

## **KIDNAPPINGS IN NIGERIA AND INTELLIGENCE GATHERING**

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### **Abstract**

*This paper examines the seeming, but superficial intractability of the soaring problem of kidnappings in Nigeria that, together with other associated runaway acts of criminalities, is causing so much insecurity in the country. Relying on a careful analysis of an assemblage of secondary data sourced primarily from journal articles, books, newspapers and the internet, the paper explains why intelligence gathering in Nigeria is not working. It locates the problem in the defective moral and ethical environment, and recommends measures for effective intelligence gathering and utilization in the country.*

**Keywords:** Kidnapping, Intelligence, Intelligence Gathering, Nigeria

### **Introduction**

Though kidnapping and abduction of people have been known to occur in Nigeria since historical times, it was not an issue to be considered a social or security problem till the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Its ascendance to this later level is one of the despicable manifestations of the ability of abhorrent men to commit serious crimes against their fellow men in the inordinate quest for power and wealth. Kidnapping is a serious crime against humanity and the problem is ubiquitous across the entirety of the Nigerian state (Ezideme, 2014, Dodo, 2010; Abdulkabir, 2017). Article 1(1,2) of the United Nation's Declaration on the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearances declares any act of enforced disappearances as an offence to human dignity that places the victims outside legal protection and inflicts severe sufferings on them and their families.

But kidnapping as a criminal activity is not limited to Nigeria. It is a worldwide problem. In 2006, the UN office on drugs reported that 10,000 people were being kidnapped yearly all over the world. As a result it launched an anti-

kidnapping manual to assist states that were affected by the problem which often resulted in the death of its victims (UN News, April 26 2006). In relative terms many countries post higher rates of kidnappings than Nigeria, though for reasons other than ransom payments. Recent rankings by the World Population Review for 2023 places Turkey at the top of the global list at 42.669 persons per 100,000 population. It is followed by Lebanon (15,384) and Kuwait (12.690). South Africa, the only African country among the top ten countries, occupy the 6<sup>th</sup> position with a kidnapping rate of 9.569. Within the African continent, the border regions between Chad, Cameroon and the Central African Republic has also become an area of concern in recent times because of soaring cases of kidnappings for ransom, a problem that has earned it the tag of central Africa's triangle of death (Egbejule, 2024 July16). However, Nigeria is ranked number 2, behind Libya among the top 10 kidnap for ransom risk countries in the world (Ayuba, 2020).

Several studies have attempted to explain the meteoric rise of kidnapping as a professional crime in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Nigeria. These studies have unearthed several root factors. Generally, the problem is rooted in the social, political, economic and ethno-religious crises of Nigeria's turbulent history. From its foundation, the nation is bedeviled by ethnic and religious fault-lines that consequently formed the basis of social inequity and socio-economic imbalances in national power and resource distribution. Successive governments did not help matters with their discriminatory policy agendas that further entrenched the imbalances, and favoured some sections of the country more than others. With population expansion and pressure on limited resources, conflicts, crime and insecurity became inevitable. Specific underlying causes of kidnapping as identified by different scholars include poverty, unemployment, religious fundamentalism, greed and corruption (Ibrahim & Ahmad, 2020; Dodo, 2010)

The number of kidnapping cases are innumerable and the frequency is very high across the country. Deutsche Welle news channel once estimated over 400 abductions a week, though it admits the figure could be much more higher. Cases of mass abductions have become so frequent that individual cases rarely catch media attention. The first case of mass abduction was the kidnap of 276 Chibok School girls from their hostel in the town of Chibok in Borno State. Such mass kidnappings has continued since then leading to abduction of tens of students and their teachers. Eight years after that episode over 11, 536 schools have been shut because of kidnappers with over 1,500 pupils abducted (Musa, Oyewole & Musa, October 15, 2022). These crimes are perpetuated by gangs of young and middle aged individuals ranging from three to over a hundred as with the rural bandits of northern Nigeria. The kidnap gangs in the north are ethnically based with strong religious attachments. Many of the groups are thought to have sponsors who supply them weapons and offer them protection from arrest.

The security services have so far failed to track and combat the problem. There is no better crime to test the utility and relevance of the intelligence services

as a necessary back-up support, than kidnapping. This is because security failures have often been blamed on gaps in intelligence gathering and utilization (Robert & Oluku, 2023; Enya, Achu & Duke, 2022, Adegoke, 2020).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Kidnapping is a grievous crime in the Nigerian State (Ezinwa, 2019) as in every other. This is because it involves the unlawful adoption and denial of the rights and liberties of another person. Three ingredients are involved in the crime of kidnapping: (i) Seizure and taking away of the victim (ii) The perpetuation of the violence of seizure and taking away against the will of the victim and (iii) the committal of the act without lawful excuse. If more than one person is involved in the kidnapping it becomes a conspiratorial act as it would not be carried out if the culprits are not of the same mind (Adetoro, 2019).

Kidnapped victims undergo both physical and psychological trauma in the process of the ordeal. According to the American Psychological Association (2013) and Alexander & Klein (2009), kidnap victims experience cognitive, emotional and relational problems such as denial, impaired memory, shock, numbness, anxiety, guilt, depression, anger, withdrawal, avoidance and the feeling of helplessness. The crime bears a lot of psychological, physiological, economic and financial implications upon victims, their relatives and society. Beside it has the potential to translate to other felonious offences such as physical violence, financial victimization and murder (Ibrahim and Mukhtar, 2017). The scourge of kidnappings has negatively impacted the country, resulting to immense psychological stress and trauma, atmosphere of fear and general distrust and reduced foreign investment (Mbah, 2023). It is therefore increasingly becoming an obstacle to security and development of the nation (Umego, 2019).

In view of its harmful consequences, the Nigerian Criminal Code Act already prohibited and severely punishes kidnappings and adoptions in all its forms. With the intensification of the problem in recent years, most states in the country enacted laws of their own with strict penalties against offenders. These laws have not only failed to deter the criminals, the kidnapping menace has escalated in all regions of the country to an extent of descending to the level of terrorism (Umego, 2019; Ezinma, 2019). The activities of kidnappers and other criminal/terrorist groups in the country became too severe for law enforcement agencies alone to handle. The Nigerian armed forces were drafted to assist in curtailing the problem. In spite of that, kidnapping and other terrorist acts still persist unmitigated in the Nigerian state.

It is against this background that this paper investigates kidnapping as a security problem; its complexity in the Nigerian context that has made it intractable; why there is intelligence failure and the role intelligence gathering can play in resolving the problem. The study adopts the analytical research method to achieve these objectives. It is based on careful analysis of systematically organized

data from secondary sources such as journal articles, books, newspapers and the internet.

### **Brief Review of Related Literature**

Several studies have addressed the status of intelligence in the scandalous upswing of crime in Nigeria. Ashaolu (2012) for instance, argues that given Nigeria's huge population size, it is unavoidable that there would be security challenges. Consequently it was expected that our law enforcement agencies would rise to the occasion by adopting appropriate strategies such as use of surveillance and intelligence gathering to effectuate its capabilities. He proceeded to explain the various institutional frameworks and intelligence gathering methods in use in Nigeria.

Agbeyi and Osugba (2021), whose work centres on Delta State, takes a look at the "massive" increase in crime and the deplorable state of insecurity in the country. They address the role of the Nigerian police in its statutory duty of crime prevention and control and some of the challenges that makes it ineffective. As panacea they make a case for a paradigm shift from the prevailing system of policing to intelligence-led policing which they describe in the words of the United States Department of Justice as a collaborative law enforcement approach that combines problem solving policing, information sharing and police accountability with enhanced intelligence operations.

On their part, Enya, Achu and Duke (2022) examine intelligence gathering as a tool for the successful operation of security outfits. They aver that in regions where crimes are successfully fought with good measure of success, it is with the aid of sound intelligence gathering. To buttress their point they cite two examples: the success achieved by the American Navy Seals in detecting and killing the dreaded Osama Bin Laden at his hideout in 2011, and the surgical strike by the American Special Forces that took out an Iranian General, Qasem Soleimann, in Iraq. They observe that the use of intelligence gathering in the operations of Nigeria's security forces is deficient, hence its dismal performance. Among the reasons identified are people's sense of patriotism being tampered by ethno-religious and political considerations, and refusal of sister agencies to share intelligence.

Another study by Niyi Adegoke (2020) contend that Nigeria's security problems is the result of lapses in intelligence gathering and utilization. As a result, its ethno-religious conflicts, communal clashes, kidnappings and other security problems have grown out of control to the extent of its now being aggravated by rising terrorism. The paper contends that there is positive relationship between effective intelligence gathering and and security and makes a case for improved training of personnel and better intelligence gathering to combat the problems.

This present work takes a critical look at why Nigeria's intelligence and intelligence gathering has not been effective in combating the scourge of kidnappings, in particular, vis avis its intelligence potentials. It offers the way

forward on how it could benefit from the deployment and use of intelligence.

### **Concept, History and Trajectory of kidnappings in Nigeria**

Kidnapping is a criminal offence that involves the forceful seizure and taking away of an individual against his will. It is an offence that is severely punished in all countries of the world. The online Dictionary Law.com defines the crime as “The taking of a person against his/her will (or from the control of a parent or guardian) from one place to another under circumstance in which the person so taken does not have freedom of movement, will or decision through violence, force, threat or intimidation”. The seizure of a person by way of kidnapping usually involve other related acts of criminality such as rape, ransom taking, rape or other form of sexual abuse, injury and killing of the victim (Ibrahim & Mukhtar, 2017). The Criminal Code Act of Nigeria outlaws kidnappings and all its associated acts (e.g Section 374 on child stealing; Section 361 on abduction, Section 364 on unlawful imprisonment). In spite of that the crime has grown ubiquitous today, with hardly a day that people are not kidnapped in the country.

Several factors are thought to be behind the surge. Prominent drivers of kidnappings identified in studies of the problem in Nigeria include widespread unemployment, moral decadence and payment of ransom by families of victims, ritual criminality and criminal opportunism (Ayuba, 2020; Peterside, 2019; Okoh, 2022). Kidnapping in Nigeria is principally driven by monetary reasons. The trading of hostages is a complex economic transaction (shorthand, 2019), facilitated by supportive institutions that have emerged to govern the market. The institutions and networks have been identified to include negotiators, banks (that receive the ransom payments), compromised security personnel, police (that charge fees to track victims), inept intelligence services, transportation bodies, communities that provide sanctuary to the kidnappers and informants (Peterside, 2022). These structures and several other factors combine to account for the boom in the despicable crime. They include the high success rate of kidnappings with very little risk of apprehension and criminalization; inefficiency and ineptitude of law enforcement agencies; the expansive un-policed spaces in the country; the high rate of unemployment that has made kidnapping a viable alternative means of earning a living etc., (Peterside, 2020; Okoh, 2022).

Historically the crime of kidnapping predates the arrival of the Europeans in Nigeria. It was rare and uncommon, often shrouded in mystery, and greeted with painful disbelief. It was a grievous source of trauma to the entire community and especially the family of the victim. Mysterious disappearances were attributed to factors such as natural calamities (drowning, attack of dangerous creatures, etc). ritual sacrifices, slavery, sexual exploitation, forced marriage and revenge/predatory attacks in periods of conflict. Other reasons why kidnappings take place today are economic, political and business purposes.

The current wave of kidnappings in Nigeria started as a child of circumstance. Its evolution was in three phases (Albert, et al 2020). First as a political instrument of pressure and part and parcel of protests in the Niger Delta of the late 1990s and early 2000 over issues of federal neglect, environmental degradation and resource control (Hazen and Honer, 2007; Albert et al, 2020; Akasike, 2008; Dodo, 2010; Ayuba, 2020; Imobighe, et al, 2000; Oluku, 2021). The Niger Delta region is the source of Nigeria's oil wealth and yet one of the poorest and environmentally ravaged places on earth (NHCR report, 2015; Emuedo & Abam, 2015). The youth protest degenerated to oil thefts and vandalization of oil infrastructure and later the taking of hostages. The seizure of oil workers especially expatriates was used to draw attention of the international community to the plight of the region. The second phase was when they demanded and received money from the oil companies to release their captives. These ransom monies were used to fund the agitation. The third phase emerged when militants from other parts of the country, particularly the north, adopted kidnapping and transformed it to a terrorist extortionate enterprise. Today kidnapping has blossomed into a profession for specialized criminals, and a burgeoning industry with an underground support networks.

The frequency and huge number of human haul is troubling. The large recurrent cases clearly show the poor state of insecurity that kidnappers have imposed on the nation. These cases include the kidnap of 276 girls by Boko Haram at Chibok in April 14<sup>th</sup> 2014, kidnap of school girls at Dapchi Yobe State in February 19<sup>th</sup> 2018, the abduction of 300 school boys from their school in Kankara, Katsina State in December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020, another abduction of about 80 school pupils at Mahuta, Katsina State in December 2020; the abduction of 317 female students in Jaugebe, Zamfara State in Feb. 26, 2021 and the kidnap of 169 school pupils at Tegin, Niger State in May 30, 2021. (Premium Times, June 22, 2021). In total over 3000 people were kidnapped in Nigeria in 2021, and another 571 in January alone of 2022 (Okoli, 2022, June 17). According to the cable index about 13 people were kidnapped everyday in 2022 bringing the year's figure to 4616. (Uthman and Oluwafemi, 2023, Jan. 8)

The industry became a literal gold mine as kidnappers demanded and raked in intimidating sums of money. The Punch of 24<sup>th</sup> August, 2023 reported that kidnappers demanded 5 billion Naira, in 582 abduction cases involving 3620 victims and received over ₦302 million in ransom payments between July 2022 and June 2023. Between July 2021 and June 2022 twice the amount totally ₦653.7 million was received by the hoodlums. All of these are based on reported cases in newspapers. (Premium times, August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022).

### **Types of kidnappings cases**

The following classification is based on the diverse motivations for kidnappings in the present times.

**Economic kidnapping:** Kidnappings have become a lucrative job for the criminal class in recent times (Chi, 2019). Economic kidnappings are carried out by emergent criminals who have taken kidnapping for ransom as a means of survival. It is the most common as it involves the activity of criminal opportunists alone or in collaboration with close persons to the victim such as spouses, children, house helps and drivers. The perpetrators are mostly young, unemployed, poorly schooled youths.

**Business/Mass Kidnapping:** Kidnapers have come to see the criminal act as a business for profit making (Dodo, 2010). This is the dangerous level to which the crime has currently evolved in the country. It is perpetrated by organized criminal groups with vast support networks. They are the people responsible for the near daily attacks and mass kidnaps of travelers on highways, trains, schools and rural communities around the country. The major culprits – especially Boko Haram, Fulani herdsmen and the rural bandits of the northern parts - kill victims whose relatives are unable to meet their huge demands of ransom.

**Ritual Kidnapping:** Ritual killing especially for money making is an old crime for which culprits kidnapped victims. A typical example of this traditional crime is the criminal abduction and murder of hunch backs for ritual purposes (Ugwoke, 2011). With the emergence of young ritualists in the guise of yahoo plus in Nigeria, abduction and killing of people for money making rituals has become more rampant in the last two decades. Most of these abductions go undetected because the victims are tricked with money or snared through consensual relationships that are privately arranged physically or via the internet (Robert & Oluku, 2023).

**Kidnapping for revenge or vendetta:** Revenge kidnappings is a common occurrence among conflicting groups and communities, where members of rival groups are adopted as part of means of settling scores with the other.

**Political Kidnapping:** This type of kidnapping is carried out to achieve political purposes. Politically motivated kidnappings happen frequently among opponents who are engaged in power tussles (Okechukwu & Osita, 2021). The American FBI identifies this as one of two forms of kidnappings associated with less developed countries (FBI news, 2019). Politically motivated kidnaps occur more frequently in times of electioneering campaigns where party tugs target strategic members of rival parties for abduction.

**Child Theft:** This type involves the abduction of children from their original parents by complete strangers for ownership, sale, rituals or sexual exploitation.

**Women Kidnapping:** This is forceful or fraudulent abduction of women for various reasons such as prostitution, rape, sexual exploitation and enslavement.

### **Theoretical Orientation**

This study is anchored on the rational choice theory in criminology. The theory was advanced by Ronald Clarke and Derek Cornish. It provides a basis for understanding different aspects of human social behaviour, including crime and crime prevention. The theory states that individuals carefully weigh the costs and benefits of their actions before taking decisions that fits their best interests. In a standard sense “rational choice is defined to mean the process of determining what options are available and then choosing the most preferred one according to some consistent criterion” (Levin & Milgrom, 2004) The theory derives from two theoretical approaches- utilitarianism and traditional economic theory (Adler, et al 2007). Utilitarianism assumes that people take decisions which guarantee them maximum pleasure and minimum pain. The economic dimension is that people take decisions whose benefits outweigh their risks

Applied to the current study, rational choice theory helps us to understand that the criminal is a rational thinker who weighs the benefits of crime against the costs (including the risk of being caught) in a process termed *hedonistic calculus* (Thomas & Boyd, 2022). This places a demand on law enforcement to examine all crime prevention options that increase the cost and risks of crime and pick the one that best cut down on the benefit of crime. The use of surveillance and intelligence gathering are two approaches in their arsenal that have proved efficacious in the fight against crime (Ashaolu, 2012)

### **Concept of Intelligence and intelligence gathering**

Laqueur (1985) describes intelligence simply as information and an organized system of collecting it. The body in charge of intelligence work is referred to as an intelligence agency and the work it does is the gathering of intelligence. On its part information is a broad universe, of which intelligence is a part or subset, being a product of processed information. Intelligence thus embodies “knowledge and/ or foreknowledge that can be used to advance or defend the interests of organized society” (Ekpenyong, 2012). To arrive at such knowledge, intelligence passes through a process involving collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of processed information to the end user.

The office of the National Intelligence of the United States defines intelligence as “information gathered within or outside the U.S that involves threats to our nation, its people, property, or interests; development, proliferation, or use of weapons of mass destruction; and any other matter bearing on the U.S national or homeland security”. Intelligence is always about threats and opportunities and is connected with security. Therefore its products is not for the consumption of everyone but specific executives or customers. These in the United



States are the President, National Security Council, Heads of Departments and Agencies of the executive branch, Chairman of the Chiefs of Staffs and Senior Military Commanders and Congress.

Intelligence collectors deploy several means to collect information. It includes interviews/interrogation of captives, suspects/persons of interests and others in position to provide needed information. Other strategies are surveillance, which requires watching and following the target, eaves dropping, planting of agents and interception of signal messages (Ekpenyong, 2012)

The production of intelligence undergoes four stages beginning with requisitions from the user.

- 1) **Requisition:** This involves policy makers and users of intelligence products making requisition for specific intelligence to address particular problem situations.
- 2) **Collection:** When leadership of the intelligence body receives orders for information needs, they dispatch collectors into the field to hunt for the raw information on the requested subject.
- 3) **Processing:** This is the stage of the transformation of assembled raw field information into forms where they can be used for the production of intelligence.
- 4) **Analysis:** This is the stage at which production is carried out through collation and evaluation of the processed data and their conversion to usable intelligence tools.
- 5) **Dissemination:** This involves the forwarding of produced intelligence to the end users for necessary action.

#### **Intelligence gathering options:**

Theoretically there are several sources of intelligence open to Nigeria to combat the menace of kidnappings and related acts of criminality. They are Human Intelligence (HUMINT), Open Source Intelligence (OSINT), Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) and Imaging Intelligence (IMINT). They all have practical utility, and to a great extent. Nigeria has minimal capabilities in all four areas and its security forces can benefit optimally if policy chieftains adopt honest, Judicious, synchronized and conscientious exploitation and utilization of its intelligence potentials.

HUMINT: Humint or human intelligence is intelligence gathering using human instruments. With its large population and enormous human resources, Nigeria has limitless potential to raise sufficient intelligence agents or local spies to sniff out kidnap cells, gangs, cartels and networks that are operating within and across its borders. While it is doubtful if sufficient attention is being given to this obvious area of its strength, (Nte, 2013) HUMINT is Nigeria's main source of intelligence . What is obvious in the literature is the ineffective deployment and use of these

resources.

OSINT: This is intelligence obtainable from the public space. Its sources include open gatherings, the mass media and the internet. According to Ekpenyong, OSINT is probably the most useful form of intelligence deployable by spy agencies and can be fully utilized in the Nigerian situation. It is specifically recommendable to track issues of ritual kidnapping aside the others.

SIGINT: Intelligence gotten from the interception decoding and interpretation of signal messages is sigint. The report of the intercepted but unutilized intelligence of the planned train attack of evidence of Nigeria's capacity in this realm even though it may be limited.

IMINT: Our internal security problems of mass kidnappings especially is something that our air defence forces can track through aerial photo images to assist the police and other ground forces.

### **The Problem with the Nigerian intelligence System**

Nigeria's intelligence services are grossly under-performing especially in crime prevention and control. Their impact in these domains is so infinitesimal, that they can be considered non-existent and a waste of resources. The resulting state of pervasive insecurity constantly brings the performance and effectiveness of intelligence under intense scrutiny (Nte, 2013).

Enyia et al (2022) have observed that Nigeria's security outfits are both lacking and defective in the use of intelligence. This anomaly is blamed for the dismal performance of the security forces in the fight against criminality (Ashaolu, 2012, Adegoke, 2020). The country has three separate intelligence units saddled with different tasks of national security needs. They are: the State Security Services (SSS or DSS), charged with preventing and detecting crimes within our borders; the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) which handles foreign intelligence and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA or DIS) which is entrusted with military intelligence. Apart from these mainstream intelligence institutions, some of the security outfits such as the police and the air force have intelligence departments of their own. What then is the problem, that they cannot sniff out kidnap and other crime cells, or help solve the many unresolved crime cases?

First, these intelligence bodies can best be described as mimic institutions designed in line with what obtains in other parts of the world. That was the vision when General Olusegun Obasanjo created the Nigerian Security Organization (NSO), the immediate predecessor of the current intelligence outfits, in reaction to the unexpected assassination of his predecessor, General Murtala Muhammed (Teniola, 2020 November 12). His intentions were genuine but the utility of the agencies have not advanced much beyond their less demanding duty of securing

institutions of the state even though their mandate and resources cover all areas of security needs. As a result, Nigerians also began to associate the intelligence establishment with the protection and preservation of the country's political establishment (Abdulahi, 2021 November 18).

Though they bear the image of similar institutions in advanced countries, they are less focused on field intelligence functions. According to Enyia, et al (2022), their personnel are unpatriotic and unmotivated. They treat the business of intelligence gathering with levity, and resources allocated to them are often misappropriated. In contrast other nations that make good progress in curbing crime and achieving significant successes in security operations do so through effective intelligence gathering. The intelligence institutions are established to serve as a support or back up agencies to security outfits and policy makers in a nation's security. They dutifully collect, analyze, produce and disseminate intelligence that are used to fight crime and take out criminals. Its mission and purpose include avoidance of strategic surprises, provision of long term expertise, support for (security) policy processes and to maintain the secrecy of information (Ekpenyong, 2012).

The intelligence services in Nigeria have also shown themselves as not moving with technological trends especially the internet and social media revolution. This according to Teniola (2020, Nov 12) was manifest in their failure to envisage the magnitude of the ENDSARS protests. The violence of the youths and the looting that followed seemed to have caught the authorities unawares. This confirms the assertion of Murtala Abdulahi (2021, November 18), that the agencies are inept in forecasting and predictive capabilities which are necessary to warn and alert policy makers of threats.

Scholars have identified several other factors that are militating against effective intelligence delivery by the agencies. The prominent ones are. lack of information sharing/competition between sister agencies (Muhammed & Yusuf, 2019 ); disregard/ non-use of supplied intelligence by policy makers; activities of inside moles (Ajiya, 2023), sabotage/involvement of security agents in criminal activities and over reliance on. HUMINT (Nte, 2013), Others are inadequate trained manpower and deficient ICT capabilities (Nte, 2013).

Intelligence by nature also has its own problem, what Walter Laqueur describes as the "crises" of intelligence. The crises is the frequent failure of intelligence institutions to provide predictions and timely warning of major events and to make correct assessment of on-going events (Langueur, 1985). That notwithstanding, while intelligence agencies in many western countries are known to strive towards attaining textbook accuracy, imposed human limitations are often the cause of most systems failure in the Nigeria setting. Therefore commitment to providing the required intelligence prescriptions and to the application of the prescribed products is an important starting point for all stake holders if the

kidnapping menace and problem of other crimes must be resolved.

Finally the harsh anomic conditions of the country which have pushed the vast majority of Nigerians below the poverty line without jobs and opportunities for self actualization while a few swim in unlimited affluence will continue to encourage criminality.

### **Pre-requisites for Effective intelligence gathering in Nigeria**

It is the view of this paper that infrastructural constraints are not the primary issue behind intelligence lapses in Nigeria's running battles against kidnappers even though there are always areas of need that should be addressed. The ruling elite in Nigeria must strive to reduce crime by working toward an egalitarian state where basic needs are met and citizens feel a sense of inclusiveness. A more egalitarian society driven by people oriented policies is *sine qui non* to the creation of a compliant citizenry, a co-operating populace and a conducive environment for free flow of information.

The intelligence establishment and intelligence work in particular is entrenched in secrecy and does not yield itself to open co-operation with the public, unlike other law enforcement agencies. But the government, for whom it works needs to create the enabling environment for the free flow of intelligence on matters that bother on collective security. Both the federal and state governments have stringent laws that criminalizes kidnapping. They need to create public awareness of these laws and rally the support of the public against the kidnappers through information sharing with law enforcement agencies.

The police and other law enforcement agencies need to be transparently committed to the enforcement of the laws and the arrest and prosecution of offenders. They, including the intelligence agencies should create a collaborative relationship with the public for information sharing. They can create and tap into the goodwill of community leaders and traditional Institutions among others. They can initiate moral and other incentives to commit people to come up with information, but with adequate offer of guarantees for confidentiality and their personal safety.

Law enforcement and other security agencies must of necessity co-operate in information sharing and strategic planning to root out the problem. They should make judicious use of available resources which government is encouraged to constantly provide for their needs.

### **Conclusion**

Kidnapping in Nigeria has developed into a hydra-headed problem that is growing out of the control of law enforcement and other security agencies. This is due to a disconnect between intelligence and security operations. The hiatus has given room for disappointing failures in security management and the consequent rise in kidnappings and other crimes. The study found that the Nigerian intelligence establishment serves mainly the security needs of the political establishment while

paying lip service to its broader assignment of providing vital intelligence to prevent and control crime in the country at large. It argues that infrastructural constraints are not the primary issue behind intelligence lapses in Nigeria's running battles against kidnappers, even though there are always areas of need that should be addressed. The paper recognized Nigeria's immense intelligence potentials in the various collection disciplines which are under-exploited because of corruption, lack of patriotism, non-commitment and poor attitudes. It affirms the efficacy of security operations when backed by good and accurate intelligence and express the belief that Nigeria can overcome its current challenges in kidnappings and other crimes if it musters the will to take the right actions.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of this study:

1. Intelligence agencies should take their work of field collection of intelligence seriously by tapping into the immense opportunities offered by open sources such as the goodwill of leaders and members of the disenchanted civil populace in our cities, towns and communities, social media leads and mass media reporting of kidnapping incidences across the country. With such initiatives, most kidnappers and kidnapping cells can be preemptively identified and eliminated
2. Commitment by the leadership of these agencies and all of the security forces in general to dedicated, honest/prudent management/deployment of available human and material resources in the fight against kidnappings and other crimes
3. Information sharing and effective collaboration of our intelligence and security forces to enable combined and effective deployment of our intelligence capabilities such as the use of drones, aerial images and signals interception to track the movement/location of kidnappers and their hostages. Efforts of the various security and intelligence agencies must be coordinated in the fight against crime
4. Sincere commitment to diligent investigation of cases and prosecution of suspects, their sponsors and collaborators
5. The political and security officers of the state charged with receiving and utilizing intelligence products should commit themselves to timely and unbiased deployment of supplied intelligence to truncate threats and arrest the perpetrators. Leaders should be patriotic enough to put the security of the state and all citizens above every other considerations. Those who fail in this duty should be held accountable.
6. The ruling elite in Nigeria should strive to reduce crime by working toward an egalitarian state where basic needs are met and citizens feel a sense of inclusiveness. A more egalitarian society driven by people oriented policies is *sine qui non* to the creation of a compliant citizenry, a co-

operating populace and a conducive environment for free flow of information.

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