



HUMAN SECURITY CHALLENGES IN URBAN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES IN NIGERIA: IMPLICATION FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

This article argues that human security crises are endemic in urban indigenous communities in Nigeria, and that because human development index is low human security crises is high. The paper pointed out some of the human security challenges in urban indigenous communities using the indigenous people of Abuja, Port Harcourt and Lagos and argued that the basis of these fundamental problems is the manner of the development process of these communities. The paper argues that although these communities presently represent a livability community they are not a sustainable community given the indicators of sustainable community. The paper then recommended that these communities be social reengineered to make them sustainable and to address the problems of human security challenges.

Keywords: Urban, Indigenous, Community, Development, Human, Security

1. INTRODUCTION

Ms Fatma Samoura, the Resident Representative of the UN Development Programme, has urged the Federal Government of Nigeria to improve human security in the country. Samoura asserted that this is necessary because the country's current Human Development Index was low. The UN resident representative stated this on the side line of the presentation of the 2016 National Human Development Report with the title: "Human Security and Human Development in Nigeria". She identified insecurity and economic lull as major factors affecting Nigeria's human development index (News Agency of Nigeria, 2016). It has been observed that increasing level of poverty, unemployment, persistent hunger, lack of access to basic services such as health care and education; disregard for human rights, sub-optimal response to natural and man-made disasters, unfettered natural resources exploitation and use among others, pose serious danger to human capital development (Rawles, 2013; kolodny, 2001 and Samoura, 2016) . The 2016 report posits that there is a dialectical relationship between human development and human security; the two can be seen as two processes that go hand in hand owing to the fact that the utmost effect

of the two is enhanced quality of life for the ordinary citizen. Progress on one is likely to enhance the chances of progress in the other, while the reverse is also possible.

The process of modernization and industrialization has increasingly shaped the way of life in urban centres and in particular among the urban indigenous communities. In urban indigenous communities, human security challenges is becoming increasingly alarming due to the influx of people into these communities following the metropolitan and industrial character of these communities (Patrick, 2008). In metropolitan centres like Abuja, Lagos, Port Harcourt, Calabar, Ibadan, Jos Kaduna, Kano and a few other cities in Nigeria, there are indigenous settlements that have become urbanized and constituted part of the city centres. Nigeria also has the largest urban sprawls, where cities have engulfed surrounding rural land and adjacent towns leading to continuous belts of settlement. Notable examples are Lagos and Port Harcourt where the attendant challenges to governance, security, and service delivery are prominent (Hove, Ngwerume & Muchemwa 2013). Ibiamu and Patrick (2006) also observed that the increasing urbanization process has resulted in the near obliteration of the urban indigenous people's culture. In addition to the cultural shock problem that these communities experience, there are a lot of human security challenges that may arrest and undermine their community development process in a sustainable manner. However, human security framework has not been used to address the challenges of community development in urban indigenous centres in Nigeria. But this is not so in most advance countries where urban development and planning is taken seriously. Rawles (2013) asserted that there should be a paradigmatic shift in community development in urban community in regard to policy discussion and development; a shift from the social justice framework to human security framework. This shift he argued is the most plausible theoretical framework for successfully addressing the challenges of urban space and subsequent policy development in comparison with social justice framework.

This paper aims to collaborate this paradigm shift in community development in particular in the areas of urban indigenous communities which have not attracted much of scholarly writing. Using the human security index we argued that those living in the urban indigenous communities in Nigeria have human security crisis, that human security framework provides clear goals, objectives and strategies for inclusive and sustainable community development.

2. THE HUMAN SECURITY INDEX

The discussion about the concept of human security started in 1990's. This discussion was pioneered by the United Nation Development Programme (UNDP). The primary focus of the discussion was the need to shift emphasis on national security to individual citizens within the state. This need in shift of emphasis arise from the increasing level of abject poverty due to warring factions within nation state and the conflicts among states. The concept of human security is multifaceted ranging from human development to protection of citizens. This concept according to Rawles is person-centred in which individual is the epi-centre and central concern of the concept. According to Hasting (2011) Human Security is the attainment of physical, mental, and spiritual peace and security of individuals and communities at home and in the world – in balanced local and global context. This definition went beyond the individual to include the community in which he lives in and the outside world that he interacts with. The most import aspect of this definition is the inclusion of physical, mental and spiritual peace in the definition of human security.

The United Nations Commission on Human Security defines human security “as the efforts of the state and other organizations to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment as well as empower people to provide and care for themselves” (cite in Rawles, 2013:359). According to the School for International Studies, Simon Fraser University as cited in Rawles human security is beyond

the absence of violent conflict, it encompass human rights, good governance, and access to economic opportunity, education and health care. However, the National Human Development Report 2016 by the UNDP defines human security as “an emerging paradigm for understanding global vulnerabilities that have evolved over the past two decades from being a traditional notion of national security with heavy investments in military preparedness and response to focusing more on the dimensions that sustain the security of people through investing in human and community development” (UNDP, 2015:1). This implies that investment in human security brings about community development therefore, the concept of human security helps to bring to the fore the fact that poverty, hunger, lack of access, diseases, natural disasters, natural resources exploitation and use are all part of those general issues that represent challenges to community development.

In recent time hunger, food, water and other threat to human dignity and right such as drugs, human trafficking, women and child abuse has been incorporated into the concept. People become vulnerable to these threats due to poverty and bad governance. Furthermore, the concept of human security is used to describe the uneven and unequal access to resources among developed nation in comparison to developing nations or the third world countries. Human security according to Sato cited in Enu, and Ugwu, (2011) is a concept that bonds peace and development. It is all about liberating humans from physical and artificial hindrances such as war, poverty or political oppression, which prevent people from choosing freely and acting freely on what they have chosen. In a policy speech by Keizo Obuchi, a former Prime Minister of Canada, he defined human security as a concept encompassing all kinds of threats to human survival, human life and human dignity. According to him it requires stringent measures to tackle such threats. The most widely acceptable conception of human security was given by King and Murray (2002). They define it as the number of years of future life spent outside a state of abject poverty. Abject poverty is a state when an individual fall below the key indicators of human well-being. United Nation Organisation identified seven key domain or indicators of human well being. These are economics, environmental, personal, community health, political and food. On the basis of these the human security index was formulated.

The Human Security Index is formulated around three component indices, Economic, Environmental, and Social Fabric Indices. These are often the discussion points around sustainable development, corporate social responsibility, and other such issues. Within the economic index are several indices among which are: income level of the people, the Gross Domestic product (GDP) per capita at purchasing power parity, protection from financial catastrophe, health care delivery, foreign exchange reserve, and percentage of foreign debt and national saving rate to GDP. In the environmental index such indices are considered: environmental vulnerability index, environmental performance index, greenhouse gas emission per capita, and population growth rate. The social indicators are divided into six sub indices.

These are the education and information empowerment index, diversity, peacefulness, food security, health care and governance. Within the framework of education and information empowerment index are literacy rate, telephone fixed line per capita, mobile telephone account per capita, internet users per capita, and press freedom index. In the social diversity index, gender gap index is most important while the minor indices include race, ethnicity, religion, age, and disability. The peacefulness social index includes the global peace index, world prison population, and political terror scale. The food security social index indicates the percentage of people undernourished, the percentage of people below local poverty index, food import compare to export GDP, percentage of people food insecure (those needing emergency aid), percentage of productive land per capita, and change in productive land. On health social index the indicators are life expectancy at birth, percentage of life expectancy that is unhealthy, percentage of population using improve water sources, and health outcome equality. The governance social indicators have only three indicators.

These are political stability without violence, control of illegal corruption, and legal corruption.

When a country or a metropolitan centre score low in all or most of these indicators such a country or city suffers from human security crisis. The indicators are intertwined and vicious in nature. Poor performance in one, such as governance factor could trigger food insecurity with its attendant undernourishment and increase death rate, diversity crisis, health security crisis with attendant low life expectancy, increase illiteracy rate and lack of information empowerment, increase political terror scale, income inequality, and depletion of external reserve and increase debt profile, low enforcement of environmental law and improper environmental conservation, waste management and high vulnerability to natural hazard.

3. HUMAN SECURITY CRISIS IN URBAN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES IN NIGERIA

In Nigeria when we talk of human security crisis what quickly comes to mind are: the incidence of Boko Haram in the North, Militancy in the South-South, kidnapping and ritual killing in the South-East and inter-communal crisis in the West. Ukiwo and Chukwuma (2012: 8) had this to say “while no region in Nigeria can be said to be immune from violence and crime, political, security and governance crisis has continue to be a major source of concern to many stakeholders...” From the human security perspective, the human security crisis in urban indigenous communities goes beyond these. The urban indigenous communities in Nigeria perhaps has the highest human security crisis because of the diversity and the metropolitan character of the communities with its attendant pressure on the existing economic and social infrastructure arising from the influx of people into these communities in search of white collar jobs and educational opportunities.. Urban indigenous communities are aboriginal settlements within an urban centre which as a result of the process of urbanization and the influx of people have become heterogeneous and multicultural.

There are cases of human security challenges in the urban indigenous communities in Nigeria. According to UNDP Human Development Report of 2015 the Federal Capital Territory was virtually the worst in most realms of the Human Security Index. There are several cases of booming in mostly areas of the indigenous settlements. These include the Kuje and Nyanya Boko Haram attack for which fifteen (15) were killed (Isine, 2015), 21 people killed and 52 injured in Banex plaza shopping complex in Wuse district.(BBC News, June 25, 2014) and several others.

The people of Gbagyi, Gbari, Gade, Ganagana, Amwamwa, Bassa, Egbira, Gwandara and Koro are the original inhabitants of Abuja and are the indigenous people who have been displaced with the development of the city of Abuja. They were dispossessed of their farm lands and consequently their original habitation and occupation. The consequences of these modern land grabbing by the state and its agents in respect of human security crisis are quite enormous. These includes the issues of food security, community security, unemployment among the indigenous people, poor and indecent housing accommodation, water and other social, economic, environmental indices. The indigenous settlements are most hit with water scarcity with *Marowa* (men hawking water in non-mechanically propelled trucks) as the major source of water supply in these areas. This system of sourcing for water is not only unhygienic and unsafe for human consumption, it constitute a human security challenge to the indigenous people.

The Abuja Original Inhabitants Youths Organization in one of their open letters to the federal Government made this statement: “Due to the activities of the FCTA environmental enforcement agents, our mothers, these days, can no longer hawk their farm produce harvested from the remaining parcels of land waiting to be taken by the takers. Our mothers and youths who hawk food and snacks are now seen and treated as environmental

nuisance who are routinely molested with seizures and destruction of their wares by the environmental enforcers. Yet, there are never any sustainable measures put in place to engage them in gainful employments.”¹ *Apart from these challenges which most of the indigenous settlements suffer from, these settlements suffer from infrastructural deficit such as good network of road, electricity, schools and health care. For instance most of the villages in the Kuji Area council are not accessible by motor car due to poor road network and the rocky terrain of the Area; also, some are not accessible during raining season with even motor cycle because of big rivers and streams without Bridges.*

The settlement pattern is disperse with the indigenous cluster type of settlement mainly in Kwali town, Yebu, Leda, Danagana, Ashara, Sheda, Dabi, Pai, while some of the indigenous people are made to live in slums due to the high level of rent in the city centre. Gishiri, Lokogoma, Nyanya, Gwagwalape Dawaki, Dutse, Dei Dei, Lugbe, Byanzhin, Karu, Karshi, Garki village, Piya Kasa, Kabusa, Ungwan Tiv, Ketti village are just few out of many slums in Abuja where the indigenous people reside now. These have created loss of traditional relationships and values among the people which is a major indicator of community insecurity.

In Karamajiji, a colony of people living with disability has been carved out. People who live in these communities have no decent houses neither social amenities that makes life meaningful. With the increasing poor electricity supply, pollution from electricity generators is rampant. The settlements also do not have proper drainages to control the movement of water especially in the rainy season. Most of the dilapidated streets are faced with a serious threat of erosion. Several flooded earth roads and erosion gullies threatening houses are what greets one on a visit to some of these communities for the first time. Because of the slums experience, Jeji said the pronouncement of Abuja has multiplied the misery and woes of the original inhabitants of the FCT with natives lagging behind in terms of infrastructures, education, political, economic and social opportunities. *Jeji said “as we recall the annexation of our lands forty years ago by the Nigerian government, we remain dismayed by General Murtala who erroneously referred to this area as ‘virgin land with sparse population’. How could a land be virgin and populated at the same time? This was the first contradiction.”*²

The pattern of the development of Port Harcourt has resulted in *the* loss of traditional relationships and values and sectarian and ethnic violence among the contending claimants of the city. Here there has been incidence of sectarian and ethnic violence between the the Okuru-Ama and Abuloma, Abuloma and Amadi-ama all in Okirika ethnic nationality; and between Ogunabali and Amadi ama in most cases over the sale of land an on boundary matters. Port Harcourt which was a major colonial seaport established in 1920 by the then secretary of the colony based on a treaty with the indigenous people of Okirika and Ikwerre has several indigenous settlements which also suffer from several human security crises. Communities such as Abuloma, Okuru-ama, Amadi-Ama, Borokiri all of Okirika ethnic nationality and Woji, Rumuolumeni, Diobu, Ogunabali, Rumume all of Ikwerre ethnic nationality just like other indigenous communities in Nigeria are dispossessed of their land and water ways. Their major occupations are fishing and farming. Their lands are used for industrial sites by oil multinational companies and by the government as residential areas and government reserved areas for the political and economic elites. Furthermore, every available space has been turned to site for commercial activities and human habitation to the extent that the natural beauty and community space that add value to the people’s tradition

¹ www.nairaland.com/2343558/marginalisation-fct-natives accessed 10/2/2017

² (pulse.ng/local/abuja-inside-the-federal-capital-territorys-slums-id4918341.html) accessed 10/2/2017

and natural habitation has been destroyed. The people are now made to be squatters in their own land.

With the increasing oil exploration, their land and water ways are constantly polluted and the eco-system destroyed consequently making fishing and farming unprofitable. For instance the new government reserved area in Port Harcourt some years back was a swamp rich with some kind of black fresh water fish and raffia trees which are used to produce palm wine and other ornamental products. This natural habitation and farm lands which most of the families depend on has been destroyed. This has not only created the problem of food security in these communities but it has raised the cost of housing accommodation, water scarcity, as well as other human security crises. Furthermore, the activities of illegal bunkering most often championed by militants and unemployed youths in the creeks of these communities has caused the communities to experience black shut (a black carbon substance) that has made rain water and underground water unhealthy for human consumption.

Similarly, the indigenous people in Lagos suffer the same fate. By the late 15th century Lagos Island was occupied by Yoruba fishermen and hunters who are called Oko. The area was later dominated by the kingdom of Benin; they called it Eko, from the late 16th century to the mid-19th century. The Portuguese first landed on Lagos Island in 1472; trade developed slowly, however, the Portuguese were granted a slaving monopoly a century later. The local obas (kings) enjoyed good relations with the Portuguese, who called the island Onim (and, later, Lagos) and who established a flourishing slave trade. British attempts to suppress the slave trade culminated in 1851 in a naval attack on Lagos and the deposition of the oba. The slave trade continued to grow, however, until Lagos came under British control in 1861. (<http://www.britannica.com/place/Lagos-Nigeria>).

What are the present human security crises? With the full development of trade and commerce, Lagos begin to experience the increasing influx of people from all over Nigeria, the neighbouring countries in the West African Coast and other parts of the world. This has not only led to population crisis in the city (Lagos is now known as the most populous city in Africa), but has put pressure on the existing infrastructure such as water, electricity, road, school, hospital, housing accommodation and so on. Today both some of the indigenous people and the non-indigenous people are seen squatting under the bridge. The water ways in Lagos has been opened up for ocean going ships and the industries most often discharge their industrial waste in the lagoon. This has not only made fishing dangerous but life insecure to the indigenous people whose life and economic activities revolves around the lagoon. Similarly, the reclamation of the Lekki swamp and the construction of residential houses in this reclaimed area for the elite class not only distort eco-system but deny the indigenous people access to their natural environment which their life and economic activities revolved around.

4. IMPLICATION TO SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

In all of these communities there are the problem of community security, personal security, environmental security, food security, health security, economic security and political security. These seven security dimensions constitute the human security audit in a community. According to Rawles (2013), from the community development perspective, the data obtained from a human security audit could be used by community leaders, municipal agencies, NGOs and other stakeholders to effectively prioritize community needs, build social and political capital, identify interventions and define policy directions.

Apart from this theoretical relevance of the human security perspective to community development, there are a lot of implications of human security crises to community development as in case of Nigeria. In most of these cities the indigenous communities have gone beyond their capacity and the extent to which it can accommodate further development except a major reconstruction, redesign and social reengineering is

carried out. Without such reconstruction there will be incessant vehicular traffic jams, housing deficits, water supply crisis, electricity and energy crisis. The indigenous settlements in the major cities of Nigeria going by their human security index may be rated low in sustainable community development indices. A sustainable community goes beyond just present livability by considering what will be left for future residents. The premise of sustainable communities is moral concern about their legacies to the future of humanity everywhere. According to Flint (2013) development of sustainable communities extends deeper than livable communities regarding how core values retain opportunities for future generations. These extensions include Economic security; Ecological integrity; Cultural vitality; Citizen engagement and responsibility:

Economic security (measures—disparities, local wealth, mutual assistance). A sustainable community possesses a healthy and diverse economy that adapts to change, provides long-term security to residents, and recognizes social and ecological limits. A more sustainable community retains residents' money within the community. By this measure one can question how these indigenous communities in Nigeria actually are economically sustainable. In Nigeria there is wide gap in the distribution of wealth and these communities have lost their economic diversity and cannot retain the money made within the community because of the massive desire for foreign goods and services.

Societal well-being (measures—respect for self/others, caring, connectedness, meeting basic needs). A more sustainable community recognizes and supports people's evolving sense of well-being, which includes a sense of belonging, a sense of place, a sense of self-worth, a sense of safety, a sense of connection with nature, and provision of goods and services that meet their needs, from the parameter of the social well being, the indigenous communities has not been able to promote societal well-being because the capitalist value of individualism and consumerism are what is been promoted rather than the traditional values of solidarity and collectivism. People now build their houses like prison yard having high fence with heavy gates. They have no sense of place and are not morally attached to their community. These have also affected social bond and community cohesion which are necessary for community development.

Ecological integrity (measures—functional capacity of natural systems, environmentally sound utilization of natural systems). In sustainable communities, both environments and diverse ecological systems are maintained for their own essential natural functions, their beauty, their enjoyment as a landscape. By implication the indigenous communities lack ecological integrity with the absence of functional recreational centre, absence of plausible waste management system and sound utilization of natural systems.

Cultural vitality (measures—existence of cultural values, ability to preserve history and culture for future generations, use of culture and history to advance societal learning). The institutions and processes communities build to retain their cultural heritage are significant indicators of a community's sustainability. The implication of this is that indigenous communities cannot preserve their cultural heritage and transmit such cultural values from one generation to another. This is due to poor intergenerational learning and the increasing multicultural nature of these communities.

Citizen engagement and responsibility (measures—reaching out, equal/fair playing field, civic capacity, accountability). A more sustainable community empowers people to take responsibility for outcomes based on a shared vision and equal opportunity. Public engagement blends the concepts of good governance, participation, consensus building, the taking of civic responsibilities, and participatory strategic planning, all of which implies cooperative problem-solving and the willingness of citizens to accept joint responsibility for actions that are sustainable. On this basis the question is what is the extent of the citizen engagement in these communities? Our argument is that due to the poor social capital which is a factor of trust, norm, social cohesion in these communities, citizens participation in the community development is at the level of what Arnstein (1969) classifies as tokenism and

in some cases non-participation. The citizens are either placated consulted, informed or manipulated about their development process

5. CONCLUSION

We conclude that that the development that have taken place in most of the urban indigenous communities in Nigeria are not sustainable due to the human security crises arising from the manner of their development occasioned by the state which gives no concern over the human development index of these communities. The development process of these communities are disarticulated and oriented to meet external needs rather than the needs of the communities. Their eco-system distorted in a manner that it cannot sustain the traditional occupation of the people and their life style. It can therefore be concluded that these communities are suffering from human security crises. It is therefore recommended that to address the human development challenges and ensure sustainable community development the various human security challenges be tackled from the bottom approach through active engagement and good community governance system.

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