

National Security and Sustainable Development in Plateau State, Nigeria.**Aigbe, Diyeli Segun**

Department of Criminology and Security Studies, Caleb University, Imota, Lagos State, Nigeria.

Adi, Isaac

Department of Criminology and Security Studies, Caleb University, Imota, Lagos State, Nigeria.

Odunusi, Kolawole Olu

Department of Political Science & International Relations, Caleb University Imota Lagos, Nigeria.

Ajomale Funmileyi Festus

Department of Criminology and Security Studies, Caleb University, Imota, Lagos State, Nigeria.

Ibok, Anwanauyi Henry,

Nobel International Business University, Accra, Ghana.

Correspondence: ahibok@gmail.com

Abstract

Sustainable development, defined by the United Nations as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, has gained global momentum as a cornerstone of economic, social, and environmental progress. Simultaneously, nationwide security encompasses a spectrum of challenges, including military stability, economic resilience, and social harmony, all of which are fundamental to sustainable development. Nigeria has been experiencing security challenges that threaten to undermine sustainable development in the country. Despite its abundant oil wealth, there has been an unimaginable level of poverty, unemployment, inequality, poor infrastructure, lack of social amenities and insignificant development. In light of this, the paper seeks to evaluate the impact of national security challenges on sustainable development in Nigeria with a particular reference to Plateau State. The study adopted the qualitative and descriptive methods of data analysis. Findings from the paper reveal, among others, that the security challenges in Plateau State, Nigeria have long historical antecedents, and the crises and conflicts in the State are the consequences of several years of neglect of youths and the vulnerable by successive governments in the State. The paper therefore recommends amongst others the Plateau State government should strengthening community-based security architecture, prioritize job creation through agro-industrial investments, microenterprise support, and vocational training, rebuilding Infrastructure and Public Services in Conflict-Affected Areas, leveraging technology and data for early warning and response, and establish a Plateau State Peace and Development Commission to coordinate the state's response to insecurity and development recovery.

Keywords: National security, Sustainable development, Descriptive method, Plateau State, Nigeria.

Introduction

National security can mean the safety of a country against threats such as terrorism, war and kidnapping. The government has to secure its citizens, economy and the aspects of the nation. Indeed, the security of a nation is ultimately to be found in the security of the citizens. Governments all over the world make the security of lives and property within their territorial area of coverage a priority agenda, just as it makes the survival, continuity, defence and security of the state a primary goal (Oko, 2022). National Security is one of the chief responsibilities of the government of any nation. It also involves developing useful partnerships and alliances with other nations to enhance sustainable development. This is attested to by Gurama (2010), who sees security as the backbone of any society and is tied to its social, political, economic and cultural growth. Negligence of this vital ingredient of sustainable development has led to all manner of social ills, including violent crimes such as insurgency, armed robbery, ritual killings, child trafficking, and kidnapping, among others. Apart from the regular security outfits such as the Army and the Police, several agencies have been established to complement these bodies. These include the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDEA) and several others. Despite the existence of these agencies and the huge financial allocation to them, achieving the goals of national security remains a huge task (Oko, 2022).

The interdependent relationship between national security and sustainable economic development cannot be undermined. Any meaningful sustainable development in an economy cannot be sustained without the security of the nation. It is the financial resources generated due to the sustainable development in a nation that is being used to sustain the security of a nation. Indeed, national security and sustainable development are inseparable.

However, Nigeria is faced with a lot of security and developmental challenges such as a high rate of poverty, income inequality, unemployment, conflict, and violence among others. As of 2022, Nigeria's poverty incidence remains high at 40% with a population of about 218 million people compared to what it was in 1960 when the poverty incidence was 15% with a lesser population of about 44 million people (National Bureau of Statistics, 2023). Nigeria's fertility rate, which is 4.99 births per woman in 2024 remains among the highest in the world. Nigeria suffers from low investments in children, low labour productivity, low female labour force participation, high unemployment, high under-employment and high poverty rate (World Bank, 2020).

Nigeria with a staggering population of about 230 million people, is the largest populated country in Africa and the sixth-largest in the world (World Bank, 2023). Though a nation blessed with an abundance of natural and human resources, the country is among the nations with the largest number of poor people in the world (United Nations report, 2023). The poverty rate in Nigeria as of 2023 was 46 percent, representing 104 million poor Nigerians living below the poverty line during this period. This staggering figure positions Nigeria as the world's second-largest population living in poverty, after India (World Bank, 2023). Despite having the largest economy and population in Africa, the Nigerian economy offers limited opportunities to most of its citizens.

Specifically, Plateau State in the North Central geo-political zone of Nigeria is among the States in the country experiencing insecurity (Gwaza, Dakum & Bogoro, 2015). The internal contradictions within Plateau State, as demonstrated by the influences of both colonialism and the period under military rule, laid the foundation for current security challenges in the State. While the Plateau State government has put in place measures to tackle some of the human security problems in the state, poverty is on the increase. In Nigeria, the national average poverty gap index is 12.9 percent. Plateau State's poverty gap index of 17.8 per cent is above the national average. Similarly, the headcount ratio defines the proportion of the population living in households where the value of per capita total consumption expenditure is below or equal to the poverty line. In Nigeria, the national average poverty headcount is 40.1 percent. Plateau State's poverty headcount ratio of 55.1 percent is equally higher than the national average implying that the level of poverty in the State is high.

Literature review

Conceptual review

i. National security

National Security can be seen as protecting the interest of the dominant group/elite, which controls the security apparatus of the state (Mou, 2016). It has also been seen as protecting the strategic interest and way of life of the people in a given society, by defending the territorial integrity, cultural values and norms of the society (Mou, 2015). Finally, National Security can also be seen as being about development (McNamara, 1968; Mou, 2016). Technically speaking, Dan Mou (2016, 2017) concluded that National Security can be seen in three basic ways: (a) the Captured National Security System; (b) the Autonomous National Security System; and (c) the Relatively Autonomous National Security System.

Babangida (2012) on the other hand views national security “as the physical protection and defence of our citizens and our territorial integrity and also the promotion of the economic wellbeing and prosperity of Nigerians in a safe and secure environment that promotes the attainment of our national interests and those of our foreign partners.”

National security must be broadened to accommodate economic, environmental and demographic issues as they are important in understanding the new causes of intra-state conflicts. Other dangers that serve as threats to national security include pollution, poverty, crime, and underdevelopment, all of which fuel conflicts (Onigbinde, 2008).

ii. Sustainable development

Sustainable development is a multidimensional concept that is conceptualized in many ways. However, the widely used one that is consensually stressed by the Brundtland Commission (1987) and the United Nations World Committee on Environment and Development 1992. Both defined Sustainable Development as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable development as described by Umezulike and Okoye (2013) is a state of having well-balanced, steady and effective use of human, material and capital resources for total economic independence and development of a nation. They, however, maintained that sustainable development can only be achieved if government and economic policymakers are transparent in their dealings. Moreover, Bagudu (2013) maintained that sustainable development is the development geared towards the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. This contains two key concepts namely the concepts of needs in particular, the essential needs of the world’s poor, to which overriding priority should be given and the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment’s ability to meet the present and future needs.

Empirical literature

Jamish (2024) explores the dynamic interplay between nationwide security and sustainable development, emphasizing how sustainability disclosure acts as a bridge fostering mutual reinforcement between the two. By examining theoretical frameworks, case studies, and policy implications, this paper underscores the critical importance of integrating security considerations into sustainability agendas and vice versa.

Okoh (2022) investigated the possible role religious leaders could play in addressing national security for sustainable development in Nigeria. The historical-descriptive method was employed in this enterprise. It concludes with the fact that any attempt to effect societal change with regard to national security without involving Religious Leaders is tantamount to ignoring one of the crucial catalysts for that process. The paper recommends that religious leaders, by virtue of their grassroots support and coverage, should co-operate with governmental agencies to stem the tide of insecurity of lives and properties in the country. Until and unless this is done, the goal of sustainable development of the country will be difficult, if not impossible, to achieve

Olukemi, Boluwaji and Abiodun (2019) examined how sustainable development and national security can be improved through office technology and management. The survey research design was adopted while the population consisted of stakeholders in office technology and management in Ekiti State. A sample size of 100 respondents was used. Two research questions guided the study, and two hypotheses were formulated for the study. The research instrument used was the questionnaire, and it was validated by experts in the field. The mean and standard deviation were used for the analysis of the data, and chi-square was used for the hypotheses formulated. The study revealed that sustainable development and national security could be improved through office technology and management if adequate attention is given to the maintenance of standards and funding of the programme. It was therefore recommended that government at various levels and other stakeholders in education should give the needed attention to adequate funding of the programme to achieve better result.

Gubak and Bulus (2018) analyzed and ascertains the impact of national security challenges on sustainable development in Nigeria with a particular focus on the Niger Delta region and the responses by successive governments in tackling them. Findings from the paper reveal, among others, that the security challenges in Nigeria have long historical antecedence, and the crises and conflicts in the Niger Delta region are the consequences of several years of exploitation, neglect and deliberate abandonment of the region, which is the economic base of the nation, by successive governments and oil multinationals. The paper, therefore, concludes and recommends, amongst others, the formulation and effective implementation of policies capable of addressing the root causes of insecurity in Nigeria and that more efforts should be made by the federal government and oil companies to improve the quality of human lives in the region and the nation at large. Qualitative and descriptive methods of data analysis were adopted for

this study. The paper used secondary data, from which conclusions and recommendations were derived.

Nwangwu and Ononogbu (2014) assessed the implication of militancy on the actualisation of Vision 20:2020. Using the Radical Approach to National Security, the paper concludes that the answer to the national security question, sustainable economic development and Vision 20:2020 is hinged on the welfare and security of the people. The paper recommends the formulation and effective implementation of populist policies and programmes capable of addressing the underlying causes of insurgency in Nigeria. These would invariably place Nigeria on the path of sustainable economic development, thereby boosting its prospects of actualising the Vision 20:2020.

Ogege (2013) examined insecurity and sustainable development in Nigeria with special emphasis on the Boko Haram insurgency. One of the most vicious onslaughts on the Nigerian state is the terror unleashed by Jamaata AhlisSunna Liddaawati - an Islamic sect popularly known as Boko Haram. This sectarian group have adopted several approaches, including bombing strategic places; that were hitherto not vulnerable to security threats, and waging murderous campaigns against individuals and institutions leading to the wanton destruction of lives and property. Using the Frustration-Aggression theoretical framework, the paper argues rather succinctly that terrorism is caused by frustrated expectations and a state of hopelessness and is sustained mainly by bad governance, corruption and a pervasively weak institutional framework. With the upsurge of Boko Haram insurgence and the inability of the security agencies to guarantee security, economic life is ground to a halt with dire consequences for society. This atmosphere of insecurity impedes the attainment of sustainable development. To create an enabling environment for sustainable development, the paper suggests, among others, that the Nigerian state should put in place good governance and viable anti-terrorism measures and build strong legitimate institutions that can adequately curb the menace of corruption and at the same time respond proactively to the challenge of terrorism in Nigeria.

Origin of spates of insecurity in Plateau State

It is well established that the peoples of the Plateau have existed in their present abode from time immemorial with distinct identification. Archaeologists have traced the origin of the

people to the ancient Nok culture civilisation that thrived between 200BC and 1000AD, (Plateau Indigenous Development Association Network (PIDAN), 2010). However, colonialism as a historical epoch set in motion various fundamental changes in Nigeria, and Plateau in particular, in the sense that these autochthonous peoples had their lives dislodged with the advent of colonialism.

Therefore, in the case of Plateau State, it was the balkanisation of the 'native pagans' among the neighbouring Hausa/Fulani Emirates that ultimately fit into that design. The implications of these on the security situation in Plateau State are multifaceted, particularly as it laid the foundation for present-day ethno-religious acrimony and animosity in Plateau State. Through the instrumentality of colonialism, the Hausa/Fulani oligarchs exercised influence over the Plateau area that they could not before the coming of the colonialists. That brief period of influence allowed them to not only influence administrative arrangements but to also tie the socio-economic and politico-cultural conduct of the area to Hausa/Fulani's sphere of influence in northern Nigeria. It is on this basis that a consideration of the clash of security conceptions on the Plateau is critical in the sense that Plateau State must not be taken in isolation, but thoughtful reflection must be made on challenges to human security in other areas surrounding the State, especially in northern Nigeria and the Sahel region in general (Gwaza, Dakum & Bogoro, 2015).

Furthermore, the military misadventure into politics in Nigeria has had a significant impact on the Plateau conflict, not only in its finding a solution to the already complex problem engineered by colonialism but also in further aggravating and complicating the situation. Professor Elaigwu observes that 'if they (military) had come in as political physicians, they had been transformed into patients by Nigeria's murky political terrain'. This transformation of the military from political physician to political patient was not necessarily conducted by Nigeria's murky political terrain alone but also by the military themselves as they worsened the already precarious condition of the patient, rendering her vegetative. Therefore, the military's solution to the indigene/settler contestation in Jos Plateau was to create Jos North Local Government perceivably to assuage the grievances of the Muslim Hausa/Fulani group (Owuamanam, 2009). This move further aggrieves the already tense situation, which eventually erupted into violent conflict with the appointment of Alhaji Aminu Mato on April 12th, 1994 as Caretaker Chairman of Jos North Local Government Council by the federal military government. The overriding objective for the 1991 local government reorganisations was the concerted manipulation of the

distribution and configuration of the new localities to favour the administration's key members, advisers, supporters, or lobbyists,(Suberu, 2001).

The internal contradictions within Plateau State, as demonstrated by the influences of both colonialism and the period under military rule, laid the foundation for current security challenges in the State. While the Plateau State government has put in place measures to tackle some of the human security problems in the State, the high rate of poverty and unemployment among youths in the State is alarming, and these have contributed to tension and insecurity in the State (Gwaza, Dakum & Bogoro, 2015).

Another origin of security in Plateau State is evident from the involvement of foreigners in the Plateau conflicts. But again, the security threats in neighbouring countries, especially countries in the Sahel region tend to push people out in search of means of survival to places like Plateau State. The mass movements of foreigners into Plateau State have strained the resource capacity of the State and unduly interfered with her economy and, ultimately, the desire to meet the human security needs of the people. This perspective is limited in the sense that it fails to consider the involvement of these 'non-Nigerians' in other parts of northern Nigeria where they have killed, maimed, destroyed and razed down communities with impunity. Secondly, their targets and victims are not necessarily only southern Christians but even Hausa-Fulani Christians, and in the case of Plateau conflicts, they kill and destroy indiscriminately (Gwaza,Dakum & Bogoro, 2015).

Challenges to National Security in Plateau State, Nigeria

A fundamental challenge to national security in Plateau State is the deep-rooted ethno-religious divide. Tensions between indigenous ethnic groups, such as the Berom, Anaguta, and Afizere and the Hausa-Fulani community, who are often viewed as settlers, have persisted for decades. These tensions are fueled by competition over political power, access to land, economic opportunities, and cultural identity. Violent outbreaks have become a tragic norm. Between 2001 and 2023, Plateau State experienced over 500 incidents of communal violence, resulting in the deaths of more than 4,000 individuals (Higazi, 2011; Morgen, 2023). The 2001, 2008, and 2010 Jos crises were among the deadliest, with each wave of violence deepening mistrust and disrupting fragile inter-communal relations. The inability of government institutions to address historical grievances and ensure justice has allowed such violence to persist.

Another growing challenge is the conflict between sedentary farmers and nomadic herders. Climate change and desertification in northern Nigeria have pushed Fulani herders southward in search of grazing lands. This migration has brought them into direct conflict with local

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farmers, especially in rural areas of Riyom, Barkin Ladi, and Bokkos. These clashes have not only caused widespread destruction of lives and farmlands but also displaced thousands. As of 2023, over 200,000 people in Plateau State were internally displaced due to violence related to land disputes and resource competition (UNHCR, 2023). These conflicts have evolved from economic disputes into identity-based hostilities, further complicating resolution efforts.

More so, the state's security infrastructure is ill-equipped to address these multifaceted threats. Many rural communities in Plateau State suffer from minimal or no security presence. Law enforcement is often reactive rather than preventive, and emergency response is typically slow. This inadequacy is exacerbated by the proliferation of vigilante groups, some of which operate with impunity and have been implicated in human rights violations. Weak institutional capacity is further reflected in the justice system. Less than 10% of reported violent crimes between 2005 and 2020 led to successful convictions (Adebanwi & Obadare, 2011). This low conviction rate reflects poor investigative capacity, corruption, and political interference.

A major factor fueling violence in Plateau State is the widespread availability of small arms and light weapons. Nigeria is estimated to have more than 6.2 million illicit weapons in circulation, with Plateau State recognized as one of the most affected regions (Onuoha, 2011). These weapons flow through porous borders and conflict-prone states, empowering non-state actors, militias, and criminal gangs. The use of high-grade weapons by community militias has increased the lethality of intercommunal clashes. Armed groups now rival the state in firepower, making conflict resolution more difficult and dangerous. This arms proliferation also undermines state sovereignty and public safety.

Ethnic and religious tensions are often exacerbated by political actors who manipulate identity divisions for electoral gains. This politicization of ethnicity has weakened public institutions, eroded trust in government, and inflamed communal tensions. Local governance in Plateau State has often failed to address community grievances or provide equitable development. This neglect fosters resentment and creates a vacuum that non-state actors exploit. Politicians have been accused of sponsoring youth groups and militias for political purposes, thus directly contributing to insecurity (Best, 2007).

Furthermore, a large percentage of Plateau State's youth population is unemployed or underemployed, making them vulnerable to recruitment by violent groups. According to World Bank estimates, youth unemployment in northern Nigeria averages over 30%, and Plateau State follows this trend (World Bank, 2020). Without access to education, training, or jobs, many young people are drawn into ethnic militias, cult groups, or criminal gangs. These groups often promise economic gain, identity affirmation, and power—appealing propositions for marginalized youth.

Effect of insecurity on sustainable development in Plateau State, Nigeria

Agriculture is the mainstay of Plateau State's economy, employing over 70% of the population. However, insecurity—particularly from farmer-herder conflicts and bandit attacks—has drastically disrupted farming activities. According to World Bank (2023) estimates, only 15% of arable land was cultivated in some rural areas in 2022, compared to over 60% before 2010. Farmers abandon their fields due to fear of attacks, leading to reduced food output, loss of income, and increasing food insecurity. The 2018 attacks in Barkin Ladi alone led to the destruction of over 1,000 hectares of farmland and the displacement of thousands of farmers

(SB Morgen, 2023). These disruptions not only affect individual livelihoods but also the state's capacity to achieve SDG 2: Zero Hunger.

Widespread violence has forced thousands of residents to flee their homes. As of 2023, more than 200,000 people had been displaced across various local government areas, often living in overcrowded and poorly resourced Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps (UNHCR, 2023). The displacement of communities disrupts education, health care, and social services. Children in IDP camps often lack access to formal schooling, contributing to rising illiteracy rates. Women and children, who form the bulk of displaced populations, are particularly vulnerable to exploitation and health challenges. This undermines progress toward SDG 4 (quality education) and SDG 3 (good health and well-being).

Insecurity in Plateau State has deterred both local and foreign investment. Once known for its tourism potential—such as Jos Wildlife Park and the scenic Shere Hills—the state has seen a sharp decline in tourism and hospitality activities due to security fears. Hotels, resorts, and small businesses have shut down, resulting in job losses and revenue decline. Furthermore, private investors are unwilling to commit resources to a region where infrastructure is regularly destroyed and law enforcement is weak. The state's GDP growth has stagnated, and unemployment has worsened, particularly among youth. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2022), Plateau's unemployment rate increased from 27.5% in 2018 to over 33% in 2022, a trend closely linked to violence and economic uncertainty.

Prolonged insecurity erodes public confidence in the government's ability to protect its citizens. In Plateau State, repeated cycles of violence have often gone unpunished, fostering a culture of impunity. Less than 10% of violent crime cases result in convictions due to poor investigative capacity, corruption, and political interference (Adebanwi & Obadare, 2011). This failure undermines the rule of law, weakens governance institutions, and stalls development planning. Local governments in conflict areas often operate under capacity due to threats to staff and infrastructure. The insecurity also diverts state resources from development to emergency response and security operations, affecting fiscal sustainability.

The insecurity-fueled displacement and competition for land also accelerate environmental degradation. In IDP camps and overstretched host communities, pressure on land and forest resources increases, leading to deforestation, soil erosion, and water pollution. Additionally, open grazing in restricted areas contributes to land degradation, while unregulated mining—especially in conflict zones—exacerbates environmental damage. These environmental stresses compromise Plateau State's ability to achieve SDG 13 (climate action) and SDG 15 (life on land), limiting long-term resilience to both man-made and natural shocks.

Sustainable development thrives on social harmony and collective action. However, years of identity-based violence in Plateau State have torn apart communities. Inter-communal mistrust, vigilante justice, and revenge attacks hinder dialogue and reconciliation. In places like Jos North and Bassa LGAs, Christian and Muslim communities live in segregated neighbourhoods, affecting social integration and economic interdependence (Best, 2007). Without deliberate peacebuilding, such fragmentation will continue to obstruct collaboration necessary for sustainable development goals, especially SDG 16 (peace, justice, and strong institutions).

Effect of National Security on Sustainable Development in Plateau State, Nigeria

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National security is the foundation upon which sustainable development thrives. In regions where security is guaranteed, economic activities flourish, infrastructure develops, and social cohesion is strengthened. Plateau State, Nigeria, known for its ethno-religious diversity and history of communal tensions, has experienced both the devastating effects of insecurity and the transformative benefits of improved security measures. We examine the positive impact of national security on sustainable development in Plateau State, drawing on empirical evidence to underscore how peace and security can drive inclusive and lasting progress.

When national security improves, economic activities naturally rebound. In Plateau State, agricultural production, the backbone of the local economy, has increased in relatively peaceful zones such as Mangu and Pankshin. Farmers who had previously abandoned their lands due to attacks have returned, leading to a boost in food production and local trade (Adesoji & Alao, 2020). Additionally, businesses and investors are more willing to operate in stable environments. Improved security in Jos, the state capital, has encouraged private sector growth in the hospitality, construction, and small-scale manufacturing industries.

Security enables education. With reduced violence, schools have reopened, and enrollment has increased. According to UNICEF (2022), primary school enrollment in Plateau State rose by 12% between 2020 and 2022, especially in areas where peace initiatives had been successful. Security also promotes social integration. The return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and interfaith peace campaigns have helped rebuild fractured communities. Programs led by NGOs and religious leaders have facilitated community reconciliation and youth reintegration, enhancing social capital and cooperation (UN Women, 2022).

With increased security, environmental protection efforts have gained traction. Peaceful conditions have allowed for the implementation of reforestation and climate-smart agricultural practices, particularly in rural parts of Plateau State such as Bokkos and Langtang (Ikejemba & Van Wyk, 2019). Also, the reduction in competition for scarce resources like grazing land and water—previously a trigger for conflict—has enabled better land-use planning and natural resource management.

Conclusions and recommendations

This study examines the effect of national security on sustainable development in Plateau State, Nigeria. National security plays a foundational role in achieving sustainable development in the state. Without peace and protection, social services, economic growth, and environmental conservation are all threatened. Sustainable development in Plateau is directly tied to the effectiveness of national security policies and their implementation at the local, State and National levels. However, the failure of the Plateau State government to tackle the problems of ethno-religious conflicts, farmer-herder clashes, proliferation of small arms and light weapons, inadequate security infrastructure, weak Intelligence gathering and coordination,

political interference and poor governance, youth unemployment and poverty, among others have gone a long way to intensify the issues of insecurity in Plateau State.

In the light of these, the study recommended that the following:

Firstly, strengthening community-based security architecture. Localising security initiatives is essential in bridging the trust gap between communities and state actors. Many rural and conflict-prone areas in Plateau State are underserved by conventional security forces. Establishing community policing and vigilante collaboration—with clear legal frameworks and oversight—can enable early warning systems and faster responses to threats (Aliyu, 2022). Moreover, empowering local peace committees and traditional institutions can foster conflict resolution rooted in cultural understanding. These mechanisms, when linked to state security operations, can reduce the frequency of retaliatory attacks that have characterised conflicts in areas such as Riyom and Barkin Ladi.

Secondly, promoting inclusive economic development. Poverty and unemployment, especially among youth, are both consequences and drivers of insecurity. According to the NBS (2022), Plateau State's youth unemployment rate exceeds 33%, significantly above the national average. To address this, development plans must prioritise job creation through agro-industrial investments, microenterprise support, and vocational training. Revitalising the agricultural value chain—through mechanisation, access to finance, and climate-smart practices—will encourage displaced farmers to return to production. These interventions should be targeted in high-risk LGAs, where food insecurity and land-based tensions are most pronounced.

Thirdly, rebuilding Infrastructure and Public Services in Conflict-Affected Areas. Insecurity has damaged schools, hospitals, roads, and water systems in several parts of Plateau State. Reconstruction and rehabilitation of public infrastructure are vital for rebuilding trust in government and facilitating social reintegration. The state government should prioritise education and healthcare access in IDP resettlement areas, ensuring that displaced populations are not permanently excluded from essential services. Additionally, infrastructure projects can be designed to create jobs, stimulate local economies, and restore inter-communal connectivity.

Furthermore, leveraging technology and data for early warning and response. Modern conflict prevention relies heavily on timely data and real-time communication. The Plateau State government, with support from federal agencies and development partners, should invest in digital platforms for conflict monitoring, geo-mapping of displacement, and early warning alerts.

Deploying drones, satellite imagery, and mobile apps for rural surveillance can help identify threats before they escalate. Community volunteers can also use SMS-based systems to report suspicious movements or attacks, allowing for quicker responses by law enforcement.

Finally, establishing a Plateau State Peace and Development Commission. To coordinate the state's response to insecurity and development recovery, a dedicated body—such as a Peace and Development Commission—should be created. This commission would be responsible for integrating peace building with socio-economic planning, managing donor funds transparently, and ensuring long-term coordination between stakeholders. Such a body should include representation from government ministries, security agencies, traditional leaders, youth groups, women's organizations, and development partners.

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