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14. ABSTRACT To stem the tide of radical violence in northern Nigeria, the government needs to strengthen the vocational and technical education system. The violence in northern Nigeria is at least in part the consequence of a young unemployed population living in poverty that is vulnerable to the militant message and cause of Boko Haram. High unemployment, and resultant high poverty rates, in the predominantly Muslim northern states can be combated with effective vocational and technical education programs, programs that are tailored to be compatible with the Muslim communities' mainstream values and which are specifically targeted to make use of existing resources while filling a void in the local job market. By leveraging the influence of the local clerics, state leaders, and natural resources, the government of Nigeria can bolster the existing vocational and technical education programs thus increasing enrollment and positioning the youth for meaningful employment. In addition, they must also work to rehabilitate those that have already succumbed to the violence. Rehabilitation programs have been instituted in several countries; models include those in Saudi Arabia and in Iraq (as executed by the U.S. military) have incorporated vocational and technical education programs that hold promise in preventing recidivism. Nigeria must explore these existing programs and create a unique application that will both prevent militant radicalism and preclude recidivism to violence by affording the young people an opportunity for gainful employment in the growth areas of manufacturing and industry.					
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NAVAL WAR COLLEGE

Newport, R.I.

**Northern Nigeria: Stemming the Radicalization through Vocational
Education (a Proactive Approach)**

By

**Darbi S. Dillon
GS-15/USAF**

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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Paper Abstract

Northern Nigeria: Stemming the Radicalization through Vocational Education (a Proactive Approach)

To stem the tide of radical violence in northern Nigeria, the government needs to strengthen the vocational and technical education system. The violence in northern Nigeria is at least in part the consequence of a young unemployed population living in poverty that is vulnerable to the militant message and cause of Boko Haram. High unemployment, and resultant high poverty rates, in the predominantly Muslim northern states can be combated with effective vocational and technical education programs, programs that are tailored to be compatible with the Muslim communities' mainstream values and which are specifically targeted to make use of existing resources while filling a void in the local job market. By leveraging the influence of the local clerics, state leaders, and natural resources, the government of Nigeria can bolster the existing vocational and technical education programs thus increasing enrollment and positioning the youth for meaningful employment. In addition, they must also work to rehabilitate those that have already succumbed to the violence. Rehabilitation programs have been instituted in several countries; models include those in Saudi Arabia and in Iraq (as executed by the U.S. military) have incorporated vocational and technical education programs that hold promise in preventing recidivism. Nigeria must explore these existing programs and create a unique application that will both prevent militant radicalism and preclude recidivism to violence by affording the young people an opportunity for gainful employment in the growth areas of manufacturing and industry.

Introduction/Background

High poverty and unemployment rates create tremendous challenges for any country. Add to them a radical Islamic element and the situation can become combustible. This may be especially true for northern Nigeria. The states in northern Nigeria are predominantly inhabited by Muslims; however, until now they seemed for the most part to have avoided the radical jihadist violence that is so prevalent in parts of the Middle East and in other African countries. In the last few years northern Nigeria has seen a rise in violence that is attributed to the Islamic militant group Boko Haram.

While the exact origin of Boko Haram (translated as “Western education is forbidden”) is debatable, there is general agreement that the group became most active in early 2000. Although not the only militant group in Nigeria, it has certainly become the most troublesome with over 76 separate terrorist acts attributed to their followers between 21 September 2010 and 28 February 2012.¹ Boko Haram’s base of operations is in the northern state of Borno in the city of Maiduguri; though, their activities have increasingly expanded throughout northern Nigeria.² Boko Haram’s ability to recruit members is facilitated by economics in the North. Borno and the northern states in general experience some of the highest unemployment rates (Figure 1) and have the lowest rates of wealth distribution (Figure 2) in Nigeria. When the young Muslims in the North have access to viable employment opportunities, then the appeal of militant groups like Boko Haram will decrease. To stem the tide of radical violence in northern Nigeria, the government needs to strengthen the vocational and technical education system.

¹ Forest, *Confronting the Terrorism of Boko Haram*, 135 – 142.

² Ibid., 66 – 67.

Source Data: http://nigeria.prognoz.com/DataAnalysis.aspx?key=CC_NIGERIA_SOCIAL_INDICATORS_OLAP
National Bureau of Statistics; Nigeria Statistical Data Portal

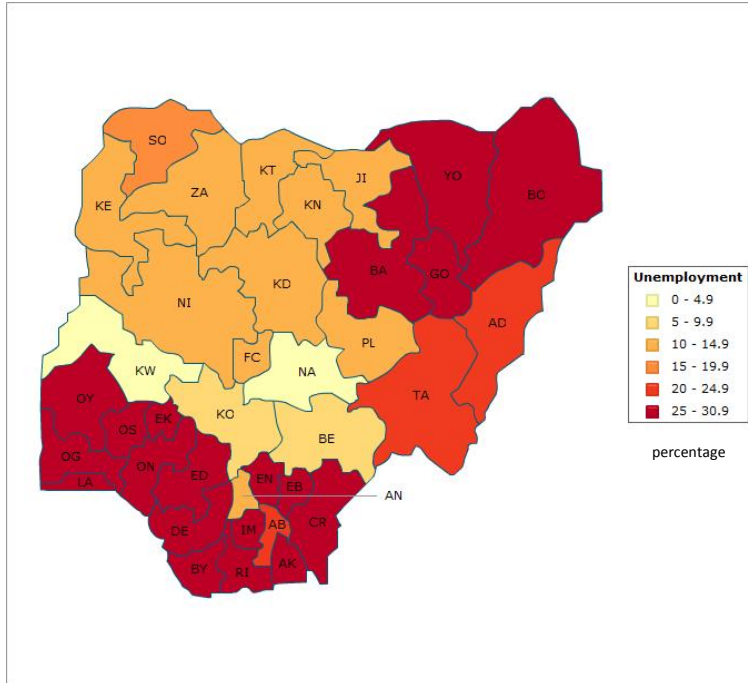
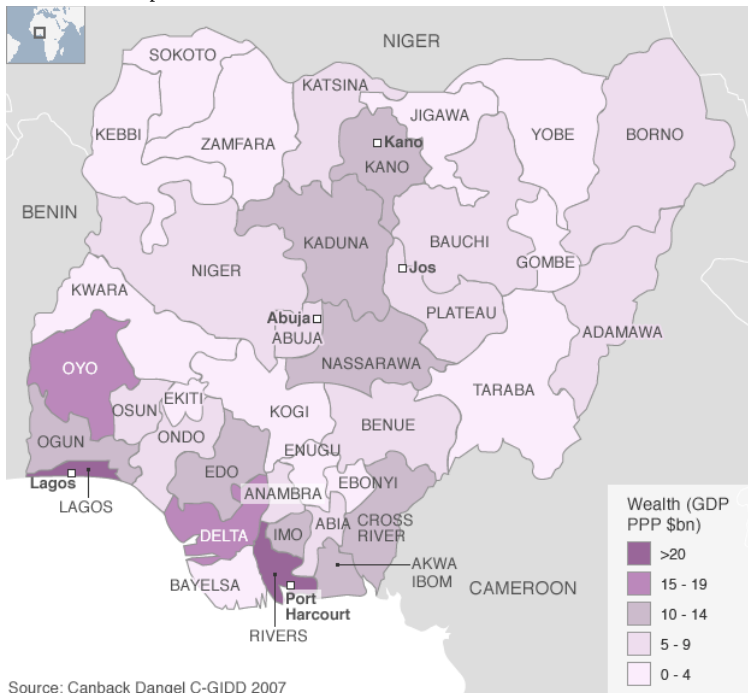


Figure 1 Unemployment by State

Source Data: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-17015873>



Source: Canback Dangel C-GIDD 2007

Figure 2 Distribution of Wealth by State

Statistics regarding Nigerian poverty rates vary depending on the source. The UN is currently attempting to verify the most recent poverty figures; however, reports indicate that poverty rates may be at, “71.5 per cent, 61.9 per cent, and 62.8 per cent using the relative, absolute and dollar-per-day measures, respectively.”³ A BBC News Africa article quoted the National Bureau of Statistics in Nigeria confirming that while the overall economy in Nigeria is growing annually, the poverty rates are continuing to rise and northern Nigeria is feeling the brunt of it. In the northern state of Sokoto the poverty rate is as high as 86.4% and the discrepancy on average between the northern states (between 77.7% and 76.3%) and the southern states (59.1%) is drastic.⁴ Poverty rates are climbing concurrent with unemployment rates. The unemployment rates in Nigeria have risen from 19.7% in 2009 to 23.9% in 2011.⁵ A relative distribution of unemployment by state as reflected in Figure 1 shows significant unemployment in the northern states to include Borno which had an unemployment rate of 26.7% at the end of 2010.⁶

The high unemployment rates along with high percentages of young people living in poverty results in a disenfranchised group seeking a way to be heard. This makes northern Nigeria particularly susceptible to Boko Haram recruitment. If these young people find gainful employment it would not only benefit the economy but would also increase their confidence and their ability to support their families without resorting to militant terrorism. While agricultural growth is critical to the Nigerian economy, on its own agricultural growth does not typically increase employment rates. Nigeria’s future lies with manufacturing and

³ Amaefule, *No Reliable Data*.

⁴ BBC News Africa, *Nigerians living in poverty*.

⁵ National Bureau of Statistics, *2011 Annual Socio-Economic Report*, 10.

⁶ National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria Statistical Data Portal
http://nigeria.prognosz.com/DataAnalysis.aspx?key=CC_NIGERIA_SOCIAL_INDICATORS_OLAP.

industrial areas that will provide employment in growth areas and reduce its reliance on oil profits. Nigeria has had vocational and technical education (VTE) programs in place for decades but enrollment rates continue to be low even though manufacturing and industry are major growth areas in Nigeria. Of those enrolled in one of the three general categories of higher education institutions (Universities, Mono/Polytechnics, and Colleges of Education), enrollment in the Mono/Polytechnic institutions decreased from 22% in 2005 to 18% in 2008- 2009.⁷ To increase enrollment in VTE programs the programs themselves must be modified to not only appeal to the northern populace but also to build on the resources and needs of the local population while filling a void in the local job market. The Nigerian government must then reach the population sectors most at risk for violent militant behavior, to include those already detained for such actions.

Tailoring to the Customer

A VTE program that is appealing to the young Muslim population in the North will reduce the high unemployment rates and thereby reduce their participation in radical Islamic movements. Nigeria has recognized that vocational and technical education is critical to combating poverty. There are hundreds of Federal, State, and private VTE institutions in Nigeria and the numbers are growing.⁸ The African Development Fund has funded Nigerian projects to increase the number of VTE institutions and to modernize some of the existing facilities and Nigeria is currently pursuing a new program with the World Bank focused in part to “provide skills (training, internship and apprenticeship) assistance to youth for employability and . . . provide conditional cash transfer to core poor and vulnerable groups

⁷ Shu'ara, *Higher Education Statistics*, 13.

⁸ National Board for Technical Education, *Directory of Accredited Programmes*.

for education.”⁹ In spite of these efforts the interest in vocational and technical education programs has not significantly increased and unemployment rates and poverty rates in the North continue to rise.¹⁰ There are multiple published articles that decry the state of the Nigerian vocational education system with recurring recommendations such as expanding computer training,¹¹ marketing to students and parents to improve the image of vocational careers,¹² improving teacher training, and updating facilities and equipment.¹³ What one does not find is discussion regarding the unique cultures and needs of the different regions, specifically the Muslim communities, and it is the Muslims that are particularly vulnerable to the allure of Boko Haram.

During colonization, the Muslim communities were allowed to maintain their Islamic schools. After the 1979 Nigerian constitution was passed, the regional governments retained significant control over the educational institutions in their region; however, much of the curricula are developed at the national level.¹⁴ This practical lack of control over content may be a force behind the negative perceptions the public tends to have regarding the VTE programs. While growing in strength and popularity, Boko Haram has not yet gained strong support of most of the northern Nigerian population. There are sufist sects, primarily Qadariyya and Tijaniyya which advocate a more mainstream version of Sunni Islam. The sufists are targets of the more radical salafists (which includes Boko Haram) just as Western

⁹ The World Bank, *Youth Employment and Social Support Operations*.

¹⁰ Shu'ara, *Higher Education Statistics*. This 2010 UNESCO presentation reflects statistics showing matriculation exam rates for entry into vocational/technical programs as compared to university entrance exams running from 15.5% in 2007, increasing in 2008 and 2009 to 20% and 22% respectively with a significant drop to 4% in October 2010. While the 2010 statistic is suspect given the dramatic decrease and the fact that it is probably based on incomplete data for 2010 (the briefing was presented 17 – 21 October 2010) the probability remains that this figure is decreased.

¹¹ Segun and Adewumi, *Vocational Education in Nigerian Junior Secondary Vocational Schools*, 113.

¹² Igbinedion and Ojeaga, *Use of Career Education*.

¹³ Kennedy, *Philosophical and Sociological Overview*.

¹⁴ Fabunmi, *Historical Analysis*, 5.

ideology and structure is.¹⁵ Jonathan Hill, Ph.D. in postcolonial politics from the University of Wales and academic advisor to the British Defence Advisory Team in Nigeria suggests that the social influence that the leaders of these sufist brotherhoods wield could be the basis for a partnership between the governments and the Muslim population. The sufists tend to have a good relationship with the state sultans which present an opportunity for collaboration regarding education at the elementary levels. The state of Sokoto's Sultan, the eminence Alhaji Muhannad Sa'ad Abubakar III, has been actively encouraging harmony within the Islamic community and partnering with the Islamic Universities to foster "right Islamic teachings."¹⁶ A well respected cleric, Ustaz Abdullahi Balala, has called for the establishment of "modern Islamic schools where young Muslims who are the future leaders can be groomed."¹⁷ Combining the efforts of the state and religious leaders is critical to encouraging Islamic moderate teachings and helping to develop VTE programs that are compatible with the Islamic beliefs and the regional resources.

Nigerians exhibit a general disrespect for vocational education. In "Voices of Youth" several young people's predicament regarding lack of employment opportunities is portrayed, including Chiioma Nwasonye, a Nigerian girl.¹⁸ Chiioma graduated from University in 2010 with a degree in Geography and Regional Planning and two years later remains unemployed. She now intends to pursue a Master's Degree in an attempt to make herself more marketable. A vocational or technical career is not an option she will consider: "My father has always made it clear to us that we must all go to universities and not polytechnics or colleges of education . . . In fact, he mandated us to obtain our master's

¹⁵ Hill, *Sufism in Northern Nigeria*, 4.

¹⁶ Daily Trust (Abuja), *Sultan Institutes Best Islamic Studies Student Award*.

¹⁷ Sule, *Cleric Calls for Modern Islamic Schools*.

¹⁸ International Monetary Fund, *Voices of Youth, Mismatched Skills in Nigeria*.

degree before he will reckon with us as graduates.”¹⁹ Another article quotes the Education Minister, Prof. Rukayat Rufai, during a speech espousing the Federal Government and UNESCO’s joint initiative to revamp VTE curricula, “to ensure that those who cannot acquire formally can have access to technical or vocational training,”²⁰ implying that VTE programs are good options only if one fails to gain acceptance into a university. A paper presented to UNESCO by the Nigerian Director of Tertiary Education even cites that vocational and technical education is the “second choice of students and parents.”²¹ However, just because the perception is common throughout Nigeria does not mean there is one blanket solution. One of the basic tenets of marketing is to know one’s customer – and all of Nigeria is not one homogeneous customer. The VTE message and programs must speak to the concerns and values of the Muslim population.

The non-profit group Winrock International has had success tailoring vocational and technical training programs to distinct cultures, with specific examples in Sierra Leone and Cambodia.²² Their Community-based Innovations to Reduce Child Labor through Education (CIRCLE) program focuses on arming children with marketable skills to prevent future abuses and poverty. The Sierra Leone CIRCLE project identified local job markets in “construction, engineering and electrical and electronic engineering.”²³ They then solicited support from these local communities and established relevant training programs. Key to the success of the CIRCLE projects is the inclusion within VTE basic and literacy education since literacy is a basic prerequisite for most successful training. The CIRCLE focus on the

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ The Vanguard, *The FG is Committed to Education for All*.

²¹ Shu'ara, *Higher Education Statistics*, 25.

²² Winrock International, *Best Practices*.

²³ Ibid., 116.

immediate local resources and needs is a resource that Nigeria may want to consider utilizing especially with respect to the northern Islamic regions.

Building the Base and Preparing for Success

To increase employment in the manufacturing and technical fields the Nigerian government must create opportunities by cultivating new industries and proactively training a relevant workforce. A common criticism of the Nigerian VTE programs is that they do not meet the needs of the cultural community or the community in which the graduates will be seeking employment. Few offer recommendations regarding exactly how to change the VTE curricula to make it more supportive. There are two sources, though, that when combined present a potential overarching plan.

First, in the Multidisciplinary Journal of Research Development, Dr. Apagu and Mr. Andural present concrete suggestions on how to make the VTE programs in Nigeria “relevant and sustainable.”²⁴ Quoting statistics from 2003 they contend that 67.76% of those who leave school at the primary level and the secondary level are unemployed.²⁵ With unemployment rates having increased since 2003 it is likely that this percentage has increased as well. The authors suggest that the training being provided is not relevant to the citizens to whom it is being offered and to garner more interest the students must be able to see the relevance to them and their families. A VTE curriculum should “first prepare Nigerians to live a happy and satisfying life in Nigeria using Nigerian technologies and materials.”²⁶ An example they use is that if people need baskets then that should be taught concurrent with the other technical skills that the local populace needs.²⁷ Curricula should be tailored to the local population. Given the discussion above, this ideology is consistent

²⁴ Apagu and Andural, *Refocusing Nigerian Vocational Education*.

²⁵ Ibid., 2.

²⁶ Ibid., 4.

²⁷ Ibid., 5

with tailoring VTE to the Islamic population. A key point is that VTE programs should execute “adaptation rather than wholesale adoption”²⁸ and discourage duplication of efforts. Import the technology as necessary and adapt them to be compatible with the indigenous skills and capabilities.²⁹ The Winrock CIRCLE program discussed above is of particular interest in this area. Tailoring VTE to the local resources and employment demands is the philosophy on which the CIRCLE programs are based and can be expanded to specifically address religious and cultural concerns.

A study by Lin and Treichel has a different perspective that claims a similar result – personalizing the manufacturing and technology that the Nigerian VTE programs will support.³⁰ Lin and Treichel researched countries that were comparable to Nigeria, identified key industries in which those countries had been successful but were now in a decline, compared those key industries to Nigeria’s existing infrastructure and resources, and identified areas in which Nigeria could focus for future growth. The study, published in 2011, highlights that Nigeria’s growth in non-oil related areas has been increasing significantly over time: “it more than doubled to over 7 percent and rose to 8 to 9 percent in recent years.”³¹ They also identify industries in which Nigeria has already established at least a minimal base on which to grow. The methodology they employed was rigorous and ultimately they identified five areas of potential future growth in which improved or added VTE would facilitate growth in that industry: construction, food processing, leather, computer assembly, and light manufacturing.

²⁸ Ibid., 6.

²⁹ Ibid., 6.

³⁰ Lin and Treichel, *Applying the Growth Identification and Facilitation Framework*.

³¹ Ibid., 4.

For the construction sector they identified the following shortfalls, “Low quality and unproductive labor inputs: shortage of skilled labor, lack of vocational training, unskilled labor exhibits low productivity.”³² (Construction VTE is an area that will be explored in the next section as a sector for which VTE training has been incorporated in detainee and prison systems.) Food processing is a special area of interest given the specific and specialized procedures required to slaughter meat for Islamic consumption. Lin and Treichel recommend, among other things, that Nigeria dispatch a team on an advisory trip to other Islamic countries to improve on the currently substandard conditions in the Nigerian Islamic abattoirs.³³ While the Islamic north should examine all of the identified areas for potential growth, food processing with an emphasis on the abattoirs is a sector in which the north has the potential to establish a niche market. The states in northern Nigeria rely on predominantly agricultural economies so a natural progression would be to investigate all areas of food processing as well.

In a monograph published by the U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, Diane Chido advocates a means to supplement organic VTE training in sub-Saharan Africa which advocates that the U.S. military through the U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) provide vocational training to the officers and non-commissioned officers of the various African countries that will serve their countries’ economic development.³⁴ AFRICOM has the ability to provide international military education and training (IMET) as part of their security cooperation programs and could use this venue to provide training in the vocational and technical areas that are lacking in Nigeria. IMET program objectives are as follows:

³² Ibid., 31.

³³ Ibid., 34 – 35.

³⁴ Chido, *Civilian Skills for African Military Officers*

- To further the goal of regional stability through effective, mutually beneficial military-to-military relations which culminate in increased understanding and defense cooperation between the United States and foreign countries; and
- To increase the ability of foreign national military and civilian personnel to absorb and maintain basic democratic values and protect internationally recognized human rights.³⁵

“Expanding on the IMET concept by establishing a single training facility in Africa would enable the U.S. military to provide engineering training.”³⁶ Chido likens the skills to be developed to those inherent in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; skills that can be used to build the African infrastructure.³⁷ While the concept of a single training facility for Africa is a long term project, the government of Nigeria could look at the potential for shorter-term IMET programs that could provide, for example, construction skills that have been identified as a deficit in the Nigerian work force. The trained Nigerian military force can then be used to supplement VTE staff.

Again, development of an experienced trained work force to support new growth industries is an area of expertise that the Winrock CIRCLE program could offer. The government of Nigeria would need to take the initiative to seek out means to support appropriate growth in the identified areas either through direct investment or by garnering private and non-profit support and then a skilled workforce will need to be in the wings to support the actual growth of those industries in Nigeria. Selectively establishing appropriate growth areas that mesh with the Islamic culture, and providing correlated training in the required skills, will lay the foundation for increased employment in the North.

Revamping Prison/Detainee System

³⁵ Defense Security Cooperation Agency, last modified November 15, 2010, http://www.dsca.mil/home/international_military_education_training.htm

³⁶ Ibid., 5.

³⁷ Chido, *Civilian Skills for African Military Officers*

Already identified violent extremists will return to violence unless the government incorporates VTE programs in the prisons and detention centers. In addition to proactively influencing the Muslim population, the Nigerian government needs to reach out to those already identified as militant radicals disposed to violence by providing practical VTE programs as part of a comprehensive rehabilitation program in the prisons and detention centers. Several countries have instituted rehabilitation programs focused on reeducating radical Muslims who have been detained. The reeducation programs generally are focused on using well-respected clerics to teach the detainees the proper interpretation of Islam. The focus is on proper interpretation of the Koran and other Islamic guides with respect to the use (or non-use) of violence, not an attempt to influence the radicals to discount Islam. The programs provide literacy education when needed to provide the individuals the ability to read the religious documents for themselves. They help identify key areas in which radicals have distorted the ideology especially with respect to the acceptance of violence as a means to an end. Also common to most of the programs is supporting the families of the detainees and including the families in the rehabilitation efforts. More recent programs instituted in Saudi Arabia and by the U.S. in Iraq have added another element which is the opportunity for the detainees to participate in vocational and technical education.

In Saudi Arabia a counterterrorism strategy called PRAC (Prevention, Rehabilitation, and After-Care) incorporates vocational and technical education as part of the rehabilitation effort.³⁸ While the counterterrorism program has been in place since 2004 it was only in 2007 that the VTE element was introduced. The Saudi program allows for VTE during detainment; however, the predominant focus is training after release from detainment. Chambers of commerce and certified VTE institutions are called upon to provide appropriate

³⁸ Boucek, *Saudi Arabia's "Soft" Counterterrorism Strategy*.

training and certification with the ultimate goal for rehabilitated militant Muslims to be able to find gainful employment and thus avoid any financial incentive to participate in the violent Islamic activities.³⁹

From 2008 through 2010, when the U.S-run detention facilities were transitioned to Iraqi control, the U.S. forces developed and executed a comprehensive rehabilitation program in three detention facilities: Camp Bucca, Camp Cropper, and Camp Taji (which replaced Camp Bucca in 2009).⁴⁰ In 2008, supplementing an existing detainee rehabilitation program, the U.S developed a VTE program at Camp Bucca. This program differs from the one in Saudi Arabia in that the VTE programs at Camp Bucca were offered while the students were being held in the detention centers. The program was built upon the ideal that,

. . . unless a detainee has a marketable skill, once he walks out the gate, chances are high that in little time he will end up in the very situation that caused him to be detained in the first place. In cultures wrapped up tightly in ideals, such as respect, showing face, and providing for one's family, you will essentially set an individual up for failure if you do not equip him with marketable skills to succeed.”⁴¹

By 2010, the programs offered included, “agriculture, masonry, sewing, carpentry, and Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC).”⁴² Many of these programs were then instituted in the other detainee facilities at Camp Cropper and Camp Taji. Most of the instructors were from the local community. Not only did they know what the local certification requirements were but they also provided legitimacy to the programs. U.S.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Angell and Gunaratna, *Terrorist Rehabilitation*.

⁴¹ Ibid., 271.

⁴² Ibid., 272.

skills proved useful as well. Camp Taji's agriculture program benefitted greatly from a reservist that had an agriculture degree.

Many of the programs were mutually beneficial; for example, the carpentry program provided planters for the agriculture program and built facilities within the camps. Detainees were not paid for training time; however, especially in the carpentry and masonry programs, could be reimbursed for work that they did that supported the detention centers. These programs built a basis for the detainees to attain practical work when released and gave them confidence that they had a productive future ahead for them and their families.

The vocational training programs provided by the Saudi Arabian government and the U.S. in Iraq were part of comprehensive rehabilitation programs. In both programs, well before vocational training, the detainees are exposed to religious training that attempts to correct their misunderstanding about the true nature of Islam. In addition, the Saudi program tracks the individuals after release and ensures continued religious counseling is available as well as employment assistance. In Iraq the detention centers were transferred to the government of Iraq when the U.S. troops withdrew so it is unknown whether follow-up care and employment assistance has been implemented.⁴³ The desired result is exemplified in a quote from a "carpentry detainee student:

First thing I am going to do is start fixing things inside my house. Then after that, I am going to start working. I am professional now, so I know what to do. Because when I leave here [detention center], I am not coming back (personal interview, January 29, 2010)."⁴⁴

To implement a similar rehabilitation program with a VTE element requires Nigeria to be able to segregate the militant Islamic detainees first, and then enlist credible local support from the Islamic clerics and from the local businesses. The current backlog of prisoners

⁴³ Ibid.,

⁴⁴ Ibid., 301 – 302.

waiting for case processing in the Nigerian prison system is another challenge that will need to be addressed. While definitely a long-term and complicated initiative, training those predisposed to militant violence prior to release from detention will serve the public, the economy, and the individual well.

Once the prisoners are segregated the Nigerian military should avail themselves of the resources of AFRICOM. “The IMET objectives are achieved through a variety of military education and training activities conducted by the DoD for foreign military and civilian officials.”⁴⁵ AFRICOM can access the personnel who had been involved in creating the rehabilitation programs in Iraq and provide the requisite assistance to establish a similar, albeit tailored, program. This type of support clearly falls within the objectives of the IMET programs and as evidenced on the AFRICOM web site, Nigeria is already participating in IMET programs although the web site does not identify specific projects.⁴⁶

Conclusion

In the northern Nigerian states, the combination of high unemployment and disproportionately high poverty rates creates a young Muslim population that is vulnerable to the salifist violence exhorted by the Boko Haram. The manufacturing and industrial sectors are growing and thus provide opportunities for employment provided the population views these sectors as respectable and viable options and the vocational and technical training programs are appealing to the Muslim population. The government of Nigeria needs to foster specifically identified growth industries that fit well with the culture and resources of the North and individualize the requisite training. State governments and the local well-

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ U.S. Africa Command, “U.S. Africa Command Fact Sheet, IMET,” last modified October 2012, http://www.africom.mil/searchDocuments.asp?q=technical%20training&sort=date:D:L:d1&btnG=Search&output=xml_no_dtd&ie=UTF8&oe=UTF8&client=africom&site=AFRICOM&num=10&start=0

resected clerics of the sufist persuasion should lead education on Islamic values and tenets and assist in personalizing the VTE programs ensuring a good fit with Islam.

In addition to reaching out to the unemployed youth, those already detained and/or convicted of violent crimes pursuant to attaining jihadist goals provide a captive audience for vocational training provided it is part of a comprehensive Islamic rehabilitation program. Reeducation programs have been instituted in several countries but the vocational training concurrent with reeducation has only been executed in Saudi Arabia and Iraq thus far. These programs have the potential to reduce recidivist violence. The greater potential, however, is to exponentially grow the stability inherent in self-sufficiency and family stability that gainful employment provides those successfully completing these programs and their families. The greater community benefits from their example and influence as well.

The ability to reduce militant violence in northern Nigeria through vocational and technical education is extensive. It starts with the young people in secondary school through efforts like the CIRCLE program that identify localized opportunities and develop specific training in those areas which are facilitated by national and state government efforts to encourage growth in specific areas of opportunity. Local government and sufist Islamic religious leaders can facilitate not only the local training efforts but are also critical to reaching those already influenced by salifist messages and have been convicted or detained for militant violence already. The common theme is to respect the Islamic culture and assist the northern states in developing training and employment opportunities that are compatible with their beliefs and values.

Recommendations

The Nigerian government needs to focus on three inter-related areas: encouraging the individualized development of VTE curricula by involving the Islamic clerics and the regional governments, consciously developing manufacturing and industrial opportunities that leverage the inherent resources of Nigeria and then developing VTE programs that will feed those industries, and creating rehabilitation programs for detained militant Muslims that will prepare them for productive employment upon their release thus providing a resilience to the Boko Haram influence.

Nigeria does not need to recreate the wheel. There are existing projects initiated by Nigeria and supplemented with support from USAID and UNESCO that are helping identify VTE areas for improvement; however, none appear to focus on the uniqueness of the Muslim communities in the North. Nigeria should pursue assistance from the Winrock CIRCLE program which focuses on regional expertise, resources, and needs to develop VTE programs unique to each area. They should concurrently explore manufacturing and industrial opportunities in growth areas of construction, food processing, leather, computer assembly, and light manufacturing and establish complementary VTE programs to support the growth areas. AFRICOM has extensive resources and can be a significant source of vocational and technical expertise for the government of Nigeria. And finally, the Nigerian government should research the rehabilitation programs that were instituted in other countries, with emphasis on the one in Saudi Arabia and the ones that the U.S. created in Iraq. Again, AFRICOM can be a source of advice and expertise in this area as well. Without providing employment opportunities for the high risk population detained for militant violence the risk is high that upon release these people will return to supporting the Boko Haram or like-minded organizations.

The government of Nigeria has the opportunity to impact Boko Haram's ability to recruit members by improving the young Muslim population's employment and economic prospects. High quality vocational and technical education programs that are respected by the local population and prepare them for pertinent industries will increase employment prospects and thereby reduce the poverty rates. The CIRCLE program, USAID, UNESCO, and AFRICOM are just a few of the existing organizations able to assist Nigeria.

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