Challenges and prospects of I.D.P management in Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper examines the challenges and prospects of the management of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) within the Nigerian context. This work has special interest in ascertaining the remote and the immediate causes of why we have Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) with peculiar interest in the three crisis ridden states of the North-East (Borno, Adamawa and Yobe Sates), underscoring the challenges confronting the Nigerian government in its struggle in the management of IDPs, with recommendations on the possible methodologies of handling the menace of IDPs in Nigeria. A lot of studies have been undertaking to underscore the root-cause(s) of the growing IDPs and the possible solutions to the crisis. But these studies have however, failed to give attention to context-specifics, robust and sustainable approaches to the crisis relating to the growing IDPs. To achieve these objectives, this paper made use of secondary sources of data with descriptive method of data analysis and equally adopted Human Security Theory and Elite Theory for better elucidation on the subject matter. The paper made a discovery that the upsurge in the growing number of Internally Displaced Persons in Nigeria is sequel to the cumulative leadership failures over the years, corruption, hypocrisy of the government, religious bigotry, unhealthy power politics, catastrophic ethnic insurgencies, protracted violent conflict between cattle herders and the farmers etc.

This work equally underpins some discoveries about the efforts of the government in the management of the Internally Displaced Persons which have not yielded the desired results as a result of inadequate funding and diversion of funds and relief materials meant for the IDPs in their various camps and/or locations. This paper therefore recommends that there is need for the government to increase its appropriation for the Internally Displaced Persons and equally ensure prompt distribution and judicious use of the IDPs' funds and materials. This paper also strongly recommends ''punitive measures'' against any official or officials found wanting in the management of the resources meant for the IDPs.

Introduction

Due to the harsh socio-economic and environmental conditions, people are being forced to leave their homes and means of livelihoods on a daily basis seeking for refuge in safer environment on either temporary or long term basis. Historically, the contemporary crisis around the world on internal displacement of individuals emerged on the global agenda during the late period of the 1980s usually stemming from violent conflicts, internal strife, systematic violations and natural factors (Cohen, 2004). The world in general has experienced an unprecedented high rate of human migration since the inception of 21st century to an extent it was dubbed "*century of people on the move*" by the then UN High Commissioner for the Refugees (also the current United Nations Secretary General), Antonio Guterres in the 2011 UN General Assembly forum. Towards the end of the year 2017, there was a report by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (I.D.M.C. 2018) that the internal displacement of individuals by head count stood at 40 million with 30.6 million new displacements.

In the new figures of 30.6 million displacements, about 11.8 million individuals were forced out of their homes through human-induced conflicts while 18.8 million other displacements occurred as a result of climate change. The affected regions by disaster are Asia, Americas, and Europe with the Sub-Saharan Africa taking the front-seat in conflict and conflict related displacements in the African region (I.D.M.C. 2018).

The impact of internal displacement of people as well as forced migration create excruciating effect on the global economy,

especially the task of engaging in humanitarian activities in favor of the individuals and the communities affected by disaster or human-inflicted conflicts for a sustainable length of period pending when normalcy is returned and the affected individuals reintegrated back into the larger society. In the area of salvaging a conflict situation, high degree of resources are usually required for effective response to the crisis: Humanitarian responses have high cost implications (Eriksson et al., 1996). Report has it that the global economy loses between the range of $250 billion and $300 billion on annual basis on the account of human displacements and disasters (Food and Agricultural Organisation F.A.O., 2017)

The effect of displacement of individuals as a result of conflict can either be direct or in-direct, short-term or long term, tangible or intangible (I.D.M.C., 2018). The impact of internal displacement on the economy can both be negative and positive as it creates atmosphere for financial opportunities and misuse by certain individuals (Omaraka, 2021). The authorities charged with the responsibility of providing humanitarian services in favor of the victims of disaster or conflict can corruptly benefit from the revenues earmarked for taking care of the challenges stemming from displacements. In other words, displacement could also be seen as s business opportunity for both the producers and suppliers of displacement needs. (Boyer et al., 2016). Displacement of individuals in Nigeria is not a new phenomenon. It has been a regular occurrence in the Nigerian territory for a period of six decades. Ever since the attainment of the Nigeria's political independence, the highest documented figures of human displacements have always stemmed from violent conflict.

The first occurrence is traceable to the civil war, also known as the Nigeria-Biafra war (29th July 1967 – 15th January 1970). 'Though, it is quite cumbersome to ascertain the actual figures of the displaced population during the period of the armed conflict as a result of the contradictory figures and unreliable data. Some sources have quoted over two million population were either displaced or in need of humanitarian aid within and across the shores of Nigeria during the civil-war era (Mohammed, 2017). 'The factors leading to internal displacement of individuals are multi-dimensional, complex and most times overlapping. For example, armed confrontation between states and/or non-state actors, human-induced disaster, climate change, generalized conflict, insurgency, ethno-religious clashes, etc., are some of those causes of internal displacement of individuals in Nigeria'. (Omaraka, 2021). For any responsible state, its primary duty is the security and welfare of the citizens, otherwise the territorial

integrity and sovereignty of the state will be in jeopardy. The primary responsibility of the state of Nigeria to always provide security for her citizens has recorded failures over the years. This is as a result of the incapacity of the state authorities secure a safe environment for her citizens.

The high rate of security breaches in Nigeria particularly in the Northern region of Nigeria has exacerbated the rate of crime and attacks from the terrorist groups from different regions of the country leaving Northern people in a deplorable state. Different reasons are responsible for the internal displacement of Nigerians such as famine, flooding, armed conflicts etc. The exacerbating number of displaced individuals in Nigeria is largely due to the resultant effect of both climate change and anthropogenic variables such as flooding among others. 'The activities of the insurgent group (Boko-Haram) in the northern region have equally contributed to the growing number of IDP in the country which is considered to be largely because of the failure on the part of the government in living up to its constitutional responsibilities' (Abdulrahman & Zuwaira 2016)

'Nigeria's signatures have always featured in the UN guiding principles on internal displacement of individuals as well as Kampala Convention of 2009 of the A.U. The primary objective of the Kampala Convention was to build on the capacity of the regional and national strength to mitigate, prohibit and/or eliminate the primary causing factors of internal displacement of persons and provide sustainable and viable solutions' (Kampala convention 2009). Nigerian in its effort in tackling this ugly trend, instituted a national disaster management body known as the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to assist in coordinating and managing disasters in Nigeria. The institution is equally charged with the statutory responsibility of managing the various I.D.Ps. Camps with the support of both local and international NGOs and Civil Society Organizations (C.S.O.) in Nigeria. Each state within the federation equally established its emergency management institution to address the menace of emergency, disaster and the internally displaced persons.

Therefore, this paper tries to assess and/or evaluate the efforts of the Nigerian authorities in the management of IDPs through the auspices of its various interventions in the management of IDPs.

Statement of the problem.

This paper discovered that the core problems confronting the internally displaced persons in Nigeria are lack of access to good

water, in adequate medical facilities, inadequate formal education, sexual abuse, poor housing conditions etc.

Akuto (2017) in an ethnographic research, underscored various challenges confronting the Internally Displaced Individuals in Nigeria. These challenges as identified by Akuto undoubtedly make life cumbersome to the IDPs. Some of these challenges include but not restricted to: insecurity, rape-incidents of women and girls on a daily basis. Reports also indicate that soldiers equally participate in the perpetration of this ungodly act against the IDPs in their various camps. The displaced persons are traumatized and dehumanized on a daily basis because of the conditions they found themselves. Empirical research carried out by (Abbas 2017) equally corroborate with the condition that the internally displaced individuals are being confronted with overwhelming challenged in Nigeria. A recent discovery shows that IDPs in Nigeria face the problems of inadequate and safe shelter (IDMC, 2014). They also battle the challenges of poor health conditions and hygiene, inadequate access to drinkable water as well as little or no access to formal education system.

Rationale for the study

This paper made use of relevant available secondary data on the challenges and prospects of the Internally Displaced Individuals for better appreciation of the conceptual and theoretical underpinnings as well as their significance to the Nigerian context. Sequel to this, the study offers a scholarly insight into the innovative and practical approaches that will guarantee a better living conditions for the IDPs in Nigeria.

Research objectives

The core objectives of this study are to carefully x-ray the challenges militating against the survival of IDPs in Nigeria and subsequently proffer practicable conceptual and theoretical solutions to those extant worrisome conditions of the IDPs.
The under-stated constitute the objectives, which are to;
1) Identify theoretical standpoint of the menace of Internally Displaced Individuals in Nigeria
2) Identify the chief drivers of the worsening conditions of the IDPs in Nigeria
3) Conceptualize the challenges and the prospects of the IDPs in Nigeria

4)   Examine the extant intervention programs of the Nigerian state with a view to identifying the lapses and proffering practicable solutions to them

Research questions

The research questions of this paper are built upon the following;
1)   What are the theoretical underpinnings of the menace associated with the IDPs in Nigeria?
2)   What are the factors that fuel the worsening conditions of the IDPs in Nigeria?
3)   What are the conceptual interpretations of challenges and prospects in relation to management of the Internally Displaced Individuals in Nigeria?
4)   What are the intervention programs by the Nigerian state in ameliorating the sufferings of the IDPs?

Focus of the study

The focus of this paper is limited to the encumbrances faced by the Internally Displaced Individuals in Nigeria as orchestrated by cumulative leadership failures over the years. This paper specifically made a scholarly insight into some of the practicable theoretical means of addressing those challenges.

Research methodology.

This paper made use of secondary sources of data with descriptive method of data analysis. Relevant literature and other extant information regarding the subject matter under scholarly discourse were sourced from specialized research database as well as academic search engines such as Google Scholar, Semantic Scholar, Scopus, United Nations Reports, and other relevant documents useful to this paper

Theoretical framework

For proper presentation of a convincing argument on this scholarly discourse, Human Security and Elite Theories were employed in explaining the remote and immediate causes of the dysfunctional political terrain of the Nigerian state which has culminate in several societal crises of which IDPs could be identified as one of those fallouts.

Human security theory (h.s.t.): This theory was coined in the year 1995 by Mahbub Ul Haq (Omoraka, 2021). This theory marked the first of its kind in pulling the attention of the global community to the arena of human security. The introduction of Human Security Approach in the global space as an area of development and intellectual discourse was as a result of the conglomeration of divergent complex factors. The proponents of HST queried the conventional notion of national security by arguing that the proper point of focus for security should not be the state, rather the individuals.

Human Development Report of 1994 presented an argument that the global security scope should be reviewed so as to incorporate threats in other seven key areas of human existence.

- **Economic security:** In this context, there is need for guaranteed source of livelihood for every individual usually from productive and remunerative work. In this case, report has it that only about 25% of the world population are economically secure. It is also on record that economic security challenges are more serious in the low and middle income economies, there are also issues of economic security challenges in the high income economies, unemployment form most part of the reasons for political tension and/or ethnic violence in the third world economies.
- **Food Security:** Food security has to do with a situation whereby people have unlimited access to basic food. According to Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), the overall availability is not the key challenge, rather uneven distribution-methodology and the lack of purchasing power. The best approach is to take care of the challenges relating to having access to assets, work and guaranteed income.
- **Health Security:** This area tries to secure a minimum protection from any form of health conditions and unhealthy lifestyle. In the low income economies, infectious and parasitic diseases form part of the major leading causes of death while in the high income economies, the major cause of death is the circulatory disease. In the contemporary world system, life-style chronic conditions are the leading killing diseases in the world, with about 80 percent of deaths occurring from the low and middle income economies.
- **Environmental Security:** The core aim of environmental security is to guarantee protection from long and short term ravages of nature, human induced threats as well as deteriorating human environment. In the low income economies, unavailability of clean water resources is one of

the major pressing needs in such environment. In the high income economies, the key threats to human existence are global warming, pollution etc, emanating from the greenhouse emissions

- **Personal Security:** Personal security tries to secure protection from physical violence either from the state or external forces in favor of the individuals. There is a general notion that the greatest cause of tension is the activities of some criminal elements, which will be taking care of if there is personal security of all individuals
- **Community Security:** The rationale behind community security is to protect people from the loss of traditional relations and values as well as from sectarian and/or ethnic conflict. Traditional communities, especially minority ethnic groups are usually unsafe. Around 50 per cent of the global community has experienced one form of inter-ethnic conflict or the other. The U.N. pronounced 1993 as the Year of Indigenous People to underscore the continuity of vulnerability of over 300 million aboriginal race in more than 70 nations as they battle unending spiral of conflicts
- **Political Security:** Political security focuses on whether the people's fundamental human rights are respected in the society. Reports from the Amnesty International says that systematic torture, political suppression, sudden disappearance of persons are still being practiced in more than 110 countries of the world. Violation of fundamental human rights are often seen during political upheavals.

In furtherance of this argument, human security equally underscores personal security which focuses on giving protection from physical abuse and/or violence against the individuals which could stem from the state or the non-state actors. In the event of failure of the state to live up to its primary responsibility of ensuring security of lives and property, the international community has the mandate to fill the gap as enshrined in chapter VII of the charter of the United Nations. The under stated are the core assumptions of Human Security Approach.

1) Human security approach focuses on the individual security rather than the state
2) The scope of threat agenda should be widened to incorporate diseases, hunger, as well as natural disaster as they are cumbersome to be dichotomized when addressing the root cause(s) of human security
3) Diseases, hunger and natural disasters kill more rapidly than war, terrorism and genocide summed together

4)   The primary duty of any state is to protect its citizens, in the event of failure to meet up with this godly obligation, the international community will apply its mandate in that regard

Adopting human security approach as a tool of analysis, it will not be out of context to state that the fundamental cause of human displacement within and around boarders is primarily because of the cumulative failure on the part of the state to mainstream human security at all spheres of governance. Individual welfare of the displaced persons should be considered as a national and international priority with honest and strict implementation. However, individual security of the people would not be properly ascertained if matters bothering on terrorism, natural hazards, insurgency etc which resulted to human displacement in the first place, are not decisively dealt with. The inalienable rights of the internally displaced individuals will be jeopardized if the authorities fail to play their legal responsibility in such a manner that would make them free from fear and want as well as their human dignity restored through reconstruction rehabilitation, and reintegration.

Elite Theory: Emergence of Elite Theory to the limelight is credited to the writings of Gaetano Mosca (1963) and Vilfredo Pareto (1963). Elite theory is a well-structured approach that seeks to underscore and explain power relations in the social environment. Elite theory argues that the society is perpetually held down by a small minority consisting of members of the *economic elite and policy makers*. This theory further argues that the power wielded by this small powerful group is alien to democratization principles and practices Members of the elite wield so much power and influence over government institutions and policies. The core attributes of elite theory are that the elite are unified with so much concentrated power, the non-elites are usually divergent in their ideology and powerless, the interests of the members of the elite are unified as a result of their common background as well as their positions of authority

The propositions of elite theory are in contradiction with pluralism. The proponents of Elite Theory argue that the society is polarized into two major groups (the rulers and the ruled). The rulers constitute the minority while the ruled represents the majority. Sadly, the elites manipulate power which gives them the enablement to state's scarce resources at the expense of the poor which forms the larger part of the state demography (Epstein, 2011, Omonijo et al., 2017).

The Elite Theory is quite suitable in addressing the contemporary security challenges confronting the Nigerian state which displacement

of persons is one of the fallouts. This paper underscores a dysfunctional style of governance which is largely responsible for the failure of the social system; thereby leading to communal conflicts, banditry, terrorism, guerrilla activities, which in turn result in sacking people from the comfort of their homes ultimately producing Internally Displaced Persons.

Conceptual clarification of terms

For further clarity, the key words of this paper will be succinctly explained which include the following;

WHO IS AN IDP? The phrase "Internally Displaced Persons" (IDPs) has no globally acceptable interpretation among scholars in the field of humanitarianism. Be that as it may, we shall be considering the working definition of the United Nations which states that:

Displaced individuals under the international law are individuals or group of individuals who are forced to flee their homes and/or sources of livelihood following an outbreak of violent conflict, condition of generalized violence, violations of human rights or human induced disasters and they must either remain within the confines of their own boarders (as IDPs) or they must have crossed an internationally recognized state boarders (as refugees) (Ladan 2006).

Consequently, there are two categories of displaced persons
- Refugees
- Internally Discipline Persons (IDPs)

During the first quarter of 2014, it was reported that there were 38.2 IDPs globally which happened to be the highest figures of IDPs since 1989; first year in which IDPs statistics were reported. In the second quarter of 2022, the following statistics were reported through the help of the table below

TABLE 1
2022 GLOBAL REPORT ON IDPs

S/N	Country	NO OF IDPs	Year
1	Ukraine	8 million	2022
2	Syria	7.8 million	2022
3	Ethiopia	5.5 million	2022
4	Congo DRC	5.2 million	2022
5	Colombia	4.9 million	2022
6	Afghanistan	3.8 million	2022
7	Iraq	3.6 million	2022
8	Sudan	2.2 million	2022

9	South-Sudan	1.9 million	2022
10	Pakistan	1.4 million	2022
11	Nigeria	1.2 million	2022
12	Somalia	1.1 million	2022

Source: Ladan, M. T. (2012)

In summary, this paper still maintains that cumulative leadership failure is largely responsible for this ugly phenomenon.

Challenges confronting IDPs in Nigeria:

The problems of the displaced individuals in Nigeria either directly or indirectly has overwhelming negative impact on Nigerian as a state and catastrophic to her socio-economic growth and development. In the words of Azam (2009), he succinctly puts the following as the core challenges of the internally displaced individuals which include but not restricted to the following:

I.   **INSECURITY:** There are several reported incidents of where women and girls are been raped on a daily basis as s result of insecurity within the IDPs camps. Report also has it that some youths indulge in hard drugs, smoking as well as other criminal activities within and around IDPs camps thereby making the environment unsafe for the regular IDPs

II.   **PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA AND FRUSTRATION:** Due to the nature of life style in the camps, internally displaced individuals are often times feel dejected, traumatized and frustrated. The IDPs usually feel the taste of bitterness mostly because of the separation from their family members and their loved ones.

III.   **HUNGER AND STARVATION:** There is a general notion that a hungry man is an angry man. Considering the magnitude of hunger and starvation facing the IDPs, sometimes they are being seen engaging in demonstrations and/or protest with their children for better living conditions

IV.   **MALNUTRITION:** When one is poorly fed, there is always an effect on the person's health. E.g., changing color of the hair, teeth, eye, skin etc. which often times results to death. Report has it that IDPs are usually given only one type of food which is only carbohydrate which is inadequate for the nutritional requirement of their body organs

V.   **SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES:** There are reports that the IDPs engage in random unprotected sex with each other

which usually results to all kinds of STDs such HIV/AIDS, syphilis. Gonorrhea, etc.

IDPs in Nigeria:

The North-Eastern Nigeria which consists of six states of Taraba, Bauchi, Gombe, Yobe, Borno and Adamawa have been tremendously traumatized since 2009 by series of human-induced conflicts with resultant effect of the growing number of internally displaced persons (Mbah 2017) made a discovery that 13.33% of the internally displaced persons in the North-East were displaced as a result of communal armed conflicts, 0.99% by climate change factor and 85.68% of the displacement occurred following the Boko-Haram insurgency. The above argument corroborate with the fact that the insurgency stemming Boko-Haram activities is largely responsible for the mass displacement of individuals in the most affected states of the North-East which are Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states. It is quite unarguable that this armed conflict is a product of cumulative leadership failure over the years as well as religious extremism which is known for its bombing, kidnapping and destruction of human lives and property. Report has it that Boko-Haram insurgency had taken the lives of over 30,000 people since the commencement of their operation in 2009 till 2020, displaced over 1.8 million out of their homes and livelihoods and destroyed over #16 billion worth of property (International Review of the Red Cross). Outside the mass production of internally displaced individuals, there is also a report that the Boko-Haram insurgency has generated over 177,000 refugees in the neighboring nations of Chad Niger Republic and Cameroon (Relief Web 2020)

As a result, the states in the North-Eastern region of Nigeria have experienced unprecedented harsh effect of the Boko-Haram activities since 2009 till present, which at some point resulted in the declaration of state of emergency in 2013 by the then government of Goodluck Ebele Jonathan for the three most affected states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe. Most of the inhabitants of the state of emergency states have been negatively affected in one way or the other as a result of the activities of Boko-Haram which led to the abrupt destruction of the means of their survival, destruction of several social amenities, abrupt destruction of the supply-chain of the economy of the three states and Nigeria at large.

Large chunk of the destruction by the Boko-Haram insurgents were reported from Borno state as several LGAs including but not restricted to Marte, Dikwa, Bama, Ngala, Gamboru, Gwoza were at different occasions overrun by the dreaded insurgents. Other affected LGAs are Chibok, Uba, Askira, Abadan, Kukawa, Balge and Kala (Reliefweb

2020). Barbaric slaughtering of human lives, destruction of properties and destruction of means of livelihood forced the residents into migration to Maiduguri metropolis where they are lumped up together in various camps as internally displaced individuals

Discussion of key findings

This paper underscored that displacement of individuals in Nigeria is majorly because of the activities of the insurgents in the North-Eastern region, banditry in the North-West, communal armed-confrontations in the North-Central, herder-farmer conflicts in the Middle-Belt and their likes. These discoveries are not in contradiction with similar studies carried out by Elijah (2018) who asserted that displaced individuals especially in the local government of Guma is largely due to attacks from suspected herders. This discovery is also not in disagreement with the works of Shimawua (2020) which asserted that Fulani herders cause displacement of humans in several communities across the states of Nigeria. The paper further discovered that the efforts of the Nigerian authorities in curbing the menace of human displacements have not yielded the desired results largely because of poor funding and/or diversion relief materials earmarked for the I.D.Ps.

These findings are also in concord with the discoveries of Ogoh & Agbo (2021) in their reports that dwells around herder-farmer clashes. This particular discovery from their work as well as other custodians of knowledge in the field of humanitarianism and development is that there is a humongous failure on the part of the government in carrying out its constitutionally ascribed responsibilities to the masses. It is quite conspicuous from the results as well as other scholarly works that the efforts of government in the management of the I.D.Ps., conflicts and other forms of insecurity has not yielded the desired result.

Taking a look on section 14 (2) (b) of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended, we will understand that the legal provision places a non-negotiable obligation on the shoulders of the government to ensure that the lives and properties of the people are given adequate protection. Notwithstanding this provision, previous and present governments have not shown adequate commitment in halting the insecurity challenges that have always mass-produced IDPs in Nigeria. Sequel to the above, it is crucial the government demonstrates aggressiveness in proactive pattern of governance and respond as quickly as possible to intelligence reports and other early warning signals for easy handling of insecurity challenges in Nigeria

Conclusion

This paper comes to a logical conclusion that displaced individuals in Nigeria are often confronted with tremendous challenges which are injurious to their health and well-being. The fundamental challenges confronting the internally displaced individuals are lack of healthy food and water, poor housing conditions, poor conditions of the health facilities, lack of access to formal education, sexual abuses etc. Report also has it that women and children are the most affected population. Further reports have proven that social workers and Non-Governmental Organizations have crucial role to play by ensuring that the I.D.Ps are adequately managed.

Recommendations

Sequel to the key findings of this paper, the following could be adduced as the recommendations that if properly implemented by the relevant stakeholders, will certainly make significant impact in the struggle to improving the living standards of the internally displaced individuals across the states of Nigeria.

1)   There is imperative need for the Nigerian authorities to amplify the volume of funding earmarked for the internally displaced individuals and equally ensure that the relief materials and funds budgeted for the I.D.Ps. are judiciously and meticulously managed for the good of the displaced individuals

2)   The authorities should always do their possible best to ensure timely intervention and provision of relief materials to the unofficial I.D.Ps camps and at the same time maintain an updated records of displacements so as to always know the exact number of IDPs living in a particular location

3)   Orientation and re-orientation of the I.D.Ps. on their fundamental human rights should be facilitated in order to keep them abreast of their legal rights for maximum protection of the said constitutionally ascribed rights

4)   There is need for more robust public-private-partnership arrangement so as to meet up with the growing demands of the human displacements in Nigeria

5)   Lastly, strong punitive measures must be put in place against any government or non-government official(s) found wanting in the act of diversion of relief materials

and/or misuse of funds earmarked for the welfare of the I.D.Ps within Nigeria.

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