



The Nigerian Army and Community Development in Nigeria, 2010- 2022: An Examination of Socio- Economic Impact

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Abstract

Original Research Article

Community Development plays a vital role in the growth and development of nations across the globe and Africa. This explains why governments of several nations introduce different community development programmes to meet certain needs of their population. In Nigeria, a number of government agencies and institutions, as well as Non- Governmental Organisations have been involved in Community Development in Nigeria; notable among such is the Nigerian Military, which comprises of the Nigerian Army, the Nigerian Navy and the Nigerian Air Force. The Nigerian Military engages in Community Development across various locations of the country as part of its Civil- Military Cooperation mandate. This paper sets out to examine the role of the Nigerian Army in Community Development and its socio- economic impact in Nigeria from 2010 to 2022. The year 2010 when the Nigerian Army established the Department of Civil Military Affairs represents a good take-off, while 2022 marked a climax of the execution of Community Development Projects by the Nigerian Army in the country. The paper provides an overview of Civil- Military Cooperation with a focus on the socio-economic dimension prior to 2010 for a basic background to the period of study. This paper reveals that the aspect of Civil-Military Cooperation prior to 2010 manifests itself in the Nigerian Army's support to host communities, where their formations are located. Furthermore, the paper notes that the Nigerian Army contributes to human and national development through the establishment of hospitals, schools and provision of other humanitarian services like free medical care, which also benefits host communities. In addition, job opportunities are also provided for citizens in some of the ancillary services thereby improving the local populations' living standard. This paper also highlights some challenges militating against the role of the Nigerian Army in Community Development. On the whole, this paper concludes that community development projects undertaken by the Nigerian Army remains beneficial to host communities and plays an integral part in nation building.

Keywords: Community Development, Nigerian Army, Civil- Military Cooperation.

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Introduction

The military forms an integral part of any nation's growth, development and stability. Across the globe, in Africa and West Africa, nations invest heavily in their militaries to achieve laid down objectives as spelt out in their respective national constitutions or decrees as the case may be. Militaries are assigned responsibilities that fall within the interests of their respective nations. One of the major tasks of the military is defence of the territorial integrity of their respective nations, as well as to ward off attacks from adversaries or perceived enemies. Depending on the national objectives, financial capabilities, as well as interests, militaries can be structured to comprise diverse services or components. The United States of American military for instance is made up of the Army, Navy, Marine, and Air Force; that of Senegal is made up of the Army, Air Force, Navy and Gendarmerie. The Nigerian military is however made up of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force. All these components or services are saddled with the responsibility of defending the territorial integrity of their respective nations by suppressing any form of threats from the land, air and maritime areas, as specified in their respective national constitutions.

In the case of Nigeria, the Military has at various periods of the nation's history dominated the political, economic and social aspects of Nigeria's affairs. During the period of 1966 to 1979 and 1984 to 1999, the military was in the front line as a political instrument and a platform for governance. This was primarily as a result of the political culture and nature of activities in the country. In the time of political crisis, the military were always in the front line as a political instrument. Various political problems in Nigeria prior to 1999 often attracted the military intervention, which resulted to a total

take-over of administrative power and leadership in Nigeria. Following the emergence of the Fourth Republic in 1999, orchestrated by the return to democratic governance, the Nigerian Military returned to undertake its constitutional mandate and since then, there have been no form of military governance in the country. In addition to carrying out the constitutional responsibilities, the Nigerian Military often engages in various forms of community development projects, as part of its civil-military cooperation activities, which helps to enhance non-kinetic approaches in promoting national security in the country. It is against this backdrop that this paper sets out to analyse the Nigerian Army community development projects across various parts of the nation from 2010 to 2022, with focus on the socio-economic impact.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Military

According to Spišák, the military refers to a specialized organisation or force that is primarily responsible for the defence and security of a nation or state. It encompasses various aspects related to armed forces, including personnel, equipment, strategies, and tactics. The primary goals of a military include protecting a country's sovereignty, deterring potential threats, and, if necessary, engaging in combat to defend national interests.¹ Another scholar Alan describes the military as an organisation authorised by its greater society to use lethal force, usually including use of weapons, defending its country by combating actual or perceived threats.² Osabiya in his study describes the Military as an institution of the state assigned with the responsibility of defending the territorial integrity of the state to ward off aggression from other independent state.³

¹ J. Spišák, "Military Concepts – A Background for Future Capabilities" *Journal of Development Economics and Management*, Vol. 2, 119.

² M.M. Alan, "Military Intervention in Politics: A Third World Perspective",

<http://ssrn.com/abstract=2468243>

³ B. Osabiya, "Democratization and The Military in Nigeria: A case for an Enduring Civil-Military Relations in the Fourth Republic and Beyond", *Global Journal of Political Science and Administration*, Vol.3, No. 2, 45



Civil-Military Relations

Civil-military relations refer to the complex interactions and relationships between civilian authorities (usually represented by the government or elected officials) and the military forces within a society. This concept encompasses the dynamics, structures, and norms that guide how the civilian and military sectors interact, cooperate, and potentially influence each other. Samuel P. Huntington's *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* is where the framework was first introduced. Huntington describes Civil-Military Relations as an aspect of national security policy as well as the principal institutional component of the military security policy. According to Huntington, the fundamental issues of institutional policy are always present; they are continuously redefined but never resolved. The ordering of its civil-military relations consequently is basic to a nation's military security policy. The objective of this policy on the institutional level is to develop a system of civil-military relations, which will maximise military security at the least sacrifice of other social values. The achievement of this objective involves a complex balancing of power and attitudes among civilian and military groups. Nations which develop a properly balanced pattern of civil-military relations have a great advantage in search of security.⁴ Shaibu states that Civil-Military relations consists of two of interaction. The first is the interaction between the civilian leadership in government and the military, while the second is the interaction between the civil society and the military that serves as its protector. They are governed by the supremacy of the people, the constitution, legal foundation, processes, procedures, precedents and international norms.⁵

⁴ S. P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*, (London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1985), 2.

⁵ M.A. Shaibu, *Democratic Institutions and Nigerian Military Regimes 1966- 1999* (Kaduna: Nigerian Defence Academy Press, 2018,) 23.

⁶ A. Aboluwoye, "A Study of the Civil-Military Relations in Nigerian Fourth Republic"

Aboluwoye simply defines Civil-military relation as the totality of relations and interactions between the military personnel and the civilians in any political system.⁶ Finer distinguishes four types of civil-military relations. In the first category, he puts all cases whereas the officers exercise their legitimate and constitutional influence on the civilian government, like any other pressure group, to attain goals such as an increase of military budget; in the second, when the officers use the threat of some sanction or blackmail to reach similar ends; in the third, when they displace a civilian regime with another one because the former had failed to perform its duties towards them adequately; and in the fourth category, the officers decide to sweep away the civilian regime and take over the government themselves.⁷ In essence, Civil – military relations focuses on the role of the military and other security forces in a democracy.

Civil – Military Coordination

The UN Office for the Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs defines civil-military coordination as the essential dialogue and interaction between civilian and military actors in humanitarian emergencies necessary to protect and promote humanitarian principles, avoid competition and minimise inconsistency in the pursuit of common goals⁸. The UN Department of Peace Keeping Operation defines civil-military coordination as a system of interaction involving negotiation, de-confliction, mutual support, joint planning, exchange of information between military elements and humanitarian as well as development

International Journal of Politics and Good Governance Volume X, No. 10.1 Quarter I (2019):1.

⁷ S. Finer, *The Man on Horseback* [London: Pall Mall, 1962], 3.

⁸ Cedric de Coning & Henthorne, Stephen E., 'Civil-Military Coordination,' (UN Publication 2008), 6.



organizations and civilian community to achieve UN objectives.⁹

Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC)

Civil- Military Cooperation basically refers to the relationship that exists between a Field Commander and the host community of his unit or formation. According to Rehse, today's military operations take place in complex environments. The military, multiple civilian and humanitarian institutions have to face a challenging and broader range of issues. In various cases the military has been confronted with tasks that are not precisely military in nature. This has increased the importance of managing the civil-military interface, predominantly the one between the military and the humanitarian organisations. This process of management is frequently described as Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC).¹⁰ He went further to describe CIMIC as all kinds of interaction and level of contact between civilian organisations and the military.¹¹ The European Union (EU) on its part thus adds that civil-military cooperation is the coordination and cooperation...between military components of crisis management operations as well as civil role players, national population international and national non-governmental organizations and agencies that are external to the EU.¹² It must be stated that CIMIC is not only restricted to crisis scenarios as various environments may warrant the necessary interaction between the military and civil community. In essence, CIMIC refers to the collaborative efforts between civilian organizations and military

forces to address various challenges, enhance understanding, and achieve shared goals in complex environments, such as conflict zones, disaster-affected areas, or post-conflict reconstruction scenarios. CIMIC is driven by shared objectives that benefit both civilian and military stakeholders. These objectives may include humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, infrastructure development, capacity-building, conflict prevention, and post-conflict stabilisation.

Community Development

The United Nations, Economic and Social Council define Community Development as a broad and multifaceted concept that refers to the process of enhancing the quality of life and well-being of individuals within a specific geographical area or social group¹³. It involves efforts aimed at improving various aspects of a community, such as its social, economic, cultural, and environmental conditions. The ultimate goal of community development is to empower individuals and communities to actively participate in shaping their own future and creating a more sustainable and vibrant environment.¹⁴

Non-Kinetic Operations

Non-kinetic operations refer to actions that do not involve physical force or direct combat. These operations are typically focused on achieving strategic goals through diplomatic, economic, psychological, cyber, and information-based means, rather than through

⁹*African Civil Military Coordination Programme, CIMIC in UN and African Peace Operations* (Pretoria: 2006,) 35.

¹⁰ P. Rehse, *CIMIC: Concepts, Definitions and Practice*, (Hamburg: Juni, 2014), 14.

¹¹ P. Rehse, *CIMIC: Concepts, Definitions 15.*

¹². European Union, 'Civil-Military Cooperation Concept for EU-Led Crisis Management Operations, ESDP/PESD COSDP 67, (Brussels: European Union, 2002,) 9.

¹³ United Nations, Economic and Social Council, Social Commission (Eleventh Session), "Concepts and Principles of Community

Development And Recommendations On Further Practical Measures To Be Taken By International Organizations", *Ekistics* 4, No. 26 (1957): 92–96.

[Http://www.jstor.org/stable/43613175.](http://www.jstor.org/stable/43613175)

¹⁴ United Nations, Economic and Social Council, Social Commission (Eleventh Session). "Concepts And Principles of Community Development and Recommendations on Further Practical Measures to Be Taken by International Organizations." *Ekistics* 4, no. 26 (1957): 92–96. [http://www.jstor.org/stable/43613175.](http://www.jstor.org/stable/43613175)



traditional military engagement.¹⁵ Here are some examples of non-kinetic operations; Diplomacy, Economic Sanctions, Cyber Operations, Information Warfare, Psychological Operations (PSYOP) that is Using psychological tactics to influence the emotions, attitudes, and behaviours of individuals or groups to achieve specific objectives. Other examples include Counterterrorism Measures and Counterinsurgency Strategies, employing efforts to win the hearts and minds of the local population to diminish support for insurgent or guerrilla groups, crisis communication, humanitarian assistance, as well as economic development by Supporting economic growth, infrastructure development, and poverty reduction to enhance stability and improve living conditions.¹⁶

CIVIL MILITARY COOPERATION (CIMIC) IN NIGERIA AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE NIGERIAN ARMY DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL MILITARY AFFAIRS

As earlier stated, CIMIC refers the relationship between the Field Commander and the host community of his unit or formation. This relationship exists for the purpose winning the hearts of the host community to ensure information sharing between the Military and the community for effective and efficient military operation going on in such communities. The Military in order to acquire these basic information, engages in programmes or projects aimed at winning the hearts and minds of that

community. The key objectives of the CIMIC is to enhance the value and integrity of the military as a defender of the community, to improve interpersonal relationship with the civil society, and as averred by Air Marshall Alex Badeh, to enhance effective co-ordination of the Armed Forces to meet the security aspirations of a united democratic Nigeria.¹⁷ Achieving this will thus provide the military an enabling environment to perform its constitutional or traditional roles. This therefore underscores the essence of cooperation between the military, the government and the Nigerian civil society to enhance foster peaceful co-existence in Nigeria.

Since 1999, there have been series of such military assistance in support of civil authority in Nigeria. The military regularly undertakes annual medical outreaches to surrounding communities with a view to improving general healthcare. In addition, military hospitals in varied locations around Nigeria, serve as primary, secondary and tertiary health facilities to communities and States.¹⁸ Although the military has been involved in CIMIC activities prior to 1999, there was no established platform to serve as a coordinating mechanism for the engagement. The desire to have a well established mechanism or platform to oversee CIMIC activities in the Military motivated the Defence Headquarters, the Nigerian Army, the Nigerian Navy and the Nigerian Air Force established the Department of Civil- Military Relations, Department of Civil- Military Affairs, Department of Civil- Military Cooperation and the Department of

accessed on 13 September, 2023.

¹⁵ Martti Lehto and Gerhard Henselmann, "Non-kinetic Warfare - The new game changer in the battle space 316 Non-kinetic Warfare -The new game changer in the battle space" *The 15th International Conference on Cyber Warfare and Security, 12 - 13 March 2020, Norfolk, Virginia, Old Dominion University, USA, pages 316-325*

¹⁶ M. Lehto, & G. Henselmann. "Non-Kinetic Warfare: The New Game Changer in the Battle Space" In B.K. Payne, & H. Wu (Eds.), *ICCWS 2020: Proceedings of the 15th International Conference on Cyber Warfare and Security, Academic Conferences International.* <https://doi.org/10.34190/ICCWS.20.033>

¹⁷ Labaran Saleh , 'Defence Radio... Promoting Healthy Civil-Military Relations,' *The Guardian Newspaper 1 June 2015 accessed through http://guardian.ng/features/media/defence-radio-promoting-healthy-civil-military-relations/ on 2 September 2023.*

¹⁸ Independent situation reports were given by formation and unit commanders Officers in States affected by the 2012 floods of which the author was Commander 302 Artillery Regiment Onitsha during the period in question.



Civil- Military Relations respectively. These departments are principally engaged in non-kinetic activities, representing the soft power component of military operations in Nigeria. With the Outbreak of Boko Haram insurgency and terrorism in 2009 and subsequently the Islamic State in West African Province (ISWAP), the Armed Forces of Nigeria incorporated non-kinetic approaches to compliment the kinetic operations aimed at ending the crises.¹⁹ Since then, non-kinetic efforts have been an integral part of military operations by the Armed Forces of Nigeria particularly the Nigeria Army.

The Department of Civil-Military Affairs (DCMA) was established in December 2010 by the then Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Lieutenant General OA Ihejirika to serve primarily as an interface between the Nigerian Army and the Civil Populace. It has the responsibility of underscoring the fundamentals of Civil Military Affairs as a Strategic National Institution. The Department is also charged with the introducing and transmitting the core elements of effective civil-military relations in areas of human rights, rule of law, negotiations liaison and conflict management.²⁰ The establishment of the DCMA became expedient upon the realisation that winning the cooperation (hearts and minds) of the civil populace particularly the communities in the operation areas is central to a successful asymmetric warfare that must be intelligence-led.²¹ The DCMA is headed by a 2- Star General who is referred to as the Chief of Civil- Military Affairs (CCMA). It has three directorates: Civil-Military Legal Desk, Information Management and Psychological Warfare. Through these directorates, the DCMA leverages the use of soft power plan and execute numerous schemes and programmes as the non-kinetic component of the Counter- Terrorism and Counter Insurgency

Operations in the country. DCMA Cells were also established in all Divisions of the Nigerian Army and saddled with the task of interacting with and fostering CIMIC with the population in their areas of responsibility.²²

THE NIGERIAN ARMY IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Nigerian Army has been involved in various community development activities across the country. These initiatives are aimed at fostering positive relationships between the military and civilians, improving the well-being of local communities, and contributing to overall national development. Here are some ways in which the Nigerian Army has engaged in community development:

Infrastructural Development

The Nigerian Army has over the years used infrastructural development as a means of contributing to national development, as well as a vital tool for winning the hearts and minds of the populace in furtherance of military objectives. The Nigerian Army has been involved in the construction and renovation of infrastructures such as schools, roads, bridges, and health facilities in different communities. By providing these essential services, they contribute to improved access to education, healthcare, and transportation. The reconstruction of roads and bridges destroyed by the Boko Haram Terrorists as well as the construction of a reference hospital in Maiduguri speaks volumes in this regard. In the same vein, the Nigerian Army through its Army Engineers has carried out notable projects for the Federal Government, State Government and other Ministries, Departments and Agencies. Some of the projects are; reconstruction of Gamboru-Ngala, Maiduguri- Damasak and Maiduguri-

¹⁹ E.V. Onumajuru, (ed.), *Lt Gen Faruk Yahaya: Counter Terrorism & Counter Insurgency Theory Meets Practice*, (Abuja: Adonis & Abbey Publishers Ltd, 2023,) 244.

²⁰ "Directorate of Civil- Military Affairs" https://army.mil.ng/?page_id=483 accessed on 13 September, 2023.

²¹ M.G. Kangye cited in E.V. Onumajuru, (ed.), *Lt Gen Faruk Yahaya: Counter Terrorism & Counter Insurgency Theory Meets Practice*, (Abuja: Adonis & Abbey Publishers Ltd, 2023,) 244.

²² E.V. Onumajuru, (ed.), *Lt Gen Faruk*, 245.



Mungono- Baga road; construction of roads/ bridges and erosion control for Kebbi State Government; and the construction of township roads and drainages for Anambra State Government.²³ The Army Engineers also reconstructed the bridge linking Maiduguri and Gamboru Ngal, which was blown by Boko Haram.²⁴ Other national projects undertaken include construction of Bailey Bridges in Adamawa, Enugu, and Osun States; and right-of- way clearance for the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation.²⁵ Other infrastructural projects are the construction of box culvert along Shema- Bakoshi- Matankari road in Suru Local Government Area of Kebbi State in 2016 and the renovation of maternity/ health centre at Wakama Village Ward of Nasarawa State in 2018²⁶ and a15 kilometre road at Ilesa West LGA in 2014.²⁷

Medical Outreach

The Nigerian Army often conducts medical outreaches in rural and underserved areas, providing free medical services, consultations, and medications to residents. This helps address healthcare gaps and improve the health and well-being of community members. In North East Geo- political zone for instance, the Nigerian Army has carried out medical outreach and distributes medical materials, hygiene and sanitation in Dikwa, Gwoza and Baga; immunization exercise and establishment of a clinic in Bama as well as free medical

²³ S.E. Udounwa, *Compendium of Nigerian Army Transformation: The Buratai Years 2015- 2020*, (Abuja: Headquarters Nigerian Army, 2020,) 252.

²⁴ Nigerian Army Corp of Military Engineers, “Army Engineer Support to Nigerian Army Stability Operations and Reconstruction in North East Nigeria,” *The Journal of the Nigerian Army Engineers* (2018,) 58.

²⁵ S.E. Udounwa, *Compendium of Nigerian Army Transformation: The Buratai Years 2015- 2020*, (Abuja: Headquarters Nigerian Army, 2020,) 252.

services to isolated communities such as Rann and Banki amongst others.²⁸

Educational Support

The army has been known to support education by providing school supplies, scholarships, and even renovating schools. This support enhances access to quality education, which is crucial for community development and empowerment. Some of these projects are the construction of a block of 3 classrooms with Headmaster’s office at Agodo Primary School, in Agodo Osun State in 2010 reconstruction of the Government Girls Secondary School, Chibok in 2017.²⁹ The Nigerian Army has also provided learning materials to pupils in several schools in Borno State. In addition to that, the Army also established a primary school at Government Secondary School IDP Camp Gwoza, where Army Officers and Soldiers serve as Teachers.³⁰

Agricultural Development

The army has also promoted food security through the establishment of the Nigerian Army Farms and Ranches Limited (NAFARL) established in July 2017 by the then Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General TY Buratai and later incorporated as a Limited Liability Company in 2018. It is Nigerian Army Agro business venture with a vision, “Enhancing

²⁶ A.D. Chinoko, *Military Leadership in a Complex Security Environment: Reflections on the Speeches and Leadership Style of Lieutenant General Tukur Yusufu Buratai*, (Abuja: KAS Arts Service Ltd, 2019,) 192.

²⁷ Nigerian Army Corp of Military Engineers, “Engineer Construction Command” *The Journal of the Nigerian Army Engineers* (2018,) 25.

²⁸ E.V. Onumajuru, (ed.), *Lt Gen Faruk*, 247.

²⁹ Nigerian Army Corp of Military Engineers, “Engineer Construction Command” *The Journal of the Nigerian Army Engineers* (2018,) 25.

³⁰ E.V. Onumajuru, (ed.), *Lt Gen Faruk*, 247.



National Security through Food Production.”³¹ Currently, NAFARL engages in livestock management, pasture development, poultry production, farming activities and dairy production amongst other ventures. The main farm is located at Giri with outposts in Lakushi and Jaji amongst other locations.³² The ranches, in similar fashion, model a possibility for curbing the perennial herdsmen and farmers clashes in the country. Food security is as important to the Nigerian Army as it is to the nation.³³ This provision caters for a basic but essential aspect of man’s existence, food. The establishment of the farms is a giant stride towards ensuring food security for the nation at large.

Environmental Initiatives

The Nigerian Army has participated in environmental conservation efforts such as tree planting and clean-up campaigns. These activities contribute to environmental sustainability and raise awareness about the importance of protecting natural resources. For instance, on 30 April, 2022 as part of the Nigerian Army’s efforts to improve on the quality of natural surroundings in the barrack community and promote climate amelioration, 7 Division Nigerian Army conducted a Tree Planting Exercise which was flagged off by the then General Officer Commanding 7 Division and Commander Sector 1 Joint Task Force (JTF) North East (NE) Operation HADIN KAI (OPHK), Major General Waidi Shaibu. The exercise witnessed the symbolic planting of 52 Neem Trees “Dogonyaro” by the GOC, Formation and Unit Commanders as well as Principal Staff Officers of the Division was carried out in Maimalari Military Cantonment. The exercise was carried out in line with Army Headquarters directives to plant trees that will serve as wind breakers in Nigerian Army

³¹ Department of Special Services and Programmes

https://army.mil.ng/?page_id=5730 accessed on 14 September, 2023.

³² Department of Special Services and Programmes

https://army.mil.ng/?page_id=5730 accessed on 14 September, 2023.

Barracks and Cantonments during the rainy season. Emphasizing on the importance of planting trees, Maj Gen Shaibu said that tree planting creates a peaceful aesthetically pleasing environment with natural barrier against windstorm and serves as shade for humans and animals as it moderates the effect of the sun.³⁴

Disaster Relief

The army has been involved in disaster relief efforts during emergencies such as floods, earthquakes, and other natural disasters. Their quick response and assistance help affected communities recover more effectively. In response to the devastating effects of the activities of Boko Haram on communities in the North East, the Nigerian Army provided borehole to enhance access to portable water supply, which became a major challenge in some communities in the area; Gulumba, Gana, Darajmel, Banki and Bita among others. On a large scale, in 2022, the Nigerian Army initiated 50,000 litre capacity boreholes in IDP Camps in Maiduguri and Dikwa amongst others.³⁵

Community Engagement

Regular interactions between army personnel and community members can foster trust and collaboration. By understanding local needs and concerns, the army can tailor their development initiatives to better suit the communities they serve. It was in this regards that in 2021, the then Chief of Army Staff, Lieutenant General Faruk Yahaya made it a policy where by all Major Generals will be given opportunities of planning and executing the most needed CIMIC project in their locales and communities can equally make requests to the Nigerian Army for critical CIMIC project assistance. The essential services include the

³³ S.E. Udounwa, *Compendium of*, 264

³⁴ “GOC 7 Division Flags off Tree Planting Exercise” <https://army.mil.ng/?p=5574> accessed on 14 September, 2023.

³⁵ E.V. Onumajuru, (ed.), *Lt Gen Faruk*, 247.



construction of healthcare facilities, water projects, boreholes, road and bridge construction. One of such projects is water project in Lasa in Borno State, where the Nigerian Army constructed 60,000 capacity water tanks with 5 industrial boreholes recharging it. The Dam project in Fika is another example of such interventions. According to Kangye, as at 2022, the Nigerian Army had to its credit more than 60 of such projects in addition to other numerous projects that are being commissioned under the essential services category.³⁶ These CIMIC projects have greatly promoted a cordial relationship between the Nigerian Army and host communities wherever their formations are located.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF NIGERIAN ARMY INTERVENTION PROJECTS

The Nigerian Army has historically played a significant role in the development of communities within the country. From 2010 to 2022, the Nigerian Army's involvement in community development has brought about socio-economic impacts, which can be examined through various dimensions.

Winning Hearts and Minds

One of the major impacts of the Nigerian Army community development projects is winning the hearts and minds of citizens in host communities, where military formations are located and in locations where military operations are taking place. The imperatives of hearts and minds battle as a core component of non-kinetic approach has been incorporated into the Service Manuals of many armed forces, including the Nigerian Army. In the North East, key stakeholders who are critical to CIMIC include religious leaders,

community leaders, traditional rulers, youth groups, women organisations, humanitarian agencies, politicians, retired military and other security agencies. These critical stakeholders wield significant influence to serve as the conduit between the state and the masses in countering violent extremism, de-radicalisation and civil-military cohesion.³⁷ The Nigerian Army therefore collaborates with these stakeholders to carry out its community development projects. These projects have gone a long way to win the hearts and minds of the local population as they view the Nigerian Army as a part and parcel of the larger Nigerian society, which is gradually eradicating the distrust of some societies against the military in the past. In essence, CIMIC projects have projected a good image of the Nigerian Army.

Success in military operations

The Nigerian Army community development projects in addition to promoting a more cordial relationship between the Nigerian Army and the host communities, has also facilitated successes in military operations, as the populace voluntarily render information that greatly contributes to the success of military operations. This was attested by former Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General TY Buratai, who stated thus; "In the cause of our operation across the Federation, we have received tremendous support and cooperation from the civil populace. The successes we have achieved thus far would not have been possible without the necessary support and cooperation of the populace."³⁸ This view is corroborated by Kangye, who stated in 2022 that "CIMIC projects, among many others that are ongoing, have assisted the military in forming an excellent relationship with the local communities in the theatre of operations, which has aided the successes recorded thus far in the

³⁶ M.G. Kangye, cited in E.V. Onumajuru (ed.) *Lt Gen Faruk*, 248.

³⁷ F. Yahaya, "The Implementation of CIMIC Policy of the Nigerian Army and the Conduct of Non-Kinetic Operations in the North East: Issues, Challenges and Lessons" (*The Journal of the Army War College Nigeria*, Vol.4, No.1, Nov. 2021,) 19.

³⁸ T. Y. Buratai, cited in A.D. Chinoko, *Military Leadership in a Complex Security Environment: Reflections on the Speeches and Leadership Style of Lieutenant General Tukur Yusufu Buratai*, (Abuja: KAS Arts Service Ltd, 2019,) 193.



counter terrorism and counter insurgency operations.³⁹ Some of these projects were carried out as Quick Impact Projects in support of communities where the Nigerian Army has operated, while others were executed for the Nigerian Army, which indirectly benefits the host communities.

Employment of Labour and National Development

Nigerian Army community development projects besides winning the hearts and minds of the populace, as well as contributing to the success of military operations, has also played an important part in the employment of labour. The Nigerian Army Farms and Ranches Limited for instance is a stone that kills many birds by proving food security, employment opportunities and developing means of optimizing agricultural possibilities in Nigeria. The establishment of farm and ranch is a giant stride towards ensuring food security in Nigeria. Apart from the physical production of crops, the Nigerian Army Farms and Ranches Limited has become a significant employer of labour. The facility in Giri for example covers a large expanse of land and contains thousands of heads of livestock. Military personnel and civilians are also engaged in both skilled and unskilled labour in maintaining and turning out produce from the facility.⁴⁰

Resumption of Economic and Social Activities

The Nigerian Army has carried out series of community development projects that have led to resumption in economic and social activities where such had previously been halted, due to a number of factors. As earlier stated in the paper,

the Nigerian Army has built roads, schools, hospitals, and other essential infrastructure as part of numerous community development initiatives. This has enhanced access to healthcare, education, and transportation in those areas. It must be stated that these projects have had positive social and economic effects that have increased economic and social activities, as well as improved living standards in the communities. In addition, the presence of Nigerian Army these areas have helped to uphold security and stability, both of which are essential for social and economic development. Thus, the Nigerian Army indirectly promotes economic development by fostering an environment that is favourable for businesses to flourish in and for communities to engage in productive activities.

CONCLUSION

This paper discussed the involvement of the Nigerian Army in community development projects that are executed through the DCMA, which was established in 2010. The period of the discourse spanned from 2010 to 2022, a period that witnessed increased level of such services to host communities. It is pertinent to say that effective community development requires collaboration, communication, and a genuine commitment to improving the lives of community members. The Nigerian Army's involvement in community development from 2010 to 2022 encompasses requirements stated, and has yielded positive socio-economic impacts. CIMIC therefore remains a matter of priority and urgency for the Nigerian Army and the Armed Forces of Nigeria in achieving positive results in counter terrorism and counter insurgency operations in Nigeria.

³⁹ M.G. Kangye, cited in E.V. Onumajuru (ed.) Lt Gen Faruk, 248.

⁴⁰ S.E. Udounwa (ed.), *Compendium of*, 264.

