

## Issues in a Terror Mass Casualty Rescue Plan

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### ABSTRACT

Terrorism is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that poses significant challenges to global security, political stability, and social cohesion. It involves the use of threat of violence by non-state actors to instill fear, coerce governments, or influence public opinion in pursuit of ideological, political, or religious objectives. The impacts of terrorism extend beyond immediate physical harm, affecting economic development, human rights, and international relations. Understanding terrorism requires an interdisciplinary approach that integrates political science, sociology, psychology, and security studies. Effective counterterrorism strategies must therefore balance security measures with efforts to address underlying issues, promote social inclusion, and uphold the rule of law. It is a well-known fact that when terrorists carry out their attacks, there is the likelihood of severe and mass casualty of people which may include security personnel, health workers, and civilian population. These attacks could lead to the death, severe to minor injuries of people and as well as to the damage to public and private infrastructure necessary for the survival of people. The paper examines the root causes of terrorism, including political grievances, socio-economic inequalities, identity conflicts, and radicalization processes. It also looks at the evolving nature of terrorist strategies, media, and transnational networks.

**KEYWORDS:** *Terrorism, terrorists (non-state actors), mass casualty, bioterrorism or weapon of mass destruction (WMD), counterterrorism strategies, political instability, weak governance, corruption, crisis management, alternative financing mechanisms, human rights, transnational networks, international relations, social inclusion, technological advancements, radicalization.*

### INTRODUCTION

There are different types of terrorism, among which is bioterrorism which is the intentional release of biological agents (bacteria, viruses, or germs) to harm people and spread fear, carried out by terrorists to create outbreaks of infectious diseases that will cause mass casualties, terror, societal disruption, or economic loss. There are two major tactics employed by terrorists, these are: bombings and kidnappings – which have been on the increase since the past few decades [1, 2], as shown in Figures 1 and 2. The FBI estimates that 2,000 bombings occur every year in the United States. From 1972 to 1975, the total numbers of bombings increased by less than five percent, and while the amounts of damage increased by more than 200 percent, personal injuries rose by almost 100

percent, and deaths increased by 180 percent. Bomb threats are in thousands annually, while the loss of police man-hours to investigate these false alarms can be staggering. The man-hour loss figure due to bomb threats in New York City alone is estimated at billion dollars a year [3]. Most times, terrorists strike unexpectedly, civilians and law enforcement agents are neither prepared nor trained or equipped to combat an invisible enemy whose stated objective is disruption, destruction, and mass death. Showing that terrorism has taken a dangerous dimension coupled with the introduction of suicide bombing. The different types of terrorism include international terrorism, domestic terrorism, national terrorism, political terrorism, state terrorism (or official

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terrorism), bioterrorism, agro terrorism, eco terrorism, narcoterrorism, nuclear terrorism, religious terrorism, and suicide terrorism, among others [1, 4], as shown in Figures 3 and 4. Terrorists are individuals who are motivated by revenge or monetary gain through extortion, either by than political, ideological, religious or other beliefs. Terrorists make use of biological agents of terror since they are hard to detect and can be spread via the air, water, or food. The possibility of a successful bioterrorist attack is not high due to the technical difficulties and constraints involved [5]. Bioterrorism (BT) has claimed few lives when compared with the more traditional forms of terrorism using guns and explosives. Urban or densely populated areas will be at greater risk of a bioterrorism attack. Bioterrorism is the intentional use of viruses, bacteria, fungi, toxins, or other germs (or biological products that may be engineered as a result of biotechnology) to produce civil unrest, disruption, disease, disabilities and death to achieve political or social objectives. It is regarded as a low probability risk. Bioterrorism can cause mass casualties, epidemic illness, healthcare worker illness, environmental contamination and legal issues. It is known to occur in one or two scenarios i.e. overt and covert. It is carried out by terrorists (also called non-state actors).

## HISTORY

The word “terrorism” originated from the reign of terror instigated by Maxmilien Robespierre in 1793 following the French revolution [6]. Since then, terrorism has spread to different parts of the world like Palestine, Ireland, the United States, and some other places. The history of terrorism in Nigeria is encapsulated in the history of Boko Haram, which means “westernization is sacrilege” in Hausa language. Book Haram is founded by Mohammed Yusuf in 2002. The Nigerian government classified it as a terror group after many years of terrorizing atrocities in Northern Nigeria. The Islamic name of Boko Haram is “Jama at ahl all sunshine lil Da wall jihad” which means people committed to the prophets teaching and jihad. This group founded by Mohammed Yusuf was led by Abubakar Shekau from 2009 until his death in 2021 [7], although it splintered into other groups after Yusuf’s death and also in 2015 – the logo is as shown in Figure 5.

The initial purpose of this group was to “purify” Islam in northern Nigeria, while jihad is to be delayed until the group was strong enough to overthrow the Nigerian government. The group was formerly aligned with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant. The major brunt of this evil group is borne especially in the North East by both women and children alongside other targets. Since the insurgency started

in 2009, the group is well known for its brutality and has killed tens of thousands of people in frequent attacks against the police, armed forces and civilians, resulting in the deaths of more than 300,000 children and displaced 2.3 million from their homes and was rated the world’s deadliest terror group according to the Global Terrorism Index in 2010 [8] – which has greatly contributed to regional food crises and famines.

In July 2013, Boko Haram was officially labelled a terrorist organization by the United Kingdom, and as well by the United States in November 2013. In May 2014, the UN Security Council added the group to its al-Qaeda sanction list. The organizational structure of Boko Haram is loose, the cells are given spiritual guidance by Abubakar Shekau. The group in 2015 pledged allegiance to the Islamic State in Iraq and the Leviant (ISIL) and took the name Islamic State (or State’s) West African Province (ISWAP), also known as Islamic State in West Africa (or ISWA) – the following year saw the group split, with one faction retaining that name and the other reverting back to the original appellation, as shown in Figure 6. In Nigeria, Boko Haram is by far the deadliest and most active terrorist group in north of the country. After Afghanistan, Nigeria is said to record the second highest number of people who died in terrorist attacks worldwide. Certain deaths are also attributed to Fulani extremists, while further violent outcomes point to conflicts among other herdsmen, farmers, and ethnic groups [9] – due to the destruction of farmlands by the animals of the nomadic Fulanis. To this end, the Nigerian government has drafted a National Livestock Transformation Plan that aims to curb the movement of cattle by encouraging sedentary livestock – as a crusade to rid the world of terrorism, as opposed to group of leaders who believe in maximum military response. It is observed that many African states in recent times have fallen into the mainstream of terrorist threats and terrorism. Other terrorist groups in Africa include Al-Shabaab group based in Somalia, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) based in Algeria and Northern Mali, and Ansar al-Sharia based in Tunisia and Libya who are resisting tyrannical rule, and while some are perpetuating terrorism to actualize their whims and caprices have started to attract international terrorist groups who are eager to extend their tentacles to areas not yet covered by them [9]. After the 2001 September 11<sup>th</sup> Terrorist bombing in New York USA, the United Nation Security Council passed resolution 1373 requiring all member states to make terrorism a crime domestically in each of its member nation.

In Nigeria, there was no counterterrorism law before 2004, but the National Assembly just inserted

sections 15 and 46 into the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) bill. Section 15 of the EFCC bill was to address the offenses of terrorism and section 46 defined the act of terrorism itself. The Niger Delta militant groups by 2006 were becoming restive and violent. Attacks on the oil pipelines by the Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND) had been recorded, with threats to further attack and destroy all oil facilities until all their demands for justice in their struggle against poverty, marginalization, under employment, and environmental degradation were met. The drafted counter terrorism bill presented by the then cabinet of president Obasanjo before the national assembly for consideration in 2005 was not passed, because the law makers didn't see the militant threats as terrorism but as violent agitation for justice and equity. Between 2003-2010, terrorism had become full blown that has engulfed the whole North East and North West, with increase in the frequency in the killing of Christians and the burning down of churches. Boko Haram insurgency had emerged and continued to escalate in sophistication, such that from late 2010 to mid-2011, it has successfully carried out over fifty-five attacks, by which time, the lawmakers began to understand that terrorism has no boundaries but must be combated.

Bringing to the fore was the case of a young Nigerian man, Umar Abdulmutallab who on December 25 2009 (Christmas day) aboard Delta/NW airline with 274 passengers was not successful in his suicide bomb attempt, which compelled Nigeria to enact an anti-terrorism legislation to punish terrorists. As at 2011, Nigeria's legal system has no law specifically designed to punish terrorism. The legal framework for the prevention of terrorism in Nigeria is essentially embodied in two enactments: Terrorism Prevention Act (TPA) 2011 and also Terrorism (Prevention) (Amendment) Act 2013 – the two laws collectively referenced to as Terrorism (Prevention) Act 2011 (as amended) or TPA 2011 (as amended), as the context so admits [9, 10].

### HOME GROWN VIOLENT EXTREMISM

According to Ogunlana, home grown violent extremism is not the only threat Nigeria will face in the near future, that there is need to be prepared to tackle both domestic and regional terrorist organizations. He therefore opined that:

“The lead agencies in charge of our security in Nigeria were primarily organized, trained, educated and equipped for conventional crime fighting, and these capabilities remained essentially to deter and fight conventional crimes. The senior leadership of law enforcement agencies is yet to grab exactly how

to handle the issue of terrorism because they have not been trained to handle terrorism issue. Therefore, the Federal Government must ensure that our law enforcement agencies need to rebalance conventional capabilities and the capacity of our police to conduct long-duration counter-terrorism operations. We must train, equip and foster the development of civil society and of course, effective governance is essential.” From the view expressed above, we can infer that the law enforcement agencies for now:

- Lack the requisite knowledge to handle terrorism
- Lack adequate training
- Lack suitable equipment for the new dimension terrorism has assumed, but he opined that the law enforcement agencies need to:
  - Create or improve career paths
  - Provide incentives and advance opportunities for security personnel with critical counter-terrorism related skills and knowledge
  - Create demands that force personnel management systems to transform in order to help us identify, access, educate, train, develop and retain adequate numbers of the people we need to wage a protracted war against terrorism
  - Design strong counter-terrorism policies i. e., by the presidency
  - The presidency to act on all necessary/vital intelligence reports decisively and promptly
  - Law enforcement agencies and the intelligence communities as constituted in the Nigerian Joint Intelligence Board (JIB) to be ready to share information as most of them place more emphasis on secrecy than on effectiveness.

To also counter terrorism, Ogunlana proffered the following goals:

1. Keep the most dangerous weapons out of the hands of terrorists
2. Recognize that it is impossible to prevent all attacks
3. Protect those facilities in Nigeria that, if struck, would cause catastrophic damage
4. Prevent radicalization by helping to deal with grievances that are spawning terrorists [11].

### IN INDIA

In India, some of the challenges facing the fight against terrorism (which also applies to Nigeria and some other countries), are hampered by several factors which include [12-14]:

1. Insufficient understanding and lack of cooperation from several segments of the population like the intelligentsia and the media.

Terrorism should not be treated as a law and order problem but a war, since a terrorist is not an ordinary law breaker but an enemy soldier of a particular heinous kind.

2. The fight against terrorism faces two major obstacles viz: (i) intellectual, and (ii) operational. In the case of intellectual, a large segment of the intelligentsia, especially the media, is engaged in an academic cause and effect debate over terrorism, saying that terrorism has no cause – of which many writers disagree with this notion. Operationally, the fight against terrorism is hampered by the interference of interest groups in the media and politicians, coupled as well with the poor understanding of the nature of terrorism as war rather than law enforcement.
3. Another great challenge is the support offered by neighboring countries e.g., Pakistan’s support against India, and while Niger Republic gives support to those terrorists in Nigeria and from large number of local supporters.
4. The global and transnational nature of terrorism: Terrorist organizations often operate across borders, making it difficult for any single country to combat them effectively. While differences in legal systems, intelligence sharing, and political interests hinder coordinated international action.
5. Another significant obstacle is ideological radicalization: In this case, terrorist groups exploit religious, political, or social grievances to recruit individuals, especially youth. Poverty, unemployment, lack of education, and social alienation make people more vulnerable to extremist ideologies. Countering such mindsets is far more difficult than using military force.
6. Technological advancements have as well strengthened terrorist networks, as internet and social media are used for propaganda, recruitment, fundraising, and planning attacks. Encrypted communication platforms make surveillance and intelligence gathering more challenging for security agencies.
7. Another challenge also lies in balancing security and human rights. Strong counter-terrorism measures may sometimes lead to violations of civil liberties, causing public resentment and loss of trust in the state. This can indirectly aid terrorist narratives.
8. Political instability and weak governance in certain regions can provide safe havens for terrorist groups. Corruption, poor law enforcement, and lack of state control allow terrorism to blossom or flourish.

Other challenges envisaged in combating terrorism in Presidential Decision Directive 62 (PDD 62), titled “Combating Terrorism” and signed by Bill Clinton, former US President on May 22, 1998, established a comprehensive, systematic approach to fight terrorism as a top national security priority include the following [15, 16]:

1. Terrorist groups may choose asymmetrical attacks on our domestic and international vulnerabilities, through the use of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and/or cyber warfare;
2. Terrorist groups possess the knowledge, skills and abilities to use WMD;
3. Former “Cold War” civil defense programmes have been downsized or dismantled and cities are not prepared to deal with a large-scale event;
4. Improvements in technology will make it difficult for law enforcement agencies to detect and prevent terrorist acts, and
5. The nation’s critical infrastructure relies heavily on the use of computers, which are prone to cyber-attacks.

#### ROOT CAUSES OF TERRORISM

Terrorism does not arise from a single cause. It is agreed by most researchers that it is caused as a result of **interacting political, social, economic, psychological, and ideological factors**, shaped by specific local and global contexts [17-27].

1. Political Grievances and State Repression: A major significant driver of terrorism is **political exclusion**. This is where groups feel denied participation in political processes or subjected to repression may see violence as the only available means of change. Some of the precursors are:
  - Authoritarian governance
  - Human rights abuses
  - Lack of political representation
  - Foreign occupation or military intervention

Therefore, when peaceful channels for dissent are blocked, extremist groups can exploit these grievances to justify violence.

2. Socioeconomic Inequality and Marginalization: Poverty alone does not cause terrorism, but economic inequality and social exclusion or feeling disenfranchised can create the fertile or breeding ground for radicalization or drive individuals to extremism.
  - High unemployment (especially youth unemployment), as goes the saying that “an idle hand is the devil’s workshop”
  - Unequal access to education and services
  - Regional or ethnic economic disparities

All of which can foster resentment, particularly when combined with perceived injustice or corruption. As stated by Aristotle, “poverty is the parent of revolution and crime.” Poverty can lead to frustration, bitterness, hate, and anger in a society with very high level of corruption and government incompetence. This could eventually lead to a revolt against the government and the system. This was the underlying cause of insurgent activities in Nigeria in the Niger Delta by groups like the Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF), and the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND). The poverty rates in Brazil is 9%, Iran is 2%, while it is 71% in Nigeria according to the World Bank overtaking India globally – with more than half of the people living under \$3 per day.

3. Ideological and religious extremism: Ideology often provides and used as a moral justification for terrorist violence.
  - Religious fundamentalism.
  - Political extremism (far-right, far-left, ethno-nationalist).
  - Absolutist worldviews that divide society into “us vs. them.”

However, it is stressed by most scholars that religion itself is not the cause, but rather its manipulation for political or social objectives.

4. Identity, Ethnicity, and Nationalism: Terrorism can emerge from identity-based conflicts, especially where ethnic or religious groups feel threatened.
  - Ethno-nationalist struggles
  - Secessionist movements
  - Cultural suppression

Violence is sometimes framed as a defense of identity, heritage, or homeland.

5. Psychological and Social Factors: At the individual level, terrorism can be linked to psychological and social dynamics, though there is no single “terrorist personality.” Some of the key factors include:
  - Desire for belonging or recognition
  - Personal experiences of humiliation or trauma
  - Influence of charismatic leaders
  - Group dynamics and peer pressure

Radicalization is often a gradual social process, not a sudden transformation.

6. Weak States and Conflict Zones: Areas where state authority is weak or contested, terrorism thrives there, leading to:
  - Civil wars
  - Failed or fragile states
  - Poor law enforcement and border control

These types of environments would allow terrorist organizations to recruit, train, and operate with little or limited resistance.

7. Globalization and Media Influence: Globalization has amplified terrorism’s reach and impact. This has resulted to:
  - Rapid spread of extremist propaganda online
  - Transnational networks and funding
  - Media coverage that magnifies fear

The use of the internet and social media have become key tools for recruitment and radicalization.

From the afore said, effective counterterrorism strategies would require not only security measures, but also political reform, social inclusion, and conflict resolution.

Other causes include [9]:

- Access to arms and ammunitions smuggled across porous borders especially in the northern parts of Nigeria.
- Foreign and local Aids: Terrorist groups receive huge financial supports from Islamic sympathizers all over the world as recorded by Calderwood (2014). Moreover, B. M. Nasarawa (personal communication, August 2<sup>0th</sup>, 2014) and R. Ukeaku (personal communication, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2013), both agreed that Boko Haram terrorist cell groups in Nigeria are receiving foreign aids. They also receive aids locally as exemplified by the leaders of the Kwara State chapter of Miyetti Allah, which included their president, Idris Abubakar, and others arrested for involvement in kidnapping and sponsorship of armed bandit groups, as reported by the Nation Newspaper [28].
- Governmental infiltration: A number of informants who are Boko Haram sympathizers have infiltrated the decision-making bodies at different levels of Nigerian government especially in northern Nigeria.
- Eminent Domain: In this case, land confiscation without adequate compensation have often led to communal disputes. Insurgency and terrorist activities have, many times, sprung up in Nigeria over ownership and use of land, occupied by two separate ethnic groups occupying the same geographical space of land.

### COMBATING TERRORISM (ANTI-TERRORISM MECHANISMS)

A look at the United States’ Department of Homeland Security (DHS), created in November 2002 and as established by executive order in October 2001. To help define homeland security, and in addition to

looking at the National Strategy – the policy areas for which DHS is responsible, as DHS is the principal federal agency with homeland security duties. On June 6, 2002, then president George W. Bush, in an address to the nation, outlined the four essential missions of the newly proposed DHS: (1) border and transportation security, (2) emergency preparedness and response, (3) coping with the threat of weapons of mass destruction, and (4) intelligence gathering and analysis designed to create an integrated intelligence picture.

The current strategic goals of DHS based on the department's strategic plan published in 2008, include (1) counterterrorism (including border security, enforcement of immigration laws, and procedures); (2) protection from weapons of mass destruction; (3) protection of critical infrastructures and key resources (including partnerships with private-sector providers, ensuring government continuity of operations during emergencies, and protection of air, maritime, and surface transportation sectors); and (4) ensuring emergency preparedness through strengthening response and recovery. Therefore, the functional categorization of the policy areas that fall within the sphere of homeland security are:

1. Policies directed at mitigating the threat of terrorism and large-scale criminality (of the type that threatens social and economic stability), including:
  - Counterterrorism strategy
  - Intelligence sharing and coordination
  - Policing strategies
  - Countering homegrown radicalization
2. Policies directed at enhancing security measures, including:
  - Border security and immigration enforcement
  - Transportation security (air, maritime, and surface)
  - Critical infrastructure protection
3. Policies directed at management of the immediate and long-term effects of acts of terrorism, natural disasters, and/or public health emergencies, including:
  - Emergency and disaster preparedness and response
  - Public health
  - Development of political, social, and economic resiliency

These areas include a great deal of overlap, with all requiring the sharing of information, inter- and intra-agency cooperation, and interfacing with the public. These policy areas may be viewed to constitute the field of homeland security in the United States,

similar amalgamation could appear as disparate policy domains in the rest of the world. Broadly speaking, counterterrorism, security, and crisis management may not be seen as part of the same discipline overseas. There are long-standing cooperative relationships between intelligence agencies and police or between police and fire and emergency medical services since many challenges require a multidisciplinary response, as no single agency can do it all alone [29].

Furthermore, N. Morag also posited the following anti-terrorism strategies:

- Greater emphasis (and resources) on intelligence gathering (intelligence-led policing) – including surveillance, interrogation, data processing and international pooling of data.
- Greater willingness to apply economic, diplomatic, if necessary, military pressure on state supporters of terrorism in order to create a new reality in which supporting terrorism is no longer a cost-effective strategy for rogue states.
- Greater efforts to limit terrorists' freedom of movement through better documentation of the population, increased presence of security personnel, ad hoc check points in areas where intelligence agencies suspect terrorist activity, increased control over border areas and ports of entry.
- Greater cooperation between law enforcement and intelligence agencies in the sharing of information and the delineation of jurisdiction.
- Greater cooperation and efforts in drying up the financing of terrorism through international cooperation and stricter banking laws.
- Stricter legal penalties for those carrying out, or facilitating terrorist operations.
- The creation of a common understanding among like-minded states regarding who the terrorist organizations are, so that they cannot easily transfer their planning and financing operations to more liberal or sympathetic states.
- Educating the population in terms of coping with the reality of terrorism as well as internalizing of safety precautions (such as reporting suspicious activity or unattended items).
- Coordinating emergency services to cope with a post attack scenario (including preparing hospitals for coping with mass casualties).
- Working towards reaching an understanding with the media so that the media will act responsibly and not foster panic, intensify the effect of a

terrorist attack or inadvertently justify the actions of terrorists.

- Implementing a continuous policy of targeted killing of terrorists designed to disrupt terrorists' activities and force other members of the terrorist organizations deeper underground.
- Community engagement: Build trust and partnerships with communities to prevent radicalization.
- Addressing root causes: Tackle socioeconomic and political grievances fueling extremism.

Moreover, the United States General Accounting Office (GAO) submits that the United States Government faces a myriad of challenges in determining and monitoring the nature and extent of terrorists' use of alternative financing mechanisms. They posit that terrorists use a variety of alternative financing mechanisms to earn, move, and store their assets based on common factors that make these mechanisms attractive to terrorists and criminal groups alike. Terrorists earn funds through highly profitable crimes involving commodities such as contraband cigarettes, counterfeiting goods and illicit drugs as well as using systems such as charitable organizations that collect large sums in donation from both witting and unwitting donors.

Terrorists move assets by using mechanisms that enable them to conceal or launder their assets through non-transparent trade or financial transactions such as the use of charities, informal banking system, bulk cash, and commodities that may serve as forms of currency such as precious stones and metals. In order to store assets, terrorists may use similar commodities since they are likely to maintain value over a long time and are easy to buy and sell outside the formal banking system. The GAO admits that the true extent of terrorists' use of alternative financing mechanisms is unknown because of the criminal nature of the activity and lack of systematic data collection and analysis. In the monitoring of terrorists use of alternative financing mechanisms, the GAO noted that the United States Government faces a number of significant challenges such as:

1. Accessibility to terrorist networks
2. Adaptability to terrorist
3. Competing demands or priorities within the U. S. Government, and
4. Federal and State officials' efforts to use and enforce applicable laws and regulations.

Regardless of these, the GAO recommended the following measures:

1. That the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), in consultation with relevant

US government agencies should systematically collect and analyze information involving terrorist's use of alternative financing mechanism.

2. Appropriate steps should be taken to:
  - A. Strengthen the leadership structure responsible for strategy development and implementation by establishing a mechanism that would have the ability to marshal resources that the strategy's vision is achieved, resolve dispute between agencies and ensure accountability for strategy implementation;
  - B. Link the strategy to periodic assessment of threats and risks, which would provide a basis for ensuring that clear priorities are established and focused on the areas of greatest need; and
  - C. Establish accountability mechanisms.

Other countries can therefore adopt or adapt the GAO's recommendations to counter the challenges faced in combating terrorism [30].

Other challenges also identified is that of non-state actors. Non-state actor is the umbrella term that refers to a number of armed groups such as political terrorists, narco-traffickers, para military insurgents and international organized criminal organizations. Bolkom and Katzman reported on a number of challenges associated with the use of military aviation in combating terrorists and non-state actors directly. These challenges are:

1. Operational challenges
2. Mindset challenges, and
3. Cost challenges

**Operational Challenges:** Compared to the armed forces of a nation state, non-state actors are easy to defeat in direct combat because they typically lack the equipment, training, and discipline that define a military service. Engaging in direct combat with non-state actors is the core operational challenge. Non-state actors also do not wear uniforms. They generally strive to integrate themselves into the local civilian population which makes target identification very challenging. The study by RAND summed up the operational challenges thus:

"Ferretting out individuals or small groups of terrorists, positively identifying them, and engaging them without harming nearby civilians is an extremely demanding task..."

**Mindset Challenges:** Combating non-state actors successfully, will require training, tactics, doctrine, political strategies, and potentially rules of engagement, than are required for conventional military warfare. All these will require a different politico-military mindset for senior decision makers.

In combating non-state actors, civilians may need to be engaged at an unprecedented level.

**Cost Challenges:** In comparison to training, equipping and employing a military force, non-state actors employ weapons and methods that are inexpensive. However, the cost to defend against non-state actors or to combat them, can be very high. To combat non-state actors, Bolkom and Katzman identified the following aviation asset:

1. **Close Air Support (CAS):** This is a military aviation mission that is highly relevant to the non-state actor challenge. The Department of Defense (DOD) defines CAS as “air action by fixed- and rotary - wing aircraft against hostile targets that are in close proximity to friendly forces and that require detailed integration of each air mission with the fire and movement of those forces.” Many of the functions, inherent in CAS, such as tracking enemy forces, differentiating friendly forces from foes, quickly delivery weapons against moving targets, and closely controlling and coordinating air and ground forces to reduce the chances of fratricide or collateral damage, are applicable to air actions against non-state actors.
2. **Special Operation Force (SOF) Germane to Air Operation:** For example, Special Operation Forces (SOFs) in the United States are small military units with special training and equipment. They are given specialized training in foreign languages, psychological operations, advanced piloting skills and terminal air control. While specialized equipment includes, for example, MH-53J/M Pave Low helicopters and MC-130E/H combat Talon I/II aircraft. SOF can take both direct and indirect action against non-state actors. Direct SOF aviation-related action include collecting intelligence, clandestinely inserting forces in close proximity to non-state actors, rescuing SOF and other forces pursued by, or held by non-state actors.
3. **Aviation-Foreign Internal Defense (A-FID):** This is indirect action against non-state actors by Special Operation Forces. The indirect activity is advising friendly foreign government in foreign internal defense (FID). FID as defined by DOD is “participation by civilian and military agencies of a government or other designated organizations to free and protect its society from subversion and insurgency” [31, 32].

Fulga opines on the challenges in controlling terrorism that “our civilization is now facing a non-traditional enemy, a widespread network of terrorist organizations supported by state and non-state actors

and whose whereabouts are hard to pinpoint, benefiting from unaccountable financial resources, up-to-date weapons and communication systems, and particularly, a highly indoctrinated human potential able to make the ultimate sacrifice for the sake of punishing the infidels.” Noble R. K. (a former Interpol Secretary-General) states that the risk of international terror has not diminished, and that the main threats come from radical Islamic fundamentalist groups such as the Al-Qaeda and its subsidiaries. As at today, all the continents and regions of the world have been faced with devastating attacks, such that it is no exaggeration to say that truly terrorism has become a global issue [33].

According to Dolan in Fulga, the challenge is worth taking up, in as much the more as modern terrorism is polymorphous, seeking to use the advantages of modern civilization as tools for its very destruction. Dolan avers that the war on terror is an asymmetric challenge, in which traditional deterrence has failed. He is therefore in support of the experts who deem it necessary to establish a new matrix of intervention, which should provide for detecting, defining, monitoring and controlling asymmetric risk factors, while diminishing the emphasis on response, and focusing on productiveness. Facts have proved as affirmed by Fulga that the fight against organized crime and international terrorism requires an active collaboration within the international community by using all the political, economic, diplomatic, and military means, as well as legal framework, in keeping with international laws, as shown in Figure 7. Hence, the imperativeness for all security agencies in nation states to collaborate, share information and intelligence as well as strategize on how to effectively detect, define, monitor, and control the scourge of terrorism and other related crimes [33], as shown in Figure 8.

For instance, in Nigeria, the Boko Haram sect also known as Jama’tu Ahliss Sunnah Lidda’ await wal Jihad has continued to unleash terror and wreak havoc in some states of the country. There are evidences that the Boko Haram has collaborators in al-Shabab and al-Qaeda. This sect has sent some eight (8) people to Algeria in North Africa to learn how to make Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) which is being used in the country. It was reported that the State Security Service (SSS) smashed a bomb making factory in Suleja, prior to which it had arrested some Boko Haram terrorists in connection with the bombing of the United Nations House in Abuja – a pointer to the fact that terrorism poses a security challenge in the Nigerian State and attributable to a lot of factors [34].

As noted by Taslim Folarin, Nigeria does not have a comprehensive anti-terrorism law for this reason has failed to meet the requirements of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) established by the G7 summit in Paris in 1989. The FATF recommendations and requirements are to detect, prevent, and suppress the financing of terrorism and terrorist attacks. However, out of the task Force's nine (9) special recommendations, Nigeria was rated non-complaint in seven and partially compliant in only two which is a challenge in itself. The country only has a Bill for "An act to Provide for Measures to Combat Terrorism and for Related Matters, 2011 (HB.322)" & The Prevention of Terrorism Act 2011 (SB.335) captioned as a Bill for "An Act to make Provision for an About Offenses Related to Conduct, Carried Out or Purposes Connected with Terrorism" [35].

Tahir A. Ajobe has reported that a security source has blamed the nation's top security hierarchy for the failure of the anti-terrorism war. It claimed that "there is serious power-play among Nigeria's job security hierarchy and this has permeated the entire Nigeria Security Institutions." The show of power play has led to inter-agency rivalries, such that security outfits no longer collaborate in the area of intelligence sharing [35]. While Ayoade Dayo, has expressed worries about the ability of Nigeria Secrete Services cum the security agencies being able to tackle terrorism effectively [36]. There is also the issue of the many "almajiris" in the North who can be easily recruited and used for the dirty job. Be that as it may, some pertinent questions asked are:

1. Who are their sponsors?
2. Who are their financiers? And
3. Who are those supporting them financially and morally in their religious circle?

Nigeria is known to have secured the convictions of hundreds for terrorism linked to Boko Haram and ISWAP. Presented are the following cases [37-42]:

1. 2024-2026 Mass Trials where 386 were convicted of terrorism charges from 508 cases. They were sentenced to 5 years life imprisonment by the Abuja Federal High Court special session in April 2026. In a notable case, Hon. Babagana Habeeb, 2015 Borno senatorial candidate was sentenced for 10 years for selling petroleum products to Boko Haram.
2. 2025 Mass Trial: In July 2025, at the Kainji Military Detention Facility: 125 were convicted, 85 for terrorism financing, 22 for ICC-related crimes, and the rest for terrorism.
3. July 2025 Terrorism Financing in Kainji, Niger State: 44 Boko Haram members jailed 10-30 years with hard labor for financing terrorism.

#### 4. UAE Convictions of Nigerian Boko Haram Financiers

Abu Dhabi Federal Court of Appeal, April 2019

- Abdurrahman Musa Ado – sentenced 10 years for collecting money in Dubai, sending to Boko Haram.
- Bashir Ali Yusuf – 10 years for transferring funds from Dubai to Nigeria.
- Ibrahim Ali Alhassan – 10 years for financing Boko Haram through Dubai transfers.
- Muhammad Ibrahim Isah – 10 years for collecting terrorist funds in Dubai.
- Salihu Yusuf Adamu – Life imprisonment for collecting terrorist funds in Dubai.
- Surajo Abubakar Muhammad – Life imprisonment.

The court found them guilty of "setting up a Boko Haram cell in the UAE to raise funds and material assistance."

Other Notable Convictions include:

- Hamatu Modu: 40 years (10 years per count, concurrent) for supplying food/info to Boko Haram.
- Isa Ali: 10 years for providing clothing/logistics to terrorists.
- Abdullahi Ali: 20 years for supplying fuel to ISWAP.
- Auwal Bello: 10 years for terrorism financing – handled approximately N750,000 during naira redesign, paid N20,000 tax to Boko Haram.
- Shehu Bukar: 20 years for cattle rustling/supplying livestock to support operations.

#### Sanctioned Financiers

March 2024 FG list identified key individuals:

- Abdulkarim Ohida – ISWAP senior commander, suspected in Owo church + Kuje prison attacks.
- Fatima Ovayioza Ishaq – ISWAP financial courier, disbursed funds to widows of fighters.
- 996 financiers uncovered by NFIU 2020-2021, plus 424 associates.

The president of Arewa Youth Consultative Forum (AYCF), Shettima Yerima, has noted that the inability to tackle the incessant bomb blasts and Boko Haram insurgency in the North by the government is a serious issue and beyond the way people are looking at it, and as well as an age-long neglect by the northern elites. He also asserted that the people carrying out the bombings have no central command,

no control, and cannot be found anywhere or located – which in itself is a problem. He argued that Boko Haram and the broader insurgency were not spontaneous phenomena but rather the result of long-standing poverty cum high rate of illiteracy, deprivation, and poor governance in Northern Nigeria. However, he submits that those behind the bombing are the rich and influential people in the Nigerian State who must be brought to book. He urged the Federal Government to address the issue of unemployment and hunger [43]. Furthermore, it has been observed and noted by Nwaokolo Ameachi that “events have demonstrated that groups using terrorist’s methods remain active in Africa. They have sometimes been able to move easily across poorly guarded borders, taking advantage of governments’ weak control over their territories and succeeded in recruiting among disaffected populations” – this broader analysis underscores that inadequate border control fuels transnational terrorism. Nwaokolo A. therefore advocates that counter-terrorism measures should be pursued from a human rights perspective. This will help to tackle its root causes directly, including asymmetrical power relations, inequality, rising poverty, and illiteracy among others. The elders and youth leaders in communities where insurgencies are active should be involved genuinely to tackle the problem and to equally agitate for a political, economic, and social campaign to meet the basic needs and legitimate grievances of ordinary people [44].

The underlisted recommendations are proffered by the Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU) of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) as per how to curb the negative effects of terrorism [45]:

1. Serious attempts must be made to solve regional and international conflicts peacefully, so that terrorist organizations will be denied the opportunity of exploiting the suffering of the people under unjust conditions, thereby spreading their misguided ideology.
2. Programmes should be developed and implemented which should aim at promoting multicultural and inter-religious dialogue, develop educational systems and other sources of socialization in order to strengthen the values of tolerance, pluralism, and human co-existence at the grassroots level. There is need to provide basic knowledge of civilization and to raise public and mass awareness of the dangers of terrorism and extremism.
3. Terrorism can be countered by economic sanctions on the affected countries with the aim of disrupting the financial networks of the terrorist organizations.
4. The salary or real wage system should be checked at least to a reasonable extent since terrorist organizations are rich to the extent of recruiting and training the unemployed as well as the working class who are not well paid.
5. There should be genuine reform in economic and political sphere of the country.
6. The war against terrorism must be made broader and more sophisticated.
7. The greatest weapons of war on terrorism is the institutionalization of integrated conflict management system that would eliminate the precondition of terrorist acts and extol human dignity.
8. States (countries) should emphasize on greater protection and respect for economic, social, and cultural rights through greater equitable development and distribution of resources.
9. Integrated conflict management system should be from the bedrock of the global counter terrorism efforts.
10. Economic and diplomatic initiatives should be welcomed in solving cases of terrorism of any kind.
11. Provision should be to “catch conflict young syndrome” which will bring the parties in conflict to the negotiating table at the early stage before the conflict escalates into violence which will eventually lead to act of terrorism. The integrated conflict management model is basically going to help African countries.
12. Good governance should be encouraged at the Federal, State, and Local Government levels as this will go a long way in the socio-economic well-being of the entire populace.
13. Fundamental human rights, fair play and equity in justice to all and sundry will go a long way in building world peace.
14. The use of dialogue, mediation, and negotiation as a feature of integrated conflict management approaches should be practically put into practice.
15. Industrial strike action of any kind should not be allowed by the federal, state and local governments, because terrorists (such as Boko Haram Sect) may capitalize on this to win more souls.
16. Intelligence effort in information gathering should be employed in dealing with the Boko Haram sect

and not military action by the Armed Forces. A lot of innocent civilians were killed by both the Army and the Boko Haram sect during their targeted attacks.

17. The influx of aliens into the country must be put to check immediately. A lot of people (migrants) from other African countries troop into Nigeria without necessary papers (passports) which is a reverse case in other ECOWAS countries. This should be monitored and controlled by Nigeria Immigration Services and other related agencies.
18. The Nigerian border lands should be well secured since most weapons are transported through such borders. Examples include: (1) The West Border Land – Kwara State land border with Republic de Benin through places like Ilesa, Baruba, Gwanara, Okuta and Yashikura district all in Baruteen Local Government of Kwara State; Lagos-Ogun State border land with Republic de Benin through places like Sango Otta, Idi Iroko and Seme border; (2) The East Border land which include Borno (Maiduguri), Yobe State Border land with Cameroon and Chad; (3) The North Border land; Sokoto State Border land with Niger Republic.
19. Nigeria border lands (routes) are to be under high security watch since terrorism (extremism) and Boko Haram sects now use the walls of Africa as recruitment and training grounds. As a result of this, terrorists now use such porous routes for smuggling their weapons into the country.
20. If critically looked into, crisis in Nigeria are being perpetrated by migrants from neighboring countries like Chad, Niger, Benin Republic, Camerouns and others who were majorly sponsored to cause confusion and disorderliness. Hence, a lot of migrants who managed to obtain Nigerian citizenship certificates are now employed into the labor force.

There is the need to note that investors care about crime levels both in terms of direct and indirect losses: physical injury and the safety of both local and expatriate staff and facilities; the unpredictability of violent crimes and communal crises; and the impact of corruption. The safety of people and their assets form a major concern for foreign businesses and accordingly a former US ambassador to Nigeria, John Campbell remarked that “US firms will only invest in Nigeria if the physical security of their personnel and property is assured” [46].

### MASS CASUALTY RESCUE PLAN

First and foremost, a Mass Rescue Operation (MRO) is defined in emergency planning (especially

maritime contexts) as a situation where a large number of people require immediate rescue and normal local resources are insufficient. The International Maritime Rescue Federation (IMRF) guidance aligns with the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue (IAMSAR) Manual [47].

A comprehensive overview of mass casualty rescue plans that can be adopted across large-scale emergencies (e.g., natural disasters, terrorism incidents, transport accidents, or other mass casualty events) would include:

#### A. Mass Rescue Operations (MRO) Framework Key Planning Components

1. Risk Assessment and Preparedness
  - Identify possible mass-casualty scenarios (e.g., ship sinking, plane crash, flooding).
  - Conduct ongoing risk and capability assessments.
  - Ensure continuous review of plans and identification of capability gaps [47].
2. Clear Command and Control Structures
  - Establish strategic, tactical, and operational command roles.
  - Define responsibilities across agencies (search & rescue, police, fire, health) [47].
3. Coordination and Communication
  - Develop interoperable communication systems.
  - Pre-designate landing/safe zones and communication channels.
  - Public messaging protocols to manage information and avoid panic [47].
4. Resource Planning
  - Identify expected and potential assets (ships, aircraft, volunteers).
  - Pre-arranged funding and logistics support [47].
5. Triage and Survivor welfare
  - Immediate triage at the scene based on severity.
  - Care and accommodation plans for survivors [47].
6. Training and Exercises
  - Conduct multi-agency drills to test and improve plan readiness.
  - After-Action Reviews to incorporate lessons learned [47].

#### B. Mass Evacuation Plans – General Emergency Contexts

Mass evacuation planning aims to move large groups from harm’s way efficiently and safely, whether due to terrorism, floods, earthquakes, or other disasters [48].

**ISO 22315 – Societal security: Mass evacuation – Guidelines for planning.** This international standard

outlines the planning of mass evacuation operations, including:

- Planning the public and implementing early warning systems
- Decision-making triggers for evacuation
- Analyzing evacuee movement and shelter requirements
- Public warning systems and evacuation route planning [48].

### Core Elements of an evacuation Plan

1. Evacuation Routes and Assembly Points
  - Multiple clearly marked escape routes with pre-assigned assembly or shelter sites [49].
2. Communication Systems
  - Alarm systems, public alerts, and reliable messaging to the public [50].
3. Training and Exercises
  - Regular drills to ensure readiness among responders and the public [51].
4. Special Needs and Inclusivity
  - Plans for vulnerable populations (children, elderly, disabled).
  - Support systems such as translators and communication for non-native speakers [52].

### CONCLUSION

Terrorism remains a complex global challenge rooted in political, social, and ideological factors. While it aims to create fear and instability, it ultimately undermines human security, economic development, and social cohesion. Effective responses must go beyond military action to include prevention, international cooperation, protection of human rights, and addressing the underlying causes that allow extremism to grow. Long-term solutions will require education, economic opportunity, political inclusion, and good governance. It is often said that “security is everybody’s business” meaning to say that security remains a shared responsibility. We all need to be vigilant or security conscious and report any suspicious character to law enforcement agencies. Terrorism cum other crimes remain a scourge to be eliminated, since they pose as threats to the corporate existence of the country and development of any nation. All security agencies should collaborate with one another and share intelligence information, to foster a multi-dimensional flow of intelligence. All hands must therefore be on deck to fight against terrorists and other forms of crimes. More information on Joint Approaches to Preparedness, Problems and Issues in a Terror Mass Casualty Rescue Plan can be obtained in the books in [53-62] and the following related journals:

*Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism*

*Society for Terrorism Research Journal*

*Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict*

*International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence*

*International Journal of Cyber Warfare and Terrorism*

*Journal of Terrorism and Defence Studies (JTDS)*

*Pakistan Journal of Terrorism Research (PJTR)*

*Indonesian Journal of Counter Terrorism and National Security*

*Journal of Terrorism and Radicalization Studies*

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**Figure 1. Terrorism**

**Source:**

<https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism>



**Figure 2. Chibok schoolgirls kidnapping**

**Source:**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chibok\\_schoolgirls\\_kidnapping](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chibok_schoolgirls_kidnapping)



**Figure 5. Boko Haram logo**

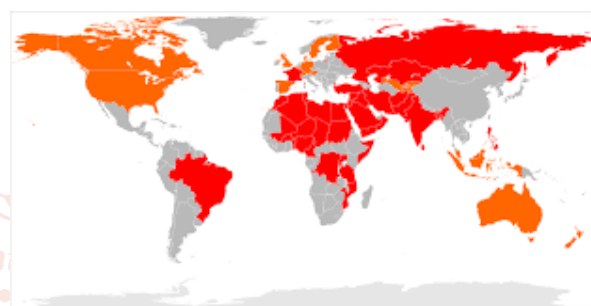
**Source:**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/?title=File:Boko\\_Haram\\_logo\\_\(2002-15\).png&redirect=no](https://en.wikipedia.org/?title=File:Boko_Haram_logo_(2002-15).png&redirect=no)



**Figure 3. Boko Haram**

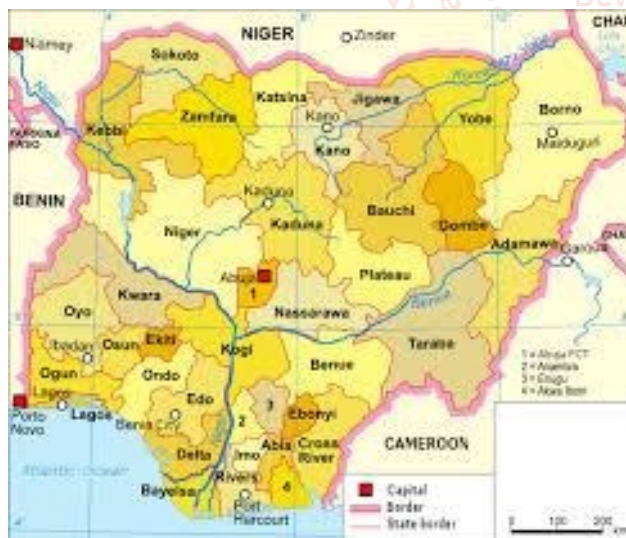
**Source:** [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boko\\_Haram](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boko_Haram)



**Figure 6. Terrorist incidents linked to the Islamic State**

**Source:**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_terrorist\\_incidents\\_linked\\_to\\_the\\_Islamic\\_State](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_terrorist_incidents_linked_to_the_Islamic_State)



**Figure 4. Religious violence in Nigeria**

**Source:**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious\\_violence\\_in\\_Nigeria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_violence_in_Nigeria)



**Figure 7. War on terrorism**

**Source:**

[https://sco.wikipedia.org/wiki/War\\_on\\_Terror](https://sco.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_on_Terror)



**Figure 8. 2019 Sri Lanka Easter bombings**

**Source:**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2019\\_Sri\\_Lanka\\_Easter\\_bombings](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2019_Sri_Lanka_Easter_bombings)