

## **Rehabilitation of Internally Displaced Persons in North East, Nigeria: Challenges and Prospects**

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### **Abstract**

*The paper investigates the challenges facing rehabilitation of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in North East, Nigeria. The deadly activities of Boko Haram insurgency have contributed immensely to the challenges via the high rate of influx of persons into IDP camps. Boko Haram insurgency since its inception in 2009 has been a threat to security, peace, IDPs camps, and stability of Nigeria state. The deadly attacks of the group have affected all facets of human endeavor in Nigeria, especially in the north east geo-political zone, leading to loss of lives, properties and displacement of persons in the area. The paper, examined the challenges facing the rehabilitation of internal displaced persons in North East region Nigeria. In doing this, communication theory was adopted for the purpose of this paper while descriptive method using books and journals to gathered data; the findings were analyzed through content analysis which indicates that the funds and materials donated to internally displaced persons by Nigeria government, United Nations, international organizations, philanthropist, and individuals were not properly utilized to alleviate the plight of internally displaced persons from camp officials, National Emergency Management (NEMA). The paper recommends that Nigeria government should explore new strategies by establishing new agency aside NEMA to ensure that funds and materials donated to them are properly monitored and utilized for the purpose of their rehabilitation.*

**Keywords:** Insurgency, Internally Displaced Persons, Rehabilitation & North East Nigeria.

### **Introduction**

The activities of insurgents in the North East Nigeria are showing no sign of abating, going by reports from different agencies in and outside of the country such as (amnesty international, 2015, International Organization for Migration, 2015 & Eme & Ugwu, 2016). Apart from concerns about the escalating number of internally displaced persons (IDPs), the poor living conditions in IDP camps is alarming and calls for more commitment from all concerned. The growing number of IDPs from the North East is much a threat to insurgency itself. Reports from International Organization for Migration (2015) has it that the few available camps lack adequate facilities and in addition, their poor sanitation

situation makes them breeding grounds for diseases that could balloon into epidemics; something Nigerian government cannot control. The situation in north east, Nigeria, where insurgents have held sway for a long time now, leaving blood and tears in their wake has worsened recently, has taking over some towns in the region by the insurgents. Fortunately, many of them have been reclaimed by the military and many of them have been killed and subdued by insurgents. In spite of this success recorded by the military, it is not yet time for residents and indigenes of the affected towns, many of whom are currently forced to take refuge in camps across neighboring countries of Chad, Cameroun and Niger and states, where they face the challenges of insufficient food and water, and poor sanitation. The Borno State government has reportedly spent over N20billion in the last three years to assist and resettle IDPs across the state and rebuild their houses, IDMC, (2014). Sadly, the houses have been destroyed again by the defiant insurgents. It is almost two years now since about N58billion was raised by the federal government to support victims of terror in the country, but since the ceremony, nothing more has been heard. Could it be that those who promised funds are yet to redeem their pledges? And what is the committee on the funds doing about it, so that the support these victims urgently need can be provided.

Besides, available statistics shows that Nigeria has the highest number of displaced persons in Africa which is estimated at 3.3 million as at the year 2014 (Internally Displaced Monitoring Centre (IDMC, 2014). The figure includes those displaced as a result of Boko Haram attacks, communal conflicts, floods disaster and incessant clash between farmers and Fulani herdsmen in Northeast Nigeria. On a global scale, Nigeria is ranked behind Syria, with 6.5 million IDPs and Colombia with 5.7 million. IDMC (2014) asserts that the IDPs figures have risen unprecedentedly in the preceding years due largely to increase number of Boko Haram attacks, heavy-landed 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, Borno, Adamawa and Kaduna displaced 100,000 persons in 2014. 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 various homes in Nigeria. This figure includes people displaced as a result of brutal attacks by Boko Haram insurgency, the government led counter-insurgency operations against the group. The biggest rise in the number of IDPs was recorded in Borno state, one of the North-eastern state ravaged by Boko Haram insurgency, followed by Adamawa, and Yobe states.

As at April 2015, Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) assessment, set up by the International Migration Organization (IOM) identified 1,491,706 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in states of Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe with about 6% of this figure attributed to inter communal clashes while the remaining 94% of these figure was caused by Boko Haram attacks. NEMA also recorded an additional 47,276 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Plateau, Nasarawa, Kaduna, Kano, and Abuja Federal Capital Territory (FCT), in February, 2015 (International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2015). This brings the total number of registered internally displaced persons in 2015 to 1,538,982 in northeast states of Nigeria. The paper seeks to address the

challenges facing the rehabilitations of the IDPs in the North East and proffer solution to these challenges.

### **Review of Related literature**

This section focuses on the review of related literature on Rehabilitation of Internally Displaced Persons in North-East, Nigeria with special emphasis on their rehabilitation, its challenges and prospects. *Internally Displaced Persons (IDP's)*: According to United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacements; IDP's are persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human made disasters and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state/country border. For Wikipedia, internally displaced person(s) is someone who is forced to leave their home but who remains within their country's borders otherwise they would be referred to as refugees.

IDP's due to their forced displacement are inherently vulnerable to deprivation, further displacement and other protection risks such as access to basic services, family separation, sexual and gender based violence, trafficking, discrimination and harassment. In view of such vulnerabilities and special needs, the UN guiding principles on internally displacement seek to guarantee that IDP's as citizens or habitual residents of their country, enjoy and without discrimination the same rights and freedoms under international and national laws as do other persons in their country. This includes freedom of movement, health services, etc. IDP's being inside their country remains entitled to all the rights and guaranteed as citizens and other habitual residents of their country. As such national authorities have the primary responsibility to prevent forced displacement as well as protect IDP's. Rehabilitation itself is the process used by authorities to help persons affected or internally displaced to get back or nearer to his original condition (Concise Dictionary of Political Science)

### **Factors affecting proper care of internally displaced persons (IDP's)**

Internally displacement of individuals is a complex issue to address due in part to the following viz:- First and foremost, it is often politically and challenging to provide humanitarian assistance to IDP's. This is because majority of them do not live in camps but are dispersed among local communities thereby making it difficult to identify their populations and their needs. Furthermore IDP's may also be inaccessible to humanitarian organizations due to factors such as their fear of being identified by authorities or fear of being exposed to health damagers associated with living in camps. Thus, their continuous movement from place to place.

Secondly, displacements have a particular traumatic impact on children and women which often place them in high risk circumstances that put them in need for specific protection measures. Women and girls are particularly exposed to the risks of sexual

violence while many internally displaced children lose access to education and many are also or forced recruitment into armed groups

According to Olawale (2016) Internally Displaced Persons in Nigeria suffer disproportionately from different problems such as malnutrition, sickness, insecurity in the camps, lack of access to education, idles among others. The vulnerability of displaced persons is a major reason why sustainable strategies for rehabilitation must be considered and implemented at the shortest delay possible. There are a lot of challenges inhibiting effective rehabilitation of IDPs in Nigeria. One of the challenges inhibiting the rehabilitation of internally displaced persons is insufficient understanding of the rights of IDPs as set out in the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the Kampala Convention. These rights include the right to life, freedom of movement, association, dignity of human person, personal liberty, right to private and family life etc. IDPs usually suffer the worst violation of their fundamental human right (Alobo & Obaji, 2016). Security threat is one of the challenges inhibiting the rehabilitation of IDPs in Nigeria, according to Olawale (2016) in September 2015, the deadly terrorist group, Boko Haram, in a suicide mission, attacked members of IDPs Camps in Madagali and Yola, killing 12 persons. In one of the attacks, bombs were reported to have been detonated inside a tent at the IDP camp. These among others are security threats faced by members of IDP camps in Nigeria. Yet to recover from psychological trauma from the loss of families, friends and properties, displaced persons are faced with security challenges coupled with a responsibility to protect themselves in their various camps. The inadequacy of security at the IDP camps opens them to attacks from terrorists and armed robbers. Similarly, Kayode (2015) opined that most camps are unguarded. The camp in Dalori is close to Konduga, a dangerous territory close to Sambisa Forest.

Alobo and Obaji (2016) shelter for IDPs in Nigeria is insufficient and most times do not stand the test of time and weather. Many existing shelters have been damaged or destroyed. Report shows that IDPs live in churches, mosques, town halls, abandoned and uncompleted buildings and where available, other forms of make shift camps which are grossly inadequate and unsuitable for accommodating the surge in displaced populations. These shelters are not as a result of government effort but as a result of the individual's effort to survive. The shelters are often overcrowded and unsuitable in terms of water and sanitation facilities, cooking and privacy, especially for women. There is often no proper waste management and electricity. This explains the regularity of hygiene based epidemics in camps. Furthermore, Olawale (2016) opined that In February 2016, IDPs in Gwoza were evacuated, and many of the IDPs protested since they have no home to lay their heads. Similarly Kayode (2015) opined that the camps are overcrowded, run down and are struggling to accommodate the increasing number of displaced people. The living conditions are atrocious, unhealthy, and dangerous. Some IDPs are moving back to their villages out of frustration. And the villages are actually the most dangerous of places to be in at the moment.

The challenge of malnutrition in IDP camps cannot be over emphasized, according to Olawale (2016) in February 2016, news reported that 450 internally displaced persons died of malnutrition. Kayode (2015) opined that malnutrition in both adults and children is

occurring at alarming rates in the camps. The worst affected are children. Arriving with other health conditions, mental and physical, children are exhibiting worrying signs malnutrition. These signs and symptoms were recorded in an April 2015 UNICEF report, "Missing Childhoods". The report states the children in the camps showed back then an 18 level threshold of malnutrition, above the globally recognized emergency threshold of 15. The situation is dire. Further health problems exacerbated by the ill-equipped and unhygienic camps are malaria, typhoid, cholera and high blood pressure. Polio and measles are still endemic and a major public health concern for children. More ailments are undiagnosed as there are no health checks carried out in some camps. Aloba and Obaji (2016) things are made worse by the fact that access to health care in Nigeria generally and the North East in particular is severely constrained for both the IDPs and host communities as a result of the destruction of health care facilities and health care workers. Outbreak of disease has increased in areas affected by dislocation. There is also the case of lack of access to vaccinations. The number of cholera cases among IDPs is seriously on the increase. More ailments are undiagnosed as there is no health checks carried out in these camps.

Corruption is one of the major challenges to the rehabilitation of IDPs in Nigeria; according to Kayode (2015) funds meant for caring for IDPs are redirected, embezzled and used for personal gratification. With women coming in pregnant after enduring months of rape from the terrorist groups, a huge number of malnourished children and traumatized adults. Men lucky to have survived have nothing. One is aware that this has triggered responses from the federal and state governments, and international organizations that are rendering one form of humanitarian support/assistance or the other. Officials were recruited to cater to the problems of the displaced. However, these funds made available and the humanitarian services are embezzled by the same people saddled with the responsibility to ensure the care of IDPs. On the other side of the problem according to Aloba and Obaji (2016) presently, Nigeria has no legislation that deals explicitly with IDPs and there is no specific institution equipped to handle matters relating to IDPs. This has made caring for IDPs very porous, inconsistent and left to chance.

### **Rehabilitation of IDPs and Its Typologies**

Nigeria is faced with the challenge of insecurity across the country from North to the South, East and West; the magnitude of insecurity resulting from the consistent activities of the insurgency in the north is the one that has captured the attention of foreign and domestic authorities. In Nigeria, the incidence of internal displacement occurred solely because it has ethnic, religious and political undertones. Muhammed (2012) submits that the volume and spread of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Nigeria reveals that about 1.4million displaced persons are been hosted across the country, for example, Akwa-Ibom (200,000); Cross-River (115,000); Ebonyi (80,000); Bauchi (45,000); Kebbi (50,000); Jigawa (200,000); Plateau (250,000); Taraba (250,000); Benue (480,000); Gombe (100,000); Edo (250,000); and Borno States (16,000). It is pertinent to note that the number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) between 2013 and 2015 has increased to about 5million within and outside Nigeria. Most of these Internally Displaced Persons are from the northern region of the country. Boko Haram insurgency in the north has most times, unleashed

mayhem and terrorised almost all the states in the north east of Nigeria where schools and homes were set ablaze and razed down, markets and other public places were burnt, innocent people were maimed, many students were adopted, kidnapped and were taken to unknown destinations.

Northern Nigeria consists of 19 out of 36 states clustered into 3 geo-political zones of North-West, North-East and North-Central. The region characterized years by violent, ethno-religious and political conflicts, rising violent crimes and widespread corruption resulting into internal displacement of population largely due to bad governance, socio-economic imbalances, injustice and inequalities, as well as insensitivity to the plight of their citizens. In terms of absolute poverty line by geopolitical zone, the North-East has retained the title of the poorest zone in Nigeria since 1985, with the highest incidence of poverty (ranging between 54.9% and 72.2%) followed by the North-West and North-Central (Muhammed, 2012:4).He captured the situation as follows:

Recently, the North-East is reported to be the home of state with highest unemployment rate in the federation, that is, Yobe State at 60.6%, as at the end of 2011. It is the zone with highest number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) totalling 11, 360 in the 1st quarter of 2012 and in 2010-2011 with highest number of forced displaced persons of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) (about 22% or 82%, North-West with 31% or 116, 207 and North- Central with highest of 42% or 162, 281 out of 377,701) due to Identity-Based Conflicts such as ethno-religious and political conflicts and violent clashes between the religious militia/armed group (Boko Haram) and government forces. Hence, within this period of coverage, the North account for 95% of IDPs in paradox of Boko Haram, an armed group that promotes sectarian violence of a different dimension that has engulfed the entire zone in the history of Nigeria, that is neither inter or intra-religious but essentially against the western educated Muslim elite and government.

It is a paradox that such a situation should emanate from the minds of those who believe that they are asserting their religious identity, reforming Islam and restoring it to its pristine purity by maiming and killing innocent residents, destroying property and rupturing peace. Internally Displaced Persons in Nigeria suffer disproportionately from different problems such as malnutrition, sickness, insecurity in the camps, lack of access to education, idles among others. The vulnerability of displaced persons is a major reason why sustainable strategies for rehabilitation must be considered and implemented at the shortest delay possible. These strategies will provide broad methods to integrate the displaced persons into the society, empower them economically, enrol the children in schools and expose them to proper healthcare facilities. Across the globe today, efforts of governments, United Nations, African Union and other international organizations, experts from various NGOs and the academia on refugees and internally displaced persons are focusing on their rehabilitation. Among others, the Kampala convention which seeks for the protection and assistance of internally displaced persons agrees with this. The

numbers of displaced persons in Nigeria increased speedily in 2014 and 2016 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 5910 households were identified in Plateau, Nasarawa, Abuja, Kano and Kaduna states. National Emergency Management Agency's statistics (NEMA) and International Organization for Migration also identified closely related number of internally displaced persons. It is clear that the figures may not be accurate considering the fact that some IDPs camps are not recognized by the government agency. Despite this uncertainty in figure, it's not obscure that displaced persons in Nigeria today are numbered in millions. 53% of them are said to be women while 47% are men. 56% of the total IDPs populations are children which more than half are up to five years old, 2.26% are breastfeeding mothers, 1.2% are pregnant women, 1.61% are identified as unaccompanied and separated children. 92% were displaced by the insurgency in north east.

Assessing the damages done to the Nigerian economy and social composition in northern Nigeria by Boko Haram over the years, the issue of Internally Displaced Persons is a great challenge to Nigeria. Efforts are made from various ends to recover and rehabilitate them but due to lack of a comprehensive roadmap/master plan of rehabilitation, there is no formidable combined effort. At this point, it is important to note that rehabilitating internally Displaced Persons go far beyond donating items to them randomly, it requires a deliberate research based plan which address the experiential challenges of the displaced persons and sustainable solutions, this will offer a strong platform for government and international actors to play. Lack of a research based master plan has weakened humanitarian interventions for displaced persons in Nigeria. The shocks, growing intensity and frequency of poverty, malnutrition, insecurity, lack of education, lack of skills and empowerment agree with this. In recent weeks, 450 displaced persons were reported dead due to malnutrition, at various instances, insurgents have attacked displaced persons in their various camps. The gap between humanitarian needs and the system's capacity to respond is likely to widen before the end of 2016 if a research based mater rehabilitation plan for IDPs is not arrived at. Without putting this in place, vulnerable internally displaced persons risk getting engaged in a vicious sequence of violence.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The paper adopts Communication Theory as its framework as propounded by Karl Deutsch (1963) to analyze the whole process of governmental functioning and its inability. Deutsch analyzes the actual functioning of government and politics as a process of steering and coordinating human efforts to attain or achieve certain sets of goals. He uses the concepts and methods of the science of cybernetics to analyze not only the existences but also the growth of political systems and predict the consequences of change that affect the structures of the systems. It became a way of thinking and studying solutions to every

societal problems and challenges. Karl Deutsch was influenced by the principles of cybernetics in describing the political phenomenon which may involve any sort of challenges. Deutsch, (1963) posits that there are similarities in the processes and functional requirements between living things, electronic machines and social organizations. A cybernetic model directs the analyst to specific aspects of any system. He is led or guarded to analyses the amount of variety of information, the structure of the information network, the structure of sub- systems, and the feedback system. According to Deutsch, information represents the strength and the ability in solving all kinds of challenges that may be facing individuals, organizations or governments.

The aim of politics is the attainment of social goals and with this objective, decisions are made with respect to address the whole society problems and these decisions must be enforceable in order to promote the attainment of social goals. Deutsch argued that governmental decisions are obeyed and carried out by the problem over a period of time due to habit and fear of authority (cited in Hara Das and Chrouldbury, 1997:73). Consequently, Deutsch comes to the conclusion that the inner source of political power is the relatively coherent and stable structure of memories. However, habits and values depend on existing facilities for social communication both from the past to the present and between the present.

According to Deutsch (1963), government in a political system is analogous to the steering of a ship and is a form of administration of communication channels. He argues that self- regulation and coordination involve the steering of information, rather than the exercise of power over the individuals. In a political system, controls involve transmission of messages and the understanding of control processes. The function of the government should be, therefore, this kind of steering rather than predominantly involving the use of power (Hara Das and Chouldbury, 1997). The sub- system is a political system like parties, pressure groups and interest groups are also viewed by Deutsch as miniature communication systems. Failures of the steering facilities lead to conflicts between political systems or between the sub- systems of a single political system (Hara Das and Chouldbury, 1997:72).

The success of a political system, therefore, has to be analyzed in this context of its capacity to apply the acquired information in the following spheres: (a) Increasing its openness, that is to refining the channels through which it receives information; (b) Increasing its capacity to respond effectively to its environment and challenges: and (c) Increasing the range and diversity of the goals which it has the capacity to set itself to pursue and achieve results.

Deutsch places emphasis on the feedback approach and argues that it refers to a communicating network that produces actions in response to problems and challenges. A government changes its behavior in pursuit of the goals, in the light of information transmitted back to it, which was as a result of its decisions and actions. The capacity of government to react prediction about the future challenges and consequences of decisions and actions is known as load (Das and Bouldbury, 1997:74).



In the pursuit to address the challenges of internally displaced persons in Northeast Nigeria. Communication theory has been graciously used to explain the role and responsibility of government in providing possible and lasting solutions to the challenges of internally displaced persons, such challenges includes funding, corruption, lack and absence of appropriate legal framework, lack of reliable statistics, absence of designated camps, ineffective mechanisms for accountability and repatriations, lack of implementation and enforcement of existing norms, inefficiency of security and corruption practices among government agency, National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) who are charged with fundamental responsibility of overseeing the activities and management of the displaced persons and their camps. However, the following has constituted to the task saddled to NEMA among others: (a) To see to the welfare of the displaced persons. (b) Provision of designated camps.(c) Provision of suitable and conducive environment. (d) To provide emergency services to IDPs. (d) Distribution of food and other relief materials. (e) Getting accurate statistics of IDPs. (f) Distribution of donated materials given by the Nigerian government, Non- governmental organizations, Individuals, Philanthropist among others has not properly been used or utilized for the purpose they are meant for (IDPs).

Karl Deutsch explained that it is fundamental responsibility of every government in delivering governmental functioning which involves the strength and ability to see and to proffer solutions to the plights and challenges of the internally displaced persons in society by rehabilitating them back fully to the society. NEMA as the government agency in charge of IDPs and their various camps has also contributed immensely to the challenges of internally displaced persons in the area of corrupt practices among the NEMA officials. Most of the materials and donations given to IDPs were not properly utilized for the IDPs but for camps officials (NEMA).Deutsch stressed further that the aim of politics is the attainment of social goals and with the objectives in its decision making process.

To underscore this point, the 2011 National Crime and Safety survey report by The CLEEN Foundation, shows that the percentage of people fearful of becoming victims of crime has increased from 72% in 2011 to 75% in 2012. Robbery has increased from 11% in 2010 to 17% in 2012. Demand for bribe according to the Foundation had increased from 20 per cent in 2011 to 24 per cent in 2012, while kidnapping and wanton bloodshed tendencies as manifested in the North –east, North-west, South-east and South-south have risen tremendously. Most worrisome is that the survey revealed that only about 2 out of 10 crimes are reported to the police-a key indicator of the people’s lack of trust in the police force. The mistrust in the police has resulted in some citizens in society resorting to self-help and vigilantism. The country does not need a crystal ball to know the implications if this is allowed to continue .Secondly, the rise of Boko Haram terrorist group has posed a key challenge to Nigeria's security. Over the past two years, they appear to have increased their capability. A sign of their growth, and increasingly daring nature was the bombing of the police headquarters in Abuja and many police stations and military formations in the country. To worsen the situation, the group seems emboldened by the slow response of the police to their new level of intensity. The CLEEN Report (2011) indicated that (54%) were dissatisfied with the performance of police in the fight against terrorism. Thirdly, the

call for state police has become deafening. This agitation was triggered by the perceived lack of capability of the present police apparatus in dealing with modern day security needs. In truth, the performance of the police has been hampered by years of underfunding, poor welfare situation, low morale and inadequate training. Daily reports of low performance and lack of interest in the job abound.

### **Methodology**

The data required to prosecute this study were all sought from secondary source. For this purpose, books, journals, periodicals, monographs, seminar papers, unpublished research works, periodicals, newspapers, magazines, internet materials, conference papers, documents, and policy pronouncements constitute sources of data for the study. This study was conducted through a qualitative approach that combined a number of research modules, across countries, in order to develop a comprehensive picture of the migration flows across the Mediterranean.

### **Challenges of Rehabilitating Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Nigeria**

The following constitutes to the challenges facing the Nigerian state in addressing the rehabilitation of displacement in Nigeria. These challenges will be discussed in themes.

*Lack and Absence of Appropriate Legal Frameworks on IDPs* In 1998, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights kick started the process which led to the emergence of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement as an international standard setting norm on IDPs. Part of the ideals set out in the Guiding Principles is the call on states to replicate the principles contained therein into national laws and policies on internal displacement (Sayne, 2012). Similarly, the African Union Convention for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons which reflects the international guidance provided in the Guiding Principles enjoin states party to domesticate the provisions of this Africa's first human right treaty into domestic law as a way of strengthening protection and assistance for IDPs within their respective borders. The Nigerian Government in 2003 set up a committee saddled with the onerous mandate to draft a national policy on IDPs as a means of addressing the gaps in the protection of IDPs in line with existing norms. The committee came up with a 51 page draft policy which was presented to government in 2011. Surprisingly, despite the severity characterized by the interminable surge in internal crises in the country which has disreputably provoked massive human loss, wreckage of infrastructures and displacement of people, the said draft has continued to sink in oblivion given the fact that it is yet to become operational. This is notwithstanding the fact that the draft national IDP policy restates all the rights and freedoms recognized under the Guiding Principles, Kampala Convention, and the Nigerian Constitution, the inordinate delay in its adoption and eventual implementation by government also adds to the issue of non-enforcement and compliance of its set out standards even before domestic courts in Nigeria (Ashiru, 2010). In addition, Nigeria has ratified the Kampala Convention but up to this present time, there is no domestic legislation that mirrors the legal and institutional

frameworks on IDPs protection ingeniously contemplated for states party in accordance with the provisions of the Convention.

Owing to absence of clearly delineated area of responsibilities for each of the relevant institutions such as National Emergency Management Agency and National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons sharing concerns on IDPs issues, the requisite synergy is also lacking regarding humanitarian intervention in Nigeria resulting in wasteful duplication of responsibilities as well as in the provisions of material needs for victims (Higaz, 2010).

*Lack of Reliable Statistics on IDPs* The actual number of persons displaced by recurring internal conflicts need to be determined before any meaning planning and eventual intervention can be effectively undertaken. In Nigeria reliable data in this regard is lacking, and this constitutes one key constraint that undermines effective protection and assistance of IDPs in Nigeria. The capacity to gather relevant data is potentially inefficient due to poor communication and transportation networks. Most of the IDPs are uprooted away from their homes into areas that are virtually not easily accessible. The National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons and National Emergency Management Agency by virtue of their enabling statutes collate data on IDPs in Nigeria without any agreeable standards in terms of methodology. Data derived from these sources are therefore questionable, inaccurate and misleading. For example, after many years, the National Refugee Commission publicly released an estimated figure of 1.5 million persons as internally displaced due to internal crises in Nigeria, this figure to say the least is doubtful given that they are not usually disaggregated by sex and age (Shedrack and Nuarrual, 2016). The cumulative effects of the above development leads to the continued distortion of the true pictures and understanding of the severity and dynamics of internal displacement in Nigeria even before national authorities and international communities for the purposes of any feasible and result oriented intervention.

*Absence of Designated Camps for IDPs* There are also challenges that are tied to the absence of IDP camps and other facilities. It is common to see that whenever there is an emergency resulting in the displacement of people; victims are hurriedly relocated to available public infrastructures like schools and other public places on temporal basis. But situations of internal displacement are not like a scorpion bite and so it does not freeze away with ease (Olukolajo, Ajayi, & Ogungbenro, 2014). There are deaths of IDPs' camps of permanent nature in Nigeria. Make shift camps are porous and not specially constructed to ensure adequate security to forestall secondary attack on the victims. A large proportion of IDPs in Nigeria resides with their family and friends who at times are members of their host communities. For example, in the IOM Round IX Reports, it was reported that out of the 97 IDPs sites in Nigeria's North Eastern States of Adamawa, Borno, Taraba and Yobe assessed by the IOM team which comprises of NEMA, IOM and Nigerian Red Cross Society, 22 are located in open air settlements called camps, 73 are in collective settlements (pre-existing structures) such as public schools and government buildings, while the remaining 2 sites are transitional centre which only provides transient accommodation to IDPs (Shedrack & Nuarrual, 2016). Given the nature of facilities stated above, medical facilities are also lacking in the so called IDPs' camps as outbreak of diseases are on the

increase because of competition for space and other related factors. These embarrassing situations threw to the wild wind any assurance that durable solutions in the form of return, resettlement and rehabilitation can be achieved for IDPs whose numbers and identities are unascertainable. More so in Nigeria there are no specially tailored housing development projects for vulnerable population like IDPs.

*Ineffective Mechanisms for Accountability and Repatriations to IDPs* This is one of bulging concerns in the legal frameworks for the protection of IDPs. The unending impunity characterized by lack of adequate domestic mechanisms to guarantee accountability of perpetrators of internal conflicts is indisputably problematic. Successive administrations in Nigeria are quite unsuccessful in applying the appropriate penal laws to ensure that perpetrators of violence of whatever descriptions incur responsibility for the wrongs committed against innocent citizens including IDPs. Several commissions and investigative panels has been set up by government at the end of every crises to probe into remote and immediate causes, unfortunately their reports of the so called board of inquiry and their eventual implication have not seen the light of the day, they are kept in archive of history. Most of the times, the setting up of commissions to probe violence are greeted with terse legal disputes due to underlining diverse ethnic, religious and political interests in the affected areas thereby stalling their effective take off. The setting up of so many ad-hoc commissions to probe violence in violence has not able to achieve the needed deterrence as the approach is seen as deferring of government responsibility in favour community and religious leaders' wishes and a time buying tactics to douse tensions and avoid criminal prosecutions. At the end faults are not apportioned because of lack of political will. This study would not differ but to agree with an opinion expressed by an author that "the use of commission is where genuine and legal controversies go to die". Government officials who are charged with the responsibility of prosecuting perpetrators see violence more of a political problem requiring political solution rather than criminal prosecutions. Rioters are often celebrated as heroes instead of rogues based on divides to which they belong. There is often a limit to how much the society can preach peace without accountability for unprovoked and wanton destruction of lives and properties as well displacement. The foregoing explains the corresponding endless urge to revenge at the slightest opportunity thereby making victims to live in an atmosphere of perpetual displacement. In the absence of fruitful criminal prosecutions and convictions of culprits for the mass atrocities they have committed either individually or collectively as evident in the various internal crises plaguing the nation, people will continue to engage themselves in this ignominious warfare with brazen impunity and rascality (Shedrack & Nuarrual, 2016). Coupled with the foregoing is the dearth of credible evidences to support the effective prosecution of perpetrators of internal conflicts given the fact that victims and witnesses prefer to stay away from the courts to avoid reprisal attacks on their persons and property in the hands of arrested culprits. This situation has led to a number of cases thrown out of court for lack of evidence with which to establish the guilt of culprits.

In addition to the foregoing challenge, there is also lack of effective reparations for victims of internal displacement in Nigeria. Unlike in other jurisdiction like Sri Lanka where there exist a purpose driven and designated remedial regime in favour of victims

of crime and their witnesses, in Nigeria, there is yet no active mechanisms in place to guarantee effective reparation for personal injuries and loss of properties during displacement. Even though, the right to seek remedy for compulsory acquisition of landed property is well conceptualized, the same cannot be the case with IDPs in Nigeria as government except in development induced displacement and evictions are not responsible for such violations for the purposes of granting affected person any form of reparation. Aside this too, the right to redress provided for in the Nigerian Constitution is not absolute. IDPs by virtue of their predicaments are poor and thus incapable of activating the judicial process contemplated in the Constitution, more so that the legal assistance conceived therein are not specifically meant to be enjoyed by IDPs alone even in the face of their peculiar vulnerability (Shedrack & Nuarrual, 2016).

Bearing this dilemma in mind, victims of internal displacement finds it extremely difficult returning to original place of abode even after the end of crises for fear of nowhere to put their heads. Reclaiming their property upon eventual return is also problematic especially where government has designated such places as crises zones. Victims run the risk of having their properties declared abandoned by government instead of being compensated.

### **Implementation and Enforcement of Existing Norms on IDPs in Nigeria**

One of the salient means of guaranteeing protection and assistance of IDPs lies in the implementation of laws and policies insofar as it relates to IDPs' rights and entitlements and their consequential enforcement upon actual breach or threatened infraction of the same. Most of these laws and policies that entrench protection for IDPs in Nigeria are either in the nature of soft laws and treaties which also lacks effective monitoring system to ensure implementation and compliance by states party, in addition to their domestic application which is evidently limited also by the provisions of the national laws. Nigeria's dualist legal system in particular where international law and domestic law are considered as two distinct legal systems require reception legislation before treaty becomes applicable in national courts, also contribute to the growing concerns regarding non-enforcement of IDPs norms. There are no national institution with the mandate to ensure implementation and enforcement of IDPs norms in Nigeria as it were in other jurisdiction like Uganda where the National Human Rights Commission is saddled with this onerous responsibility.

### **Conclusion and Suggestions**

In this paper, we investigate challenges facing the rehabilitation of internally displaced persons in North East Nigeria. The study found out among others that the frequency of Boko Haram attacks has undermined the rehabilitation of internally displaced persons and the government agency, National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) who is charged with the responsibility of overseeing the activities of IDPs Camps has also contributed worrisomely to the rehabilitation of displaced persons in the region by not

utilizing the donated relieved materials given by Nigerian government, Non-governmental organizations, philanthropist etc for internally displaced persons but for the camp officials interest. Having identified the challenges of rehabilitation of IDPs, it was vividly observed that, one appropriate and celebrating offer that one can give to the homeless is shelter and basic needs such as food, cloth, water and so on. Apart from all these basic needs supplies, the IDPs also needs to be counseled, cared for and assisted to overcome the emotional dramatization that is usually associated with such nasty experience. The time has come for Nigerian Government to look vividly into the activities of National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) across all IDPs camps.

There is need for an integrated rehabilitation approach towards addressing the IDP challenges in Nigeria. The strategies for integrative rehabilitation should give clarity to the roles available to the Federal, state and Local governments, public and private donors, national and local leaders, and international actors to address and respond to the growing number of challenges confronting displaced persons in Nigeria. If not explored, the vulnerability of the IDPs may instigate intolerant attitudes, more radicalism, and theft among other social vices that promote unrest.

In view of the above, we challenge our leaders; particularly the de-tribalized statesmen and women of goodwill and positive disposition to rise up to the demand of history and work towards peaceful resolution of all political and ethno-religious conflicts in the country. It is counterproductive for Nigeria to strive towards development while at the same time struggling to manage massive humanitarian crises as a result of avoidable bloody conflicts.

Nigerian government should provide for more adequate humanitarian assistance, including food, water, shelter, medical care and other health services, sanitation, education, and any other necessary social services, and where appropriate, to extend assistance to local and host communities. In keeping with this standard, the Nigerian government should conduct needs assessment of internally displaced people and host communities, and take steps to organize and improve relief activities, in cooperation with local nongovernmental organizations and international agencies. The federal government should also review the activities of the body coordinating humanitarian activities in order to protect and assist internally displaced people. The federal government should establish and assign responsibilities to appropriate agencies aside from NEMA for the protection and assistance, and for cooperating with relevant international organizations or agencies, and nongovernmental groups, in accordance with article 3(2) (b) of the Kampala convention.

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