

Nigerian State and Responses to Plights of Persons Internally Displaced by Boko Haram Insurgents: Implications for Socio-Economic and Political Development

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Abstract

The daunting challenge currently confronting the Nigerian state is how to alleviate the plights of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the northeast occasioned by violent activities of Boko Haram insurgents. Since Boko Haram insurgents started their campaign of terror against the Nigerian state in the North-east in 2009, many lives have been lost while properties worth millions of naira have been destroyed, forcing many people to flee their homes for safety areas. Obviously, the most affected persons are vulnerable groups such as children, aged and women who are exposed to severe socio-economic, political, psychological, medical and environmental hazards. These sorry states of affairs have become serious sources of worries to governments, academics and other critical stakeholders in the Nigeria project. Despite the serious academic questions provoked by the plights of the IDPs and obvious need to demystify their socio-economic and political implications, extant studies had paid fleeting attention to this all important aspect of knowledge. This lacuna poses challenges of policy and analysis to government as there is no research informed explanations to guide its policy formulation and implementation on the on the matter. It is this void that this study strives to fill. The study adopts qualitative methods in carrying out its investigation. As such the study employs documentary data for its investigation while content analysis is utilized for data analysis. The theoretical framework that anchors the study is the social exclusion theory. The study discovered that the IDPs in the north east suffer challenges of starvation, accommodation, unemployment, school dropouts, sexual harassment, child labour, early marriage, poor health and sanitation. The implication of the findings is that the situation constitutes a setback to Nigeria development as it further compounds and complicates the already existing challenge of poor living standard in the region and invariably account for Nigeria's low development index. The study recommends among others; that government should make more concerted efforts to provide the needs of the displaced persons while it expedites actions to end up the insurgency. The study equally recommended for the interventions of the international humanitarian agencies, philanthropic organizations and public spirited individuals to ameliorate the plights of the IDPs.

Keywords: Nigerian State, Internally Displaced Persons, Boko Haram, Insurgency, Socio-Economic and Political Implications

Introduction

One of the contemporary challenges facing the Nigerian state is how to provide succor to the plights of the internal displaced persons (IDPs), occasioned by incessant violent attacks perpetrated by the Boko Haram insurgents in northeastern part of the country. Since Boko Haram insurgents began their campaign of terror against the Nigerian state in the northeast in 2009, many lives have been lost while properties worth millions of naira have been destroyed, forcing many people to flee their homes for safety areas. Obviously, the most affected persons are vulnerable groups such as children, aged and women who are exposed to severe socio-economic and political challenges. Even though Nigerian government has made efforts to address the plights of IDPs by providing IDPs camps, there are still challenges of overcrowding, poor sanitation, joblessness and insecurity in the IDPs camps across the states of Northeast. This situation has in some occasions forced the IDPs to even flee the IDPs camps for their safety, an action that worsens their predicaments.

Although, there is no existing precise officially record on the total figure of IDPs caused by the Boko Haram insurgents, it is reported that in 2013 alone, 300,000 people fled the states of Born, Adamawa and Yobe, out of which seventy percent of them are said to be women and children (HRW, 2014). It is also on record that in 2013 alone, 470,500 persons were displaced across communities in some parts of Nigeria due to Boko Haram insurgency and other humanitarian emergencies (HRW, 2014).

Besides, available statistics shows that Nigeria has the highest number of displaced persons in Africa which is estimated at 3.3 million people as at the year 2014 (IDMS, 2014 and NRC, 2014). The figure includes those displaced as a result of Boko Haram insurgency, communal conflicts, floods disaster and incessant clashed between farmers and Fulani herdsmen in the northeast. On a global scale, Nigeria is ranked behind Syria, with 6.5 million IDPS and Colombia with 5.7 million (IDMS, 2014 and NRC, 2014). Statistics from HRW (2014) asserts that the IDPs figures have risen unprecedentedly in the preceding years due largely to increasing number of Boko Haram attacks, heavy-handed counter-insurgency and ongoing inter-communal violent conflicts in some communities across the country. For instance, the clashes between farmers and Fulani herdsmen in states

of Benue, Taraba, Zamfara and Kaduna displaced 100,000 persons in 2014 (NEMA, 2015). Over the years, the growth of IDPs figure in Nigeria is quite alarming.

As at April, 2015, IDMC estimates that 1,538,982 people were forced to flee their homes in Nigeria. This figure include people displaced in as result of brutal attacks by Boko Haram insurgency, the government led counter-insurgency operations against the group, ongoing inter-communal clashes. The biggest rise in the number of IDPs was recorded in Born state, one of the Northeastern states ravaged by Boko Haram insurgency, followed by Adamawa, and Yobe states. As at April 2015, Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) assessment, set up by the Internal Migration Organization (IOM) identified 1,491,706 IDPs in states of Adamawa, Bauchi, Born, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe with about six percent of this figure attributed to inter communal clashes while the remaining ninety four percent of these figure is caused by Boko Haram insurgency. NEMA recorded an additional 47,276 IDPs in Plateau, Nasarawa, Kaduna, Kano, and Abuja Federal Capital Territory (FCT), in February, 2015 (IOM, 2015; NEMA, 2015). This brings the total number of registered internally displaced persons in 2015 to 1,538,982 in Northeastern states.

Despite the concerted efforts by the Nigerian state to contain the violent activities of the insurgents, they have extended their activities beyond northeast to even Abuja and its environs. This development indicates that more persons are likely to be displaced if urgent measures are not taken to contain the activities of the insurgents. The most worrisome is the untold hardship faced by these innocent and vulnerable groups in their new abodes. The IDPs who are lucky to be accommodated in IDPs camps are faced with threats of security as the insurgents had in many occasions beaten the security and carried out suicide bomb attacks in some IDPs camps in the Northeast. The development further exacerbates the lights of the IDPs as it expose them to more psychological trauma and socio-economic hardship.

Worst still, the IDPs who fled to neighbouring communities are forced to begin life afresh in their host communities where they are abandoned to their fates. In their new communities, the IDPs are regarded as stranger and of course treated as nobodies by their host communities. Worst evil of all, they are exposed to severe socio-economic challenges such as starvation, accommodation, unemployment, social discriminations, sexual harassment, child labour, early marriage and its attendant teenage pregnancy. They are also faced with the problems intimidations, humiliations and other forms of social exclusions. As a result of these plights the IDPs are prone to all sorts of health challenges such as vascular diseases, malaria, malnutrition, water born diseases, and untimely deaths.

Furthermore, the displacement also affects national productivity as the youth population who constitutes parts of the productive forces of the country is also displaced. The implication is that the youth population who could have contributed to growth of the gross domestic products now stays without jobs in their host communities. More than that, the migration of IDPs adds to more sours to injury, as it compounds the already existing pressures on few available social amenities in their host communities such as accommodation, electricity, portable water, hospitals, schools and markets. This development places the IDPs on stiff competition for means of survival with their host communities such as farm lands, as good number of IDPs are predominantly farms who depend solely on cultivation of crops for their livelihoods. In most cases, some of the IDPs stay without farm lands to cultivation their crops. This renders the IDPs unproductive and as such complicates the challenges of food security and unemployment facing the country. All these challenges negatively militate against government development efforts and accounts for the continuous down wards trends in Nigeria's development index and demand for urgent attention. Obviously, time is ripe to provide modalities for addressing the plights of the IDPs in the Northeast, with a view to ameliorate their sufferings and repositioning them to contribute meaningfully to socio-economic development of the country. It is against this backdrop that this study sets to interrogate the plights of IDPs in Northeast and to appraise the efforts put in place by Nigerian state to address the issue.

Statement of the Problem

The rate of internally displaced persons in the Northeastern Nigeria occasioned by the violent attacks perpetrated by the Boko Haram insurgency is highly alarming. Even though the government has made efforts to address the plights of IDPs by providing IDPs camps, the IDPS still are facing severe socio-economic, health and environmental challenges, such as joblessness, insecurity, lack of foods and good drinking water, overcrowding and poor sanitation in their camps across the states of Northeast. This situation has in some occasions forced the IDPs to even flee the camps for their safety, an action that worsens their predicaments.

Worst still, the IDPs who fled to neighbouring communities are forced to begin life afresh in their host communities where they are abandoned to their fates. In their new communities, the IDPs are regarded as stranger and of course treated as nobodies by their host communities. They are also denied their socio-economic rights and subject to socio-economic and political control in their host communities. The situation becomes more worrisome when weighed against the backdrop of the fact that those displaced persons are predominantly the youth and vulnerable groups such as women, children and aged. Most of the

Equally worrisome is the undue pressures which the displaced persons have brought to bear on the few existing social infrastructures in their host communities. The pressures further compound and complicate the already existing bad states of the infrastructures and the standard of livings of the host communities. The situation constitutes serious sources of worries to both the governments, humanitarian organizations, academics and other critical stakeholders in the Nigerian. Despite the obvious academic questions raised by this conditions of IDPs and the need to address the puzzle and harness its outcomes for public policy making and implementation, extant studies have paid fleeting attention to this all important aspect of knowledge. The extant studies have not given deserved attention to how the IDPs could be rehabilitated and re-integrated into the society, have rather focused on how to provide temporary measures that would alleviate their plights (Lopez, 2011:IDMC, 2013);

To bridge this void, this study sets to interrogate the plights of the internally displaced persons in the Northeastern Nigeria and to appraise the efforts made by Nigerian state to bring succour to their plights. This study, therefore, is provoked by the need for an effective policy framework to address the plights of IDPs in the Northeast. To address the problem the study raises the following question:

- (1) What are the socio-economic and political implications of internally displaced persons in Northeast on Nigeria's development?
- (2) What measures should be taken by Nigerian state to rehabilitate and re-integrate the internally displaced persons in the Northeast Nigeria?

Conceptual and Theoretical Underpinnings

The Concept of State

There is no universally accepted definition of the state as scholars have viewed and described the concept in several ways; employing different phraseologies, criteria and perspectives. This has resulted in a plethora of different definitions. Thus, defining the concept from the formal structural perspective, Max Weber the foremost German sociologist, defines the state as "that aspect of human society which has exclusive monopoly of legitimate exercise of force". Aligning himself with Max Weber, Mouscheng Hsition Lin, in Ikejiani-Clark, (2009:176) views the state as:

A territorial human society which exercises... supreme coercive power over individuals and groups within it for the purpose of regulating and maintaining a general hierarchy of social values and-institutions...

Concurring with Weber and Lin, Robert Jordan, in Ikejiani-Clark, (2009:176) describes the state as: ... *a political authority which maintains domination over a specific geographical area... to ensure internal stability and external security with monopoly of force being its central distinguishing characteristic.*

All the above views and definitions ascribe to the state the monopoly of legitimate exercise of force. And by doing so, these scholars ascribe to the state the supreme sovereign authority throughout its territory. Indeed, this further informed Professors Hague and Harrop, cited in Ikejiani-Clark, (2009:176) who proceeded to define and Assign the state sovereign status. According to them, the state is:

The authoritative decision-making institution for the entire society to which all groups, institutions and persons are legally subject... it is sovereign and in the last resort, its authority is compulsory... and it is the ultimate Regulator of the legitimate use of force within its territory.

In all, notwithstanding their slight phraseological differences, all the above definitions concur with each other on the fact of its (state) possession of exclusive monopoly of legitimate exercise of force. And by the fact of this reality, it follows that the state is the illimitable sovereign authority exercising the ultimate supreme power to make and enforce authoritative decisions that are binding on all persons and groups and institutions within its territorial jurisdiction. The state therefore is both illimitable and omnipotent in its exercise of authority and power. Indeed, Professor Laski (1967:xii) makes this point most eloquently as he avers that:

The state is in fact is the final depository of the social will, which sets the perspective of all other organisations. It brings within its power all forms of human activity the control of which it deems desirable... it is the keystone of the social arch. It moulds the form and substances of the myriad human lives with whose destinies it is charged.

The Concept of Insurgency

In the words of Kilcullen, "Insurgency is a struggle to control a contested political space, between a state (or a group of states or occupying powers), and one or more popularly based, non-state challengers" (Kilcullen 2006: 112). Kilcullen also tried to draw a line between classical and contemporary insurgencies thus: "while the latter seek to replace the existing order, the former sometimes strive for the expulsion of foreign invaders from their territory or seek to fill an existing power vacuum" (Kilcullen 2006: 112). Similarly, the Oxford English Dictionary defines insurgency as "an armed rebellion against a constituted authority (for example, an authority recognized as such by the United Nations) when those taking part in the rebellion are not recognized as belligerents." According to this definition, "an insurgent is one who rises in revolt against constituted authority; a rebel who is not recognized as a belligerent."

The British Army counter-insurgency manual, Army Field Manual (AFM: 2001:231) defined insurgency as:

The actions of a minority group within a state who are intent on forcing political change by a means of a mixture of subversion, propaganda and military pressure, aiming to persuade or intimidate the broad mass of the people to accept such a change. It is an organised, armed political struggle, the goals of which might be diverse.

This definition also conform with the US Army-Marine Corps Counter-insurgency Field Manual (FM 3-24) which defined insurgency as “an organized, protracted politico-military struggle designed to weaken the control and legitimacy of an established government, occupying power, or other political authority while increasing insurgent control” (Petraeus & Amos 2006: 1).

Apart from the definition by Kilcullen and to an extent that of Oxford dictionary, the author does not totally agree with the other definitions as they fail to reflect the complexities of modern insurgencies especially with regards to their political, economic and social dimensions which Kilcullen simply describe as “struggle.” By implication, the other definitions branded insurgency as a predominantly military problem. However, in what seems to be a replacement of the 2006 FM 3-24 definition of insurgency, the 2009 Joint Publication 3-24 Counter-insurgency Operations, defined insurgency as “the organized use of subversion and violence by a group or movement that seeks to overthrow or force change of a governing authority.

While I agree more with this definition by the Joint Publication, I wish to stress that such definition excludes any insurgency that does not seek to overthrow or change the governing authority. A good example would be separatist insurgencies which aim for secession from within a state or reformist insurgencies which seek to influence government policies by forceful means.

In all, insurgencies connote an internal uprising often outside the confines of state’s laws and it is often characterised by socio-economic and political goals as well as military or guerrilla tactics. Put differently, it is a protracted struggle carefully and methodically carried out to achieve certain goals with an eventual aim of replacing the existing power structure. To launch their anger on the state, insurgents often target civilians and infrastructures. However, other than the violence of insurgency are its political and socio-economic dimension, where often lies its causes and effects. Traditionally however, insurgencies seek to overthrow an existing order and replace it with one that is commensurate with their political, economic, ideological or religious goals (Gompert & Gordon 2008: 23).

Internal Displaced Persons

Displaced persons under international law are persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obligated to flee or to have cause to leave their homes or place of habitual residence in particular, due to or in order to stave off the effect of armed conflict, violations of human rights, situations of generalized violence, natural or manmade disasters, to another place considered relatively safe either within their own national borders (as internally displaced persons) or travel across an internationally recognized state border (as refugees) (Ladan, 2006).

Internally Displaced persons are mostly victims of the brutality of man against man, various kind of injustices or violence confrontations, perpetrated either by their own government against them or by others, such as terrorism, communal clashes, religious conflicts, riots, natural disasters and so on. Ocha (2003) described IDPs as persons or groups of persons who because of armed conflict, systematic violations of human rights, internal strife, or natural or man-made disasters have been forced to flee their homes or places of habitual residence suddenly or unexpectedly, to another location but have not crossed an internationally recognized state border. It is expedient to clearly distinguish between refugees and IDPs. The displaced persons, who have crossed an international border and falls under one of the relevant international legal instruments, are considered as refugees. Although internally displaced persons are often defined as those uprooted by conflict, human rights violations and natural or human-made disasters, Robinson (2003) expanded the scope to also include those displaced by development projects. Most times, the focus of sympathetic attention and international aid centre round those displaced by disaster than for victims of development. Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions and the Social and Economic Right Action Centre in 2008 suggested that over 2 million people were forcibly evicted from their homes between 2000 and 2007 in cities such as Abuja, Port Harcourt and Lagos following government urban maintenance and or renewal programs (CHRESERAC, 2008).

In situations of armed conflict, IDPs, like any other person benefits from international humanitarian law and the legal protection of international human rights law. However, while they continue to benefit from all of the international human rights instruments and legal protection available to other persons, they are excluded from the specialised protection of international refugee law because they have not crossed an international border. Ibáñez and Moya (2007) opined that the fact that they are displaced from their homes exposes them to a situation of vulnerability to poverty and human right abuses.

Internally Displaced Persons in Nigeria

The full scope of displacement in Nigeria is unknown (Egwu, 2011) as there is limited capacity of the state to collect data and the complex nature of displacement patterns IDMC (2013) observed that no comprehensive

survey on internal displacement has been conducted and there are no mechanisms to monitor durable solutions. The available estimates only include people who have sought shelter at temporary IDP camps; whereas, most IDPs had reportedly preferred to seek shelter with relatives, rather than living in camps.

The head of National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced - Hajiya Hadiza Kangiwa estimated at the sensitization rally to commemorate 2013 World Refugees' Day that Nigeria currently has 4.4 million internally displaced people (NAN, 2013). The cause of IDPs in Nigeria can be traced to many events and situations all across the nation. While some of the conflicts appear to be caused by religious or ethnic differences, gains from politics, social and economic nature are generally behind the violence in the country with increasing level of poverty, low levels of education and a host of youth population with feeling of alienation (Oduwole and Fadeyi, 2013). Nigeria has had cause to contend with the issues of internally displaced persons who were affected by disasters in different parts of the country. However, the number of the displaced induced by disasters far outweighed those from natural circumstances such as floods, landslides, ocean surges, fire, etc (Manzo, 2011).

Olagunju (2006) traced the numerous violent communal conflicts in Nigeria to mid-1960s when the Western Nigeria witnessed violent ethnic conflicts when the duo of Obafemi Awolowo and Ladoke Akintola, parted ways based on political differences. The event gave birth to a series of crises and clashes which led to a state of emergency being declared in the Region. The Northern Nigeria started witnessing crisis when Ahmadu Bello - an undisputedly most powerful politician in Nigeria in the early fifties to mid-sixties, and leader of the ruling Northern Peoples' Congress in control of the Federal Government with headquarter in Lagos - was assassinated in the coup d'état of January 15, 1966. The failed coup d'état led by Kaduna Nzeogwu, a person of Ibo ethnic origin which is mostly located in Eastern Nigeria led to the civil war of 1967-1970, basically between the Ibo and the Hausa but with other ethnic groups in the federation fighting on the side of the Federal government, which was headed at that time by a Northerner - Yakubu Gowon. After the civil war there was relative peace in the country until the 1990s.

Since Nigeria's return to civilian rule in 1999, records has it that thousands of people have been killed in recurring inter-communal conflicts and politically motivated violence that have also led to consistently large waves of internal displacement (IDMC, 2013). According to Bamidele (2012), the widely held view by experts is that the politicization of religion and ethnicity in Nigeria has been responsible for the formation of groups such as the Oduduwa Peoples' Congress (OPC), Egbesu, the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), Arewa Peoples' Congress (APC), the Bakassi Boys, Igbo Youth Congress (IYC), Igbo Peoples' Congress (IPC), Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF), Niger Delta Resistant Movement (NDRM), Movement for the Survival of the Izon Nationality of the Niger Delta (MOSIEND), the Nigerian or Yobe Taliban, Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), Jama'at Ahlus al-Sunnah Liddawati Wal-Jihad or better known as *Boko Haram*. The activities of these groups as at one time or the other contributed to increasing number of internally displaced persons in Nigeria. Notable among these groups is *Boko Haram* which has its base in North-Eastern Nigeria. IDMC (2013) reported that increased violence by the radical Islamist group *Boko Haram*, inter-communal violence between Muslims and Christians and clashes between farmers and pastoralists led to burgeoning human displacement. Although, Nigerian government is yet to compile reliable figures of the displaced, not less 63,000 people were documented as newly displaced by violence. Terrorism, whether domestic or transnational has a devastating effects. For instance, Oriakhi and Osemwengie, (2012) observed that attacks from Islamic sect - *Boko Haram*- menace in Nigeria has led to loss of many lives, destruction of properties worth billions of Naira, severe damaged to infrastructure, loss of investment and income to mention but a few.

The Meaning and Origin of Boko Haram

Officially, Boko Haram is called Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad which in Arabic means "People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad" (Liolio, 2013:33). The group which is better known by its Hausa name 'Boko Haram' was a local radical Salafist group which transformed into a Salafi-jihadist terrorist organisation after 2009. It is based in the North-East of Nigeria, in the areas predominated by the Kanuri people. Loosely translated from the local Hausa language, Boko Haram means, 'Western education or civilization is forbidden.' Put differently, 'Western education or civilization is a sin, (Liolio, 2013).

Boko Haram is believed to have started in far back 1995 with the name 'Sahaba' and it was led by one Abubakar Lawan (Liolio, 2013). But then Abubakar Lawan was later said to have travelled for study at the University of Medina, Saudi Arabia, consequently leaving the old clerics to concede the group's leadership to a self-proclaimed Nigerian spiritual leader named, Mohammed Yusuf. Yusuf was said to have abandoned the old cleric doctrines thus reorganising and coming up with what became, Boko Haram in 2002 at the Northern city of Maiduguri, wherein was its headquarters. In Maiduguri, Yusuf established a religious complex that included a mosque and a school where many poor families from across Northern Nigeria and from neighbouring countries enrolled their children. The centre had ulterior political goals and soon it was also working as a recruiting ground

for future jihadists to fight the state. The group thus includes members who come from neighbouring Chad and Niger and speak only Arabic (Liolio, 2013). At the same time, Yusuf succeeded in entrenching his hold in Northern states such as Bauchi, Gombe, Kano, Katsina and Yobe. And in 2004 the complex was relocated to Yusuf's home town called Kanamma in Yobe state near the Nigerian-Niger border. In Kanamma, a militant base called "Afghanistan" was created (Liolio, 2013).

Theoretical Framework

The theory used for the explanation of this study is the social exclusion theory. The theory argues that social exclusion subject individuals and groups to discriminatory practices that expose them to humiliations and deprivations. It avers that social exclusion detaches and alienates some groups of individuals from the mainstream of society with resultant negative effects on their citizenship and other socio-economic rights. These exclusions are not just limited to material resources but also to matters like social participation, culture and education, access to social services and power. The theory is associated with the works of scholars such as Pacione, 1997; Lee et al, 1997; Black and Muddiman, 1997; Walker, 1997; Hills, 1998 among others. The theory is very apt for the study as it graphically captures the essence and focus of the study. This is because it not only exposes the complexity of the persistent powerlessness arising from systemic deprivations, humiliations disempowerment, alienation and hardship facing the IDPs in the Northeastern Nigeria but their dynamics effects on the socio-economic health of Nigerian state.

Methodology

The study adopted qualitative method in carrying out its investigation. The data employed for the study were gathered from secondary sources. As such, data used for this study were collected from public libraries as well as private libraries of a number of colleagues and associates within and outside the country. The study also made use of internet materials wherein relevant articles were carefully retrieved. The study utilized both content analysis and trend analytical techniques for the analysis of data. As such the information employed for analysis in the study were carefully extracted from logical chains of evidence presented in journal papers, conference papers, periodic papers, edited books, documentary materials among others.

Boko Haram and Internal Displacement in Nigeria

Since Boko Haram began its campaign of terror against the Nigerian state, several people have been forced to flee their homes for areas safety in the sates of Amawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe.

Table 1: Total Figure of IDPs in Northeast as at February, 2015

State of Location	Number of IDPs
Adamawa	220,159
Bauchi	60,555
Borno	672,714
Gombe	24,655
Taraba	74,125
Yobe	135,810
Grand Total	1,188,018

Source: Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) (2015).

The table above shows that the total number of IDPs in Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe is 1,188,018 IDPs. A breakdown analysis of the table above reveals that Borno state has the highest number of IDPs which is placed at 672,714, followed by Adamawa with 220,159 IDPs and Yobe that has 135,810 IDPs. Other three states of the region such as Taraba, Bauchi, Gombe have 74,125 IDPs, 60,555 IDPs and 24,655 IDPs respectively.

In Borno, Maiduguri LGA is hosting the highest number of IDPs (432,785) whereas most of the internally displaced persons in Adamawa have been identified in Yola South (41,275), Girei (38,495) and Yola North (35,293). In Yobe the majority of IDPs are in Damaturu (36,855) and Potiskum (21,400). In Gombe, the Gombe LGA is hosting the highest concentration of internally displaced persons (13,472). In Taraba, most IDPs have been identified in Gassol (20,641) and Gashaka (10,322) LGAs. The figure 1 below further illustrates the distribution of IDPs in the Northeastern States of Nigeria.

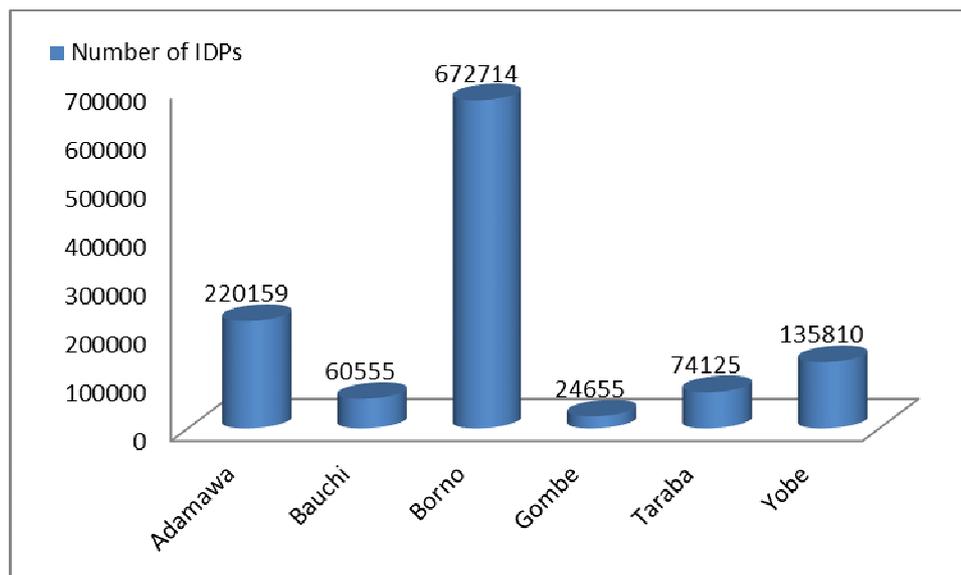


Figure1: Histogram showing the Distribution of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) as at February, 2015.

Socio-economic and Political Implications of Internal Displacement

Displacement internal displacement has socio-economic and political implications for the displaced persons and their host communities. Some of these implications could be collapsed under the following sub-heading:

Implications for the Displaced Persons

Socioeconomic conditions: In some circumstances, poor socioeconomic conditions (e.g. impoverishment, unemployment, lack of access to services and infrastructure, over-crowded living conditions) may make it more likely for IDPs to become radicalised. However, Lischer (2005) finds instead that there is generally little evidence to support the connection between particular socioeconomic conditions and IDPs violence. Drawing on a case study of camps in Dadaab, Kenya, for Somali IDPs, Martin-Raygo (2013) finds that good quality education is a key factor in countering the risk of radicalisation. A study on Gulu town, Uganda, finds that continued close connections of IDPs with their families and those they lived with before displacement resulted in internal social regulation and lack of resort to violence among Gulu's displaced population.

Political factors:

Voice and grievance mechanisms: lack of outlets for the peaceful expression of IDP voices and their exclusion from political processes may encourage violence as this may be seen as the only way in which the displaced can be heard. In addition, the lack of effective grievance mechanisms can result in misclassification of ordinary political engagement as radicalisation (Lischer, 2005)

Circumstances of expulsion: Lischer (2003; 2005) identifies three categories of IDPs based on their cause of flight: situational IDPs; persecuted IDPs; state-in-exile IDPs. Persecuted IDPs are more vulnerable to propaganda and manipulation than are situational IDPs. State-in-exile IDPs (e.g. Rwandan Hutus in Zaire; Afghans in Pakistan) are the most likely to engage in military violence as an extension of pre-existing conflict. Other scholars have contributed additional criteria to explain whether IDPs are likely to become militant, such as the socioeconomic status of those who fled; political motivation in the form of an ethno-nationalist project focused on the country of origin; and economic motivation toward the country of origin.

Host capability and will: where the capability and will of receiving states to secure borders and demilitarise refugees are both high, the risk of IDP violence should be lower; where capability and will are low, conflict and the misuse of humanitarian aid as a tool of war is likely (Lischer, 2003).

Impact on host communities: Displaced persons have the potential to destabilise host communities in various ways, including directly by participating in attacks; indirectly by changing the demographic (ethnic or sectarian) composition of host communities; and indirectly by imposing a heavy economic and social burden on local communities (e.g. driving up rents; competing for employment; and drawing on limited social services) Lischer (2003; 2005). These conditions can produce resentment among local host populations and could, alongside extreme IDPs deprivation, create the background for future clashes and conflict. Negative perceptions of IDPs can also result in harsh constraints placed on these populations. Mistreatment of IDPs can become a grievance against which IDP communities unite.

Protracted situations: If IDP crises become protracted, there is a greater likelihood that refugees/displaced persons will become involved in political violence and be susceptible to militant recruitment (Olukolajo, 2014). Overtime, IDPs can develop into a highly organised and militant states-in-exile. In addition, protracted situations

result in reduced expectations for the future, increasing feelings of hopelessness, and desperation among refugees/displaced person. Further, host societies are likely to become less hospitable the longer a IDP crisis lasts.

Socioeconomic conditions

Living conditions and employment

Most IDP crises occur in the poorest regions of the world, with immense material hardship experienced by IDPs (Holzer 2012). Some scholars argue that poor socioeconomic conditions can make it more likely for IDPs to become radicalised. Hutson, Long & Page (2009) find that some Palestinian IDPs living in poverty-stricken camps with minimal opportunities, have exhibited an attraction to radical Islam, which has not occurred among the better-integrated Palestinian community living outside the camps. Hanafi and Long (2010) argue that the negative effects of confinement and overcrowding in these camps, including feelings of despair, are likely to lead to chaos.

In the case of Iraqi IDPs, Leenders (2010) states that extreme deprivation (impoverishment, lack of access to higher education, and limited employment opportunities) fuels grievances, particularly among youth. This, combined with growing resentment within some host communities could trigger future clashes and conflict, possibly of a sectarian nature. Within Iraq, the displacement of Iraqis is occurring in a context of high unemployment, decreased access to basic food rations, clean water, sanitation and electricity. Ferris (2008) claims that although there is no evidence that IDPs are being recruited into militias in a greater proportion than other Iraqis, the greater likelihood of IDPs being unemployed than those not displaced makes them particularly vulnerable. In order to counter this vulnerability and security risk, she calls for sufficient humanitarian assistance to ensure that IDPs have livelihoods and access to education and health services. Lischer (2008) also emphasises that in the case of Iraq, where IDPs are mainly concerned about food, shelter, health care and education, humanitarian assistance plays an essential role in minimising the influence of militant groups on displaced persons and pacifying anxious host states.

More generally, however, Lischer (2005) finds that there is little evidence to support the common argument that particular socioeconomic conditions, including poor living conditions and the presence of bored, young men among the refugees, are correlated with refugee violence. She finds political factors to be more relevant. Allen (2010) observes that Somali IDPs, living in very poor conditions in camps and facing high rates of crime and violence, were not themselves inclined to organise into armed groups.

Education

Martin-Rayó (2013) also finds that poverty, lack of employment opportunities and the presence of idle youth have not resulted in radicalisation and terrorist recruitment of IDPs. He considers good quality education to be a key factor in countering the risk of radicalisation. Those who have received even a little education are more inclined to view violence negatively and to be less susceptible to ideological brainwashing by extremist groups. He compares their situation to that of Somalis who experience institutionalised discrimination in education (e.g. language barriers, corrupt payments, violence targeting only Somali students). Some of these students, who expressed a sense of desperation, openly identified their desire to join al-Qaeda upon graduation. In light of these findings, Martin-Rayó (2013) concludes that a well-rounded education, even if for short duration, is a key factor in reducing radicalisation of displaced populations and that the international community should develop protocols for education in camps alongside established protocols for food, clothing and shelter.

Social ties

A study on displaced populations in Gulu Town, Uganda, attributes the relative stability of the town – despite the massive influx of uprooted rural Acholi people – in part to social ties. The displaced were often tightly connected to their families and those they lived with before displacement, resulting in considerable internal social regulation among Gulu's displaced population (Branch, 2013). Over time, however, the new generation of displaced comprised those who are poor and had lost their family and social ties. This new dynamic has contributed to a rise in tensions that could in turn increase urban violence or provide a recruitment ground for government militias or rebels (Branch, 2013).

Political factors

Voice and grievance mechanisms

There has been a growing critique in recent years of the way in which humanitarian and aid agencies purport to speak on behalf of IDPs refugees and their tendency to represent IDPs solely as helpless and lost. This has resulted in the silencing of IDPs voices and their exclusion from the design and implementation of interventions aimed at IDPs communities (often undermining efficient and dignified programming) (see Hanafi and Long, 2010). In addition, they have been left out of political processes. Palestinian IDPs particularly the youth, have been critical of having no voice in the legal formulation of their status and say in political processes that affect them (Hanafi and Long, 2010). In the case of Rwandan Hutu, Perera (2013) finds that their exclusion from

access to conventional political power/local governance structures has strengthened their conviction that they need to remain armed to survive. In the case of Darfur, IDPs have regularly expressed concerns over the lack of access to the political process. Kahn (2008) argues that the principle that camps are neutral spaces should not result in them being strictly apolitical. Rather, the failure to allow for the peaceful expression of political views may encourage violence as this may be seen as the only way in which those displaced can be heard.

Further, the lack of effective grievance mechanisms and outlets to articulate different viewpoints – and the failure of humanitarian actors to institutionalise such practices – can result in the misclassification of ordinary political engagement for radicalisation. Acts that could otherwise be considered civic debate are seen as a social problem (Lebson 2013). This in turn can result in problematic repression of such engagement. In a case study on a Liberian IDP camps, Holzer (2012) points to inadequate grievance practices as a key factor behind the classification of social protests as ‘criminal acts’ and subsequent police crackdowns. Between 2007 and 2008, a group called IDPs Women with IDPs Concerns engaged in social protests (including a food boycott) to push for better migration choices. The latter case, according to Holzer (2012) has been an exception. Practitioners and policymakers need to view IDPs as actors who take independent political action. This, Lebson (2013) argues could result in a reconsideration of policies that seek to deter political activity and that instead aim to establish alternative opportunities for political agency, such as town hall forums in camps and communities, refugee-run media, polling and traditional forms of political engagement unique to each group.

Government Responses to Plights of IDPs

1. Establishment of Institutional Frame to Handle IDPs

The initially, challenge encounter by Nigerian state in managing the plights of IDPs was the absence legal institutional frame responsible for providing short, medium and long term measures for their plights. In the absence of a legal framework or institution, provision of assistance, protection, reintegration and resettlement for IDPS is mostly undertaken by agencies of government on an ad hoc and reactive basis.

In order to address this gap and ameliorate the plights of the IDPs, the Federal Government of Nigeria set up a committee to draft a National Policy on IDPs to assist in registration and issuance of identity cards, prevention or reduction in instances of internal displacement, and allocation of responsibilities to agencies and organs of government, non-governmental and civil society organizations (Bukar, 2011). The committee’s work culminated in a National Policy on Internally Displaced Persons which was prepared and presented to government in 2011 but it is yet to be officially adopted. The draft Policy is based on the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (the ‘Kampala Convention’) of 2009.

The draft National Policy aims to guide the different branches of government, donors and humanitarian agencies in preventing displacement and in providing protection and assistance to those displaced. It also allocates responsibilities to the appropriate government bodies for different aspects of the short, medium and long-term response to internal displacement, with the existing National Commission for Refugees (NCFR) as the governmental focal point with responsibility for coordinating the activities of all agencies, including international humanitarian agencies. Furthermore, it empowers the National Emergency Management Agency, the Human Rights Commission and the Institute of Peace and Conflict Resolution to partner with the NCFR to support the activities of the states and local governments in implementing the Policy within their respective spheres of activities.

The Policy starts by re-affirming the fundamental rights of all citizens under the 1999 Constitution but also acknowledges the particular vulnerabilities of women and children, according them special guarantees. It then includes measures to protect against being displaced and sets out standards pertaining to the delivery of humanitarian assistance by national and international humanitarian agencies. To this end, the Policy envisages the application of various laws and institutions to the protection of IDPs under what it terms a ‘humanitarian framework of cooperation’ of all relevant ministries, states, local governments, departments and agencies as well as international organisations and charitable institutions. The Policy also identifies some circumstances under which a person ceases to be an IDP (Bukar, 2011).

It goes on to outline in general terms national and international legal principles applicable to IDPs. These principles are reflections of fundamental rights of individuals as guaranteed under the Constitution and under international instruments, including freedom from discrimination, freedom of movement, freedom of association, and the rights to dignity and family life.

While the Policy guarantees the protection of the above mentioned rights, it at the same time prohibits acts that are capable of causing internal displacement such as ethnic cleansing or large-scale development projects not justified by public interest. It outlines strategies for the prevention and management of conflicts including the involvement of communities and ethnic groups in the economic, political and social activities of the government, and promotes dialogue, consultation, inter-ethnic marriages, religious harmony through inter-faith relations, education and a fair and equitable distribution of economic resources among the people and

communities. Where, however, displacement becomes inevitable, then all the rights of citizens equally accrue to IDPs.

The NCFR is enjoined to create a conducive atmosphere for the return, resettlement or reintegration of IDPs. In planning for return, resettlement or reintegration, the Commission is equally enjoined to ensure participation of the IDPs through their chosen representatives.

The Constitution declares that the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government; accordingly, government at all levels and its agencies are the first referral point in the implementation machinery of the Policy. However, the Federal Government has delegated most of its responsibilities to the NCFR. This now has ultimate responsibility for rehabilitation, resettlement and reintegration of all IDPs as well as for the prevention of conflicts or disasters leading to displacement along with specific other agencies which have responsibility for emergency management, protecting human rights or designing and implementing programmes to prevent the breakdown of peace and to prevent conflict that would lead to displacement.

One of the major problems is the fact the Policy has no legal status and is therefore incapable of enforcement either by the government or the delegated actors. In addition, there is no body or organisation responsible for monitoring implementation by the NCFR, which is anyway under-funded. Recognising the scale of the funding difficulties, the government has proposed the establishment of a Humanitarian Trust Fund to attract funding from individuals, corporate bodies, international agencies and others for activities in aid of IDPs. Similar funding bodies should be established for other government agencies that complement the work of the NCFR. However, even if there were adequate funding, there is the problem of lack of accountability by those entrusted with public office and funds.

Currently there are monumental challenges relating to prevention of displacement, assistance, return and relocation of IDPs. The National Policy has come at a time when the country actually requires a strong legal and institutional framework – rather than a mere policy – and effective implementing institutions.

Following a year-long survey, Nigeria's National Emergency Management Agency reported in late 2011 that there were some 370,000 IDPs in the country, including some 74,000 in camps. Previous estimates by government and other agencies only included people who had sought shelter at temporary IDP camps, and did not reflect the many who had taken refuge with family and friends. In the absence of mechanisms to monitor IDPs' ongoing situations, it has been impossible to determine how many may have recovered and achieved a durable solution.

Other responses include: Reconstruction of Social Amenities Destroyed by Boko Haram; Establishment of IDPs Camps; Provision of Security at the IDPs Camps; Provision of Health and Sanitation facilities; and Supply of Foods, Beddings and Clothings.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Nigeria state since 2009 has been battling to provide succor to the plights of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the Northeast, occasioned by violent activities of Boko Haram insurgents. The campaign of terror mounted by the Boko Haram insurgents against the Nigerian state in the region has forced many people to flee their homes for safety areas. As such the number of the IDPs in the states of Adamawa, Borno, Bauchi, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe, has continued to rise astronomically. As at December, 2016 the total official figure of IDPs in the said states was 1,188,018.

The most affected persons are vulnerable groups such as children, aged and women who are exposed to severe socio-economic and political challenges. The resultant effects of IDPs in the north east is increase in starvation, lack of accommodation, unemployment, school dropouts, sexual harassment, child labour, early marriage, poor health and sanitation. The implication of the huge IDPs figure in the region is that the development if left unabated will continue to compound and complicate the already existing challenge of poor living standard in the region and invariably affect negatively the development index.

These sorry states of affairs require urgent attention of government and other stakeholders to put the IDPs back to their normal lives. The responses of Nigerian government to the plights of the IDPs have never gone beyond the usual ad hoc method of providing relief materials to IDPs which most cases are not always enough. To say the least, Nigerian state has never put in place a sustainable strategy that would ensure socio-economic and psychological rehabilitation IDPs so as to re-integrate them into the society.

To ameliorate the socio-economic and psychological conditions of the IDPs, the study recommends among others; that government should make more concerted efforts to provide the needs of the displaced persons by rehabilitating the socio-economic and psychological conditions of the IDPs. This could be achieved through the provision of employment opportunities and skill acquisitions programmes for the IDPs. Government should also carryout sustainable programmes that is geared towards the rehabilitation and re-integration of the IDPs into the society while it expedites actions to end up the insurgency. The study equally recommended for the interventions of the international humanitarian agencies, philanthropic organizations and public spirited

individuals to ameliorate the plights of the IDPs.

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