

PARTNERSHIP AGAINST VIOLENT EXTREMISM
“PAVING THE WAY TO PEACE”

Background/Introduction

Nigeria currently faces a threat of violent extremism from militant groups. This could derail its difficult but promising journey towards prosperity and completely transform almost every facet of national life. Not since the experience of the civil war in the 1960s has the country been confronted by an existential threat so determined to shake the foundations of its unity. The rise of violent forces against the state, though not totally new has in recent times been more ideological in nature. Groups such as the Jama'atu Ahlus Sunna Lidda Awaiti Wal Jihad (Boko Haram) and the splinter group known as Jama'atu Ansarul Muslima fi Biladus Sudan (Ansaru), aims to destabilize, degrade and ultimately destroy Nigeria. The groups object to what they consider the corrupting influence of Western civilisation and seek to make Nigeria (starting with the Muslim North) into a strict Islamic state. They are against democracy as a system of government and believe it is unlawful for Muslims to subject themselves to constitutional governments.

The most prominent of the groups, Boko Haram is ideologically linked to Al Qaeda and has pledged loyalty to ISIL. It successfully recruits members from amongst the general public by targeting disaffected youths with limited knowledge of Islam and vulnerable Muslims searching for meaning, offering hope and a sense of belonging. Charismatic extremist leaders manipulate religious texts as justification for an alternative movement.

Now faced with this bedevilling situation, the office of National Security Adviser came up with a new approach to countering it, called the Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) programme, or soft approach to countering violent extremism. This involves the use of various methods that includes; first, working with civil society and other stakeholders to counter the efforts at recruitment of members in communities and check the spread of radicalisation; the second is de radicalisation of already radicalised members of the group; and the third is strategic communication that seeks to counter the spread of violent extremist ideology in the society with counter narratives.

In order to implement the first method of working with civil society and other stakeholders, the Strategy Against Violent Extremism, (SAVE) project was set up by the office of the National Security Adviser. The SAVE project with the support of the UN and EUTANS facilitated the creation of a network of partners that included civil society organisations and representatives of government agencies, to collaborate and work together on this all important efforts at countering extremist violence. This network that has now emerged is called Partnership Against Violent Extremism (PAVE)

PAVE intends to be an inclusive network that will reach out to all stakeholders, particularly at the grassroots level to strive to find sustainable solutions by addressing the underlying causes of violent extremism.

This document explains the strategy that PAVE will use to that!

Problem Analysis

Nigeria, perhaps for the first time in its history is faced with a major problem of violent ideological extremism that is threatening the country. The problems (not according to any priority) inherent in this can be further be broken down and identified as follows;

- I. Destabilisation of the country and its destruction
- II. Escalation of violence characterised by bombings, killings and maiming
- III. Security difficulties, little peace, particularly in the North East
- IV. Recruitment of citizens, particularly disaffected and idle youth, without or with skills and inadequate education. Others searching for a meaning to life but with little knowledge of Islam, and in need of sense of belonging
- V. Radicalisation of these recruits and other people in society to believe in the ideology of corrupting influence of Western civilisation and making of Nigeria (starting with the Muslim North) to a strict Islamic state.
- VI. Manipulation of religious text by charismatic extremist leaders
- VII. Non self regulation of religious teachings by Islamic clerics
- VIII. Poor community support to its members on skills, education and income
- IX. Poor detection of security challenges or threats by communities
- X. Bomb attacks on western style structures and institutions and killings of people who believe in such systems. Example of these are the attacks on schools, banks, offices, military and police structures and Churches and Mosques
- XI. Kidnappings of girls, women and men for domestic chores, membership and other desires
- XII. Economic sabotage by destroying markets, banks and stalling business transactions
- XIII. Refugees and displaced persons, particularly women and children created by attacks on villages and towns
- XIV. Enhancement of poverty by denying many of sources of livelihood and properties
- XV. Spread of social ills of rape, unwanted pregnancy, street begging, etc

Now taking a next step in problem analysis, these problems can be grouped as follows;

Categorisation	Group of Problems
Futuristic problem, that has not occurred yet, but afraid it may occur if threat is not checked	I. Destabilisation of the country and its destruction
Immediate problems, what we are seeing happening now	I. Escalation of violence characterised by bombings, killings and maiming II. Security difficulties, little peace, particularly in the North East

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> III. Bomb attacks on western style structures and institutions and killings of people who believe in such systems. Example of these are the attacks on schools, banks, offices, military and police structures and Churches and Mosques IV. Kidnappings of girls, women and men for domestic chores, membership and other desires
<p>Also immediate problems that we are witnessing now, but as consequences of the above violence and killing actions –</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Economic sabotage by destroying markets, banks and stalling business transactions II. Refugees and displaced persons, particularly women and children created by attacks on villages and towns III. Enhancement of poverty by denying many of sources of livelihood and properties IV. Spread of social ills of rape, unwanted pregnancy, street begging, etc
<p>Intermediate problems that lead to the immediate ones in the two rows above</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Recruitment of citizens, particularly disaffected and idle youth, and in need of sense of belonging II. Radicalisation of these recruits and other people in society to believe in the ideology of corrupting influence of Western civilisation and making of Nigeria (starting with the Muslim North) to a strict Islamic state. III. Manipulation of religious texts by extremist leaders
<p>The root problems, causes of all other problems above</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Youth without or with little skills II. Inadequate education.

	III. Little knowledge of Islam, IV. Non self regulation of religious teachings by Islamic clerics V. Poor community support to its members on skills, education and income VI. Poor detection of security challenges or threats by communities
--	---

Accordingly and in line with the concept of problem analysis, if the problem of violent extremism in Nigeria is to be addressed, solutions must be found to all the root causes. As such the following

Root problems		Solutions
I.	Youth without or with little skills	Provide skills to the youth
II.	Inadequate education among the young people	Provide good education to them
III.	Little knowledge of Islam,	Dissemination of the right teachings of Islam
IV.	Non self regulation of religious teachings by Islamic clerics	Religious organisations to self regulate clerics
V.	Poor community support to its members on skills, education and income	Support communities to provide community support mechanism
VI.	Poor detection of security challenges or threats by communities	Support communities to set up early warning system

Now we can go back to our first table on categorisation and insert other solutions/objectives, goals, mission and vision as applicable.

Categorisation	Group of Problems	Solutions
<p>Futuristic problem, that has not occurred yet, but afraid it may occur if threat is not checked</p>	<p>I. Destabilisation of the country and its destruction</p>	<p><i>This is a future problem that has not occurred but can be prevented. A positive statement on it can read</i></p> <p>“To prevent the destabilisation and destruction of Nigeria that will ensure a stable and sustainable Country”</p> <p>And this is a vision because it can only be attained in the long future- maybe not even be attainable but hopeful about it.</p> <p>A vision statement for PAVE can therefore be:</p> <p>A Nigeria that is peaceful, stable and enjoying sustainable progress”</p> <p>A mission statement for PAVE can then read:</p> <p>“ PAVE works to advocate for policies and interventions as well as implement programmes that will ensure the eradication of violent extremism, leading to a peaceful and stable Nigeria”</p> <p>This has linked the mission to the goal below.</p>
<p>Immediate problems, what we are seeing happening now before our eyes</p>	<p>I. Escalation of violence characterised by bombings, killings and maiming</p> <p>II. Security difficulties, little peace, particularly in the North East</p> <p>III. Bomb attacks on western</p>	<p>If solutions to the root causes below work, gradually all these problems will stop in time to come.</p> <p>So achieving the reduction or eradication of these problems should be the goal of PAVE.</p>

	<p>style structures and institutions and killings of people who believe in such systems. Example of these are the attacks on schools, banks, offices, military and police structures and Churches and Mosques</p> <p>IV. Kidnappings of girls, women and men for domestic chores, membership and other desires</p>	<p><i>There is need to note here that it is not the issue of prevention because these problems have already occurred! And will take a long time to reduce or eradicate</i></p> <p>So the goal should be:</p> <p>“Eradicate/reduce violent extremism in Nigeria”</p> <p><i>(Note also that solutions to these problems will be pursued by the Military counter attacks)</i></p>
<p>Also immediate problems that we are witnessing now, but as consequences of the above violence and killing actions –</p>	<p>I. Economic sabotage by destroying markets, banks and stalling business transactions</p> <p>II. Refugees and displaced persons, particularly women and children created by attacks on villages and towns</p> <p>III. Enhancement of poverty by denying many of sources of livelihood and properties</p> <p>IV. Spread of social ills of rape, unwanted pregnancy, street begging, etc</p>	<p>In the long run these problems will also be solved.</p> <p>Meanwhile the only thing that can be done is to provide succour and assistance to victims. Funds for economic rejuvenation and reconstruction of communities as well as rehabilitation of victims, etc</p> <p><i>PAVE can certainly provide support to displaced persons and other victims by providing donations of food items, clothing and motivational support, among others. So this can form into an objective for PAVE</i></p>
<p>Intermediate problems that lead to the immediate ones in the two rows above</p>	<p>I. Recruitment of citizens, particularly disaffected and idle youth, and in need of sense of belonging</p> <p>II. Radicalisation of these recruits and other people in society to believe in</p>	<p>Once the root problems below are addressed all the problems here will go away.</p> <p>Meanwhile other interventions such as de radicalisation and strategic communication can work</p>

	<p>the ideology of corrupting influence of Western civilisation and making of Nigeria (starting with the Muslim North) to a strict Islamic state.</p> <p>III. Manipulation of religious texts by extremist leaders</p>	<p>here.</p> <p><i>There may not be a role here for PAVE</i></p>
<p>The root problems, causes of all other problems above</p>	<p>I. Youth without or with little skills</p> <p>II. Inadequate education.</p> <p>III. Little knowledge of Islam,</p> <p>IV. Non self regulation of religious teachings by Islamic clerics</p> <p>V. Poor community support to its members on skills, education and income</p> <p>VI. Poor detection of security challenges or threats by communities</p>	<p>Provide skills to the youth</p> <p>Provide good education to them</p> <p>Disseminate the right teachings of Islam</p> <p>Self regulation of clerics by religious organisations</p> <p>Support communities to provide community support mechanism for their member</p> <p>Support communities to set up early warning system in their communities</p> <p><i>All these are objectives for PAVE, but need to be grouped and reworded as done below.</i></p>

From the above analysis in the table above we have derived the following;

- I. A vision statement for PAVE can therefore be:
“A Nigeria that is peaceful, stable and enjoying sustainable progress”
- II. A mission statement for PAVE can then read:
“PAVE works to advocate for policies and interventions as well as implement programmes that will ensure the eradication of violent extremism, leading to a peaceful and stable Nigeria”
- III. The Goal should be “Eradicate/reduce violent extremism in Nigeria”
- IV. The objectives will be as follows;

- To increase awareness among stakeholders in Nigeria, including PAVE members on the imminent threat of violent extremism and advocate for solutions to the root causes of such violent extremism which includes lack of skills, jobs, income, good education and the absence of early warning systems in vulnerable communities among others.
- To improve the capacity of PAVE members and target communities on provision of support mechanism in skills, education and income to vulnerable members as well as on setting up of early warning signals system in their respective communities
- To provide assistance to victims of violent extremism, particularly women and children
- To establish and strengthen links for information sharing between key stakeholders working towards permanent solutions to violent extremism in Nigeria.

(now after amendments and agreement on this we can go forward to identify activities for each objective, the outputs, outcomes and impacts with the theory of change. Also cost implication, providing sources of funding, action plan as well as monitoring and evaluation segments and that will be all for the strategic plan.