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Insurgency and the Invisible Displaced Population in Nigeria: A Situational Analysis

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Abstract

Using the vulnerability theory, this article appraises the effects of the neglect of internally displaced persons (IDPs) due to the interpretation of the concept of internal displacement among national humanitarian stakeholders in Nigeria. Interviews and focus group discussions were employed for data collection in three selected informal IDP settlements, while data were analyzed using the content analysis technique. The study found that the destinations of IDPs determined the level of vulnerability as well as the protection they experienced during displacement. IDPs in informal settlement were very vulnerable in terms of their access to quality education, shelter, food, health care, and potable water as they were often cut off from the government's humanitarian interventions and only visible to nongovernmental organizations and individual philanthropists who have limited means. It is therefore recommended that, there should be a holistic intervention mechanism in managing the displacement crisis in Nigeria irrespective of their resettlement destinations.

Keywords

Boko Haram, displacement, human rights, internally displaced persons (IDPs), insurgency, invisible displaced

Introduction

"Internal displacement is one of the greatest tragedies of our time and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are among the most vulnerable of the human family" (United Nations [UN] Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [OCHA], 2004, p. 1). This is because the intensity of internal displacement, arising from different factors, which include violent conflicts, man-made and natural disasters, has become a global problem. In fact, in the past few years, reports of internal displacement have increased around the world, bringing about a change from large-scale refugee flows to amplified internal displacement. The internal displacement of civilians and their need for human rights protections remain one of the vital human rights concerns of the post–Cold War era (Kalin, 2010). This is because the end of the Cold War marked a historical shift in the nature of warfare as well as the form of displacement hitherto witnessed. Warfare metamorphosed into a form in which combatants do not necessarily have to be state actors. It is disturbing that most combatants are unknown substate actors waging war against the state. Notwithstanding, armed conflicts today are targeted against civilians.

Evidences from the post–Cold War era show that most intrastate conflicts occurred in Africa and Nigeria have contributed immensely to the global displacement figure. Internal displacement in Nigeria has been driven over the past few decades by coups, internal armed conflicts, generalized violence, human rights violations, and natural hazards (International Committee of the Red Cross, 2009). Currently, the insurgency by Boko Haram has been the major cause of displacement after the Nigerian Civil War of 1967 to 1970. The Boko Haram insurgency began in 2002 but gained momentum in 2009 when the leader of the sect, Mohammed Yusuf, was killed while in police custody (Imasuen, 2015). The flight of surviving members of the sect into neighboring African states through Nigeria's porous borders exposed them to trainings in improvised explosive devices (IEDs),

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more funding, as well as linkages with mercenaries. With these, the sect now gained a more terrifying outlook in terms of the use of sophisticated weaponry, deadliness of attacks, and the change of targets from national security forces and overrunning of state properties to civilian targets (Caux, 2013). To this end, the Boko Haram sect became identified with the use of extreme violence to instill fear into the general Nigerian population, especially in Northeast Nigeria, bringing about the displacement of about 3.3 million people (Adekola, Azuh, Amoo, & Brownell, 2019; National Emergency Management Agency [NEMA], 2015; Olanrewaju, 2018; Olanrewaju, Omotoso, & Alabi, 2018a).

Holistically, the flight destinations of IDPs both within and outside the country are to host communities, IDPs' camps, and safer neighboring countries outside the country of displacement. Thus, as violence by the sect intensified, human rights violations increased, civilians were forced to flee to other areas in search of security both outside Nigeria as refugees and within safer communities and camps in Nigeria as IDPs (NEMA, 2015). Caux (2013) observes that most IDPs live within communities, whereas the displaced persons who flee to safer countries to take refuge there are called refugees. Refugees, according to the Organization of African Unity Convention also known as the Kampala Convention of 1969, are persons who

> owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of his country of origin or nationality, is compelled to leave his place of habitual residence in order to seek refuge in another place outside his country of origin or nationality. (Organisation of African Unity, 1969)

However, the 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement defined IDPs as

> persons or groups of persons who have been forced, obliged to flee, to leave their homes or places of habitual residence; in particular, as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border. (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [UN OCHA], 2004)

These definitions show that there are some similarities between IDPs and refugees. Adhikari and Joshi (2008), Deng (2004), and Lee (1997) argue that internal displacement and refugee crisis are similar problems with related causes and needs. IDPs are somewhat like the refugees fleeing from an unsafe place to a new destination within the state where the flight is taking place. They are uprooted from their homes and seek shelter and safety elsewhere. Both categories of persons are forced to flee from their homes for the same reason, which is the fear for their lives. Their vulnerable positions make them categories of concern. However, the works of Muggah (2014) and Adhikari and Joshi (2008) also provide another distinction between the two groups of persons, which is whether the migrant crosses an international border or not. Refugees are displaced outside the boundaries of their country. That is, they leave their homes and cross international borders. On the contrary, IDPs are those displaced within territorial borders of the place of residence.

Generally, the effects of internal displacement are multifarious and dispossess the concerned persons of their employment, home, and security. Victims of displacement are at the risk of arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances, forced conscription, human trafficking, sexual assault, loss of suitable health care, deprivation of food, loss of education opportunities, and other cruel effects of displacement (Adekola et al., 2019). Literature has, however, espoused the unequal effects of displacement on men, children, and women (Abimbola & Adesote, 2012; Adeyeye, 2013; Joshua & Olanrewaju, 2016; Knezevic & Olson, 2014; Lennard, 2016; Olanrewaju, Omotoso, & Alabi, 2018a). Less attention has been given to the discriminatory treatment of IDPs in host communities arising from the neglect of the government toward providing humanitarian aids to IDPs in host communities as against the government's presence in formal camps. The effects of the invisibility of IDPs living in host communities to the government is the gap that this article seeks to address.

This article is anchored on Marth Fineman's vulnerability theory. The common perception of vulnerability is used to define defamed, victimhood, deprived, stigmatized persons, and dependencies of particular groups within a given population (Fineman, 2005). Vulnerability within the context of this theory describes a universal state of all human beings (Fineman, 2005; Satz, 2008). It is a constant aspect of all human condition, in that all humans are vulnerable and have the potential of being dependent. Kirby (2006), arguing from a human rights perceptive, avers that humans are exposed to "simultaneous increase in threats" and a "weakening of coping mechanisms." In other words, humans exist within a fragile society that is continually prone to internal collapse, disintegration, and other destructive external forces.

IDPs are a category of concern because internal displacement is linked with the violation of certain human rights of people and a critical debate within humanitarian circles. Vulnerable population such as displaced persons are social groups with relative exposure to risk factors (Adekola et al., 2019; Fineman, 2008). They are marginalized, disadvantaged, and disenfranchised from mainstream society (Fineman, 2008). As such, internal displacement is obviously a human condition that portrays vulnerability and the inability of victims to ensure their self-provision of needs and protection at least during the period of displacement. They are exposed to illness, injury, emotional distress, dependency and loss of capacity for economic independence, and loss of livelihood. The theory, among other issues, therefore, provides the framework for the interrogation of the plight of IDPs living in selected informal settlements in

Nigeria as well as an understanding of how the neglect of the government has aggravated the violation of their human rights and further entrenched their vulnerability. It also allows for the interrogation of the extent to which institutional lapses are manipulated to worsen the existing inequality against IDPs.

Method

Study Design

This study made use of focus group discussions (FGDs) and interviews to explore the effects of the biased perception of the notion of internal displacement among stakeholders on displaced persons living in IDP settlements. The FGDs facilitated discussions among the participants. It offered the chance of seeking clarifications on issues of concerns to the researchers and also asked salient questions as follow-up to probe for more information.

As with the study by Amoo et al. (2017) and Olanrewaju et al. (2018b) in which FGDs were the major instrument of data collection, features of framework analysis were used in data analysis for this study. The utilization of framework analysis allows for the use of a series of interconnected stages such as "familiarisation, identifying a thematic framework, indexing, charting, mapping and interpretation" of data. In addition to this, the use of this technique of analysis allows for the deduction of themes from the research question and responses of participants (Amoo et al., 2017; Amoo et al., 2018; Green & Thorogood, 2004; Mitchell, King, Nazareth, & Wellings, 2011). Furthermore, framework analysis also allows for the development of real-life outcomes via the use of content analysis methods of data as well as provides the opportunity to offer practical solutions to societal problems such as internal displacement.

Study Location

This study is a part of an unpublished PhD thesis. The study was conducted in three informal IDP settlements in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. They are the Durumi IDP settlement (Abuja Municipal Area Council), the New Kuchingoro IDP settlement (Abuja Municipal Area Council), and the Pegi IDP settlement (Kuje Area Council). The IDP settlements were selected for this study because of their germane ethnographic configuration and convenience. Before accessing the IDPs in the settlements, permissions were obtained from the relevant management bodies.

Recruitment of Participants

The parent study was a comparative study of the management of internal displacement in informal IDP settlements, formal, and faith-based camps. It was a gendered study that centered on women's evaluation of the management of internal displacement in the different camp settings. Participants for this study were recruited via the multistage sampling techniques. At the first stage, purposive sampling technique was engaged in the selection of the IDP camps in Abuja, the FCT that was visited, which are Area 1 IDP settlement (referred to as Camp 1), Pegi IDP camp (referred to as Camp 2), and New Kuchingoro IDP (referred to as Camp 3). The camps were conveniently picked from the list of camps available mainly because of accessibility and interest shown in participating in the FGD. The stratified random sampling technique was used to categorize the respondents into various FGD groups at the second stage. The population was distributed into homogeneous subgroups based on age. The various categories of an FGD were women between the ages of 20 and 49 and women from 50 years and above. At the third and last stage, a simple random sampling technique was used to select women for each of the FGD but intermediated by those who were willingly interested in participating. Key participants for the in-depth interview sessions were selected via purposive sampling technique. The characteristics of participants (such as socio-marital status and age) were considered at the beginning of the interview.

Key interviews were conducted with government agencies such as NEMA and National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons. Also, preliminary investigation and information obtained from key informants have shown that security agents did not have any form of formal presence in the informal settlements, but rather were often deployed to government-managed camps, whereas the protection in the informal camps was being controlled by the formed "IDPs" Vigilante Group. To this effect, government security officials were excluded from the discussion. The authors considered that conducting interviews with security agencies who have no contact with informal IDPs would not be too relevant to this study.

Data Collection

FGDs were organized in locations void of distractions within the IDP settlements and allowed participants to be very comfortable to discuss the subject matter. Two FGDs were conducted in each camp. Each of the groups had eight to 10 participants. The participants were divided into two different age groups (20-49 years and 50 years and above); this was done to gain insight into how the various needs between the age groups can influence their perception of the government's intervention. The small number of FGDs conducted was due to the limited availability of the number of invitees. Participants were absolutely volunteers. Nonetheless, the small number of FGDs provided sufficient data and were manageable. Each of the FGDs lasted between 105 and 150 min. The researchers allowed discussions by members to continue until theoretical permeation of knowledge was reached and there were no more novel information provided by the groups (Olanrewaju, 2018).

The FGDs were moderated by a postgraduate student selected to avoid ideological bias and misrepresentation of IDPs' analysis. Although some of the discussants spoke in Hausa (local dialect in northern Nigeria), some individuals combined pidgin English and Hausa. Generally, most of the discussions were held in Hausa. The focus group guide used for the study was adopted from the work of Kruger (2002). Respondents were asked about their experiences and their evaluation of the level of intervention they received from government and relevant agencies.

Validity and Integrity of the Data

The variety of participants' social characteristics (economic status and age) made the findings of this study very representative. These criteria aided in comparing and contrasting views among the participants on the role of the government in meeting their needs. To further validate the obtained data, researchers reviewed the notes to ensure accurateness of data. The transcriptions were also evaluated by other researchers who had qualitative expertise but were not part of this study. Transcripts were read numerous times to categorize themes, to ensure that a similar approach to transcription was followed, and to eradicate bigotry in the indication of themes. In addition, the results of the analysis as well as the suitability of the results were also determined by non-participating women and colleagues.

Data Analysis

Field notes were taken throughout all the interview and focus group sessions. Responses from all participants were first and foremost transcribed and thereafter analyzed through "systematic content analysis" (Franzosi, 2007). The field notes and transcripts were read severally to enhance the researchers' understanding of the data. Recurring themes and answers were categorized through the adoption of the "scissors and paste" approach adopted by scholars such as Mitchell et al. (2011) and Amoo et al. (2017).

Concepts were coded and subsequently structured into groups for each transcription and thereafter combined together. Themes were then developed by adding more concepts, combined or split (Amoo et al. 2017, 2018). Responses that proved difficult to be directly grouped into the themes were regrouped subsequent to the discussions among the reviewers. The significance of responses by respondents and the relationship with the adopted themes were deliberated on. The FGD participants were referred to with their age groups and demarcated by their camps.

Results

Majority of the respondents were 20 years and older and had been displaced for an average of 3 years. Many of the respondents were not economically active, whereas a few of them were engaged as casual laborers on farms, some were domestic servants, a few of them were full-time housewives but most of them did nothing. Among those who had never received formal education, one of every two could neither read nor write however; discussions in Hausa language, the local dialect in Northern Nigeria allowed every participant to actively engage in the FGDs.

Misinterpretation of the Concept of Displacement

As already stated, there are three destinations for persons fleeing violence, which are IDP camps, host communities, and other countries. National displacement agencies have chosen to segregate between destinations, which affects both the visibility and invisibility of IDPs as the case may be. These national humanitarian actors redefined the global notion of internal displacement to flight within formally designated government camps. Also, it argues that the choice of persons to settle with family members (believed to be squatters) during displacement rather than being in designated camps disqualifies them from being IDPs. Such IDPs are rather referred to as dwellers. This is against the stipulation of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement that displaced persons can find solace in any safer community they choose to resettle in within the borders of the country they got displaced. For instance, a personal communication that revealed this misinterpretation is stated below:

> IDPs are not destitute. Destitute, squatters and poor dwellers do not qualify as IDPs. Most of the people in the informal camps are dwellers. Of course, we have had a lot of displaced persons from the North East who have moved to Abuja not because they were coming to camp, they were moving in with families and relatives. A lot of these people (relatives) are squatters . . . who are taking advantage of the displacement situation caused by Boko Haram . . . We have some people who came from Nasarawa, because they were distributing relief materials in a particular town, everybody is now coming around, that is the challenge . . . no camp has been created in Abuja. (National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons, personal communication, 2016, January 17)

More disturbingly, the respondent argued that

> . . . most of them (IDPs and squatters) move and find themselves . . . Otherwise, if you are displaced and you are from the North East and you have relatives in Asokoro, now we (agency) begin to think as economists about poverty status. If you were displaced and you have a relative in Asokoro and you move in with your relatives in Asokoro, . . . as far as we are concerned, you are not a displaced person. You are not in an informal settlement because something has forced you to live your former place of residence and you have moved in with your relatives and you will need certain time support to re-establish yourself . . . (economic interest). (National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons, personal communication, 2016, January 2017)

Evidently, this perception of internal displacement is very detrimental to the plight and human rights of the displaced persons (Olanrewaju, 2018). Concerns arising from this discourse are the economic underpinnings of resettlement destinations and that resettlement with family members and relatives within host communities disqualifies IDPs from being recognized as IDPs. They reveal that the concerned humanitarian agencies have preferred not to give cognizance to the actual displacement situation but prefer to analyze the choice of destination, which has become a major negligence issue.

This element within the narrative above negates the meaning of displacement stated in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (1998):

> Internally displaced persons are persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border. (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [UN OCHA], 2004, p. 5)

Evidently, the above definition indicates one very salient component, which is the fact that the movement of such persons is forced, and that the movement is limited to the geographical enclave or terrain of national borders. Displacement, therefore, refers to the involuntary movement of a population. It occurs when a population hitherto occupying a geographical enclave is forced to physically relocate to another place as the option to remain is not available (Muggah, 2014).

Determinants of Flight Destination

One major determinant of flight destinations is the availability of assistance that unaffected family members provide to displaced persons. A number of the participants mentioned the roles the unaffected family members played in ensuring their escape from violence by Boko Haram insurgents and helping them escape to the FCT. In fact, more than 75% of all the respondents across the camps were sponsored by unaffected family members to escape the insurgency to safer locations. In some cases, IDPs transported themselves to their desired destinations. Less than 25% of the respondents of this study stated that they sponsored themselves to their desired locations in host communities. Below are some excerpts of assistance IDPs received for their flight:

> We were assisted and transported here with the help of kind people around me. (Woman, aged 40 and above, Camp 3)

> . . . we ran to Lassa, we did not return home. While there, we were told that there is a camp for the displaced here so we looked for money and came here . . . (Woman, aged 40 and above, Camp 3)

> The information about this place were given to me by persons that got here before us. I was told I could stay here in peace. (Woman, aged 20-49, Camp 1)

> We first got to Adamawa on foot, then from there, we entered a commercial vehicle and came here. The fact that I have relatives in Abuja gave us hope to come to Abuja. I did not go to them when I got here. I came directly to this place. (Woman, aged 40 and above, Camp 3)

> I trekked from the mountain in Borno to Cameroon, and from Cameroon to Adamawa. My son sent transport money to me to come here. (Woman, aged 50 and above, Camp 2)

One of the reasons for the choice of host communities is the deficient role of the government in providing security. This challenge is described in the excerpt below:

> We are all from Chibok (Borno State). Chibok IDPs are not in camps . . . this is as a result of the kidnapping of the girls from their school. We (parents of the Chibok school girls abducted on the night of 14-15 April, 2014) trusted the government to protect our children and they were kidnapped right under the government's nose so we cannot trust the government to protect us in the camp. We live in rented apartments here. Some of the apartments here go for 1500, others go for 2500. Everyone here rents where to sleep. Those who don't have money are left with no choice but to go back to Chibok . . . going to government camps is the least decision we would make . . . (Camp coordinator, Camp 2)

Another determinant of IDP destinations is the network of invitation and cultural/communal ties. Narrating the settlement of displaced people of Chibok Community in Pegi-Kuje in Abuja, the IDP coordinator stated that

> I got here first. Others followed suit. They did not know anyone here. We move together, this is a culture of the Chibok people. The coming of the Chibok people here was a result of a network of invitations. Protection at that time was the ultimate desire of all. We came to the FCT because we know that the FCT is the best. Before anything will happen in the FCT that means all the other states would have been gone or cleared off.

> My neighbours in the village that are living in Abuja told me about this place. (Woman, aged 50 and above, Camp 1)

In fact, another excerpt from one key informant is stated below:

> We do have a culture; there is a culture of this strong communal link with individuals. So usually when anything happens whether the person is displaced, whether it's the landlord that injected you from your house, you will always go to meet your relatives and all that . . . most IDPs moved and find themselves. (Mathias, personal communication, 2016, January 17)

In discussing network of invitation, the following excerpts are relevant:

> I got the information of this place from persons that got here before us. They told us that there was a place we could stay in peace. (Woman, aged 20-49, Camp 2)

> When I found out that one of my living relatives was here I decided to come here and join her. We are together here at this camp. That is her over there . . . (Woman, aged 50 and above, Camp 1)

Effects of the Biased Conceptualization on IDPs

The results of the FGD analysis revealed that there are a number of effects of the biased conceptualization of displacement on displaced persons living in host communities in the FCT. It was observed that almost all the principles of the UN Guiding Principles have been contravened in the informal settlements because of the neglect from the state. For better clarification and analysis, some subthemes are used to discuss the effects of the biased conceptualization of the interpretation of internal displacement.

Shelter

All the results from Camps 1 and 3 revealed that all the shelters were very deplorable as they were leaking, congested, and not conducive. All the 10 respondents between ages 20 and 49 in Camp 1 avowed that the shelters were terrible. Similarly, 10 of every 10 respondents from age 50 and above in Camp 1 also argued that the shelters were not befitting for humans. In Camp 2, one respondent out of every 10 women in age group 20 to 49 argued that the shelters were terrible and inhabitable, likewise two of every five respondents from age 50 years and above also opined that the shelter was not habitable. Relatively, nine respondents from every 10 respondents in age group 20 to 49 expressed that their shelters were manageable, whereas four of every five respondents in the older age category confirmed that their accommodation was conducive. However, in Camp 3, all respondents in both age categories (20-49 and 50 and above) considered that the shelter were not befitting for human beings to live in. So much disgust and pain were shown by discussants when describing the state of the shelter they live in. Below are some thematic extractions:

> I hate where I live now. Rain messes up the shelter. (Woman, aged 20-49, Camp 3)
> The shelter is terrible. NGOs provide us with materials to build the bashers . . . The bashers get socked when it rains. This is not a proper accommodation for a human being. (Woman, aged 50 and above, Camp 1)

> They (IDPs) created it (shelter) themselves. It is not convenient at all. It is not even good for humans to stay in before the rainy season. Three children got infected by bed bugs because of this weather. It is more dangerous to children due to how the make shift tents are. Dew normally enter the rooms and because of this, most of their clothes and beds are usually wet which causes skin disease. (Camp coordinator, Camp 3)

The situation is even worse for those who have no shelter to live in:

> I do not have a room here and my children are not with me, if I happen to get my own room, I will go and bring my children and they will stay with me. I have five children in Kaduna, I left them in my brother's house. There is no place here for me to sleep here . . . in fact, I sleep in one of these open classrooms here. (Woman, aged 20-49, Camp 1)

Educational Discrimination

Discrimination against displaced children was also observed concerning schooling. IDP children are denied access to Universal Basic Education (UBE) because they cannot pay fees, buy books, school uniforms, and so on. Excerpts from camp coordinators are as follows:

> . . . An issue that affects our children is that of ethnicity. The Pegi people do not pay much school fees they are charged just 1,000 while non-indigenes (displaced persons) are charged about 2,700 almost thrice that of the indigenes. Sometimes, they do not even pay and their names are in the register. (Camp coordinator, Camp 2)

Similarly, in the New Kuchingoro camp, the camp coordinator argued that

> Education occurs partially in the camp. The school was founded by Life Builder Foundation . . . we lack teachers. The class rooms are terrible and are made of tents and once rain starts falling, teaching and learning stops. (Camp coordinator, Camp 3)

Displaced women also had some concerns to share regarding educational discrimination and vulnerability. Excerpt of the narratives of women aged 20 to 49 is stated below:

> Almost all of our children were attending schools back at home. Now, our children go to IDPs schools. The schools are not as good as the ones back home. The teachers in the school are voluntary teachers that only come to teach the displaced children when they are free. They are not taught with syllabus. They are lagging behind their peers that are not displaced. For now, we cannot afford to pay school fees for them into better schools. (Woman, aged 20-49, Camp 1)

Health Care

Reports on health care from all the groups across the camps revealed that IDPs do not have access to good health care facilities. Although there are primary health care centers in

their communities, lack of funds deny the IDPs medical aid when they need it. Specifically, in Camp 1, almost all respondents aged 20 years and above argued that they had no access to good medical facilities, whereas three of every five respondents (aged 50 and above) indicated that the health care facilities they had were not adequate to meet their medical needs. In this camp, two of every five participants (aged 50 and above) expressed that they had manageable health care facilities and have received some care. In Camp 2, all the respondents in the two focus groups collectively opined that the health care facilities in the community were good and that they (i.e., IDPs) received adequate health care and have the financial means to get the intervention. In Camp 3, majority of the respondents between ages 20 and 49 avowed that IDPs did not have access to good health care and made reference to complete absence of any health facility in their camp. They only received first aid from their camp coordinators, who, by their perception, had no medical training. Fewer respondents (relatively, one out of every five participants), especially those in age group 20 to 49 years, supported the stance that IDPs received good medical care in camp, whereas the majority among the older participants (about seven out of 10) responded that the health care was poor. Notwithstanding, there were few members of the group in the same age group who asserted the opposite and considered the medical intervention so far received as manageable and also commended the providers of such health care.

Some of the common challenges IDPs face across the informal camps are expressed in the excerpts below:

> Unlike what we had in our villages and towns, we have no standard medical facility here . . . Majorly, all we get is first aid. (Woman aged 20-49, Camp 1)

> When our women want to deliver their babies they pay 5,000 while the displaced persons are asked to pay 5,000 and it is a government hospital. I do not know why the marginalisation is meted against people needing help that have been forced out of their own communities to strange lands in quest for safety . . . They do not benefit from the surety programme announce by the past administration that when a woman delivers there will be a free gift. We have appealed to the local government but IDPs cannot fight for themselves . . . the government is in the best position to make our condition of living better. (Camp coordinator, Camp 2)

> IDPs have access to first aid here in camp, but one problem is that the women do not have any work to do to pay for health services at the primary healthcare centers, they usually deliver at home . . . we have pro health organization in collaboration with TY Danjuma Foundation who provides some delivery kits to the women when their time is due. We also have a traditional birth attendant, and since we came to this camp there have recorded about 46 births. (Camp coordinator, Camp 3)

The excerpts show some issues impeding the ability of IDPs to access health care.

Supports From Nongovernmental Organizations and Individuals

The major strategy for coping among all the IDPs is through support from nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and individuals.

The following excerpts describe the invisibility of IDPs to government. The invisibility of IDPs describes the institutional/government's laxity toward IDPs in host communities:

> Our major source of humanitarian assistance are the charity organizations. The government appears at a low level . . . The government only comes to get information and goes. (Camp coordinator, Camp 3)

> . . . Unlike those in Government camps, each person sorts himself/herself out and we live on donations from FBOs, individuals and NGOs . . . NGOs and faith based organisations (FBOs) are the major food donators and they also donate other basic necessities. Without these aids we cannot eat because we don't work. We cannot work here because we don't have anything to do due to the fact that most of us are farmers and we don't have any land to farm on. (Women, aged 50 and above, Camp 3)

> NGOs come here to donate things to us (IDPs). NEMA and FCT Emergency Management Agency FEMA staff occasionally come here but not to render us help. They are the agency between the people, NGOs and the government. The custom is that before relief materials is brought to us here, both the relief materials and donors are screened by NEMA or FEMA as the case may be for the protection of the displaced persons because we have heard of explosions and bombings of the IDPs in other locations. (Camp coordinator, Camp 2)

In addition to the excerpts above, the excerpt below from Camp 3 captures the plights of the IDPs across all the camps:

> We suffer the most because the government does not give us anything . . . most of the relief materials we get are from charity organisations. Due to lack of government presence and funds, we cannot get medical treatments, education and other welfare needs. In 2016 alone, 11 people died due to the deplorable condition of living in the camps. (Camp coordinator, Camp 3)

Excerpts of the FGD in Camp 3 stated below are similar to those expressed in Camp 1:

> . . . we live on the kindness of good hearted Nigerians and others. People have been helpful. They give us food to eat and clothes to wear. However, there are times we don't have enough to eat . . . Dunamis church dug us a borehole . . . but we do not have water when we cannot buy fuel to run the generator as there is no electricity here . . . each person goes to the community to find water. (Woman, aged 20-49, Camp 1)

> We are no longer able to cater for our children as we planned. We have people who donate food to us as well as clothing. We do not usually buy food we get donations from people. Both

> Christians and Muslims give to us, but when they don't bring anything sometimes, we depend on God's mercies . . . Displacement and the negligence of government make us feel handicapped as we cannot live the way we want. (Woman, aged 50 and above, Camp 3)

> There is no work to do. We just sleep and wake up. We were just managing and hoping that help will come from people. (Woman, aged 20-49, Camp 3)

Another narrative of a woman aged 20 to 49 in Camp 1 explicates the effects of their neglect by government:

> I am not working or farming. I manage from the gifts from people. I don't have enough to eat. I would like to work. The death of my husband no doubt affected me. This is because I have lived for many years with my husband and we have done things together, now I am alone. My 6 children are not schooling. There is no toilet here. We ease ourselves in the bush because we have no bathrooms. These bashers were built by NGOs but they come through NEMA to provide us help.

The situations discussed in all the themes above show that IDPs across the communities live in poorly serviced environments, which has made it very difficult for them to recover from the displacement as well as other additional shocks they experience during displacement.

Discussion

This article provides evidence of the effects of the biased perception humanitarian agencies have about internal displacement and displacement destinations chosen by affected persons. The findings extend beyond existing studies on displacement. Apart from adding to the body of knowledge on displacement, they may also help in addressing the institutional laxity currently observed in the management of displacement in Nigeria. Although a number of studies have addressed the displacement subject in Nigeria, this study focused on the effects of the misconception of the notion of displacement on IDPs living in host communities.

It was discovered that IDPs in informal settlements are almost invisible to the government but visible to NGOs and individuals who can barely meet their needs. The situation observed in the camps selected for this study was predicted by Caux (2013) that

> Local organisations may be more aware of IDPs' needs and concerns, but often lack the capacity to assist all of those in need. Where assistance is provided to IDPs outside camps, it is generally ad hoc and insufficient. (p. 6)

Caux (2013) confirmed that limited care affects the capability of IDPs to recuperate from added shocks, most especially if they do not rely on social or family networks to assist and protect them. The invisibility of displaced persons violates their rights to good life, food, and good shelter, among others. It was observed that the major challenges that IDPs in host communities face is the inability to access means of livelihood and essential services such as good shelter, water, physical security, education, and health care, which results from their invisibility to government. These tally with the findings of Harild and Christensen (2010) and Solomon (2009). The complication of their situation can be aptly captured by the report of the UN Secretary-General that

> Urban IDPs living in slum areas that are poorly constructed and situated in hazard-prone locations, such as low-lying areas and landfill sites, are likely to be vulnerable to physical safety risks, damage or destruction of housing, and secondary displacement. (UN Secretary-General, 2010)

The study also observed that there are reasons for the invisibility and vulnerability of IDPs in the informal camps. They are discussed below.

Poor Methods of Comprehensive Data Collection on IDPs in Dispersed Settings

Most importantly, this article argues that one of the paramount reasons for the neglect of informal IDPs located in various settlement is the poor method of data collection on IDPs in their various dispersed settlements. The biased notion from officials could be one of the strategies used to dodge the responsibility and not consider them as real displaced persons. This could be based on their dispersed nature and lack of effective institutional mechanisms to collect credible data and information on the number of IDPs, their locations, demographic characteristics, and the conditions they face, which are very essential in effectively managing displacement crisis. For more than 15 years since the displacement started, Nigeria is yet to have accurate data on IDPs outside camps because of poor methodology on accurate data collection procedure. Thus, adequate planning, funding, and social service delivery cannot be implemented. The lack of effective mechanisms to identify displaced persons is also hinged on the lack of trust in persons who have identified themselves with the status of displacement.

Limited Funding

Limited funding is another major challenge affecting the management of displacement (Senior Protection Assistant UN High Commissioner for Refugee, personal communication, 2016, July 5; A. Meiriga, personal communication, 2016, January 16). For national agencies such as NEMA, shortage of funds is attributed to low budgeting for emergencies. For instance, NEMA does not get funds from the yearly national budget for the management of IDPs. Funds for the

management of IDPs are derived from the allocation from disaster management (E. Manzo, Interview excerpt with National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). Staff, 2017, July 5). Due to limited funds, humanitarian activities toward IDPs are limited to mostly IDPs in formal camps, leaving out IDPs in dispersed areas in host communities. This submission noted above aligns with the findings of Lenshie and Yenda (2016) that the absence of funds has incapacitated the Nigerian government from handling issues and problems faced by IDPs as it affects all the dimensions of interventions.

Negligence of Responsibility

Closely related to the challenge of funding is the deliberate neglect of responsibility by state actors. Very significantly, this affects the length of time it takes for IDPs to receive necessary care needed for their survival. Thus, all the camp coordinators agreed that negligence of the government is a major problem they are confronted with in the management of IDP camps (G. Genesis, Excerpts of an interview with Camp Co-ordinator, St Theresa's Catholic Church, Jimeta, Adamawa state, 2016, June 28; I. Ibrahim, Excerpts of an interview with Malkohi IDP Camp Coordinator, Adamawa State, 2016, June 26). Camp coordinator of Camp 3 (personal communication, 2016, July 2) lamented about the neglect of government. He stated that

> The biggest challenge we are facing in camp is that the government have neglected their duties. This have had direct effects on supplies and funding. The only thing they have provided for us is the space we are occupying for now . . .

It is evident that the government at various levels is guilty of this. For instance, the state government neglected their responsibilities toward IDPs (M. Kadril, Excerpts of an interview with NEMA Official, Adamawa State, 2017, August 17; I. Ibrahim, Excerpts of an interview with Malkohi IDP Camp Coordinator, Adamawa State, 2016, June 26). The Federal Government has also lagged behind in its responsibility and has not been absolutely committed to protecting the rights of IDPs as it relates to adequate standard of living. A crucial cause of this neglect is caused by the centralization of government and power. M. Kadril (Excerpts of an interview with NEMA Official, Adamawa State, 2017, August 17) avows that

> The way Nigeria is run, everything is always coming from the central. So, for the state to meet up with their demand has always been a challenge. When we start up a program, they might give you the necessary thing that they have at hand. On the long run, they start having issues, (and) drawing back, making them feel burdened on the shoulder of the Federal government. Right now they have stopped their mandate.

Poor Coordination Among Institutions Managing IDPs

There is the proliferation of organizations working to protect IDPs' human rights. Prevalent opinions in literature and opinions of key informants from various government agencies and ministries avowed that the government established a number of overlapping IDP management agencies and institutions with similar structures and mandates. Common instances cited are the case of National Commission for Refugees (NCFR), which was transformed into the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons, which is lumbered with the obligation of caring for refugees in Nigeria and not IDPs (E. Manzo, Interview excerpt with National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). Staff, 2017, April 5). As the spate on displacement from Boko Haram insurgency intensified, State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) and NEMA were mandated to cater for IDPs. The similarities of mandates between the two agencies – National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons and NEMA created a dilemma of which both of them have the responsibility of knowing what has not been done already and what has been done. Put differently, these agencies are ignorant of the boundaries of their role to the IDPs. Supporting the position, Obikaeze and Onuoha (2016) contended that humanitarian agencies and NGOs partnering with the government are often confused over which of the two agencies of the government they should relate with. There are also clashes of role between the numerous agencies, especially the international organizations over their duties to displaced persons. This led to overlapping and multiplication of responsibilities and efforts, which causes delay and wastage of resources. This is in tandem with the finding of Cohen and Deng (1998) that the insufficiency of coordination between and among agencies and actors managing IDPs affects IDP management.

The Absence of a Framework for the Management of IDPs

The absence of a framework for IDP management is problematic to IDP management agencies. The Nigerian government set up a working group to draft a national policy on IDPs to assist in the registration and issuance of identity cards and the division of responsibilities to organs of government, agencies, civil society, and NGOs. The National Policy on Internally Displaced Persons was drafted based on the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa and the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and presented to the government in 2011. Even as in January 2018, it was yet to be adopted. This ought to be a wholistic blueprint of how all

displacement matters and victims would be addressed irrespective of their resettlement destinations.

The lack of domestic legislation not only explains why the policy and practice of governments varied with international human rights standards but also creates ambiguity about the status of refugees at the local and national levels. This scenario coincides with the findings of Alobo and Obaji (2016) and Zachary (2000) that the overwhelming enormity of the displacement caused by Boko Haram, as well as the absence of a regulatory framework on internal displacement management, has affected the ability of the government to be proactive in planning for displacement.

IDPs have limited knowledge of the conditions of living in their chosen destinations. While making decisions on destination choices, they are more overwhelmed by fear and security concerns than the evaluation of the effects of destination choices.

The study shows that due to the negligence of government to provide for the needs of IDPs in host communities, these groups of displaced persons have had to rely mostly on supports from individuals, religious bodies, and groups toward alleviating the plight of IDPs in Nigeria. Despite these supports, the funds have been inadequate to meet the needs of IDPs in Nigeria. The majority of the respondents argued that the lack of adequate funds has resulted in the poor state of shelters, deficiency in manpower, limited number of successful women in the skill empowerment programs, poor-quality food, the deplorable conditions of the health care, and absence of quality education of displaced children.

Another major finding arising from the biased conceptualization of population displacement in Nigeria is the creation of frustration and aggression among the neglected displaced population against the state. This is in line with previous findings, that showed that grievances from the Niger Delta militancy, Fulani herdsmen crisis, and other failures of the state to deliver minimal services of security, poverty reduction, lawlessness, armed conflicts, equitable management of resources by ill-functioning governments, and political instability contributed to the feeling of alienation toward the state, thereby contributing to the weakening of Nigeria's cohesion (Bertocchi & Guerzoni, 2010; Di John, 2008; Duruji & Oviasogie, 2013; Mcloughlin, 2012).

Limitation of the Study

There are limitations to this study, which include the use of convenient samples of IDP settlements, which limit the generalizability of the research findings. First, the study was limited to only IDPs in informal settlements. IDPs who were settled in formal camp formations were not part of this study. The participants mainly comprise persons displaced by the Boko Haram insurgency. Second, the number of IDP settlements in the sample was small. The sample from which the population of this study was drawn are three settlements within the FCT. However, the study was able to sample the responses of different categories of women across the various settlement, which allowed for comparison of responses.

Conclusion

This study has added to the body of knowledge on the misconception of the notion of displacement and flight destinations of IDPs and how these affect humanitarian interventions IDPs get. The study concludes that IDPs are not aware that flight destinations affect (whether positively or negatively) their access to humanitarian aid. Although humanitarian intervention of the government and other actors have targeted IDPs in formal camps because they have been identifiable and classified as vulnerable population, IDPs within host communities are hidden groups of the same vulnerable displaced population. This biased perception grossly reflects the unwillingness of the government to plan for the management of IDPs taking solace in host communities. The perception of IDPs in host communities is that they are abandoned and neglected by the government. The study submits that although the government hides beneath the assumption that IDPs far from their places of displacement are not true IDPs, the undermanagement of internal displacement and the inefficient implementation of the dictates of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement in Nigeria expose the country to more risks of terrorism, ethnic/religious fragmentation, and disloyalty to the state, among other crisis. To avert these social abnormalities, the study, therefore, recommends the need for the government to improve efforts to address the vulnerabilities and needs of IDPs within host communities. The government and relevant agencies should eradicate the notion that IDPs far from their vicinities and staying with family members are not true IDPs and ensure compliance with the global meaning of internal displacement as stipulated in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, so that the rights and human dignity of displaced persons that are not within formal IDP camps can be protected and respected. Most importantly, the government needs to create a mechanism to verify IDP status, such that they are catered for by the government irrespective of where they decide to resettle.

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