

Humanitarian Crises and the Management of the Internally Displaced Persons' (IDPs) Camps in Nigeria

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Abstract

Given the high level of humanitarian crises in Nigeria, Africa's largest and most populous country, particularly over the past ten years, the concept of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) Camps has gained some currency in several parts of the country. In the main, IDPs Camps, which have become a necessity in Nigeria, are characterised by increasing social injustices like rape, diversion of food items and other corruption-related cases which are deemed as inexcusable. As a consequence, IDPs in Nigeria suffer disproportionately from different problems such as malnutrition, sickness, insecurity in the camps, lack of access to education and healthcare, among others. Many have suffered severe mental distress caused by traumatic experiences of having witnessed or been subjected to gross violations of human rights such as killings, torture, sexual violence, family separation and displacement from home. For all these categories of victims, the idea of seeking refuge, protection and succour in IDPs Camps may not be a bad one. However, the management of these camps in Nigeria has become a source of great concern due to heart-rending stories of sorrow and shame in Nigeria's IDPs Camps. This paper examines some dark spots in the management of IDPs Camps in Nigeria and concludes that the vulnerability of displaced persons is a major reason why sustainable strategies

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for rehabilitation must be considered and implemented at the shortest possible time.

Key words: Humanitarian Crisis, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) Camps, Vulnerability, Insecurity and Corruption.

Background to the Study

The concept of internally displaced persons (IDPs) has assumed a global dimension in recent times. This is due to frequency of communal violence, natural disaster, internal armed conflicts, border conflicts, ethno-religious conflicts and terrorist attacks in several parts of the world. In much of Africa, the phenomenon constitutes a serious concern given the level of underdevelopment in many of these countries. In mid-August 2017 for instance, more than 300 people died in a mudslide in Sierra Leone's capital, Freetown.¹ Several thousands of people were rendered homeless in the disaster. Similar gory tales are reported in many other countries in the continent. Irrespective of the cause of the displacement, the phenomenon always leaves socio-economic, political and physical assaults on millions of people worldwide, such as: vulnerability to security and physical threats, loss of lives and properties, loss of contact with children and family members, inadequate and insecure shelter, discrimination in aids distribution, psycho-social stress, sexual and gender-based violence. Other challenges include loss of personal documentation, hampered access to health care, adequate food, water, sanitation, education, employment, inadequate access to basic services, housing, land and property, and unsafe or involuntary return, local integration or relocation (United Nations Human Rights, 2011).

In modern armed conflicts, millions of refugees, IDPs and other civilians affected by war have been affected by the psychosocial consequences of crises. Many have suffered severe mental distress caused by traumatic experiences of having witnessed or being subjected to gross violations of human rights such as killings, torture, sexual violence, family separation and displacement from home. To all of these categories of people, the choice of shelter in IDPs camps is perhaps non-negotiable. However, the management of IDPs camps in Nigeria has constituted another headache as quite a number of mind-blowing atrocities characterise the running of majority of the camps.

Statement of Research Problem

Displacement, whatever might be its cause, leaves negative socio-economic footprints in millions of people worldwide (Olukolajo *et al*, 2014). During violent conflicts or natural disaster, IDPs are usually forced to leave home as most houses and properties are destroyed, looted or burnt down (Ladan, 2012). It leaves the displaced with the quest for shelter and survival, either of which is provided for by relatives or government. While it is the constitutional responsibility of the latter that these needs are met, the former through social ties and sense of communal relationship may provide such. It must be noted here that the primary needs of IDPs remains shelter, food and opportunities to reduce dependence. Olukolajo, *et. al.* (2014) revealed that most IDPs have reportedly preferred to seek shelter with relatives rather than living in camps. The vast majority of displaced persons in Nigeria reportedly seek refuge with family, friends or host communities in areas where their ethnic or religious group is in majority (Je' adayibe, 2008). This is partly because of their tentative assurance of freedom, care and provision which comparatively is better provided for by relatives than in IDPs camps.

The importance of camping in management of internal displacement cannot be overstated. Well managed camps and camp-like setting can strengthen physical, legal and material protection and security. In Nigeria, the recent magnitude of displacement and the distance seem to have aided the living in camps of IDPs. Also, since majority of those displaced in Nigeria are women and children with little affinity with relatives, their living in camps is inevitable. Coupled with the fact that there are no official IDPs camps of long lasting nature in the country (Oduwole, 2013), the non-availability of accurate and comprehensive record as regards displacement is also reflected in the situation of camping. The statistics of IDPs camps in the country is not available and their condition remains inaccessible. Their spatial characteristics remain unmapped and where data exists, it is not holistic as it is usually fragmented. These are mostly accounts of individual authority in charge of displacement management neglecting the unregistered camps which actually accounts for the highest numbers of IDPs camps.

IDPs in Nigeria live in very pathetic sub-human and difficult conditions. Apart from the difficulty of obtaining food items, water and other important means of livelihood, majority of them have lost touch with humanity and

normal living conditions. IDPs lack access to educational, health and nutritional facilities. Some of these IDPs camps are school facilities, empty government buildings or tents that were set up by the affected state government, some by the federal government, some by concerned (local/international) organisations and others by the victims themselves. Needless to say, these camps are largely populated by women and children who are in dire need of shelter, beddings, clothing, education, parents, better welfare and a promising future. Considering the foregoing, the study seeks to examine the situation and management of IDPs camps in Nigeria as well as examine the challenges constraining effective management of IDPs camp in Nigeria.

There are over fifty IDPs camps across the country housing more than three million inmates.² Borno State alone accounts for a majority, with a total of thirty-two camps. In each camp, there are repeated stories of rape, sex-for-food and materials, rampant pregnancy and abandonment of the mother and child. There is also pilfering of relief materials and extortion. Apart from paucity of foods, drugs and other basic daily needs, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases are ravaging the camps. The Presidential Initiative for the North East was set up to help with rebuilding the region and managing the IDPs camps which have recently been tagged “camps of sorrow and shame.”³ The devastation to human lives and livelihood by the insurgency in the North East is severe, with more than an estimated 20,000 persons killed, an estimated 2.4 million persons displaced and billions of Naira worth of personal and public assets destroyed. Many humanitarian intervention efforts, national and international, have worked over time to assist in coping with the task of bringing succour to the IDPs in and outside the region, with most of these efforts aimed at providing short-term emergency assistance and relief to the victims of the violence and displacement. However, there remains a need for better coordination of these efforts particularly the humanitarian resettlement and reconstruction of the region.

Since the return to democratic rule in 1999, Nigeria has witnessed relative deterioration of its internal security leading to a situation in which the trends and patterns of terrorism in the country have become a major source of concern. This, in addition to pockets of natural disasters across the country, has made the issue of IDPs a major governance problem in Nigeria. The Nigerian government produced figures on internal displacement for the

first time since *Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC)*'s monitoring began, and the official number of up to 3.3 million⁴ contributed to a rise in the overall figure for the region, from 10.4 million at the end of 2012. This made Nigeria the country with the largest IDPs population in the region.

The increase continued an upward trend set in 2012, linked mainly to worsening conflict and violence throughout the region, and also to an improvement in the collection of data on IDPs (Global Overview, 2014). According to a Zurich-based international displacement monitoring centre (IDMC),⁵ a Norwegian non-governmental organisation in its 2014 report, Nigeria is home to the largest IDPs in the world after Syria (6.5 million) and Columbia (5.7 million) (*Punch*, August 23, 2015). The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) stated that the number of internally displaced persons in Nigeria is approximately a third of the IDPs in Africa and 10 per cent of IDPs in the world.⁶ IDMC reports that there are 3.3 million IDPs in Nigeria as a result of Boko Haram attacks, communal and religious violence in the middle belt, flooding, cattle rusting and competition for resources. Indeed, Nigeria is noted to have third highest internally displaced persons (IDPs) after Syria and Iraq.⁷ Such northern states like the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Adamawa, Bauchi, Benue, Borno, Gombe, Kaduna, Kano, Nasarawa, Plateau, Taraba, Yobe, and Zamfara have recorded highest number of victims. This means that about 2% of Nigeria's population has lost homes, family life, means of livelihood and businesses. About 800,000 children have had their education truncated, meaning that the future looks bleak for these children (*Punch*, August 23, 2015).

Conceptual Clarifications and Theoretical Framework

In this section, we shall attempt to (i) define two key concepts associated with this paper namely, concept of Humanitarian crisis and internally displaced persons (IDPs), and (ii) provide a theoretical anchor for the research.

Humanitarian Crisis: Any situation that results in infringement of citizens' rights constitutes a humanitarian crisis. Often, humanitarian crisis results from armed conflict, systematic violations of human rights, internal strife, or natural or manmade disasters leading to people leaving or

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs): *The internally displaced persons (IDPs) are persons or groups of persons who have been forced to flee their homes or places of habitual residence as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violation of human rights or natural or human made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognised state border (Wasike 2000:1). This definition has strengthened the position of Guy Martin who defined IDPs as those who have been forced to leave their homes and sources of livelihood but are still within the borders of a country undergoing violent internal conflict (Martin 1995:248). As the number of the IDPs keeps growing at an alarming rate, the plight of these people has largely become unaddressed by the international community such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (Nowrojee, 1997). The reason often cited for that is that, the responsibility for such IDPs lies with their home government.*

Theoretical Framework

In population studies, population movements or migrations usually take two main forms- voluntary migration and involuntary or forced migration. Of the two, voluntary migration or what is now known as regular migration (Prothero 1987: 1282) involves a permanent change in place of residence in which the decision to move has been taken in circumstances offering the migrant relatively free choice. Forced, involuntary or irregular migration is the second type of migration because of the nature of the movement of the people concerned (the bomb blast, ethnic conflict, and natural disaster, especially flooding). This type of migration involves a change of residence under pressure which may therefore not be wholly permanent but may involve further movement, whose timing and direction are uncertain. Inherent in this is the ideas that force (war, conflict, ecological disasters and so on) being an external factor affecting a person, acts as a push factor leading people to decide to leave their country and settle elsewhere. Historical record of population movements is punctuated by human crises such as among the Diaspora of the Jews, the expulsion of the Huguenots from France and the deportation of American Indians from their tribal territories.

For the purpose of this paper, social conflict theory and relative deprivation theory are adopted as the framework of analysis. Social conflict theorists

emphasise the importance of interest over norms and values, and the ways in which the pursuit of interests generate various types of conflict as normal aspects of social life, rather than abnormal or dysfunctional occurrences (Marshall, 1998). Social conflict theorists agree that the existence of groups with different interests does not mean that they will be in conflict all the time. There may be periods of truce, or it may be that some social groups are persuaded that their interests are not different from those of other groups. Nevertheless, periods of harmony do not last forever, and eventually, conflict will return (Collier *et. al.*, 2003). The main idea of social conflict theory revolves around competition over scarce resources (money, leisure, sexual partners), structural inequality in power and reward, as well as revolution and war (Ogunbameru, 2008).

From the assumptions above, the social conflict theory is apt and relevant for the appreciation of the conflict challenges facing Nigeria, most especially the Boko Haram insurgency and the herdsmen-farmers conflicts which have led to rise in the number of IDPs in the North-East and North-Central geo-political zones. It offers deep insights into the interlocking factors that sustain conflicts. It presupposes that once conflict has occurred, it heightens and becomes challenging to restore peace on account of a number of factors such as ethnic pluralism, proliferation of arms, displacement of people, mass killing of people, existence of income disparities, social inequalities, domination of particular ethnic group over the other groups, existence of expensive republic of hoodlums and the activities of criminal entrepreneurs.

Relative Deprivation Theory

Understanding the applications, strengths and weaknesses of relative deprivation theory provides a vital background for all those interested in analysing the issue of insurgency and internally displaced persons. The theory proves useful in explaining the root causes of social movements and revolutions (Krahn and Harrison, 1992). In sociology, relative deprivation *theory* is a view of social change and movements, according to which people take action for social change in order to acquire something (for example, opportunities, status, or wealth) that others possess and which they believe they should have, too.

Management of Internally Displaced Persons in Nigeria: Issues and Challenges

Across the globe today, efforts of various stakeholders, including governments, United Nations, African Union and other international organisations, are primarily on strategies and methods of rehabilitating IDPs. Among others, the Kampala Convention which seeks the protection and assistance of IDPs agrees with this. The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and International Organisation for Migration also identified closely related number of IDPs. It is clear that the figures may not be accurate considering the fact that some IDPs camps are not recognised by the government. Despite this uncertainty in figure, it is not obscure that displaced persons in Nigeria today are numbered in millions all of whom live perpetually in dehumanising conditions. It is estimated that some 53% of IDPs are said to be women while 47% are men. Also, some 56% of the total IDPs population are children which more than half are up to five years old; some 2.26% are breastfeeding mothers, some 1.2% are pregnant women, and some 1.61% are identified as unaccompanied and separated children. A whopping majority (92%) were displaced by the insurgency in north east.⁸ According to findings, reasons for displacement have ranged from communal clashes, natural disasters to insurgency attacks which constitute about 85%.

Challenges/Condition of IDPs in Nigeria

Living in IDPs Camps in Nigeria is essentially brutish, nasty and poor, almost approximating the Thomas Hobbes's state of nature.⁹ The IDPs camps are certainly not prisons or detention camps, but sadly the lives of many of the occupants are not quite different from those of prisoners. The people (victims) typically fled their homes without taking anything as many of them, being farmers and fishermen, arrived in camps with only the clothes they had on. Many virtually have nothing but hope and will to survive. In Borno State, as in many others, state government has been responsible for moving and securing the IDPs from the various towns captured or destroyed by Boko Haram. The state government is responsible for the IDPs alongside NEMA which also assists in providing relief materials.

Running the camps is not without the typical problems as there have been claims that senior government officials and camp officers are helping themselves to relief materials meant for IDPs. It has been reported that some senior officials cart hundreds of bags away, and that some of the officials indulge in selling materials meant for the people to them.¹⁰ There are also reports of corruption and financial irregularities within the camps among the officials. The state government claims to be spending N600m monthly, whereas IDPs, who are able to voice their opinion, complain bitterly of government not doing enough for them. They complain about the quality of food served and some complain of sleeping on the bare floor without sheets, or mats.¹¹

In any conflict situation, and particularly those with ethnic or religious underpinnings, the humanitarian needs are immense, and the means to satisfy those needs within the conflict area are severely limited. Internally displaced civilian populations move from one place to another, seeking safety and protection inside their own country. The misery of displaced persons in recent years becomes a formidable problem of global significance and implications (Ladan, 2012) and spatial psychological implications of displacement. The scale of internal displacement and the inevitable problems and nature of the response have become far more momentous in contemporary times. The consequence of internal displacement on IDPs themselves, as well as on the local authorities and communities that host them, can be shocking. Yet, the central objective of any IDPs camp is to ensure that IDPs are properly rehabilitated or assisted to enable them return to as close to a normal life as possible and to assist them in fully gaining their life back.

Livelihoods of millions of population in the northeast and north central have been disrupted following over five years of insurgency and conflict. According to Fewsnets, households in the two regions, worst affected by violent conflicts, continue to face acute food insecurity, with limited access to income-earning activities and markets. The regions are food-producing as well as routes for livestock, and the insurgency has contributed to greatly reducing household capacity to continue typical livelihoods, as well as decreased market function and trade flows. In Adamawa, Borno and Yobe States, markets are strongly impacted by the conflict. Major assembly and

cross border markets are not functioning and many more are functioning well below normal levels. Consequently, stable food and livestock trade flows within and outside these states have been significantly restricted. Markets stocks are further limited by the significantly below-average local production. This is leading to above-average food prices which are also high relative to neighbouring areas.

While the act of displacement itself often may violate the human rights of those affected, the subsequent loss of access to homes, lands, livelihoods, personal documentation, family members, and social networks can deleteriously affect the ability of IDPs to assert and relish an entire range of fundamental rights (Monney, 2005). Most apparent, IDPs instantaneously become reliant on others for basic needs such as shelter, food and water. At the same time, their susceptibility may be amplified by barriers to accessing health care, education, employment, economic activities, and electoral politics in their areas of displacement. Moreover, the longer displacement continues, the greater is the risk that traditional family and social structures break down, leaving IDPs dependent on outside aid and vulnerable to economic and sexual exploitation. Such dependency, in turn, reduces the chances of durable solutions and sustainable reintegration into society once political and security conditions have changed to enable such solutions to take place.

Paucity of data on displaced persons, their camps and afterwards has made it nearly impossible to evaluate the establishment as well as management of IDPs camps. The role of stakeholders in such has also been silent however the need for an inquiry into this is reflected in the continuous increase of the number of IDPs and the disheartening state of IDPs camps. It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to examine the management of the internally displaced people's camp in Nigeria. Internal conflicts in Nigeria have forced thousands of people out of their homes. For instance, over 500,000 Tivs were said to be displaced from Nasarrawa and Taraba states in the Tiv-Jukun clash of 2001. Particularly since civil rule re-emerged in Nigeria in 1999, the country has witnessed a series of internal conflict and terrorist activities that have displaced thousands of people from their homes. A few of these conflicts occurred in Ife-Modakeke, Zango Kataf, Kafanchan, Tafawa Balewa, UmuleriAguleri, Zaki Biam,

etc. Since 2009 when, following the death of its leader, Muhammed Yusuf, the Islamic terror group, Boko Haram, stepped up its terrorist activities, several thousands of citizens have been forcefully displaced from their homes, particularly in the north eastern part of the country.

Most IDPs have been displaced from rural to urban areas; yet, violence in larger urban centres has led to substantial intra-urban displacement, signifying a shift in displacement modalities (Andrea, *et. al.* 2014). In many developing countries urban violence has been attributed to clashes between illegal armed groups and government forces, activities of post-demobilisation groups, disputes over the control of urban areas that include profitable micro-drug trade, forced recruitment or labour, and pressure on communities to engage in illegal mining and illicit plant cultivation (Andrea, *e.t al.* 2014). IDMC estimates that there were 33.3 million internally displaced people in the world as of the end of 2013. They were forced to flee their homes by armed conflict, generalised violence and human rights violations. This figure represents a 16 per cent increase compared with 2012, when 28.8 million IDPs were reported, and is a record high for the second year running (Global Overview 2014). As of the end of 2013, sub-Saharan Africa had the largest number of IDPs with 12.5 million, followed by the Middle East and North Africa with 9.1 million. Sixty-three per cent of all IDPs globally come from just five countries affected by conflict: Syria, Colombia, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Sudan (Global Overview 2014). Indeed, the numbers of displaced persons in Nigeria increased speedily in 2014 and 2015 following increased severe attacks from the dreaded terror group, Boko Haram. From the Displacement Tracking Matrix in a report published in February 2015, over a million displaced persons consisting of 149,357 households were identified in six states of north east and north central (Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe states). Another 5,910 households were identified in Plateau, Nasarawa, Abuja, Kano and Kaduna states.

Due largely to the massive destruction of public and private infrastructure, it becomes exceedingly difficult for IDPs to return home, even when calm seems to have returned to their communities. Sadly, many of them have nothing to return to as they have lost everything to the insurgency, militant attacks or natural disasters. The situation was compounded by a glaring

absence of social and public services which have been destroyed by the conflicts. As a way of addressing some of these challenges, President Muhammadu Buhari in October 2016, established the Presidential Committee on the North East Initiative (PCNI), under the Chairmanship of General T.Y. Danjuma (Rtd), as the apex coordinating body for all interventions in the region including those by the public, private, national and international development partners. Domiciled in the Presidency, the Committee is charged with responsibility for developing the strategy and implementation framework for rebuilding the north east region. The initiative is a 32-member committee, set up by the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) to provide emergency assistance and to ensure a safe and secure north east.

The PCNI is designed to oversee all remedial programmes aimed at addressing the crisis in the north east since 2009. Alhaji Tijjani Tumsah, the Vice Chairman of the PCNI said that the Committee would allow people to return back to their communities only when it has been certified safe for return by security agencies and the state governments.¹² As part of resettlement programmes, efforts have been made to construct buildings and restore homes of those people that have been displaced. The VP of PCNI added that the number of people returning to their communities was increasing in the areas where the military had recorded successes, adding that the committee was considering an alternative solution to create a new resettlement in the areas that are secured as the way forward.

One of the major problems people in the IDPs camps face is the lack of proper and adequate food. Indeed, occupants of IDPs have continued to suffer lack in the most critical areas of existence. First, due to insufficiency they scavenge for food everyday. A mother of four, Mrs. Asabe Abel, said: "...in this camp,¹³ I am living with my children as if we are in an orphanage home, no food, nowhere to sleep, we have escaped from crisis but we don't know how to escape from hunger. Hunger will soon kill my children." The state governments, National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) are in charge of the camps, which also have custody of relief materials donated by philanthropic organisation like the Dangote Groups.

There are subterranean moves to cover up misdeeds in several IDPs camps. First, journalists are kept off the camps so as not to be able to report and expose corruption-related stories. In the Bakassi¹⁴ IDPs camp, for instance, no journalist is allowed entry upon arrival at the camp. Instead, he is first directed to SEMA to submit an application letter that finds eternal abode in one of the dusty files at the relief agency. The practice is to direct the journalist from one office to another, on and on until frustration sets in and he is forced to abandon the mission. It is alleged that SEMA diverts food items meant for IDPs to private quarters. The situation is that:

They actually re-bag grains meant for IDPs and re-sell at the open-air market. These bags of grains that are diverted, they claim that they are giving them to IDPs in host communities...”It’s very smart move from these SEMA officials because they know that there’s no documentation for IDPs resident in host communities. Of course, this particular IDP population exists, but you can’t track their number. It is this loophole that SEMA exploits to divert aids meant for IDPs.¹⁵

This weighty allegation was corroborated by someone who once worked as a driver at the SEMA office where relief materials are stored. According to him, there are times when SEMA receives aid and keeps allnot just half-of humanitarian aid to itself. According to him,

...they gave SEMA about 3,000 bags of sugar during the Ramadan period. We brought it and they didn’t make use of it; they just kept it till after the Ramadan period and the sugar became solid. Then they started to break the sugar and change the sacks. Then they loaded it in the cars at night, and took it to the flour mill to sell.¹⁶

As a result of this development, in August 2017, displaced persons from two different camps blocked the highways linking Borno to adjoining states in protest of “poor feeding and ill-treatment” at the camps. The IDPS at the Arabic Teachers’ College Camp were the first to protest, on August 26, and they were followed by those from the Bakassi Camp on August 30. The protests prompted the state government to scrap its central feeding programme, under which food was cooked at the central kitchen and shared

to IDPs, and adopt the household sharing system that allocated raw food to family heads according to family sizes.

The question of education is also not one to be pushed aside. Experts have proven that illiteracy is one of the reasons that led to the proliferation of recruits for Boko Haram and Fulani herdsmen attacking many innocent people across the country. Many of the educational supplies needed in the camps have been hijacked the same way the food were, many young ones, whose schooling was cut short due to the insurgency have had their educational growth stunted.

The displaced people are also in need of shelter and non-food items (NFIs). Recurrent ethnic and inter-communal clashes are also responsible for displacement of persons largely due to destruction of houses, schools and markets, thereby occasioning the urgent need for non-food items and shelter to address needs, reduce vulnerabilities and offer protection to displaced and affected communities. In most of the camps, IDPs face acute accommodation problem as there was always not enough houses to accommodate them. Particularly in the state of emergency (SoE) states,¹⁷ the displaced people live in churches, mosques, town halls, abandoned and uncompleted buildings, and where available, other forms of make shift camps which are grossly inadequate and unsustainable for accommodating the surge in displaced populations. The IDPs usually make do with a makeshift arrangement; they simply gathered grass and sticks, fix the sticks together on the ground in a circular shape and thatch the grasses on the sticks. The increasing number of IDPs living in inadequate public or private shelters indicates that the coping mechanisms of both IDPs and host communities have become overstretched. Many of the communal and makeshift shelters are overcrowded and unsuitable in terms of water and sanitation facilities, cooking and privacy, especially for women.

Most IDPs in host communities have limited access to health services due to various constraints such as lack of information on services and transportation costs (OCHA, 2014). In Taraba, outbreak of diseases has led to the death of about 70 persons in the IDPs camps situated in Bali, Bali Local Government Area. Cholera reportedly killed 48, while measles killed 13, and 9 others died of other ailments. The camp where victims of attacks by Fulani herdsmen in Tiv communities were accommodated was set up in March 2014 and has provided shelter for more than 2,000 people, about

126,000 people have been reportedly displaced by the crises where 1,000 houses in more than 60 villages and farm settlements were destroyed. In addition, some 35,909 cholera cases, including 753 deaths (2.1% case fatality rate) were reported between January–November 2014. Reported numbers decreased from 792 cases in the last week of October 2014 to 35 in the last week of November 2014 (UNICEF, 2015).

One of the noticeable negative effects of insurgency and conflicts is the problem of food insecurity. Within the North East and North Central states, for instance, cultivation of the major staple food crops (sorghum, maize and millet) has been stalled due largely to security challenges, with estimates stating that only about 20 percent of the usual land is being cultivated for these crops. This will seriously impact the level of food availability and access to the populations even in the immediate period after harvest. Dry season activities within the area will also be limited. An estimated 90% of IDPs are staying with host communities and most are dependent on host families for food. As a result, the already limited resources of host families are usually under serious strain posing a precarious food security and nutrition.

Across the crisis-ravaged North East and North Central regions, in particular, the affected populations have indicated having increasing difficulty in accessing health services. It is noteworthy that Boko Haram insurgents were noted for attacking numerous health facilities and health workers, meaning that in large areas of Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa the health system is barely functioning at all. As of March 2014 for instance, only 37% of facilities in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states were functional (OCHA, 31 March 2014). Outside of these areas of conflict and Boko Haram-held territory, those fleeing the violence have only minimal access to health services, the majority of which are women and children. Although IDPs camps are usually located away from hazards yet sanitation and hygiene concerns in the camps remain causes for concern to ensure that disease outbreak is curtailed especially in areas where adequate washing facilities are lacking. Only one third of healthcare facilities remain operational after numerous attacks on healthcare workers and destruction of healthcare infrastructure. Lack of access to vaccinations is also having serious consequences. Primary health care services that remain functioning have been overwhelmed by the recent influxes of IDPs.

For communities hosting large concentrations of IDPs, the additional caseloads for local health facilities has placed the health system under severe strain. Health facilities in the north-east were already poorly resourced before the current crisis, and additional resources have not been provided to meet the needs of populations swollen by displacement (IDMC 2014). Primary health care (PHC) services, in particular, have been overwhelmed by the recent influxes of IDPs. Outbreaks of disease have thus increased in areas affected by displacement. Lack of access to vaccinations constitutes serious consequences making worse the already problematic situation. The number of cholera cases among IDPs and host communities in 2014 was estimated at 35,732 and 753 deaths compared with 6,600 cases at the same period in 2013. The lack of water and sanitation facilities raises serious concerns about the outbreak and spreading of diseases in IDPs camps. As of December 04, 2014, five north-east states namely Adamawa, Borno, Yobe, Bauchi and Gombe alone accounted for about one-third (2925) of the 9020 suspected measles that were reported from all 36 States and the FCT. This attests to the level of access to measles vaccination in the states affected by the crisis.

Persistent attacks on schools and communities have severely impacted education in the war-ravaged states, particularly in northern Nigeria. This is in addition to the fact that most of the displaced people are camped in schools thereby interrupting learning and other schooling activities. Access to education is thus severely impacted by widespread closures, occupation of schools, and attacks on educational facilities by the insurgents. Since 2012, Boko Haram has burned more than 300 schools in the north (AllAfrica, 2015). Nearly 6.3 million, or 60%, of the 10.5 million out-of-school children in all Nigeria are in the north of the country. One-third of primary school children and one-quarter of junior secondary school children are out of school (OCHA 24/07/2014). Girls have limited opportunities to access education and livelihoods outside of the home or marketplace (OCHA 30/06/2014). Universities are also affected. After students were killed by BH, Adamawa State University in Mubi closed indefinitely (*Premium Times*, 2014).

More children are exposed to the dangers (abduction/kidnap etc.) associated with insurgency with more opportunities for separation of children from fleeing parents. Children who have been abandoned or separated

from their families become “adopted” by warlords or community vigilantes who recruit these children into their groups. Teachers have fled from communities due to fear of attack. Households highly affected by conflict in northern Adamawa and southern Yobe and Borno States have experienced much greater difficulty in maintaining their livelihoods.

There is a growing recognition of the need to better identify and assist IDPs living outside camps and the populations who host them. In Nigeria, current estimates place the proportion of IDPs staying in host communities *vis-vis* those staying in camps at about 90%. IDPs living outside camps may have the opportunity to integrate and overcome their displacement, and it is perhaps this perception that drives people in that direction. The downside, however, is that non-camp settings, whether urban or rural, can be hostile environments where IDPs encounter threats to their safety and wellbeing. The fact that displacement often has multiple and overlapping causes calls for wide-ranging responses that promote peace-building, governance, stability and reconciliation. Such comprehensive interventions require the coordinated engagement of a wide variety of organisations and institutions. The challenge ahead lies in overcoming the perception of internal displacement as a solely humanitarian issue and positioning it as a matter for development agencies, private companies and others to address.

In 2013, IDMC identified three areas in which such responses need to be improved. For practical and sometimes political reasons assistance has focused on IDPs living in camps. The simple fact that responses tend not to reach those outside camps and their host communities needs to be addressed. On the practical level, this has not happened in part because IDPs outside camps are more difficult to locate and identify, which goes some way to explain why, in most cases, assistance for them tends to be ad hoc and insufficient at best. Much of the work is left to local and faithbased organisations, but the sheer number of IDPs thought to be living outside camps means that greater recognition of the issue is urgently needed. In Pakistan, for example, about 95 per cent of IDPs live with host communities in urban settings.

According to Crisp (2001),¹⁸ there are three stages to the settlement programme. First, refugees are given relief aid and transported to camps, to inhabit houses built for them or which they are expected to build for themselves. During the second stage they are provided with tools and seeds,

and primary education is organised. During this period refugees are expected to be motivated to work and get on their own feet quickly, by being told that there will be a gradual reduction in their food rations after the first harvest. In the third stage, aid is withdrawn, on the grounds that the refugees should, by then, be “self-sufficient” and “integrated” into the local community (Harrell-Bond, 1985: 10).

By the end of the 1970s, the states most directly concerned with the refugee problem in developing regions were beginning to consider the need for alternative models of assistance. Countries of asylum, many of them affected by the related ills of political instability, the global recession and economic mismanagement, stressed the need for “international burden sharing,” so that they could cope with the adverse impact of refugees on their economy, environment and infrastructure. Donor states, many of whom were keen to limit their overseas aid expenditure, were becoming increasingly reluctant to devote their resources to open-ended “care and maintenance” programmes for refugees in low-income countries.

The international community’s response to this situation, formulated in a series of meetings during the late 1970s and early 1980s, became known as the “refugee aid and development” strategy. In contrast to the established model of refugee relief, this approach stipulated that assistance should be development-oriented from the outset, and thereby enable beneficiaries to move quickly towards self-sufficiency. Rather than focusing specifically on refugee camps and communities, the new strategy also emphasised the need for a focus on refugee-populated areas. International assistance, it was agreed, should be used not to provide open-ended relief but to promote sustainable development. And both refugees and the local population should benefit from that process.

Challenges in the Management of IDPs Camps in Nigeria

There are several challenges that have continued to plague the management of IDPs camps in Nigeria. These challenges include: inadequate funding, corruption and hostile attitude of host communities.

1. Funding- Although IDPs management agencies get funds mainly through international aids and donations, the funds they get are more often than not insufficient to meet the increasing needs of

IDPs in the country. Lack or insufficiency of funds results in deficiency in manpower, commodities, infrastructure, equipment and mobility.

2. Attitude of the host community- has been described as another challenge. It was reported that many of the host communities of the camps are usually friendly with IDPs until commodities are supplied to the latter. Members of the host community seek to share from the commodities and not being able to achieve this goal may make them frustrated and hostile towards the IDPs.

The hostility is said to take different forms ranging from segregation to robbery and other forms of attack. Therefore, in order not to endanger the lives of IDPs who they are mandated to protect, management agencies are usually obligated to cater, to an extent, for members of the host community by letting them have a share of materials meant for the IDPs, thereby reducing their ration.

Conclusion

There is a need for effective synergy of action by stakeholders in the management of IDPs camps in Nigeria. The rapidly increasing number of IDPs in the country, occasioned by increased humanitarian crises in the country may challenge the child protection system in the short and medium term. This is compounded by the fact that trauma of pervasive armed conflict severely impacts negatively on the psychological wellbeing of children and families. This paper has discovered that the financial and logistics requirements for catering for occupants of IDPs camps are enormous, which calls for sustained synergy among relevant stakeholders. The international community, wealthy individuals and other organisations in any state housing IDPs camps should assist with shelter, bedding, food and other relief materials as the problem is beyond the capacity of the state to handle alone. In most of the camps, there are insufficient basic facilities including functioning water boreholes and toilet facilities, with the result that inmates have to relieve themselves in the open, due to lack of toilets or bathrooms. Yet, the number of people living in the camps steadily increases, stretching the scarce resources.

Recommendations

For effective management of IDPs camps in Nigeria, the following recommendations are put forward:

- 1. Overcome the challenge of lack of policy/institutional framework for addressing the plights of the vulnerable in Nigeria.** In the absence of a legal framework or institution, provision of assistance, protection, reintegration and resettlement for IDPs in Nigeria is mostly undertaken by agencies of government on an ad hoc and reactive basis. Indeed, there is a total lack of policy framework for addressing the plights of IDPs in Nigeria. As a matter of fact, the Nigerian Senate does not have a committee on the IDPs specifically, even though there are committees of the Senate saddled with the responsibility of tackling poverty and its related challenges. To overcome this challenge, there is a need for quick passage of bills to help address the crisis in IDPs camps across the country.
- 2. Government should enact laws to compel IDPs management agencies to observe the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.** Governments of Nigeria should enact laws to compel IDPs management agencies at all levels to stringently observe the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement to the letter. They should adapt these principles as national laws and make them binding on all IDPs management agencies. Better still, the national assembly should facilitate the domestication of the Kampala Convention on Statelessness and Protection of Refugees in the troubled areas within the country.¹⁹
- 3.** The root causes of the problems leading to internal displacement of people should be critically looked into. Thus, government should take bold steps in addressing problems of poverty, unemployment, and environmental degradation across the country.
- 4.** There should be clear mechanism to monitor and track the displaced people living with host communities/families because absence of this will hinder proper targeting and planning for humanitarian assistance. There is the need for periodic census of IDPs in camps for proper targeting and planning.

5. Provision of relief materials is crucial. Therefore occupants of IDPs camps should be provided food and non-food items, including blankets, mats and mattresses, to alleviate their sufferings before other relief measures could be given to them. Concerted efforts should be made to provide basic facilities for occupants of IDPs camps.
6. There are report of mismanagement of funds and financial irregularities among camps officials. This issue should be looked into with a view to curbing corruption in the camps.

Notes

1. *The Guardian*, August 16th 2017- AU urges support for Sierra Leone after deadly mudslide.
2. IDPs camps in Lagos is situated at Ibeju-Lekki area. It was established in 2016 as a federal shelter for such persons; IDPs camps in Borno state contain 1,434,149 people. The biggest IDPs camps are in Maiduguri. There are four large IDPs camps near Maiduguri: Arabic Teachers College (9,880 IDPs), Teachers Village (6,500 IDPs), National Youth Service Scheme Camp (6,611 IDPs) and Gubio (4,500 IDPs); IDPs Camps in Abuja contain 13,481 people. The large camps in Abuja are: Lugbe IDPs Camp, Area One IDPs Camp, New Kuchingoro IDPs Camp, Kuje IDPs Camp. (see <https://www.naija.ng/1142900list-idp-camps-nigeria-locations.html#1142900>).
3. *The Nation*, Sunday December 17, 2017, pg. 19- “Camps of Sorrow and Shame” The total number of 3.3 million IDPs is based on estimates provided to IDMC by the National Commission for Refugees (NCFR) in 2014.
4. The total number of 3.3 million IDPs is based on estimates provided to IDMC by the National Commission for Refugees (NCFR) in 2014.
5. The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) is the leading source of information and analysis on internal displacement. For the millions of people, worldwide, displaced within their own countries. IDMC plays a unique role as a global monitor and evidence-based advocate to influence policy and action by governments, UN agencies, donors, international organisations and NGOs.
6. Nigeria sets new record; now has Africa’s highest number of displaced persons ([www.premiumtimesng.com/news/161344-nigeria- sets...](http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/161344-nigeria-sets...)).
7. <http://www.nigerianmonitor.com/2015/07/07/nigeria-has-3rd-highestinternally-displaced-persons-after-syria-iraq-nhrc/>.
8. <https://www.thenigerianvoice.com/news/208765/strategies-for-rehabilitatingidps-in-nigeria.html>.
9. The pure state of nature or “the natural condition of mankind” was described by the 17th century English philosopher, Thomas Hobbes, in *Leviathan* and in his earlier work, *On the Citizen*.

10. punchng.com/hunger-has-dealt-us-more-blow-than-boko-haram-idps/
11. punchng.com/hunger-has-dealt-us-more-blow-than-boko-haram-idps/
12. <http://www.pulse.ng/news/local/north-east-why-idps-cant-leave-their-campsyet-id6966795.html>
13. The Aningo camp according to findings is sheltering about 10,000 displaced persons, most of whom are women and children. They came from villages like Akuni, Gidan, Gambo, Galo, Assakio, Amawa and so on. A visit to the IDPs camp in Aningo village revealed that they live as though in the wild, sleeping in what looks like nests.
14. The Bakassi camp is the biggest of a dozen official IDPs camps in Borno state, by land mass. Set up on January 25, 2015 with a population of 4,763 IDPs from Monguno, Gwoza, Guzamala, Marte and Nganzai local governments, Bakassi IDPs camp has grown in approximately two years to its current population of 21,202.
15. <https://www.naija.ng/947805-nigerian-idp-camps-8pictures-will-movetears.html#947805>.
16. <https://www.naija.ng/947805-nigerian-idp-camps-8pictures-will-movetears.html#947805>.
17. Three states namely Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states were placed under emergency rule as a result of the destructive activities of the Boko Haram insurgents in 2014.
18. CRISP (2001) crisp@unhcr.org.
19. <https://www.referencenigeria.com/saraki-condemnsrape-corruption-idpcamps/>

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