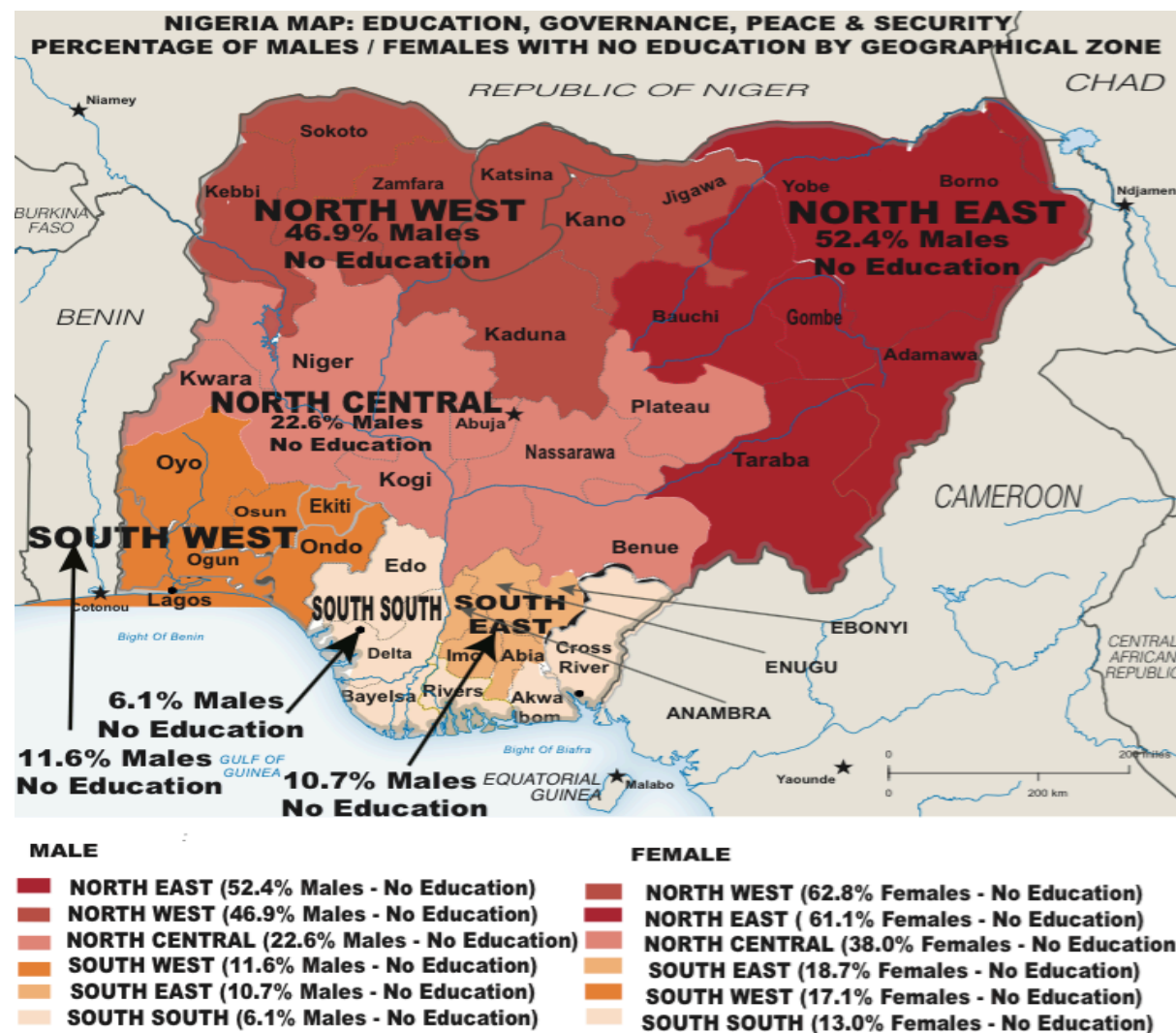




Nelson Mandela: "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

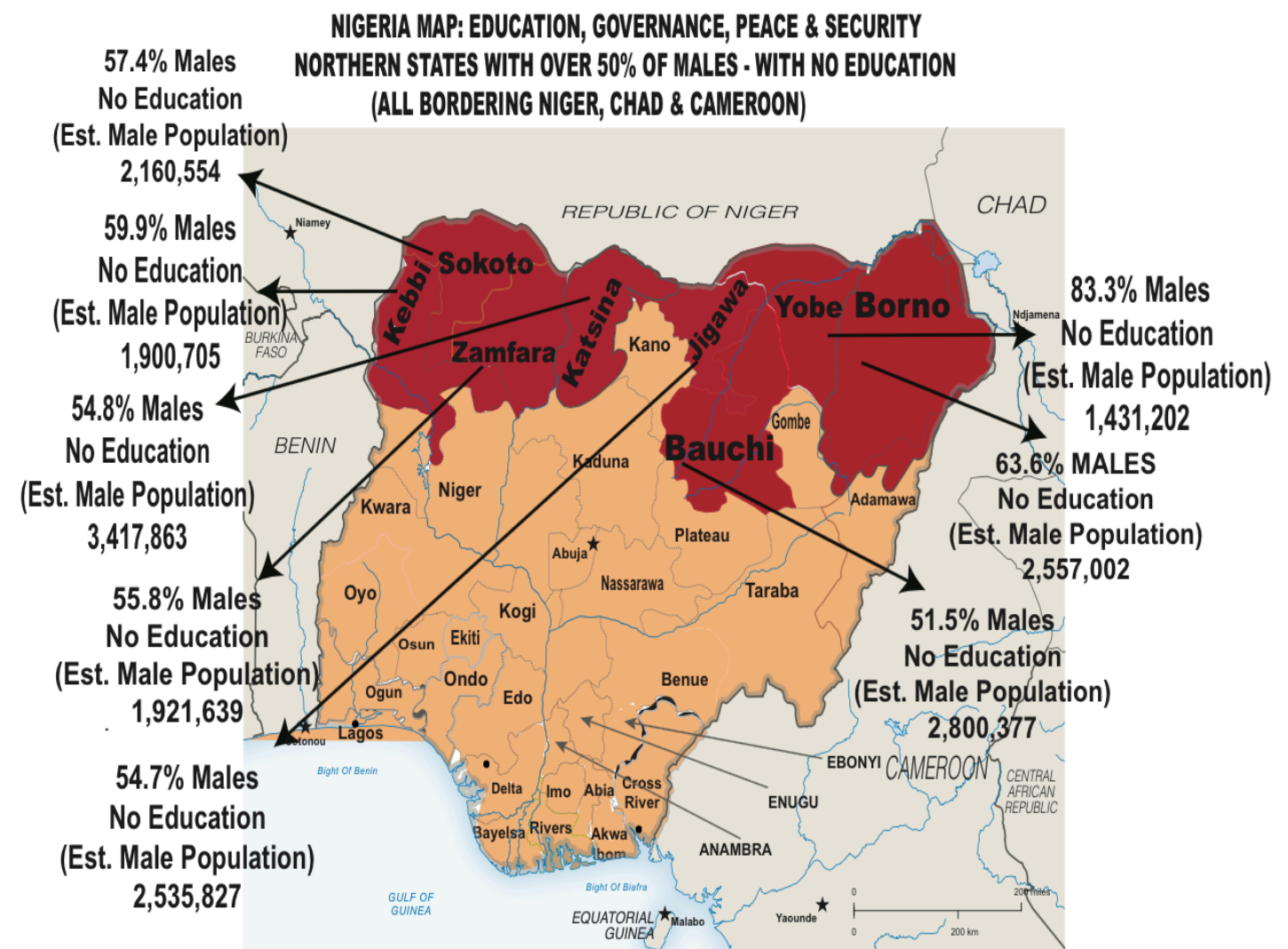
Ban Ki Moon (UN Secretary General): "Eliminating terrorism requires international solidarity and a multifaceted approach - among the many tools we must use, we must also tackle the underlying conditions that provide violent extremist groups the opportunity to take root."

It's peaceful societies and respect for human rights. It's education, jobs and real opportunity. It's leaders who listen to their people and uphold the rule of law. Missiles may kill terrorists. But good governance kills terrorism."



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Figure 1.



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Figure 2.

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❖ North East, North West State's And Federal Government Not Acting On Evidence From Socio-Economic Data And Indicators

Whatever the specific origins of the group Ahlussunna lid-Da'wa wal Jihad (more un-popularly known as Boko Haram) socio-economic and human development data indicate its rise to prominence and growth cannot be fully understood unless examined in the context of weak governance, poor socio-economic conditions and underdevelopment it has brutally and skillfully exploited - to advance its extremist goals; and in particular the inter-linkages between Education, Youth Development, Governance, Peace and Security.

Once the picture becomes clearer, the futility of a solely military solution to the problem also becomes reasonably obvious.

Boko Haram is nothing if not an expression of dramatic irony - the name by which it is more un-popularly known is said by various experts to either mean "Non Islamic / Misleading/ or Western Education is Forbidden". The name is in itself a clue to the poor socio-economic conditions it has exploited to create insecurity in the geo political zone of North East Nigeria - and beyond.

In North East Nigeria most affected by Boko Haram an astonishing majority of 52% of all males over the age of 6 years have not had access to any form of education - leading to un-employability, impoverishment, and destitution on a mass scale. Estimated number of males in North East States is 11.4 million (See Figure 1)

In Yobe and Borno states (2 of the states until recently under state of emergency) an unbelievable 83.3% and 63.6% of all males over the age of 6 years have not had access to any form of education. (See Figure 2)

While North East Nigeria has suffered the most insecurity, it is not the only geo political zone susceptible to the message of extremism. North West Nigeria is also highly at risk, with 46.9% of males having no education. In four out of 7 of the North East states, a majority of well over 50% of males aged above 6 years have also had no access to any education. (See Figure's 1 and 2)

The saying "If you think education is expensive, try ignorance" has never been more true - both for Nigeria and neighboring countries to the North. In the past weeks Boko Haram has carried out increasing numbers of cross border raids into Cameroon, Chad, and Niger Republic.

Significantly, in almost every North East and North West Nigerian state that borders Niger Republic, Chad, and part of Cameroon - the percentage of males over 6 years old that have not had access to any education are in the clear majority - ranging from Yobe 83% (North East), Borno 63.6% (North East), Kebbi 59.9% (North West), Sokoto 57.4% (North West), Zamfara 55.8% (North West), Katsina 54.8% (North West), Jigawa 54.7% (North West) - along with Bauchi 51.5 (North East) - a bit further inland. Very significantly, the percentages of uneducated males across these 8 states translate into roughly half of a combined male population of 18.7 million - creating a large pool of penury, misery, destitution, vulnerability, and potential sympathizers for Boko Haram. (See Figure's 1 and 2)

Not surprisingly these states also have the highest percentages of males that cannot read or write, and also have the lowest percentages of males that have attained secondary school education or higher. In other slightly less affected North East and North West states the percentages of males over 6 years that have had no education range from 28% to 46%. ([See scorecard / http://ow.ly/JfBwE](http://ow.ly/JfBwE))

If state and federal officials continue to avoid acknowledging and acting on the weak governance and poor socio-economic conditions Boko Haram has exploited - and in particular the poor state of education and youth development - the apparent mystery will continue to grow as to why exactly Boko Haram "has not been militarily defeated" - and hundreds of millions of dollars more will be expended trying to impose an exclusively military solution to contain an insurgency problem fueled by underdevelopment.

Clearly not every uneducated male in North East and North West Nigeria are members of, or even sympathizers of Boko Haram. But if just 10%, or even 1% of the above numbers empathize with, or are vulnerable to Boko Haram's brutal indoctrination - this would translate into roughly tens, or hundreds of thousands. Exclusion and marginalization from modern society on this scale (in the face of poor governance and opulent 'fat cat' officials) translates into a large pool of resentment and potential sympathizers for Boko Haram.

Extremists of various types exist on all continents, and some are well educated. However they are generally individuals or small groups - unless presented (through weak governance, poor socio-economic conditions, marginalization, persecution, irrational fears, or other reasons for mass resentment) - with the incredible gift of hundreds, tens of thousands, or hundreds of thousands of potential sympathizers and recruits - and the real possibility of expanding into a trans-national anti-social movement.

❖ The Sociology Of Boko Haram

Significantly and for a group that is apparently against education, Boko Haram seems to have a better understanding of sociology than the Governments of North East and North West Nigeria. It even appears that Boko Haram is implementing an evidence-based policy of spreading insecurity - whereas state and federal governments are not acting on the evidence.

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Sociologists have long established that large groups of uneducated, unemployed / unemployable, socially excluded, marginalized (and by extension resentful) young men are more likely to behave unlawfully, be less governable and more vulnerable to forming or joining groups or gangs prone to anti social, criminal and, or extremist behavior - and Boko Haram has skillfully exploited this.

In urban centers especially in poverty stricken slums across the world, such scenarios have led to existence of armed gangs numbering in hundreds, or even thousands with designated territorial influence; and extremists have now been known to step up recruitment in prisons in the Western world.

When large groups of uneducated, unemployed / unemployable, socially excluded, marginalized (and by extension resentful) young men, cluster in tens or hundreds of thousands in vast geographical areas where there is little or no governance presence (few schools, no social amenities, no jobs etc.) - it does not take much imagination to see how the introduction of extremists like Boko Haram that (fill the governance gap) provide arms, some training, brutal indoctrination - facilitate a crude reward system of looting villages and towns, and mass abductions of young girls and women - can quickly translate into a significant anti-social movement - leading to mass insecurity, and the displacement of millions of citizens - and therein lies the problem. It is even questionable whether uneducated / non-literate, indoctrinated males consumed by looting and abduction of girls have any real understanding of religion?

Evidently it is easier to be against education, when or where the majority have been completely excluded from the educational and human development process; and by extension it is easier to attack schools - in places where schoolgirls and schoolboys are a minority.

The attack on Chibok town, abduction of the Chibok schoolgirls, and the saga that has followed highlights more than anything else the poor official understanding of (or refusal to acknowledge) the scale of underdevelopment (and why it may happen again).

In other words, the tendency is that the social weight of a majority that have been marginalised from education, from literacy, jobs, and from participating in modern society are more likely (under the brutal spearhead of extremists) - to drag societies down to their level - and in the process help further extremist goals.

The Governor of Borno State is on record as stating repeatedly that Boko Haram cannot be Nigerian's. It may be more accurate to say that a significant percentage of youth in Borno may feel that they have been excluded from Nigeria, and have fallen into the embrace of Boko Haram.

The inability, refusal or poor capacity of state and federal government officials to interpret and act on human and social development data fully at their disposal - to connect education and governance to peace and security - underlines their retreat into disbelief.

Hence, multiple conspiracy theories amongst the political elite, and a distinct growth industry around accusations and counter accusations between politicians of being "*sponsors of Boko Haram*", and "*enemies of Nigeria*". *Even the Presidency has suggested that there may be Boko Haram Sympathizers in the government.*

The real problem is not that Boko Haram may have sponsors (whether real or imagined). The real problem is that poor socio-economic conditions exist which Boko Haram is able to exploit. Without these conditions, Boko Haram would be a small isolated group instead of the estimated 6,000 to 10,000 core; and tens or hundreds of thousands of potential sympathizers and recruits.

Exploiting the hysteria amongst the political elite, fake Boko Haram groups have also apparently emerged to negotiate with and extort resources in exchange for fake ceasefires; with the government seemingly falling for at least one hoax promise to release the Chibok schoolgirls.

As if the real Boko Haram is not bad enough, there is now apparently competition from '419' Boko Haram. If the consequences were not so serious, it might actually be funny. But this is no laughing matter.

If (as is very likely) more atrocities are committed by Boko Haram in its desperation to demonstrate it cannot be defeated, there will be little patience for 'sociology'. But the authorities will have to come back to this. Even if the estimated 6,000 to 10,000 core are all captured - what happens next? Both to them, their sympathizers, and the poor conditions that created the sympathizers?

❖ A Multisectoral Human And Social Development Strategy For Peace And Security

The evidence that education and youth development are drivers of economic growth is well established. It appears incontrovertible that they are just as important for governance, peace and security.

As the insecurity spreads - health, human, social and economic development are dragged backwards in the North East - education is now a high risk activity; maternal and child mortality are on the

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rise; vaccinations are not being given to children; treatment and prevention of HIV, TB and Malaria have suffered; Neglected Tropical Diseases will be further neglected; gender equality, girls and women's rights, health and development are receiving a battering; clean drinking water is a rarity, and malnutrition and stunting are growing. If North East Nigeria were a country, it would not be far from the bottom of the global human development index.

The clear lesson from the growth of Boko Haram is that provision of education for millions of children and youth cannot be relegated to the level of personal business - for the simple reason that it has an impact not just on human development and civilization - but also on governance, peace and security - not in one country, but sub-regionally and possibly globally.

It is no exaggeration to say the growth of groups like Boko Haram is one reason why the Millennium Development Goal of Universal Primary Education cannot be ignored by governments without consequence. It is also why basic education is free and compulsory in all developed societies - as it should be in every society.

No army - whether national or a regional intervention force, and no matter how well armed and determined - could sustainably implement a permanent or exclusively military solution to insecurity - in the absence of a dual strategy to urgently resolve poor socio-economic conditions that ensure potential sympathizers of an insurgency may be as high as tens of or several hundred thousand.

The Governors of North East (and North West) Nigeria along with the federal government which has oversight responsibility owe the country (and ECOWAS sub-region) an explanation as to why the inter-linkages between education, governance, peace and security situation in North East and North West Nigeria have not been well addressed - to the extent that an armed group has been able to grow exponentially, acquiring the capacity to take over and hold dozens of towns and villages - potentially destabilize the entire country, and neighboring countries, and compel the creation of sub regional intervention force - that may become bogged down in a very long conflict.

If the refusal to address these linkages continues, and North West Nigeria also falls firmly into the grip of Boko Haram (and in the process expanding the conflict well into Niger Republic, Chad and Cameroon) it will be an even bigger governance blunder than in the North East.

When (or if) it happens - the military pacification of the territories affected Boko Haram will be the easy part. The difficult part will be the separation of hard core Boko Haram from the wider circle of empathizers, sympathizers and recruits tipped towards Boko Haram by marginalization and poor socio-economic conditions.

Going forward, improved policy and massive investment in education, youth and population based development must be factored into the Peace and Security Architecture for Nigeria and the ECOWAS sub region - and the lesson must extend to the rest of Africa, if not globally.

By 2030 - within 15 years - Nigeria alone is expected to add an estimated 92 million youth to its population - roughly equivalent to the current population of Egypt or Ethiopia. The planning for their schools, teachers and development training should have commenced already (to avoid possibility of even wider insecurity in the near future). Such population growth - driven by poor family planning, very high fertility rates - and underpinned by underage/child /forced 'marriages', multiple 'wives' and gender inequality - raises real possibility of a demographically driven catastrophe.

Nigeria, Chad and Niger Republic already affected by Boko Haram are amongst a group of countries with 30% or more of primary school children out of school. In Nigeria this translates to an estimated 8.7 million children. (See Figures 3 and 4 - on page 5)

Sustainable peace in North East, North West Nigeria and bordering countries will require long term investment of tens of millions of dollars in schools and colleges for boy and girl children; adult education and vocational training for millions of men and women - overall population and social development - and crucially the re-orientation of many combatants.

ECOWAS Finance and Development Ministers must meet urgently with Education and Youth Development Ministers on improved policy and investment for all of North East, North West Nigeria and bordering countries - inclusive of protection of schools; and girls / women from gender based violence. Improved and better targeted domestic investment should be supported by the African Development Bank and similar institutions.

All Governors of North East and North West Nigerian states need to urgently develop a youth development and education Marshall Plan with the federal government to avert wider insecurity and instability - inclusive of protection of schools; and girls / women from gender based violence.

In particular, Universal Primary Education, International Goals on Youth Development and Education - from the International Conference on Population & Development (ICPD) Beyond 2014, and Post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals - require urgent financing in North East, North West Nigeria and bordering countries - inclusive of gender equality.

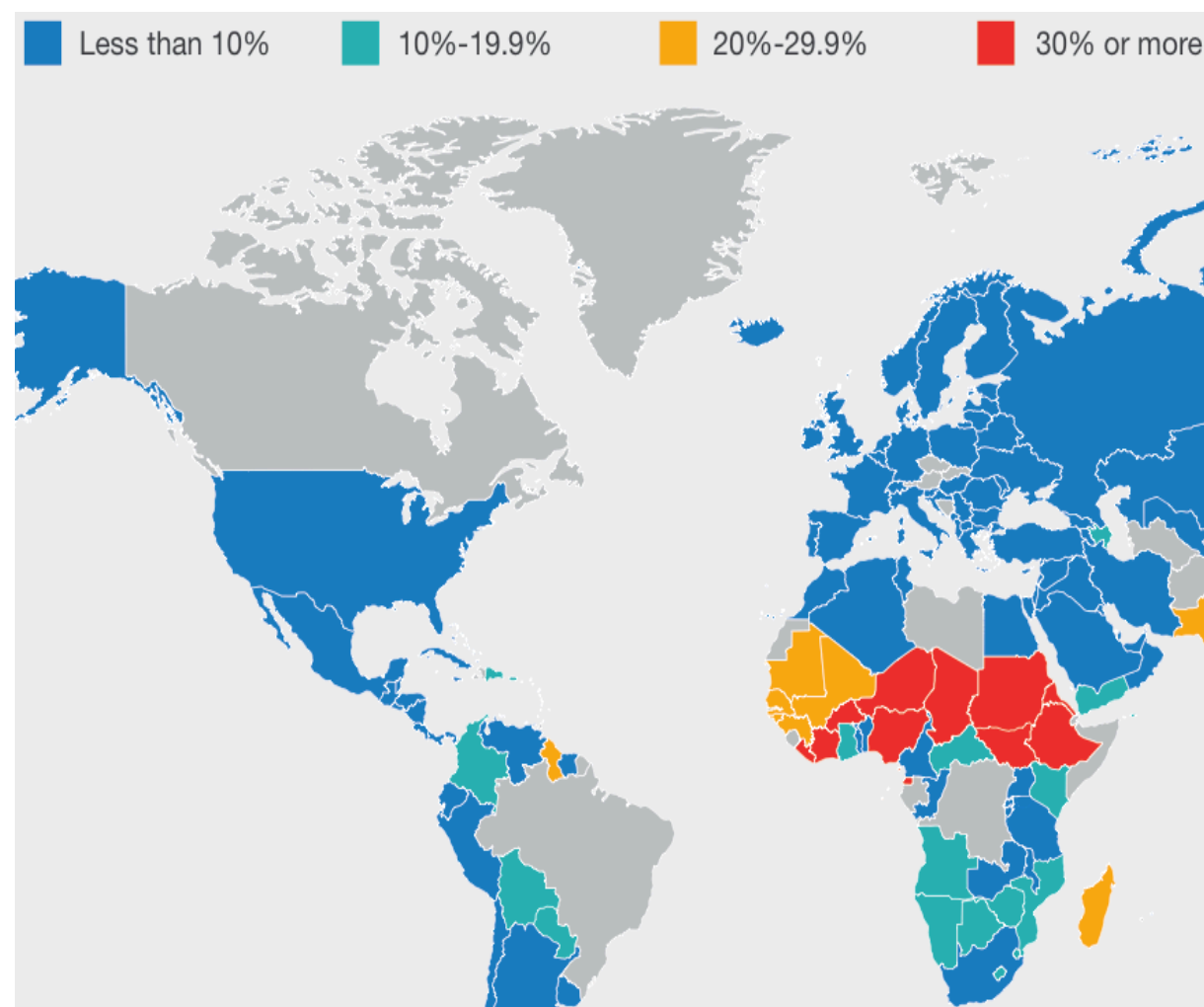
Without a dual human and social development approach addressing the underlying problem of underdevelopment - especially a strong focus on education and youth development - the military

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(including the regional intervention force) which is trained for war, and not development - may in its anxiety to demonstrate that it is capable of 'defeating' Boko Haram (in six weeks) - go into over kill mode - and then be perceived as an occupying force by a significant percentage of the population of states where many already probably feel excluded from governance.

Figure 3.

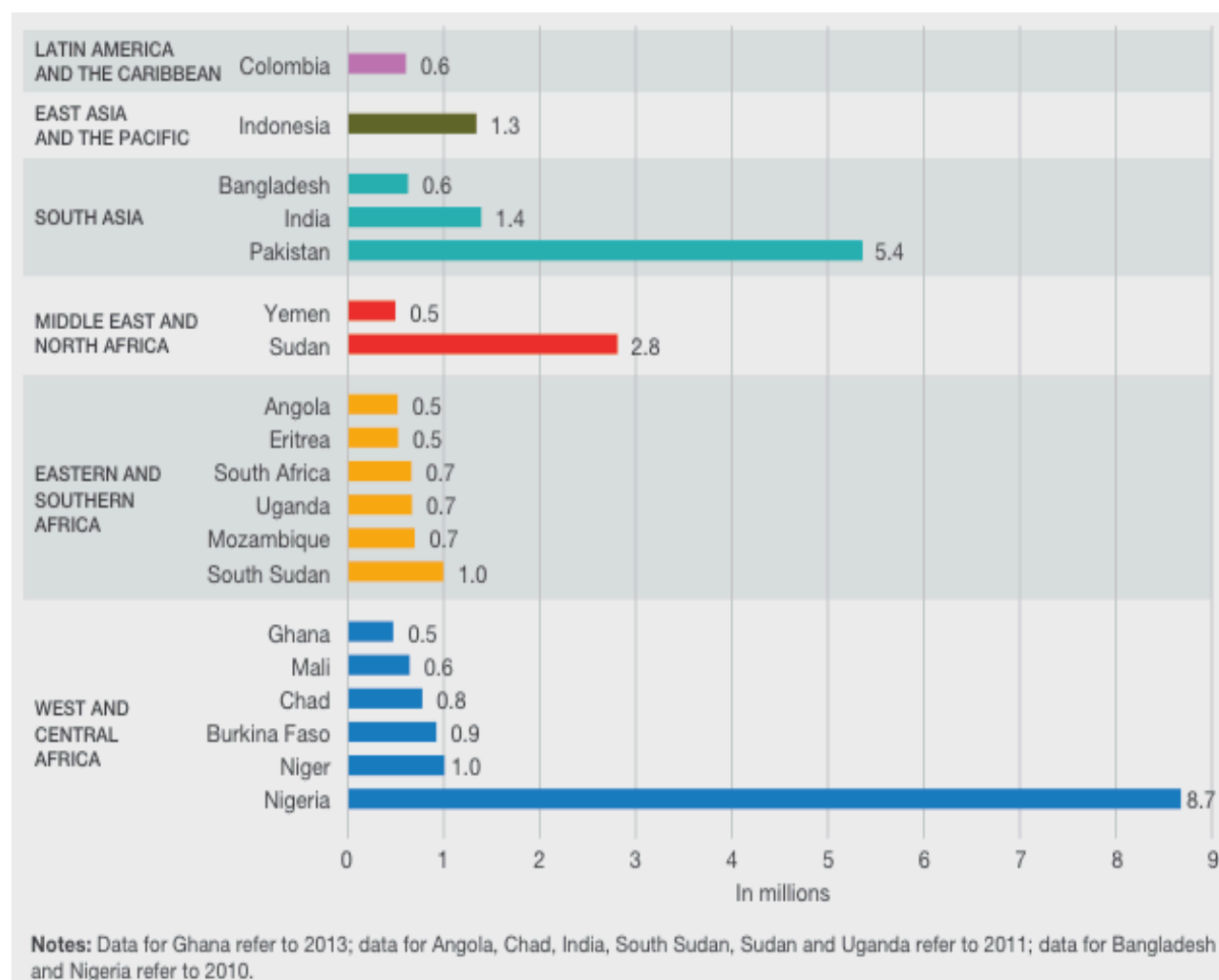
**Percentage of out-of-school children of primary school age
(Including Nigeria, Niger Republic and Chad)**



Note: Data refer to the latest year available between 2002 and 2012.
Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2014

Figure 4.

Selected countries with more than 0.5 million out-of-school children (of primary school age). By region, 2012 or latest available year.



Notes: Data for Ghana refer to 2013; data for Angola, Chad, India, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda refer to 2011; data for Bangladesh and Nigeria refer to 2010.
Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2014

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Main sources for study summarized in publication: Africa, Health, Human & Social Development Information Service (Afri-Dev.Info); National Bureau of Statistics; Nigerian Population Commission; Nigeria Baseline Youth Survey Report; Nigeria MDG Survey Reports; Nigeria Demographic Health Surveys; UNESCO Global Database; UNICEF Global Databases based on Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS); Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS);

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