

Unveiling the Drivers of Drug Abuse and Violent Insurgency in Nigeria: The Complex Realities of Adamawa and Borno States

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Abstract

The enduring issues of drug abuse and insurgency in Nigeria, particularly in Adamawa and Borno States, have given rise to profound social and security challenges. These interconnected problems perpetuate instability, intensify socio-economic hardships, and obstruct developmental efforts in the affected areas. This study investigates the underlying drivers of drug abuse and their role in exacerbating insurgency, with a focus on critical factors such as poverty, illiteracy, indoctrination, and frustration. It further examines how substance use amplifies violent behaviours among insurgents, using strain theory as a framework. Strain theory suggests that socio-economic pressures and the lack of legitimate avenues to achieve success compel individuals to adopt deviant behaviours as coping mechanisms. The primary objectives of this research are to identify the underlying causes of drug abuse and insurgency in Adamawa and Borno States, analyse the relationship between substance use and insurgent activities, and propose evidence-based policy interventions. A qualitative methodology was adopted for the study, with data gathered through both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs) with a diverse group of respondents. The analysis will utilise content triangulation, combining data from FGDs, KIIs, and secondary sources to uncover recurring themes and patterns. Findings reveal that drug abuse serves as a catalyst for insurgent violence, with substances such as tramadol, diazepam, and codeine frequently used by combatants to diminish fear, enhance aggression, and endure prolonged conflicts. The study further identifies socio-economic factors such as poverty, unemployment, and educational deprivation, alongside ideological indoctrination, as key drivers of both drug abuse and insurgent participation. The application of strain theory elucidates how these socio-economic strains push individuals toward deviant coping mechanisms, including substance misuse and insurgency. This research highlights the necessity of addressing drug abuse as an integral component of counter-insurgency efforts. Its significance lies in its contribution to understanding the socio-psychological and structural factors underpinning these challenges, thereby offering a theoretical basis for policy intervention. In conclusion, tackling drug abuse and its socio-economic precursors is critical for fostering sustainable peace and security in Adamawa and Borno States. Recommendations include enhancing educational and economic opportunities, reinforcing drug enforcement policies, and integrating substance abuse rehabilitation into broader counter-insurgency strategies. Additionally, the findings underscore the importance of addressing structural inequalities to alleviate socio-economic pressures that drive deviant behaviours.

Keywords: Drivers, Drug Abuse, Violent Insurgency, Strains Theory

Introduction

Drug abuse and violent insurgency are global phenomena that have continued to undermine peace and security across societies, with significant socio-economic and political consequences. Globally, substance abuse is a major public health issue. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) estimated in its 2023 report that approximately 296 million people worldwide used drugs in the preceding year, reflecting an increasing trend over the past decade. These figures highlight the global scale of the problem and its potential to fuel insecurity, particularly in fragile states and conflict zones. For example, Afghanistan's poppy cultivation for heroin production has directly funded Taliban insurgencies, creating a vicious cycle of drug abuse and violence (Peters, 2009). On the African continent, drug abuse has gained alarming prevalence, exacerbating socio-economic vulnerabilities. Countries like South Africa and Kenya have reported increasing rates of substance use among youth, particularly with cannabis, alcohol, and synthetic drugs such as methamphetamine (Onaolapo *et al*, 2022; Ebrahim, Adams & Demant, 2024; Olawole-Isaac, Ogundipe *et al*, 2018). Furthermore, in West Africa, drug trafficking routes have turned nations like Guinea-Bissau into narco-states, destabilising governance and security. The proliferation of drugs often coincides with violent extremism, as seen in the Sahel region, where groups like Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) utilise drug revenues to finance terror activities (Galito, 2012).

Regionally, within West Africa, Nigeria stands at the epicentre of the drug abuse crisis. The HealthThink. (2021) reported in 2021 that approximately 14.3 million Nigerians aged 15-64 had used drugs, with cannabis and opioids being the most prevalent substances. The rise of drug abuse correlates with the proliferation of criminality, including armed banditry, kidnappings, and insurgencies. For instance, drug use among youth in the Niger Delta has been linked to militant activities and the vandalism of oil infrastructure (Healthwise, 2021, October 26; Emmanuel, 2021, October 25; Odomovo, 2019). At the subregional level, the Lake Chad Basin—comprising Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, and Niger—has witnessed heightened insecurity due to Boko Haram insurgency. The group has exploited the socio-economic marginalisation in the region to recruit followers, often through drug inducements. Reports suggest that combatants frequently use substances such as tramadol and amphetamines to suppress fear and enhance aggression during attacks (Musa, 2024; Duyile and Adejoh, 2023).

Nationally, Nigeria faces a multifaceted crisis in Adamawa and Borno States, which have been at the epicentre of the Boko Haram insurgency since 2009. The insurgency has resulted in over 350,000 deaths and displaced more than 2 million people, with socio-economic deprivation providing fertile ground for recruitment (Olaewaju, 2021). Drug abuse in these states has exacerbated the situation, with substances like codeine and tramadol widely consumed by insurgents and vulnerable youth. The strain theory, as postulated by Merton (1938), provides a theoretical lens to understand this phenomenon. The lack of legitimate opportunities, coupled with frustration from socio-economic pressures, pushes individuals to adopt deviant coping mechanisms, such as drug abuse and insurgency. At the geopolitical zone level, the North-East, where Adamawa and Borno States are located, represents the most economically disadvantaged zone in Nigeria, with highest poverty rates (Musa, 2020). Educational deprivation and unemployment are rampant, creating conditions conducive to radicalisation. Furthermore, cultural and religious indoctrination by extremist groups has been instrumental in sustaining insurgent ideologies. In contrast, states in the North-West and North-Central geopolitical zones, such as Kaduna and Zamfara, are grappling with banditry and farmer-herder conflicts, further illustrating how insecurity intersects with socio-economic challenges. In Adamawa and Borno States, the situation is particularly dire. These states, characterised by high rates of poverty, illiteracy, and displacement, are a microcosm of the broader challenges facing Nigeria.

For example, in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State, the use of tramadol and diazepam is prevalent among displaced youth in camps, who often cite frustration and hopelessness as drivers of substance use. Similarly, in Adamawa's State capital, Yola and Mubi area, evidence indicates that drug abuse is widespread among unemployed youth, particularly Shila armed boys, many of whom might be easy targets for Boko Haram recruiters (Abdullahi, Hammaadama & Saa-Aondo, 2024).

In sum, the persistent challenges of drug abuse and insurgency in Nigeria, particularly in Adamawa and Borno States, have created significant social and security concerns. These intertwined issues contribute to ongoing instability, deepen socio-economic hardships, and hinder developmental progress in the affected regions. This study seeks to explore the root causes of drug abuse and their impact on intensifying insurgency, emphasising key factors such as poverty, illiteracy, indoctrination, and frustration. Additionally, it examines the role of substance use in exacerbating violent behaviours among insurgents through the lens of strain theory, which argues that socio-economic pressures and limited access to legitimate opportunities drive individuals toward deviant coping mechanisms. The primary objectives of this research are to uncover the drivers of drug abuse and insurgency in Adamawa and Borno States, evaluate the connection between substance use and insurgent activities, and develop evidence-based policy recommendations.

Definition of Key Concepts

Drug Abuse

Drug abuse, also known as substance abuse, refers to the harmful or hazardous use of psychoactive substances, such as alcohol and illicit drugs. According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2024), substance abuse encompasses the repetitive use of these substances in ways or amounts that harm an individual's physical and mental health, as well as their social well-being. This often leads to dependence syndrome, marked by a compulsion to consume drugs despite experiencing negative consequences. From a behavioral standpoint, drug abuse is the intentional misuse of substances to achieve euphoria, relaxation, or escape from stress. Common examples include the non-medical use of prescription drugs like tramadol and codeine, substances that are particularly prevalent in certain regions of Nigeria, especially among youths in urban slums and conflict zones (Eske, 2023, February 14). In Adamawa and Borno States, the widespread consumption of these substances is common among displaced persons and insurgents, often serving as a coping mechanism for trauma and socio-economic hardship (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], 2018; Gire & Ibaishwa, 2020).

From a societal angle, drug abuse is often a response to systemic issues, such as poverty, unemployment, and social exclusion. For instance, in the United States, the opioid crisis has been linked to economic dislocations in post-industrial regions (Case & Deaton, 2020). Similarly, in Nigeria's North-East, the high rates of drug abuse among youth can be traced to structural inequalities, including limited access to education and employment opportunities. These socio-economic pressures align with strain theory, which posits that when legitimate avenues for success are blocked, individuals may turn to deviant behaviours, such as drug use, to cope with their frustration (Merton, 1938).

Violent Insurgency

Violent insurgency refers to organised, armed resistance against a recognised authority, typically the state, with the aim of achieving political, religious, or ideological objectives. It

involves a combination of guerrilla tactics, terrorism, and propaganda to undermine state control and mobilise support. Insurgencies are often fuelled by grievances such as marginalisation, corruption, and perceived injustice. In Nigeria, violent insurgency is epitomised by Boko Haram, which has waged a protracted conflict since 2009, primarily in Adamawa and Borno States. The group seeks to establish an Islamic state and opposes Western education, which it views as corrupt and anti-Islamic. The insurgency has resulted in over 350,000 deaths and displaced millions, making it one of the deadliest conflicts globally (Olawaju, 2021). Boko Haram's recruitment strategies often exploit socio-economic vulnerabilities, to coerce or entice individuals into their ranks (Musa, 2020).

From a global perspective, violent insurgency is not unique to Nigeria. Examples include the Taliban in Afghanistan, which has used both ideological and economic incentives to sustain its insurgency, and Al-Shabaab in Somalia, which operates within a fragile state context (International Crisis Group, 2016). In these cases, insurgencies are driven by a combination of historical grievances, socio-political marginalisation, and external funding, often linked to illicit activities such as drug trafficking.

Intersection of Drug Abuse and Violent Insurgency: Global and Local Contexts

The relationship between drug abuse and violent insurgency is multifaceted, reflecting a dynamic interplay of substance use as both a symptom and an enabler of conflict. This nexus is characterised by the strategic use of drugs by insurgents to enhance combat performance, suppress fear, and sustain prolonged violent activities, as well as the exploitation of drug trafficking as a revenue stream to finance insurgent operations.

Globally, the use of drugs by insurgent groups has been well-documented across various conflict zones. During the civil war in Sierra Leone, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) notoriously provided child soldiers with cocaine and amphetamines, often mixed with gunpowder, to induce aggression and fearlessness in combat (Richards, 1996). Similarly, in Afghanistan, the Taliban has leveraged the country's extensive opium trade, earning billions annually by taxing and trafficking heroin, which simultaneously funds their insurgency and destabilises the region (Nicoletti, 2011).

Another notable example is the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) in Colombia, which capitalised on the cocaine trade for decades. The group's involvement in drug production and trafficking not only financed its military campaigns but also deepened its control over rural territories, where coca cultivation thrived (Felbab-Brown, 2010). This symbiosis between drug economies and insurgent groups demonstrates how substance abuse and trafficking can serve as pillars of insurgent sustainability.

In Nigeria, the intersection of drug abuse and insurgency is starkly evident in the activities of Boko Haram. Combatants within the group are known to consume drugs such as tramadol and amphetamines during operations. These substances heighten their aggression, reduce inhibitions, and enhance their capacity to inflict violence, enabling the execution of brutal acts, including mass killings and abductions (Musa, 2024). Interviews with former combatants have revealed that drugs are often distributed before attacks to desensitise fighters and ensure compliance with leadership directives. Moreover, Boko Haram has reportedly engaged in drug trafficking to fund its operations. According to Idris & Tutumlu (2021) the group exploits porous borders in the Sahel region to facilitate the smuggling of controlled substances. This illicit trade not only generates significant revenue but also establishes connections with transnational criminal networks, further complicating counterinsurgency efforts. The impact of this nexus extends beyond insurgents to the wider community. In conflict-ridden areas like

Borno State, the availability of drugs has surged, leading to increased substance abuse among displaced youths and exacerbating social instability. For instance, the abuse of tramadol—a prescription painkiller—has reached alarming levels, with reports indicating its widespread use among internally displaced persons (IDPs) as a coping mechanism for trauma and despair (Gire & Ibaishwa, 2020).

The West African subregion, with its porous borders and weak enforcement mechanisms, has become a transit hub for drug trafficking. Insurgent groups, including Boko Haram and Al-Qaeda affiliates in the Sahel, exploit these vulnerabilities to smuggle drugs such as cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamines. This illicit trade not only funds insurgencies but also destabilises fragile states, undermining governance and rule of law. For example, the trafficking routes through Mali and Niger have strengthened the financial capabilities of jihadist groups, enabling the purchase of sophisticated weapons and recruitment of fighters (Felbab-Brown, 2010).

Theoretical Framework

This study adopts strain theory, developed by Robert K. Merton (1938), to examine the socio-economic drivers of drug abuse and violent insurgency in Adamawa and Borno States. Strain theory posits that societal structures exert pressure on individuals to achieve culturally approved goals, yet provide unequal access to legitimate means of success. This disparity creates strain, leading to frustration and deviant coping mechanisms. Agnew's General Strain Theory (1992) expands this framework to include emotional and relational strains, providing a multidimensional perspective on deviance.

The theory's relevance to Adamawa and Borno States is evident. These regions face pervasive poverty, with over 70% of the population living below the poverty line (Musa, 2020). High illiteracy rates and widespread unemployment exacerbate socio-economic pressures, pushing vulnerable youths toward substance abuse or insurgency. For instance, the consumption of tramadol among displaced persons in Borno highlights the use of drugs as a psychological escape from trauma (Gire & Ibaishwa, 2020). Boko Haram exploits these strains by recruiting disenfranchised youths, offering financial incentives and a distorted sense of purpose (Onuoha, 2014; Mercy Corps. 2019).

Despite its strengths, strain theory faces critiques. It is sometimes criticised for oversimplifying the relationship between strain and deviance, neglecting cultural norms and structural violence (Messner & Rosenfeld, 2001). Additionally, its focus on Western models of success may not fully capture the communal and religious dynamics in non-Western contexts like Nigeria. Nevertheless, the theory's ability to link socio-economic inequalities to deviance remains a significant strength, offering valuable insights into policy interventions.

Strain theory provides a robust framework for understanding the drivers of drug abuse and insurgency. By identifying poverty, illiteracy, and frustration as root causes, the theory underscores the need for holistic interventions. Policies focusing on poverty alleviation, education, and rehabilitation can address these strains, reducing the prevalence of deviance and promoting stability in Adamawa and Borno States.

Methodology

This study focuses on Adamawa and Borno States, which are severely impacted by Boko Haram insurgency and widespread drug abuse, especially among youth. Borno State has 27 Local Government Areas (LGAs), while Adamawa has 21. The selection of specific LGAs was

deliberate, considering factors such as insurgency intensity and drug abuse prevalence. In Adamawa, two LGAs were chosen from the Northern Senatorial Zone: Mubi North and Madagali. Mubi North, an urban area, was a key site for Boko Haram activities and was declared their “Islamic City” in 2015. This highlights its strategic importance in the insurgency. Madagali, a rural area near the Sambisa Forest, plays a critical role as a border gateway to Cameroon, which is impacted by both Boko Haram and drug trafficking. These selections provide a balance between urban and rural contexts, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of drug abuse and insurgency. In Borno, six LGAs were selected across the three Senatorial Zones: Maiduguri and Konduga (Central Zone); Mobbar and Abadam (Northern Zone); and Gwoza and Asira Uba (Southern Zone). These LGAs were chosen due to the extensive Boko Haram presence and documented drug abuse. Borno's diverse geography and Boko Haram's reach across the state necessitated a selection from all zones to capture a broad range of experiences. Data will be collected via Focus Group Discussions (FGD), Key Informant Interviews (KII), and secondary sources, with content triangulation to enhance validity. Purposive sampling was applied in Adamawa, and random sampling in Borno to ensure diverse perspectives. This geographic focus aligns with regional findings indicating high levels of drug abuse and insurgency in the Northeast (Musa, 2024; O'Connor, Betancourt, & Enelamah, 2021).

Discussion of Findings

Interviews with repentant Boko Haram members from Madagali (Adamawa State) and Maiduguri (Borno State) offer critical insights into the drivers of drug abuse and insurgency in these regions. According to one respondent from Madagali, poverty and frustration are key drivers of both phenomena. "Life is hard," he noted, emphasizing the lack of jobs, poor living conditions, and limited support systems, which contribute to a pervasive sense of hopelessness. Drug use, he explained, became a way to escape this harsh reality: "When you are constantly living in fear, with no way out, sometimes these substances are the only relief you can find" (KII, Repentant Boko Haram, Madagali, October 7, 2024). The respondent also discussed how insurgency served as a source of ideological fulfillment and empowerment. Many people, he explained, joined Boko Haram for a sense of religious purpose and a desire to fight for a cause, which they believed offered meaning and social status in their marginalized communities. "Some joined because they believed they were fighting for religion," he said. This combination of poverty and dissatisfaction with the government led many to embrace insurgency as a means of escaping their dire circumstances and gaining a sense of belonging. He further noted that drug use among insurgents enhanced their courage and moral detachment: "The drugs made us feel strong, unafraid" (KII, Repentant Boko Haram, Madagali, October 7, 2024).

A similar account was shared by a repentant Boko Haram member in Maiduguri, who highlighted how poverty and lack of opportunities contributed to both drug abuse and insurgency. "In communities with scarce economic opportunities, youth turn to insurgent groups like Boko Haram for financial support," he said. The absence of legitimate employment opportunities, compounded by drug trafficking, creates a cycle where insurgency and drug abuse are interconnected survival strategies (KII, Repentant Boko Haram, Abadam, October 3, 2024). He also pointed out the role of peer pressure in normalizing both drug use and involvement in extremist activities, particularly in marginalized communities. Social dynamics within these communities often drive young people towards these destructive paths, as they seek respect and belonging (KII, Repentant Boko Haram, Abadam, October 3, 2024). Lastly, the respondent mentioned the negative impact of poor upbringing and lack of parental guidance in exacerbating these issues. In environments marked by conflict, violence, and trauma, young

people are more susceptible to exploitation and manipulation by insurgents and drug traffickers (KII, Repentant Boko Haram, Abadam, October 3, 2024).

The interviews with repentant Boko Haram members from various regions reveal the multifaceted drivers of drug abuse and insurgency in Adamawa and Borno States. One respondent from Maiduguri emphasized how living in conflict zones leads to mental health issues, with young people exposed to trauma resorting to drugs as a coping mechanism. Additionally, the lack of education, vocational training, and counseling further traps individuals, pushing some toward drug use and others toward extremism as a way to assert control over their lives. He also highlighted how poor governance and inequality breed resentment, especially in marginalized communities, where perceived injustice leads individuals to seek refuge in extremist ideologies or drugs (KII, Repentant Boko Haram, Maiduguri, October 3, 2024). A similar account was provided by a repentant Boko Haram member from Gwoza, who stressed that poverty, unemployment, and stress are major factors driving drug use. Tensions in job-scarce regions lead many to turn to drugs for relief, while insurgents' inherent violent tendencies are amplified by substance abuse. Illiteracy and lack of civic education make individuals more vulnerable to extremist ideologies (KII, Repentant Boko Haram, Gwoza, October 3, 2024). Respondents from Abadam and Askira/Uba echoed these points, noting that stress relief is a key reason for drug abuse, while socio-economic issues remain the main drivers of insurgency (KII, Repentant Boko Haram, Abadam and Askira/Uba, October 3, 2024).

A KII from Mubi North identified porous borders, institutional decay, and weak governance as contributing factors to drug abuse and insurgency. These issues enable the flow of drugs and weapons, while high unemployment and poverty leave many youths vulnerable to substance abuse (KII, Resident, Mubi North, October 9, 2024). Military personnel in Konduga and Gwoza pointed to peer influence, frustration, and socio-economic deprivation as factors exacerbating both drug abuse and insurgency, with insurgents exploiting these vulnerabilities to recruit and maintain control (KII, Military personnel, Konduga, October 4, 2024; KII, Military personnel, Gwoza, October 14, 2024). In Mobbar, a senior military officer linked drug abuse to poor moral guidance, disrupted family structures, and socio-economic factors like poverty and illiteracy. These same factors drive insurgency, with ideological manipulation further encouraging vulnerable individuals to join Boko Haram (KII, Senior military officer, Mobbar, September 25, 2024). A CJTF member in Mobbar and an IDP from Konduga also attributed the rise in drug abuse and insurgency to poverty, unemployment, and a lack of education, highlighting the role of Boko Haram in exploiting these conditions for recruitment (KII, CJTF Member, Mobbar, September 26, 2024; KII, IDP, Konduga, October 4, 2024).

The findings from various interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) reveal a complex interplay of socio-economic, political, and cultural factors driving both drug abuse and insurgency in Borno and Adamawa States, particularly in relation to Boko Haram activities. One of the most significant drivers identified is poverty, which leaves many individuals, especially the youth, vulnerable to both insurgency recruitment and substance abuse. The lack of economic opportunities leads individuals to view joining insurgent groups or engaging in drug use as a means of survival. Boko Haram exploits these vulnerabilities by offering financial incentives, food, and a sense of belonging, effectively recruiting from a population that feels abandoned by the state (KII, Faith-Based Leader, Abadam, 26th October 2024; FGD, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), Abadam, 26th September 2024).

Closely linked to poverty is the widespread lack of education. Illiteracy and the absence of formal education make individuals more susceptible to manipulation and radicalization by extremist groups. Many of the individuals interviewed expressed how the lack of educational opportunities led them to feel powerless and without hope for a better future. This ignorance also extends to the dangers of drug abuse, which exacerbates the situation. Without education, individuals are unable to critically analyze extremist ideologies or understand the long-term consequences of substance use, making them more vulnerable to both insurgency and addiction (KII, Faith-Based Leader, Abadam, 26th October 2024; FGD, Individuals Who Were Rescued and Those That Had Been Trapped and Lived under Boko Haram, Mubi North, 9th October 2024).

Psychological trauma resulting from years of violence and displacement further exacerbates substance abuse. Many internally displaced persons (IDPs) and former Boko Haram members spoke about how the psychological scars of conflict led them to use drugs as a coping mechanism. The harsh realities of their lives pushed them toward substance abuse as a means to escape their pain and frustration. Boko Haram capitalized on this trauma, preying on those who felt marginalized and offering them a distorted sense of purpose, which further entrenched their involvement in both insurgency and drug use (KII, NGO Staff, Mubi North, 10th October 2024; FGD, with Repentant Boko Haram Members in Maiduguri, 4th October 2024).

Government failures and weak governance were frequently cited as key drivers. The state's inability to meet the basic needs of its citizens, such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure, has created a vacuum that insurgent groups have filled. The absence of effective governance has allowed Boko Haram to operate with relative impunity, offering a sense of purpose and belonging to individuals who feel neglected by the government. This void has also contributed to the proliferation of the drug trade, with weak law enforcement enabling the widespread availability and use of narcotics, further fueling both addiction and insurgency (KII, A Senior University Lecturer, Maiduguri, 2nd October 2024).

Cultural and religious manipulation also plays a crucial role in sustaining both drug abuse and Boko Haram's influence. The insurgents exploit religious beliefs to justify violence, framing their insurgency as a religious duty. This ideological manipulation, combined with drug use, dulls moral judgment and allows recruits to engage in violent acts without hesitation or guilt. Additionally, the influence of peer groups and social pressures, such as broken homes and orphanhood, was noted as another factor driving individuals toward both insurgency and drug abuse. Young people from unstable family environments or those lacking proper guidance were particularly vulnerable to radicalization and exploitation by insurgent groups (FGD, Individuals Who Were Rescued and Those That Had Been Trapped and Lived under Boko Haram, Mubi North, 9th October 2024; FGD, with Repentant Boko Haram Members in Maiduguri, 4th October 2024).

The Administrative Officer at the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of Borno State Police Headquarters (Maiduguri, 30th September 2024) emphasized that drug abuse has been a longstanding issue, exacerbated by the insurgency. The lack of parental support is a significant factor contributing to youth involvement in drug abuse. Without guidance or emotional stability, many youths resort to substances as a way to cope with feelings of loneliness and alienation. The harsh economic environment and limited job opportunities also push youth to drugs as a way to gain temporary energy and motivation, with many using substances to numb their present struggles, unaware of the long-term consequences (KII, Administrative Officer, CID, 30th September 2024). The officer further highlighted the

irrationality of Boko Haram's insurgency. Unlike peaceful protests with clear objectives, Boko Haram's violence is aimless and indiscriminate, targeting civilians, including innocent children, in a manner that lacks any constructive purpose. The insurgency's senseless violence, including acts of terrorism against defenseless civilians, underscores the profound disorder and chaos characterizing Boko Haram's actions (KII, Administrative Officer, CID, 30th September 2024).

The Deputy Commander of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Borno State Command, also shared important perspectives on drug abuse in the region. Poor parenting, exacerbated by widespread broken homes, leaves many children without proper moral training, making them vulnerable to drug abuse and involvement in the illicit drug trade. Peer rejection, particularly among girls who face emotional distress from family exclusion, often leads them to drugs or prostitution as a coping mechanism. Some also turn to marginalized social groups, such as those involved in lesbianism, for a sense of belonging and acceptance (KII, Deputy Commander, NDLEA Borno State Command, 30th September 2024). The Deputy Commander further noted that Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), who have experienced trauma and displacement, are particularly at risk for substance abuse. The lack of resources and interventions in IDP camps often leaves youth vulnerable to manipulation by drug dealers. Furthermore, poverty plays a key role in both insurgency and drug abuse, as many youths are enticed by Boko Haram's promises of financial support and material rewards. The group's use of drugs to enhance the performance and morale of their fighters creates a dangerous cycle of dependence and violence (KII, Deputy Commander, NDLEA Borno State Command, 30th September 2024). Religious ideology is another crucial factor in fueling insurgency and drug abuse. Boko Haram recruits, often disillusioned by societal marginalization, are drawn to the group's radical interpretation of Islam, which condemns Western education and promotes violent extremism. For some recruits, joining Boko Haram is a means of asserting power, and they often turn to drug use as part of their indoctrination. The use of substances like tramadol is common among Boko Haram fighters, as it helps them endure the physical and emotional tolls of their violent actions (KII, Deputy Commander, NDLEA Borno State Command, 30th September 2024).

In summary, the drivers of drug abuse and insurgency in Borno State are multifaceted, involving socio-economic factors, lack of parental guidance, peer pressure, and exploitation by extremist groups. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach that includes poverty alleviation, educational reforms, improved mental health support, and interventions to combat radicalization and drug abuse in vulnerable populations.

Content Triangulation of major Findings

The findings from both Adamawa and Borno States show a high level of agreement on the drivers of drug abuse and insurgency, with key factors including poverty and unemployment, peer pressure, the lack of effective law enforcement, the availability of drugs, illiteracy, broken homes, marginalization, and corruption. These drivers were strongly corroborated by scholarly literature, which highlights the critical role of socio-economic factors in exacerbating these issues. Poverty and unemployment were identified as major contributors to both drug abuse and insurgency in the region. Participants from both states emphasized how poverty leads to a sense of hopelessness and alienation, pushing many youths towards drugs as a form of escape. This is consistent with the work of Owoyomi (2021), who argues that poverty predisposes youths to engage in illicit drug use and trafficking. Shaw, Egan, and Gillespie (2007) also underscore the connection between poverty, family breakdown, and drug abuse, suggesting that economic deprivation leads to psychological stress, which, in turn, contributes to substance

use. Further supporting this, Nagelhout et al. (2017) found that economic recessions, marked by high unemployment, increase psychological distress and drug use, while Nolte-Troha et al. (2023) found that unemployment is directly linked to substance use disorders. Musa (2020) adds to this by emphasizing the relationship between poverty and the rise of Boko Haram's insurgency. He suggests that poverty serves as a catalyst for violent extremism, creating a vicious cycle where poverty fuels insurgency, and the insurgency, in turn, exacerbates economic conditions. This aligns with the findings from the Adamawa State Planning Commission (2020), which reports high levels of poverty and unemployment in the region, further contributing to the insecurity and vulnerability of youth to recruitment by insurgent groups.

Peer pressure, particularly among youth, was also found to be a significant driver of drug abuse in both states. This finding is consistent with research by Smith (2023), which highlights the strong influence of peer associations on adolescent drug abuse. Similarly, the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) identifies peer pressure as a key factor in increasing substance use among adolescents. Muldoon (2024) notes that peer pressure has become a focal point of recent studies, coinciding with rising substance use rates. Keyzers, Lee, and Dworkin (2020) reinforce this view by showing that both positive and negative peer pressures can significantly shape behaviors, including drug use.

Findings from qualitative data by a significant majority of respondents in both Adamawa and Borno States, also identified the lack of effective law enforcement as a key driver of drug abuse. This consensus aligns with Jatau *et al.* (2021), who highlight that despite Nigeria's existing drug laws and strategies, drug abuse persists. They advocate for a collaborative approach among community, government, and religious entities to address this challenge effectively. This sentiment mirrors the U.S. drug policy framework outlined by the Institute of Medicine (1996), which has been characterized by stringent regulations and enforcement mechanisms. The findings suggest that while there is agreement on the necessity of effective law enforcement, the differing perceptions in Borno may indicate a need for a thorough evaluation of current enforcement practices in Nigeria. This reinforces the argument for a comprehensive, community-engaged response to drug abuse that addresses both legal and social dimensions.

The widespread availability and accessibility of drugs are pivotal factors driving the alarming rise in drug abuse in Adamawa and Borno States. Qualitative data collected from these regions indicate a strong consensus among respondents that the ease of access to various substances, including tramadol, diazepam, and codeine, has become a major contributor to both experimentation and addiction, particularly among the youth. Focus group discussions in these states revealed that the normalization of drug use, due to its increasing accessibility, has extended beyond the general population to include insurgent groups and internally displaced persons (IDPs). These groups, already facing profound socio-economic challenges and insecurity, are further exacerbated by the pervasive drug trade, which facilitates addiction and undermines efforts to stabilize these regions. This pattern is not unique to Nigeria. Reports from multiple sources reinforces the notion that the availability of drugs significantly contributes to higher rates of abuse (*The Sun* 2016, 25th June; *Premium Times Nigeria* 2016, October 27; Gire and Ibaishwa (2019), Kaiser *et al.* (2020), Aluh *et al.* (2023), NRA Forum (2022), *Premium Times* (June 29, 2021). For example, Musa (2024), Duyile & Adejoh (2023), Zubairu (2023), have all documented the increasing rates of drug abuse among insurgents, with some studies indicating that these substances are often used by militants to enhance their endurance and aggression during attacks. Furthermore, the growing prevalence of drug use among IDPs highlights the vulnerability of displaced persons, who frequently turn to drugs as

a means of coping with the trauma, stress, and uncertainty associated with their displacement due to Boko Haram's insurgency.

The situation in Adamawa and Borno aligns with global trends, where the availability of drugs is a recognized catalyst for substance abuse. Tam and Foo (2012) argue that drug accessibility has been a key factor in the global rise in substance abuse, emphasizing that easy access to drugs not only heightens the likelihood of initial experimentation but also fosters addiction among those most vulnerable. In the case of Adamawa and Borno, the already fragile socio-economic environment, compounded by displacement and insecurity, has made drugs increasingly available and accessible to a wide range of individuals, amplifying the risks of dependency and its associated consequences. Supporting this view, Friedman & Hadland (2024) reported that about 22 high school age adolescents died each week from overdoses in the United States in 2022, driven by fentanyl-laced prescription pills, illustrating the pervasive nature of drug access even in developed nations. Similarly, the United Nations (as cited in Tam & Foo, 2012) has consistently raised concerns about the role of drug availability in triggering experimentation and addiction, especially among young people in unstable environments. Furthermore, Nawi *et al.* (2021) and the National Collaborating Centre for Mental Health (2008) stress that the initial use of drugs often leads to a cycle of dependency that disrupts individuals' lives and destabilizes entire communities. The long-term consequences of this dependency can be seen in the growing number of individuals who become entrapped in addiction, perpetuating the cycle of poverty, violence, and instability in their communities.

In Nigeria, statistics reveal the severe scale of the country's drug crisis. In 2015 alone, narcotics valued at approximately N3.7 billion (around 11.5 million USD) were confiscated at Lagos's Murtala Muhammed International Airport. These seizures included 172 kilograms of cannabis, 160 kilograms of ephedrine, 114 kilograms of methamphetamine, 96 kilograms of cocaine, 45 kilograms of tramadol, and 5 kilograms of heroin (Adelani, 2016). More recently, Egole (2024) highlights the continued efforts of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) in combating drug trafficking. Between January 2023 and March 2024, the NDLEA intercepted and seized a staggering 207,976 kilograms of various hard drugs across seaports in Nigeria. Mr. Femi Babafemi, NDLEA's Director of Media and Advocacy, disclosed these details, noting that the agency's operations led to multiple arrests and drug seizures, including 14 suspects and 16.69 kilograms of cocaine along with 11,622.229 kilograms of cannabis sativa in the first quarter of 2024 alone. From January to October 2023, the NDLEA arrested 167 individuals and seized 196,336.99 kilograms of assorted drugs (Egole, 2024).

These figures underscore the NDLEA's persistent efforts to curb drug trafficking, yet they also reveal the vast scale of illicit drug trade entering Nigeria. Large quantities of drugs continue to flow into the hands of individuals in both urban and rural areas, exacerbating instability in regions such as Adamawa and Borno. The widespread availability of drugs in these areas compounds existing socio-economic issues, creating a vicious cycle of addiction, poverty, and insecurity. Such a complex situation necessitates a multi-pronged approach to address drug trafficking and abuse in Nigeria. While strengthening the legal framework to regulate drug availability is essential, it is even more crucial to implement targeted intervention programs that extend beyond law enforcement. Effective intervention strategies should incorporate community engagement, education, and economic empowerment, with special attention to vulnerable populations, including internally displaced persons (IDPs). Additionally, these strategies must be informed by culturally sensitive approaches tailored to address the specific challenges faced by local communities and insurgency-affected areas. Addressing the root causes of drug abuse—such as socio-economic deprivation, displacement, and inadequate

access to health and rehabilitation services—will allow Nigeria to make meaningful progress in reducing the drug crisis that fuels insurgency and violence, particularly in the country's northeastern region.

The role of education is also strongly emphasized in the qualitative data of findings from Adamawa and Borno States, in which majority of the respondents acknowledged the impact of illiteracy and poor educational standards as driver of drug abuse in these states. These perspectives align with findings from Munga and Ombui (2017), who stress that literacy is crucial for understanding the health and societal consequences of drug abuse. They note that youth with limited education are more vulnerable to early drug use, which disrupts academic growth and promotes adverse behaviors like decreased focus and motivation. Jones (2021) further connects illiteracy to both substance abuse and violence, attributing these issues to service gaps and misinformation, and suggesting that cyclical illiteracy can be exploited to maintain social inequalities. Moeslim (2016) adds that illiteracy and poverty are drivers of drug-related crime, advocating for basic education as a preventative measure—a view supported by the UN's World Drug Report, which emphasizes poverty eradication as essential to reducing drug abuse. These insights suggest that raising educational standards could significantly reduce drug abuse by equipping youth with essential knowledge and resources, highlighting the importance of targeted educational reforms and awareness initiatives. Together, these sources call for urgent educational and socio-economic reforms, reinforcing the importance of accessible education and poverty reduction in breaking cycles of addiction and social disadvantage.

The findings of the qualitative data from Adamawa and Borno States showed a strong consensus on the role of family dynamics in driving drug abuse with emphasis on peer group pressure as driver of drug abuse in both states. Scholarly research supports this view. Dunn *et al.* (2002) found that parental neglect, particularly in families with substance-abusing parents, heightens children's risk for substance use disorders (SUD), with neglectful parenting partly mediating the development of substance use disorders SUD. Jazuli *et al.* (2020) further confirmed that adolescents from disharmonious families face a significantly higher risk of drug abuse, with family instability being a key factor in substance abuse. Kroese *et al.* (2020) similarly links high rates of family distress, such as divorce and single-parent households, to elevated opioid overdose deaths, reinforcing the notion that family structure and distress can exacerbate drug-related issues. These findings suggest the importance of family-based interventions to address parental involvement and support systems for youth. Together, these findings emphasize that family structure and parental involvement critically influence youth vulnerability to substance abuse, highlighting the need for targeted family support and educational programs to mitigate drug abuse in high-risk areas.

Regarding the drivers of insurgency, the responses from Adamawa and Borno States indicate a widespread recognition of marginalization, injustice, and discrimination as significant drivers of insurgency. These local perceptions align with scholarly findings on violent extremism in Africa. Akubo and Okolo (2019) suggest that marginalized populations provide a vital base for insurgencies, a view supported by Kwanashie (2013). Shurkin (2022) discusses how groups in the Sahel use grievances tied to political exclusion, ethnic discrimination, and poverty to recruit members. Similarly, Enakemu and Ifeanchio (2024) note that in North East Nigeria, Boko Haram and ISWAP exploit socioeconomic disparities and social injustices to mobilize support. Collectively, these studies underscore that addressing marginalization and inequality is critical for reducing radicalization and extremist recruitment. This strong regional consensus points to the need for governance reforms that address social inequities to mitigate conflict. Furthermore,

based on qualitative findings in both Adamawa and Borno States, an overwhelming majority of respondents recognized the links between poverty, unemployment, and illiteracy as key drivers of insurgency. These findings are in agreement with scholarly insights. Okolie, Onyema, and Baseey (2019) stress poverty's role in creating vulnerable populations susceptible to recruitment into militia activities. Similarly, Usman (2015) draws parallels with the Arab Spring, showing how economic hardship leads to social unrest. Further, Adeodu, Ademola, and Clara (2024) confirm these connections, identifying the inadequacy of current responses to root causes and calling for a focused approach to poverty alleviation and educational improvement. This widespread acknowledgment highlights the pressing need for economic development programs that target poverty reduction and expand educational opportunities as strategies to mitigate insurgency. Collectively, these perspectives underscore the importance of addressing socio-economic inequalities as a foundation for countering insurgency.

Another findings from qualitative analysis by majority of respondents in Adamawa and Borno States showed that corruption is a significant contributor to insurgency. Scholars such as Nkwede, Moliki, and Dauda (2017) reinforce this perspective, linking systemic corruption to Nigeria's prolonged insurgency, particularly the Boko Haram crisis. They argue that corruption not only fuels insurgency but hinders effective counter-insurgency efforts, deepening Nigeria's socio-economic and political issues. Similarly, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (2016) and Chayes (2014) draw parallels in global contexts, noting how corruption undermines governance, intensifies grievances, and indirectly supports insurgent movements. These studies collectively validate the survey results, emphasizing that addressing corruption is critical to combating insurgency and fostering stability. So also the findings stress the urgent need for transparency and accountability reforms within security agencies to restore public confidence and improve security measures.

The findings from qualitative data gathered from respondents in Adamawa and Borno States indicate that ideological indoctrination and propaganda serve as significant drivers of insurgency. Supporting this perspective, Arvisais *et al.* (2022) examine the methods used by ISIS, particularly their incorporation of educational materials designed to embed extremist ideologies. This analysis illustrates how indoctrination not only shapes young minds but also sustains insurgent movements over time. Similarly, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (2017) emphasizes the targeted use of indoctrination by terrorist groups, especially among children. These groups leverage concepts such as honor and social prestige to cultivate deep loyalty and entrench insurgent ideologies. The UNODC also notes that punitive responses directed at indoctrinated youth may inadvertently reinforce these beliefs, thus creating significant barriers to their reintegration into society. Further aligning with the respondents' perspectives, Omenma, Hendricks, and Ajaebili (2020) discuss indoctrination as a crucial phase that transitions individuals from susceptibility to active participation in insurgent activities. They highlight how recruitment through social and religious networks solidifies commitment to extremist causes, making it clear that indoctrination plays a central role in fostering insurgent behavior. With emphasis on Boko Haram in Nigeria, and with particular reference to northeast, Onuoha (2014) notes that itinerant preachers exploit prevailing circumstances by promoting an extreme interpretation of religious teachings. They propagate a narrative that portrays the government as weak and corrupt, which resonates with disillusioned individuals. This ideological framework creates fertile ground for armed groups like Boko Haram to recruit and train youth for various activities, ranging from mundane tasks to involvement in suicide bombings. Such ideological indoctrination and propaganda are significant drivers of insurgency, as they not only justify violent actions but also forge a sense of purpose and belonging among recruits, facilitating their commitment to extremist causes.

Collectively, the survey findings and scholarly literature confirm that indoctrination is a foundational driver of insurgency. This underscores the urgent need for targeted educational and community programs aimed at disrupting these harmful narratives. The strong consensus among researchers and respondents alike supports the implementation of educational and community-based interventions designed to counter extremist messaging and provide alternative perspectives to vulnerable populations. By addressing the root causes of indoctrination, such initiatives can play a vital role in mitigating the impact of insurgency in affected regions.

The triangulated data from respondents in Adamawa and Borno States and scholarly findings highlight external influences, globalization, and great power competition as major drivers of the Boko Haram insurgency. Respondents across both states emphasize that foreign backing not only sustains but also intensifies Boko Haram's operations, resonating with findings from the Department of the Army (2009), which notes that insurgencies often depend on external moral, political, and material support. This alignment reflects how insurgent groups like Boko Haram are often empowered through international actors, who provide resources and strategic guidance, amplifying their impact on regional stability. Supporting this perspective, Salehyan, Gleditsch, and Cunningham (2011) argue that globalization and great power competition shape insurgent strategies, which mirrors respondents' insights about Boko Haram's reliance on foreign networks for legitimacy and resources. Respondents describe how these international connections, especially with global jihadist entities, have bolstered Boko Haram's operations. This dynamic, as detailed by Lutz and Lutz (2013), follows a historical trend where globalization intensifies insurgency by linking local grievances to global power struggles, further corroborating the respondents' views on foreign manipulation in the Boko Haram conflict. Major Hamza Al-Mustapha, former Chief Security Officer to General Sani Abacha, highlights the involvement of external powers in Boko Haram's operations. In an interview on Breketé Human Rights Radio and Television, Al-Mustapha described Boko Haram as part of a "calculated game," suggesting that the group's actions serve to mask the activities of foreign entities aiming to exploit valuable natural resources, notably lithium, in Northeast Nigeria (Hamza, 2023). According to Al-Mustapha, these external actors, in collaboration with local accomplices, use Boko Haram to destabilize the region, thereby facilitating resource extraction under the guise of ongoing conflict (Hamza, 2023). This assertion underscores the complex motivations behind Boko Haram's persistence, blending local grievances with broader geopolitical interests.

The NRA Forum (2022) further illustrates Boko Haram's reliance on international affiliations, noting that alliances with groups like al-Qaeda and ISIS provide financial and logistical support, a sentiment echoed by respondents who observed that foreign funding and resources, including arms, enhance Boko Haram's operational capabilities. For example, in 2020, six Nigerians were convicted in the UAE for transferring \$782,000 to Boko Haram from Dubai, underscoring the material support flowing from international sympathizers. Additionally, Adeyeye, Akinrinde, and Omodunbi (2022) provide a nuanced interpretation, asserting that while external influences manipulate insurgencies, they often exploit pre-existing grievances. This view aligns with respondent insights, which recognize that although foreign powers amplify Boko Haram's capacity, they do so by capitalizing on local discontent and socio-economic issues. This complex interplay of local and international factors suggests that Boko Haram's insurgency is deeply interwoven with both domestic and global interests.

In summary, this triangulation of respondent qualitative data and academic sources confirms that Boko Haram's insurgency is not an isolated phenomenon but rather a conflict fueled by both local grievances and significant external influences. By intertwining with global power struggles, resource exploitation, and ideological networks, the insurgency represents a multifaceted challenge requiring strategies that address both internal socio-economic issues and external geopolitical interests.

Qualitative analyses reveal that drug abuse serves as a major driver and recruitment strategy for insurgency in Nigeria, especially in Adamawa and Borno States. Together, these findings illustrate that a significant proportion of respondents in both states recognize a crucial link between substance use and the rise in insurgent activities, echoing established scholarly perspectives. Musa (2021) asserts that drug and psychoactive substance abuse is a primary motivator for various violent domestic crimes, including extremism. For example, evidence from the bodies of suicide bombers in Northeast Nigeria has shown traces of such substances, suggesting that many were under their influence during attacks. Additionally, the improper, long-term handling of dual-use chemicals, fertilizers, and explosive materials has fueled their availability for criminal activities and violent extremism. Boko Haram not only uses drugs but collaborates with organized crime networks to facilitate drug trafficking (African Arguments, 2024). The group has exploited drug addiction among vulnerable youth and internally displaced persons (IDPs) as a tool for control and recruitment.

Duyile and Adejoh (2023) link the increasing trend of substance abuse and trafficking to the escalation of insurgency in Nigeria. They note that Boko Haram's activities have reached unprecedented levels, significantly impacting Nigeria's Global Terrorism Index (GTI) ranking—from sixteenth in 2008 to third by 2015, with Boko Haram identified as the world's deadliest terrorist group at the time. The security vacuum left by insurgent activities has also enabled rises in other crimes and social unrest nationwide, such as farmer-herder conflicts, banditry, kidnapping, piracy, and violent protests and secessionist movements. Musa (2024) further underscores that drug abuse is a major factor in crime and violence, especially among young people across Africa, with Nigeria being a stark example. The relationship between violent crimes, particularly those linked to Boko Haram, and drug abuse in Northeast Nigeria emphasizes the urgency of the issue. These findings highlight the need for comprehensive strategies addressing both drug abuse and the broader socio-political dynamics of insurgency in Nigeria.

Conclusion

The intricate relationship between drug abuse and violent insurgency in Nigeria, particularly in Adamawa and Borno States, has been shaped by a multitude of socio-economic, psychological, and ideological factors. The findings from interviews with key informants highlight the significant role of drug abuse as both a consequence and a facilitator of insurgency. The drug crisis is deeply rooted in issues such as poor parenting, lack of familial support, widespread poverty, and the breakdown of social structures, particularly in the context of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) who face immense socio-economic vulnerabilities. The insurgency, particularly the Boko Haram movement, has exploited these vulnerabilities by offering material incentives, including financial support and drugs, to recruit young people into violent extremism. The role of drugs in insurgency cannot be overstated, as substances like tramadol, codeine, and diazepam are used not only to enhance physical endurance during violent operations but also to numb the psychological trauma associated with acts of violence, such as abductions and killings. The emotional and physical toll of the conflict, compounded by the widespread use of drugs, has created a dangerous cycle of addiction and extremism that

is difficult to break. Youths, especially those living in conflict zones or IDP camps, are particularly susceptible to drug abuse and insurgent recruitment due to their marginalization and lack of alternative opportunities. The combination of ideological indoctrination, socio-economic deprivation, and substance use has contributed to the persistence of Boko Haram's insurgency in these regions.

Recommendations

1. *Strengthening Family and Community Support Structures:* Interventions to address the lack of family support systems are crucial for preventing youth from turning to drugs and violent extremism. Programs that promote positive parenting, mental health support, and family counseling can mitigate the risks associated with broken homes and social alienation. Additionally, community-based initiatives that strengthen social cohesion and provide mentorship for at-risk youths can help create protective networks.
2. *Economic Empowerment and Poverty Reduction:* Addressing the root causes of poverty through job creation, vocational training, and economic empowerment programs for youth is essential. Given the high unemployment rates and economic instability in the region, initiatives that create sustainable livelihoods will reduce the allure of joining insurgent groups that offer financial incentives. Governments and NGOs should focus on fostering entrepreneurship and skills development, particularly in rural areas and IDP camps, where opportunities are limited.
3. *Expanding Mental Health and Addiction Rehabilitation Services:* Comprehensive mental health support and addiction rehabilitation services should be established for both drug users and those affected by the psychological trauma of insurgency. Targeted programs that focus on trauma recovery, counseling, and reintegration are needed to address the long-term impacts of drug abuse and the violence youths have been exposed to during the insurgency. Providing a holistic approach to recovery can break the cycle of drug abuse and violent extremism.
4. *Improved Security and Protection in IDP Camps:* IDP camps remain a high-risk environment for drug abuse and recruitment into insurgent groups. It is vital to improve security measures within these camps, ensuring that youth are protected from both drug dealers and insurgents who prey on vulnerable populations. Resources should be allocated to provide educational opportunities, psychosocial support, and safe spaces for displaced youth to rebuild their lives.
5. *Countering Ideological Extremism and Radicalization:* Addressing the ideological drivers of Boko Haram's insurgency is a key aspect of long-term peacebuilding in these regions. This involves promoting educational programs that focus on peacebuilding, tolerance, and conflict resolution, while also offering alternative narratives that challenge extremist ideologies. De-radicalization programs should be expanded to help reintegrate former insurgents into society, providing vocational training and psychological support to counter the ideological and psychological impacts of extremism.
6. *Community Engagement and Awareness Campaigns:* Local communities must be engaged in countering both drug abuse and insurgency. Awareness campaigns that highlight the dangers of drug use and the manipulation tactics of insurgent groups can empower community members to protect their youth from falling into these traps. Religious and community leaders should be mobilized to promote positive values and resilience against extremist ideologies. Collaboration with local leaders can foster a collective sense of responsibility in safeguarding the future of young people.
7. *Enhanced Monitoring and Intervention for Drug Supply Networks:* Given the significant role of illicit drug supply in perpetuating both addiction and insurgency, the government must enhance efforts to disrupt drug trafficking networks. This can be done through

improved border control, intelligence gathering, and cooperation between local law enforcement agencies and international organizations to prevent the flow of drugs into conflict zones.

By addressing these multi-dimensional challenges through comprehensive and coordinated efforts, it is possible to disrupt the vicious cycle of drug abuse and violent insurgency in Adamawa and Borno States. Through a combination of socio-economic interventions, family support, mental health services, and counter-extremism programs, a more stable, secure, and resilient future can be achieved for these regions.

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APPENDIX I

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW (KII)

S / N	Key Informants	Address and Locations of Informants	Areas of Specialization	Date of Interview	Emails and Phone Numbers
1.	Name Withheld	Madagali LGA (Adamawa State).	Repentant Boko Haram	Monday, 7 th Oct, 2024	Restricted
2.	Name Withheld	Madagali LGA (Adamawa State)	Community Leader	Monday 7 th October, 2024	Restricted
3.	Name Withheld	Mubi North LGA (Adamawa State)	Residents that lived with BH during when they occupied the town of Mubi North	Thursday, 10 th October, 2024	Restricted
4.	Name Withheld	Mubi North LGA (Adamawa State)	NGO staff	Thursday, 10 th October, 2024	Restricted
5.	Name Withheld	Abadam LGA (BH Rehabilitation Center, Maiduguri) (Borno state).	Repentant Boko Haram	Friday 3 rd October, 2024	Restricted
6.	Name Withheld	Askira/Uba LGA (BH Rehabilitation Center, Maiduguri) (Borno State).	Repentant Boko Haram	Friday 3 rd October, 2024	Restricted
7.	Name Withheld	Mobbar LGA (BH Rehabilitation Center, Maiduguri) (Borno State).	Repentant Boko Haram	Friday 3 rd October, 2024	Restricted
8.	Name Withheld	Gwoza LGA (BH Rehabilitation Center, Maiduguri) (Borno State).	Repentant Boko Haram	Friday 3 rd October, 2024	Restricted
9.	Name Withheld	Maiduguri Metropolitan (BH Rehabilitation Center, Maiduguri) (Borno State). (Borno State).	Repentant Boko Haram	Friday 3 rd October, 2024	Restricted
10.	Name Withheld	Maiduguri Metropolitan (BH Rehabilitation Center, Maiduguri) (Borno State). (Borno State).	Community Leader	Friday 3 rd October, 2024	Restricted
11.	Name Withheld	Maiduguri Metropolitan (BH Rehabilitation Center, Maiduguri) (Borno State). (Borno State).	Repentant Boko Haram	Friday 3 rd October, 2024	Restricted
12.	Name Withheld	Mobbar LGA (Borno State)	Senior military officer	Wednesday 25 th September, 2024	Restricted

1 3 .	Name Witheld	Konduga LGA (Borfno State)	Junior ,ilitary personnel	Thursday 4 th October, 2024	Restricted
1 4 .	Name Witheld	Gwoza LGA (Borno State)	Junior ,ilitary personnel	Monday 14 th October, 2024	Restricted
1 5 .	Name Witheld	Maiduguri (Borno State)	Senior Lecturer	Wednesday 2 nd October, 2024	Restricted
1 6 .	Name Witheld	Askira/Uba LGA (Borno State).	Community Leader	Thursday 17 October, 2024	Restricted
1 7 .	Name Witheld	Mobbar LGA (Borno State)	Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF)	Thursday 26 th September, 2024	Restricted
1 8 .	Name Witheld	Maiduguri (Borno State).	Senior officer of the Criminal Investigation Department, NPF Hqtrs	Monday 30 th September, 2024	Restricted
1 9 .	Name Witheld	Maiduguri (Borno State).	Senior Staff of the NLEA	Monday 30 th September, 2024	Restricted
2 0 .	Name Witheld	Konduga LGA (Borno State).	IDP	Thursday 4 th October, 2024	Restricted

Source: Research Survey, 2024

APPENDIX II

SAMPLE RESPONDENTS FOR FGD CLUSTER 1 (ADAMAWA STATE): RESCUED CIVILIAN CAPTIVES AND PEOPLE THAT WERE TRAPPED AND LIVED UNDER BOKO HARAM

Source: Research Survey, 2024

S/N	Participants	Location for FGD Adamawa State	Category of FGD Participants	Date and Time for FGD	Emails and Phone Numbers
1.	Name Withheld	Mubi North	Landlord	Wed. 9 th Oct, 2024	Restricted
2.	Name Withheld	Mubi North	Cobbler	Wed. 9 th Oct, 2024	Restricted
3.	Name Withheld	Mubi North	Health Worker	Wed. 9 th Oct, 2024	Restricted
4.	Name Withheld	Mubi North	Farmer	Wed. 9 th Oct, 2024	Restricted
5.	Name Withheld	Mubi North	Teacher	Wed. 9 th Oct, 2024	Restricted
6.	Name Withheld	Mubi North	Commercial Bus Driver	Wed. 9 th Oct, 2024	Restricted
7.	Name Withheld	Mubi North	Businessman	Wed. 9 th Oct, 2024	Restricted
8	Name Withheld	Mubi North	Civil Servant	Wed. 9 th Oct, 2024	Restricted
9.	Name Withheld	Mubi North	Student	Wed. 9 th Oct, 2024	Restricted
10.	Name Withheld	Mubi North	Commercial \Tricycle Rider (Keke NAPEP Rider)	Wed. 9 th Oct, 2024	Restricted
Total			10		

APPENDIX III
SAMPLE RESPONDENTS FOR FGD CLUSTER 2 (BORNO STATE):
REPENTANT BOKO HARAM

S/N	Participants	Location for FGD	Category of FGD Participant	Date for FGD	Emails And Phone Numbers
1.	Name Withheld	Maiduguri	Repentant Boko Haram	Friday 4 th October, 2024	Restricted
2.	Name Withheld	Maiduguri	Repentant Boko Haram	Friday 4 th October, 2024	Restricted

3.	Name Witheld	Maiduguri	Repentant Boko Haram	Friday 4 th October, 2024	Restricted
4.	Name Witheld	Maiduguri	Repentant Boko Haram	7/12/2017 3:30 PM	Restricted
5.	Name Witheld	Maiduguri	Repentant Boko Haram	Friday 4 th October, 2024	Restricted
6.	Name Witheld	Maiduguri	Repentant Boko Haram	Friday 4 th October, 2024	Restricted
7.	Name Witheld	Maiduguri	Repentant Boko Haram	Friday 4 th October, 2024	Restricted
8.	Name Witheld	Maiduguri	Repentant Boko Haram	Friday 4 th October, 2024	Restricted
9.	Name Witheld	Maiduguri	Repentant Boko Haram	Friday 4 th October, 2024	Restricted
10.	Name Witheld	Maiduguri	Repentant Boko Haram	Friday 4 th October, 2024	Restricted
Total			10		

Source: Research Survey, 2024

APPENDIX IV

SAMPLE RESPONDENTS FOR FGD CLUSTER 3 (BORNO STATE): INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSON'S (IDP's)

S/ N	Particip ants	Location for FGD	Category of FGD ParticipantS	Date and Time for FGD	Emails and Phone Numbers
1.	Name Witheld	Abadam	Male (Aged)	Thursday 26 th September, 2024	Restricted
2.	Name Witheld	Abadam	Male (Youth)	Thursday 26 th September, 2024	Restricted
3.	Name Witheld	Abadam	Male (Aged)	Thursday 26 th September, 2024	Restricted
4.	Name Witheld	Abadam	Male (Youth)	Thursday 26 th September, 2024	Restricted
5.	Name Witheld	Abadam	Female (Youth)	Thursday 26 th September, 2024	Restricted
6.	Name Witheld	Abadam	Female (Youth)	Thursday 26 th September, 2024	Restricted
7.	Name Witheld	Abadam	Female (Aged)	Thursday 26 th September, 2024	Restricted
8.	Name Witheld	Abadam	Female (Aged)	Thursday 26 th September, 2024	Restricted
9	Name Witheld	Abadam	Male (Youth)	Thursday 26 th September, 2024	
1 0	Name Witheld	Abadam	Female (Aged)	Thursday 26 th September, 2024	
Total			10		

Source: Research Survey, 2024

