census figures, the population of the state stands at 6,113,503 with 3,090,438 (50.55%) being male and 3,023,065 (49.45%) females. It also has a growth rate of 3% per annum for Kaduna State, which is greater than National growth rate of 2.8% per annum by this projections. Therefore, when put side by side, urbanization and population growth have aided transformation of many communities in Kaduna state and the changes overtime have had profound implications on the inhabitants as well as also shaped the social relations. Unfortunately, banditry and other crimes are by products of these transformations.

There are over forty ethnic groups in the state scattered around the 23 Local Government Areas that make up Kaduna State. In terms of demographics the State is mostly populated by Hausa, Fulani, Gbagyi, Adara, Ham, Atyp, Bajjuu, Ninkyob, Kurama, Koro, Zango Kataf, Mada and Agworok ethnic communities. Each of these ethnic communities speaks a distinct but related dialect with the exception of the Hausa, Fulani, Gbagyi and Kaninko dialects. Furthermore, the state is divided into 3 senatorial districts; the Northern Senatorial District, Southern Senatorial District and the Central Senatorial District.

The rise of banditry in Kaduna state is attributed to several factors.

Dambazau, has observed that there is no single cause of crime and criminal behaviour but the causation of crime will depend on multiple factors. In Kaduna, for instance, internal dynamics have a direct impact on banditry which has been exacerbated by insecurity and instability. The situation has deteriorated particularly in the rural areas which have a low presence of the state indicating that the environment plays a major role in the proliferation of crime. The ethnoreligious make-up of Kaduna state has made it one of the most heterogeneous entities in northern Nigeria with cultural, social and religious diversity cutting across about forty ethnic groups. The human geography of the state is a melting pot of different people and cultures. The foregoing situation has birthed a complex inter-group relations that has been characterized by mutual distrust and fear. Thus, it could be right to say that Kaduna State can take its place as one of the most vulnerable and volatile states of Nigeria when it comes to violent conflicts.

In one of the study areas, particularly Birnin Gwari, the majority of the populations are farmers (both Hausa and Gbagyi), similarly, in Chikun LGA, there are variants of minor ethnic groups that are predominantly farmers while in Giwa and

Igabi, the majority of the rural inhabitants are Hausa farmers. All these LGAs have pastoralists living with them for ages intermingling and initially interacting peacefully. The traditional system of leadership instituted by the Jihad allowed for very strong social ties between the Fulani and Hausa and between Fulani and other ethnic groups. However, by the mid-1980s not even the strongest of bonds could stop this peaceful and harmonious coexistence from going sour as violent conflicts between them became the tale of the day. The ever-increasing population dynamics and take-over of grazing land, environmental degradation of available grazing land, desertification caused by climatic conditions and others have been a source of conflict between them and a breakdown of social relations along ethnic lines. Other factors such as poverty, unemployment, government neglect of rural areas and so on added to the problem at hand. The presence of vast forests which has housed thousands of Fulani herders has become the bone of contention as the forests have become hideouts for criminals like highway robbers, cattle rustlers, kidnapers and cannabis cultivators. The ungoverned Kamuku forest is a nightmare for the local government areas that are situated around it as it has served as a continuous source of crime and violence for the inhabitants. Furthermore, the surge in violence between different groups in the area has been a huge cause for concern as well.

These groups are in different categories.

The first group comprises mainly of Hausa farmers and community-sponsored vigilantes (protecting the Hausa) against Fulani pastoralists and armed militia groups. The attacks back and forth between these groups are traceable to herder-farmer crises which have accelerated and further degenerated to outright violence and criminality. The vigilante groups have been accused of targeting alleged criminals as well as innocent Fulani because of their

ethnic affiliation. On another hand, there are large criminal gangs involved in criminal activities such as cattle rustling, kidnapping for ransom, armed robbery, pillaging and indiscriminate attacks on people. Added to this violence is the confrontation between security forces and bandits. The situation has been further aggravated by the proliferation of deadly criminal gangs, thriving in a region inundated with huge supplies of arms and ammunition that state security forces struggle to control.

According to the crime statistics of Kaduna state, in 2015, there were 84 and 48 reported cases of cattle rustling and kidnapping respectively around the selected local government areas but by 2018 even though cattle rustling cases reduced to 33, kidnapping reached an all-time high with 171 reported cases. These official figures represent only reported and documented cases. Most of these cases in rural areas remain largely unreported where there is very disturbing low state presence and the inability of the Nigerian government tasked with the responsibility of safeguarding citizens from the activities of bandits. Apart from that, these four local governments are somewhat connected by the large swath of forests that has made the movement of bandits easy and the terrain makes it difficult for security operatives to penetrate.

Effects of Banditry on Women and Children

In almost all crises situation, women and children are always the worst hit. Therefore, in the study area, women and children have been identified as some of the worst hit by banditry. When bandits attack communities, they do not specifically go with the intention of targeting women, in fact, most communities that have been attacked have lost more men than women. Usually, men are at the forefront of any kind of conflict and they suffer death and permanent injuries thus subjecting women and children to untold hardship ranging from economic stress to socio-

psychological trauma and imbalances arising from gender-related violence. Bandits go primarily to steal cattle and other valuables they can lay hands on and target people for abduction. Abuse or violence against women usually takes the theme of “collateral damage”, “casualty of conflict” or “spoils of war”. What is however certain is that during most of these attacks, more and more women, girls and children undergo a series of violence by the bandits.

Conflict and violence have in recent times, been seen as a gendered activity because women and men have different access to resources, power and decision making before, during and after conflicts. As a result, women and men experience situations of conflict, tension and general crisis significantly. According to IASC Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action, approximately 80% of today’s civilian casualties are women and 80% of all refugees and Internally Displaced People (IDP) worldwide are women and children. Much emphasis is laid on the discriminatory nature of conflict by D. Mazurana et. al who argued that armed conflict and violence are not gender-neutral, but deeply discriminated activities. It is a fact that armed conflict directly kills and injured more males than females especially because combatants are predominantly male. However, it is the indirect consequences of violence that have the biggest role in shaping people’s lives and livelihoods. In the aftermath of bandits’ attacks and related crimes, there is increasing evidence that women and children bear the worst brunt of these indirect consequences.

Findings from the study areas indicate that more and more women have been caught up in this complex web of violence. Although the trend of banditry is still unfolding, official figures indicating the number of women affected by banditry may be unavailable for now, reports however indicate that a huge number of

women and children have suffered both direct and indirect consequences of banditry. Many women and children in Birnin Gwari, Giwa, Igabi and Chikun LGA have been killed, maimed, kidnapped, raped and internally displaced. A rough estimate as reported by the Centre for Democratic Development Research and Training (CEDDERT) shows that between 60% and 75% of rural dwellers were affected and the number of women and children remains high. This goes to agree with the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men and their summation which says that 80% of civilian casualty and internally displaced are women and children.

A major and very disturbing effect of banditry on women and girls as revealed by findings in the study area is rape which is sexual-based violence. Bloom and Matfess stated that sexual violence against women and girls is oftentimes intended to humiliate their families and communities, wherein women and girls are bearers of honour. Women in this kind of situation are vulnerable whereas men who biologically have more physical strength are subdued. Sexual violence has been used strategically to advance military objectives. It is a mechanism for destroying family and community structures, making it a valuable tool for terrorist groups. Women get raped just to bruise community pride and ego and for insurgents to assuage their sexual needs making the women the main victims of attack. As “bearers of honour” men are usually shamed for failing to protect their women and since the intent of sexual violence is aimed at destroying family and community structures, most armed groups commit public rapes in front of either community or family members who are forced to witness the atrocity or are even forced to commit acts of sexual violence against their own family members. Therefore, the aim of rape is for dehumanization and humiliation and sometimes with the intent of being forced

to bear 'enemy children'; hence, making sexual violence a weapon of war.

Rape is not just an aggressive expression of sexuality, but a sexual expression of aggression, a manifestation of anger, violence, and dominance, to affirm brutality, a morale booster for armed groups, a way to project and demonstrate power and demonstrate their capacity to intimidate civilian population. As such, women and girls who are community assets are continually violated. Several accounts of village attacks and victims of kidnap indicate that women continue to face sexual based violence in the hands of their attackers and abductors and many times before their children and husbands, or in front of other abducted victims under threat of armed gunmen, and in the open. The statistics of it is yet to be approximately and appropriately put because of a lot of women feel too ashamed and the fear of being stigmatized would not talk about their ordeal. This vulnerability of women as a community asset who is being violated as element of spoils of war makes rape or abuse of women's bodily integrity a punishable offence under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

The Platform for Action of the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women noted that "while communities suffer the consequences of conflict women and girls are particularly affected because of their status in society as well as their sex." Women and children have been abducted by armed groups and kept for sexual slavery, sexual humiliations and torture and sometimes forced into combat roles. Thus, for bandits, the value of a woman as an asset for her family and community is highly prized. Even though gender-based violence is an under researched aspect of banditry, it is evident that more and more women are affected by Gender Based Violence in both peacetime and conflict times because of inequality between men and women dictated by

factors such as tradition and culture and religion.

When women are subjected to sexual violence, it comes with serious implications physically, medically and psychologically. Women and girls are subjected to brutality during such acts and are endangered to chronic pain, infection and infertility. Sexual violence may lead to unwanted pregnancy and thus abortion may be required which comes with its own health risks and complications. Other brutal consequences of rape could be fractured bones, traumatic gynecologic fistula, mutilation and amputation of limbs. Psychologically, the implication of SV is extremely grave as victims are most times likely to be infected with sexually transmitted diseases like HIV and AIDs, gonorrhoea and syphilis etc. Therefore, health implications as a result of the consequences of sexual violence on women will be even harder to collate especially in the face of this culture of silence by rape victims which results in significantly devastating repercussions as the trauma could last a lifetime for the victim and others.

The account of Huwaila, is one of the few cases of kidnapped victims who unfortunately contracted HIV, a devastating health implication. Huwaila, a 17-year-old Fulani girl at the time of her abduction in late 2017 was living in a small Fulani settlement in Rikwa around Galadimawa District in Giwa Local Government area. Her small community and others were attacked by bandits and by the end of their operation, Huwaila's father's few cattle were taken away and she was abducted. She spent approximately six months in captivity. She was released when she started getting frequently ill. She was thus taken to the primary health centre where she was diagnosed with HIV.

Apart from the psychological trauma she and her family faced, she also had to deal with a life-threatening health issue. Huwaila, pointed to the fact that there were

other girls being held there as at when she was released. Some of them were kidnapped while others it seemed were there voluntarily. The frightening thing here is, as a result of fear of stigmatization or sheer ignorance, the health issue of Huwaila has been kept very silent by her family. This affected Huwaila's treatment as most times, she would not show up for her monthly retroviral treatment. The health workers upon investigation discovered that she had moved away with her people to an unknown location, others were speculating that she could have been married off. The implication of this especially for people in rural areas where not much attention is being paid to ensuring undertaking medical tests before marriage is that the man who may likely marry Huwaila would also be at risk and so also the children they are likely to bear.

Huwaila's case was stumbled upon by medical practitioners through sheer coincidence. The reason is if she had not started developing some symptoms of the disease and if she had not gone to treat a supposed "mild ailment", her case may likely not be known. The researcher may likely not be aware of the fact that there was sexual violence involved because cases of rape will never be reported in this instance because of societal stigmatization and marginalization. Thus, from the foregoing, there is every likelihood that cases such as that of Huwaila will likely surface or there may even be women and girls already living with some life-long health-related issues. Dr Muhammad Isa stated that even though he had not physically encountered any case like that of Huwaila, there is every likelihood that there may be many more victims of sexual violence who may unknowingly be living with some deadly diseases but because of societal stigma, may never speak about or even admit to being raped. They will only silently deal with the traumatic experience.

Some women and girls who are living with other health issues such as fistula which

leaves them unable to control urine and faeces, often times face rejection from their husbands and shunned by their communities which affects their work and ability to care for the family. This has direct influences on women's livelihood as women are bound to live in abject poverty, unemployment or lack of livelihood opportunities which thus makes them very vulnerable to further trauma. Even though none of the findings from the study have revealed such, however, the manner by which some women and young girls get brutally raped means that there is an almost certainty of such cases occurring which may be a bit tasking to uncover.

Studies also revealed that in late 2017, two teenage girls were abducted from the village of Dogon Dawa district of Birnin Gwari local government area. The family of the girls were never contacted nor was ransom demanded. After about seven months in captivity, the girls were returned back to their village both heavily pregnant. Their abductors were even "considerate" enough to send them back to their parents with two rams which they demanded should be used when the girls were delivered their babies as part of the Islamic child naming rite.

In the same Birnin Gwari, a bride was abducted on the day she was to be taken to her husband's home, she spent two months in captivity. What may have happened to the new bride is better imagined and many girls have been turned to sex slaves. The foregoing is a current trend on how banditry is continually unfolding. In another instance, two brides were abducted on their way to their new homes where a new life was meant to have taken off. Findings showed that, when the brides were released weeks later, one of the husbands rejected the young bride immediately. Nothing was heard of the other bride as her parent decided to send her far away from their village.

Therefore, the social consequences for survivors of sexual violence are very

damning, especially for their families and communities. Most women, their families and sometimes the whole community are being severely stigmatized, most females face marginalization and social exclusion. This is why only a few who had been abducted ever relate their experiences. Most women would blatantly deny any act of rape. In some situations when women are being raped by their attackers, most family members tend to look at them with suspicion. Some husbands, go as far as making their wives swear an oath just to ascertain the truth of what may have transpired while in the kidnappers' den. Many women may have difficulty marrying or remarrying and, in many instances, women who have experienced sexual violence often times face rejection from their husbands. Kabiru Haruna, a member of the CESSPOL Vigilante group operating within Rigasa suburb in Igabi local government, further expatiated on this:

My newly wedded wife was kidnapped in the early part of November 2017 from our home in a village in Buruku district in Igabi local government area. After an intensely debated ransom fee was paid and she was released, her parents for fear that I may send their daughter back to them accused me of having a hand in the kidnap because of the way conversations back and forth going with the kidnappers. The major fear of my wife's parents arose from the fact that their young teenage daughter could have been raped and I may likely reject her and send her back to them or I may simply ignore her as a wife. Rejecting her means that she may not get another suitor or if she is to remarry, she has to leave our community and go far away from where she is known to a place where no one knows about her ordeal. My young wife was thus made to swear by the Quran about her ordeal with the kidnappers but she maintained her stand of not being sexually molested. She vehemently refused to talk further about the incident.

The above situation as presented by Kabiru Haruna is a recurrent picture of the ordeal of sexually abused women and the culture of silence, shame, stigma and marginalization within communities. Many women and girls would never admit to being sexually abused. Reinforced by the value placed on culture, especially in northern Nigeria, victims are forced to keep silent to avoid washing dirty linens in public. This fear of stigmatization prevents victims from speaking out when sexually abused by bandits, as the tag attached to them by society is probably worse than the abuse experienced. This further promotes the idea of keeping tight-lipped about female experiences to their families and their husbands in the case of married women.

In Chikun Village of Chikun Local government, the year 2017 marked doom for Deborah and her family. Her father after serving the nation for 35 years, retired and decided to settle in his village. He became a target of bandits' attack on two occasions, and he lost his life on the second attempt. It is believed that the attacks were carried out based on tip-off from informants who had knowledge of when he received his retirement gratuity. During the burial procession as people gathered to mourn the dead, the attackers invaded the house again and this time around, they took Deborah Samuel and her sister. From the camp of their attackers, the young ladies were able to arrange for ransom to facilitate their release. Not long after their release, the two ladies had to relocate to an unknown location. It was rumored that they were raped repeatedly and thus living within their locality where they were well known would have been shameful. Hence, it is believed that it was the shame and stigma they would face that may have prompted their relocation to some other places. The implication of this is that the ordeal these women passed through made them abandon the only home they have always known and

the people they have grown with and means of livelihood.

Another very disturbing revelation from the field showed that some top bandits' commanders were in the habit of abducting women from a certain ethnic group who they keep as sexual slaves. Reason for this is that, studies show that bandits have a strong relationship with spiritual consultants basically for fortification and luck. When a bandits' hideout was busted in Chikun Local government in February of 2019, in one of the confessional statements of the bandit he indicated that abducting women from a particular ethnic group as sexual slaves is a means of good luck for him as directed by his "spiritualist". He indicated that some of them were made to engage in coital activity with females within a certain ethnic and age group. Sexual violence against women continues to manifest in many strange dimensions.

Socio-economically, banditry has affected the lives of women, children and the aged in different dimensions. Majority of the women in the eye of the storm were mainly struggling peasant housewives, some farmers, while some were market women and others engaged in a host of other economic endeavours. For instance, since the study concentrated more on the rural areas, it is instructive to state that in Birnin Gwari and Giwa, majority of women are housewives who engaged in helping out on farms during annual harvest periods and engaged in other indoor economic activities. In Igabi, most of the women are housewives, some are traders while many others are farmers. In Chikun, since most of the inhabitants are Gbagyi, Kaje and other minority ethnic groups, the predominant occupation of the women in those area are farming, trading and a host of other menial economic activities. Hardly would you find women who are just housewives, it is a known knowledge that most of these women in these areas struggle as much as the men, and in some cases struggle more than the men. Because of their location,

they are mostly rural dwellers with meagre means of livelihood. They are poor, exploited and largely uneducated. Given the neglect in most rural areas and the state of girl-child education in northern Nigeria, educational opportunities are significantly low, job, occupational and social mobility are highly restricted. This affects children as well. Thus, because of the stark economic realities, educational advancement is particularly jeopardized with banditry now compounding the difficulty.

Findings from the study areas show that quite a number of women and children have either lost their own lives or women are widowed as many have lost their husbands and are left with children to cater for. Hospital reports from Birnin Gwari General Hospital in 2018 showed quite a number of women who were either brought in for sustained injuries as a result of highway robberies or village attacks. The records showed there is a growing increase in the number of women casualties as a result of bandits' attacks. Many who survived attacks escaped with various degrees of injuries. A huge number of them lost their lives and a number of them who sustained injuries are left with permanent disabilities and grossly inadequate access to health and rehabilitation services. Disability hinders productivity and decreases strength of the work force of any society; it enhances general feeling of vulnerability in the society. Disability as a result bandits' attacks completely alters a person's ability and capability. It can be recalled in July 2018, the commissioner of Education in Katsina State, Professor Halimatu Saadiya Idris lost her life to armed bandits in Gidan Busa, an obscure settlement between Katari and Jere road 90 kilometres away from Kaduna town, at around 7 pm. The bandits opened fire on their vehicle which caused the professor her life. Many women have also died in bandits' den after being abducted.

In another finding, Hussein pointed out that a Fulani woman who had delivered a baby was abducted in Kidandan barely two weeks after her delivery. The woman's husband pleaded with her abductors to allow her to take her baby along as there was no way he could cater for the new born. Barely two days after the abduction, the child was returned to the father by the bandits who claimed the baby disturbed their camps with its cry. The father still pleaded for the baby to be returned back to its mother while he concentrated on getting the ransom. After some minutes of back and forth over the new baby, the bandits cut the baby into two saying that it was obvious the father also did not want the child. They further gave him an ultimatum of a week to come up with the ransom or have his wife killed. These cases are just a few amongst atrocious many. The demise of Prof Halima as well as the demise of many other faceless and nameless victims of these gruesome bandits' attacks have a devastating effect on their families. Many families already lived in abject poverty and cannot even afford three square meals talk more of providing money for ransom when their relatives get abducted.

The effects of death in the study period have resulted in an increase in the number of widows, widowers and orphans. The unfortunate and sudden demise of a bread winner have deliberately forced women to take over the reign of responsibility and become the sole breadwinners, thereby taking up a combined role of motherhood and fatherhood. This has resulted in gender roles reversal with added responsibility. This is often times cumbersome especially for rural women who even before the outbreak of banditry and conflict in the study area were economically disadvantaged and were thus consigned to the thralldom of rural life. Therefore, the demise of a family head as a result of banditry implied intensified stress both physically and mentally. They have to bear the burden of maintaining their families

even under undue stress of insecurity and vulnerability. It is, therefore, no wonder that many women tend to develop trauma and psychological disorder especially because of their experiences which include kidnapping, and exposure to the dead and wounded which could mentally scar them for life.

Traditionally, women play many different important roles and they are found to put in a lot of effort in whatever they do. Most times the effort is more, sometimes less and sometimes an equal amount of effort is put in as compared to men. This assertion is backed by a United Nations Human Development Report in 2004 which estimated that women work 20% or 102 minutes per day more than men on the average. What is however important to note is that the effort put in by women varies significantly according to their position in the social hierarchy. Furthermore, women experience social structural inequalities and injustices in their everyday lives which has been accentuated by societal norms and symbols which Okpeh argues are grossly unfair to the female gender, as women are made to feel less important than men. This gender social distinction ascribes power and status to men while positioning women as enslaved subjects of patriarchal dictatorship. Aondoahemen asserts that this oppressive structures against women sustained their disempowerment and enfeeblement to the extent that they are subjugated and have lower social status and limited access to socio-economic assets such as land, money, education and employment. Even at that, it has been observed that the earnings of rural women are almost 100% spent on the upkeep of their families.

The plight of the rural woman in terms of these injustices and marginalization is even shoddier compared to that of women in the urban areas. To make matters worse, banditry has affected the economic facet of women's livelihood further exacerbating their vulnerability. The death of household

members of working age means that the household will be left with severely depleted earning capacity. This is oftentimes enough to push already vulnerable households into an extreme level of poverty.

Some women in the study area noted that banditry affected their meagre businesses. Fatima, Talle and Hauwa became victims of bandit attacks when their vehicle heading to a weekly market in a Kato village near Niger state was attacked. They pointed out that every fortnight, they journey from Kaduna to Kato village market to purchase yam in bulk for resale. Unfortunately for them, on one of such trips, their vehicle was attacked near Pallwaya along Kaduna Abuja Road in Chikun Local government area. On board were 5 women and 11 men including driver and conductor. Due to old age and her inability to walk fast, Talle was asked to trek back to the road, while the others were made to trek tens of kilometres and were released only after ransoms were paid.

All the women who encountered this unfortunate incident were forced to abandon the trade. In the first instance, their business capital was taken away from them and their families were made to raise money for ransom further improvising them. Talle is a widow who depended on the yam business to care for her orphaned children while the unfortunate journey was the first time for Hauwa. These women were affected negatively as they were stripped of their meagre economic power. Hasiya Gambo whose husband is a member of the vigilante group in Kidandan had to double her effort in order to be able to feed the family and support her husband. Due to the nefarious activities of bandits, a number of men have taken the local policing outfit (vigilantes) as their permanent jobs, therefore, the wives step in to assist them in running the affairs of the home such as feeding, payment of school fees and other family needs.

Furthermore, banditry also has grave implication on children. One of the immediate effects of this menace on children is disruption of educational activities as it led to the closure of schools both in areas invaded by banditry and host communities that serve as refugee centres for internally displaced persons. Other effects include the destruction of or damage to schools' infrastructures and material and total abandonment by teachers and decrease in school supervisors and inspections. While long term effects of banditry to school children lies in the fact that migration of children along with their parents to safer climes as a result of banditry, increased number of dropouts and if care is not taken, there would be an increase in number of children and youth involved in criminality and other social vices. With thousands of children already disadvantaged educationally even before the outbreak of banditry, they stand a higher chance of becoming potential kidnappers, bandits and terrorists in the face of the burgeoning regional insecurity. The exacerbating security challenges has destroyed so many schools and thus many parents would not allow their children to go to school for fear of being harassed, killed or kidnapped. Many children have been taken up for *almajiranci*.

Findings also shows that some underaged girls have found themselves engaged as domestic helps and may encounter domestic violence in the hands of their employers. Abubakar pointed out that from reports gathered in hotspots of attacks in Birnin Gwari, there are only a few schools still operating. The story is the same for parts of Giwa and Chikun. In places where schools have opened, hundreds of schoolchildren have been forced to drop out of school due to the loss of parents. Another effect of banditry that had devastating implications for women and children in Kaduna state is the aspect of population displacement. The reign of violence as a result of insecurity in many locations of the

world has given rise to the displacement of people from their ancestral homelands or places of residence to other locations within or outside their country, homes and comfort zones. This is a result of a growing spate of recurrent insecurity arising from insurgency, militancy, terrorism, farmers/herders clashes, communal/ethnoreligious and political violence. In Kaduna state, the phenomenon of banditry has created a situation of mass displacement of people. This social dislocation has left many extremely traumatized as a result of loss of family members and close relatives, horrifying experiences from attacks, economic activities grossly disrupted, dehumanizing housing and living conditions, poor health conditions as a result of the absence of health care facilities and disruption of education of children and youths etc.

The global statistics for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) due to conflict as at 2016 was 11.8 million, by 2017, the figure had more than doubled to 30.6 million people but by 2018 the number has risen to close to 40 million worldwide and as expected about 70-80% of all IDPs are women and children. The effects on women and children mostly border on human rights abuses of women, insecurity, unemployment, poverty; family, social and cultural breakdown, economic despondency, psychological trauma etc. Information gathered from an official of the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) Kaduna state stated that there are basically no official existing IDP Camps in Kaduna but a few locations are often used during an emergency situation. Therefore, Mubarak Muhammad of the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) stated that most victims of bandits' attacks in Kaduna state were put up in non-conventional camps which are temporary makeshift structures or self-settled camps. These are places like primary schools where displaced persons usually would settle themselves. For

instance, when armed bandits stormed five villages in Birnin-Gwari Local Government Area, it forced communities in Kagi, Bagoman Daji and Kugu as well as adjoining villages of Kwaga to move out of their homes to Birnin-Gwari town state on Saturday 17th September, 2016. The Displaced Persons self-settled at FOMWAN School adjacent the Emir Palace in Birnin-Gwari without food, water and good latrines. Other camps include Unguwan Shittu Primary School and Unguwan Ali Gado Primary School all in Birnin Gwari town.

This, by implication, adversely disrupted educational activities of the children who attend those schools where the IDPs settled themselves. Still within the study area, it has been revealed that some IDPs were hosted by some communities. Mararaban Jos Community of Igabi local government hosted people from about 17 villages Figali, Hayin Amadu, Gidan Dari, Hayin Tsauni, etc who were sacked by bandits on 7th October 2018. Some of the displaced persons were given empty rooms by house owners, while others were given uncompleted buildings to reside in before returning back to their communities.

In another incident in Igabi about 2000 displaced persons took refuge at LEA Birnin Yero Primary School, following a breakout of violence between bandits and vigilantes. The bandits for some time had prevented people from going to their farms, they kidnapped and kill at will, and took away their animals. This pushed the people of these communities in Birnin Yero to confront the bandits. The vigilantes were overpowered and the bandits' promised members of the communities' untold hardship. Thus, the villages of Tura, Unguwan Gebi, Sabon Gida, Unguwan Tofa, Makri, Unguwan Dangauta, Jagani, Kusau, Gidan Sarkin Noma, Sabon Gari, Unguwan Pati, Sauran Giwa, Unguwan Alhaji Ahmadu, Unguwan Nayawu decided to move out

before they were attacked. In Chikun village, there were cases of IDPs who also settled themselves in an abandoned church building having been displaced as a result of clashes between Gbagyi farmers and Fulani herders. This clash was further exacerbated as a result of some criminal elements forming alliance with some Fulani youths to also steal the animals of the herders.

In Kaso, a small Gbagyi village in Chikun, due to the incessant attacks on the community and other surrounding communities, most of the inhabitants migrated to Maraban Rido and Unguwan Sunday. Some of the displaced persons had to seek for accommodation which they did not have to struggle for before their displacement. Some persons got lucky and were accommodated by members of their host communities, others were not so lucky as they had to make provision for their accommodation and other basic means of survival. Studies indicated that adjusting to the new life in the suburb became extremely difficult. Some of the displaced people found it difficult to pay the rent after the first year. It is instructive to state that before their displacement, most inhabitants of Kalso village lived in their rural homes and did not have to worry about rent. The food they ate was basically farmed by them; their lives were simple. The displacement threw them out of their comfort zones. For some families, feeding became a problem, many children were unable to attend school, they could not adjust to the new environment. As such, some of the displaced persons returned back to their villages and resolved to face whatever kind of danger that awaited them.

As usual, women and children always constitute the largest number of displaced persons. A couple of women pointed out that the displacement caused by banditry disrupted their normal life routine. Many have lost their communities during the crisis. Some may not be able to return for

years or may never return to their communities because of the level of destruction to farmlands and homes. In some communities, findings show that bandits have overtaken such surrounding villages where the brigands move about freely with their weapons slung on their shoulders and even go to the market place without concealing their identities. The psychological trauma is often times overwhelming as displaced people are often stripped of their social identities.

For Asmau Isa and Jamila Haruna, they attributed what befell their Village of Dogon Dawa as the will of Allah and is looking up to Him to come to their aid. Her husband suffered injuries from gunshots when bandits attacked Gwaska in 2017, before he finally died. The thought of her husband's badly mutilated body has been traumatizing. Her children had not seen school for over two years since 2017. Jamila Haruna who lost her husband to the bandits has been having the most difficult time of her life. Her children have been separated from her because she cannot take care of them. While she is with the two younger ones, the older four children had to be taken into custody by their uncle in another town. This has left her deeply traumatized.

Asma'u noted that many women like her are facing similar or worse ordeals. She noted that some children have been sent off to live with relatives who have instead turned the children to *almajiranci*, which is another breeding ground for insecurity. Many people both young and old especially women and children have also had to resort to street begging as a means to survive. It has been observed that the number of very young children in and around Kaduna Central Market (Abubakar Gumi and Checheniya market) within the metropolis who beg for food and alms have significantly increased within the period of study. Some of these young children interviewed admitted that their mothers were close by, waiting for them to return

with alms. Some women are seen around eateries and banks in Kaduna Metropolis also seeking what to get to survive. For some of them, the families that had taken them in are also managing to survive as such they have to go out to fend for themselves.

In a nutshell, displacement as a result of banditry in the study area has altered the structure of many families and reversed gender roles as female-headed households increased which breaks down the social setting. This places a heavy burden on women as they become the only breadwinners of their families. Also, because of their displaced status, a number of young girls have fallen prey to lurking men who have taken advantage of their vulnerable situation, while some others are involved in prostitution in exchange for food and other basic necessities. Esther Jatau says that all her older children have not returned to school since bandits' attacks increased. They have moved out to Sabon Tasha and are engaged in different economic activities. That may be the end of school for them.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. 2006 Population and Housing Census of the Federal Republic of Nigeria: National and State Population and Housing Tables, Priority Tables, Vol. 1. National Population Commission. (2009).
2. Andrew Agbese & Maryam Ahmadu Suka & Habibu Umar Aminu, "How gunmen laid siege to Abuja-Kaduna road", Daily Trust Vol. 45, No. 67, Tuesday, July 2018, 5
3. Aondoahemen AE "Female Liberation Struggles in Nigeria and the Dilemma of the Rural Woman" in P. Ukase et al (eds.) History, Globalization & Relations in Africa Festschrift in Honour of

Conclusion

In conclusion, it has been demonstrated that banditry in parts of Kaduna state is timely situated in the complex internal security challenges of the 21st century Nigeria. From 1999, it has been established that banditry had started to transform from mere conflict between Fulani herders and farmers especially in Birnin Gwari area of Kaduna with petty thefts involving Fulani youth. By 2012 onwards what had been witnessed is a total metamorphosis of these criminal activities into hydra-headed monstrosity starting with armed highway robbery, then cattle rustling and finally snowballed into kidnapping and village attacks. These were mostly accompanied by many losses of life and destruction of properties. The paper revealed the changing tides that had helped further in exacerbating this transformation in criminality. The crux of the paper on women in conflict and violent situations has shown how banditry has dramatically altered the lives of thousands of women and girls and men as well, showcasing them in a reverse role away from their traditionally known gender roles, which is outside their domestic sphere thereby increasing their vulnerability.

Okpoh O. Okpoh, (Lagos: Integrity Publishers, 2018).

4. Bandits displace 17 villages in Kaduna State-Pulse Nigeria. <https://www.pulse.ng/news/local/bandits-displace-17-villages-in-kaduna-state/9bw6cj> accessed 20th November, 2019.
5. Bastick M, Grimm K & Kunz R., "Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict: Global Overview and Implications for the Security Sector. Geneva Centre for Democratic Control of Armed Forces". Switzerland: SRO Kundig, 2007.
6. Bello S and Oyedele EO, "The city of Kaduna" in G.Ashiwaju et al (eds.) Cities of the Savannah: A History of some

Towns and Cities of the Savannah, Kaduna 2000.

7. Crime Statistics in Kaduna State Based on Monthly Intelligence Report Compilation Obtained from Situation Reports Presented to the State Security Council January to December, 2015-2018. A detailed of crime data in Kaduna state is contained in Appendix

8. Crisis Group Africa Report No 252, Herders Against Farmers: Nigeria's Expanding Deadly Conflict, 19 September 2017.

9. Dambazau AB, Criminology and Criminal Justice 2nd Edition. (Ibadan: University Press. 2007.

10. Green I, "Propaganda and Sexual Violence in the Rwandan Genocide. An Argument for Intersectionality in International Law", *Colombia Law Review*, Vol. 33 (2002), pp.733-776.

11. Hansen H.B & Twaddle M, (Eds), *Uganda Now: Between Decay and Development*. (London & Nairobi. East African Studies, Heinemann. 1988.

12. Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution, "Strategic Conflict Assessment of Nigeria" (Abuja: John Archers Publishers, 2017.

13. Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, "2018 Global Report on Internal Displacement (GRID 2018) 16 May 2018" <https://reliefweb.int/report/2018> accessed 12th October, 2019.

14. M. Bloom and H. Matfess "Women as Symbols and Swords in Boko Haram's Terror" *PRISM* 6. No.1, 2015.

15. Mazurana D, Raven-Roberts A. and Parpart J., *Gender, Conflict and Peacekeeping*. (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2005), p.18.

16. Okpeh O.O, "Society and Violence Against Women" *Review of Gender Studies in Nigeria*, Benue State University, Makurdi, 2002.

17. Oluyemi-Kusa D & Salihu A. "The Effect of Armed Banditry on Rural Women's Livelihood in in Kuna M. J. & Ibrahim J. *Rural Banditry and Conflict in*

Northern Nigeria, (Abuja: Centre for Democracy and Development, 2015).

18. Resolution 1 Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action of the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women <https://www.un.org/pdf> accessed 12th March 2017.

19. Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, 1998-Office of Affairs. <https://www.legal.un.org/statute/csstatute> accessed 14th March 2017.

20. USAID Education in Crisis and Conflict Network by Results for Development, "Affordable Non-State Schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria", May 2018

21. Wali I, *Gender Specific Effects of Armed Conflict in Africa: A Case of Women in Northern Uganda*", An unpublished Dissertation submitted to the Dept of International Studies, University of Nairobi, 2015.

22. Women, Girls, Boys and Men- Different Needs, Equal Opportunities, *IASC Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action*, 2018. <https://www.resourcecentre.savethechildren.net> accessed 15th March, 2017.

Interviews

1. Adamu Waziri, 45, Superintendent of Police and Officer in Charge of Anti Kidnapping department, Nigerian Police Force Headquarters' Kaduna, interviewed on 4th August, 2019.

2. Asma'u Shafiu, 36 years, Widow, Internally Displaced Person in Birnin Gwari, interviewed via telephone on 13th June, 2019.

3. Benjamin George 33 years, Child Sponsorship Officer and Women Unit Coordinator, Hope for the Village Child Foundation, interviewed at their Office in Kujama, Chikun Local Government on 9th September, 2019.

4. Dr Muhammad Isa, Male, 42 years, Medical Doctor, Primary Health Care Centre Giwa, interviewed at Giwa Local Government on 12th May, 2019.

5. Esther Jatau 32 years, Gbagyi farmer and trader, interviewed in Kujama on 12th July, 2019.
6. Group interview with Fatima Abbass 56 years, Talle 48 years and Hauwa 40 Years, yam traders, interviewed at Unguwan Shanu Kaduna on 20th September, 2019.
7. Hajiya Hadiza Yahuza, 58 years, Caretaker Chairperson Igabi Local Government interviewed at Chikun Local Government headquarters in Kujama, on 23rd September, 2019.
8. Hasiya Gambo, 34 years, housewife, interviewed at Giwa local government on 19th August, 2019.
9. Ibrahim Gero. 45 years, Chief Security of Yansakai Vigilante in Birnin Gwari Local Government. Interviewed on 19th September, 2019.
10. Jamila Haruna 33 years, Widow, Internally Displaced Person in Birnin Gwari, interviewed via telephone on 13th June, 2019.
11. Jibril Danazumi Giwa, Male, 37 years, health worker Primary Health Care Centre Giwa, interviewed at Giwa Local Government on 12th May, 2019.
12. Kabiru Haruna 40 years, member of CESSPOL Vigilante Office at Hayin Rigasa on 12th May 2019
13. Mallam Abubakar Sadiq Birnin Gwari, 42 Years, Special Assistance on Security Matters and also secretary to the Chairman of Birnin Gwari local government, interviewed at the Ministry of Local Government Affairs, Kaduna State on 20th October, 2019
14. Mubarak Muhammad 38, Civil Servant, State Emergency Coordinator SEMA Kaduna State, interviewed at SEMA Office on 25th October, 2019
15. Ruth Barera 38 years, Chief Coordinator, Hope for the Village Child Foundation, interviewed at the Maraban Rido, Chikun Local Government, on 14th July, 2019.