

THE IMPACT OF INTERNALLY DISPLACE PERSONS (IDP) ON HOST COMMUNITIES OF ADAMAWA STATE

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ABSTRACT

Whenever, people are forcefully displaced due to violent conflict such as Boko Haram insurgency, Herdsmen attack, religious and communal conflict they usually seek for refuge elsewhere. Thus, when they are within their country, they are called Internally Displaced Persons (IDP). These calibers of people usually receive assistance and support from humanitarian organizations both nationally and internationally. The aim of this paper is to assess the impact of internally displaced persons on host community of Adamawa state. A literature review on areas of such displacement of IDPs in the state especially during the heydays of Boko Haram insurgency was done, socio-economic and infrastructural and security impact was also carried out. Descriptive survey design method was adopted for the study. Having presented and analyzed the data, findings revealed IDPs have great impact on their host community. This impact usually manifest in the decay of the infrastructure, socio-economic instability, increases in crime rate in such communities and so on. The study therefore, recommended that for peaceful co-existence of the IDPs in the community, there is also need for support and assistance for the host communities instead of the IDPs alone and that of Government and Non-Governmental Organizations should address the immediate challenges of both IDPs and the host communities.

Keywords: *host community, internally displaced persons, impact,*

Introduction

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), according to the United Nations Guiding Principles (UNGP) (2017) are "persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of

human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border." It is therefore important to note that the movement is involuntary and takes place within national borders. According to Musa, Abba, and Baba, (2016), IDPs are thus different from persons who can stay safely in their place of residence but have opted to go away on their own free will, without coercion. Not only that, they are also different from refugees because they have not crossed an internationally recognized territorial border, and thus do not require a special legal status as a result of being outside their country and without its protection. As such, they are entitled to all the rights and guarantees as citizens and other habitual residents of their country.

Historically, Adesote, and Peters, (2015) said internal displacement is not a new thing in Nigeria as it has occurred many years ago. For instance, during the Biafran war (1967-1970) some two million people died and ten million people became internally displaced. While displacement of this magnitude has not been repeated since, approximately 500,000 people were forced to flee their homes after ethnic violence rocked Nigeria in October 2001, the majority of whom returned to their homes by mid-2002. Available figures suggested that towards July 2002, a total of at least 30,000 people remained internally displaced in the country. This figure is mainly composed of a remnant of the June/July 2001 clashes involving Tivs in Nasarawa and Taraba states, as well as people still displaced after the October 2001 violence in Benue state involving Tivs and the Jukun/military.

According to Abdulrahman and Zuwaira (2016), In Nigeria, the Northern region especially the North-East and North-Central are the most affected in this violent conflict, and with several people displaced from their homes, and sheltered in relations homes, or in friends' homes, or in internally displaced camps. Anywhere these persons find shelter, it entails a great impact on the host communities because they were not prepared to receive them and in addition with various kinds of problems ranging from inadequate food, shelter or healthcare facilities, traumatized situation, lack of proper security, therefore, those who find shelter in homes of friends or relations' constitute burden on their host.

UN (2014) reported an experience of internally displacement in Adamawa state are too numerous to mention or discuss, for instance; the maitesine riots of 1984 in Jimeta, in which

many people fled their homes to different parts of the state while others lose their lives and valuable properties as a result of the unfortunate incident. Apart from this, other ill-timed circumstances that led to displacement of people in the state include the religious crisis of 2000 (Sharia law), the post-election violence of 2011, Boko Haram insurgency of 2014, attack by Fulani herdsmen on some communities in the state, etc. Thus, all these and more also led to the displacement of many people in the state internally. It is important to note that the IDPs settle in other community or camps. Their relationship here is usually complex. When they first arrive there is often an expression of solidarity and support as friends or family members help them to get settled. But such good will is often short-lived due to the limited resources of the host community. In general, IDPs are often treated with hostility by the general public. Furthermore, host communities often do not understand the state assistance programs for IDPs.

Statement of the Problem

For many years, now there have been expressed concerns about the problems faced by host communities of Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) in Adamawa state. And chief among those concerns is the fact that many host communities' resources are scarce even before IDPs arrive, and that their arrival foreshadow food shortages, deterioration in living conditions and an increase in crimes, health hazards and the likes. In Adamawa state, ever since the dawn of Boko Haram, millions of people are force to leave their place of abort to other parts of the country seeking for refuge. Internally Displace Persons (IDP) is not only a humanitarian issue, but also has important economic, social, political, and environmental impacts not only the places of origin but the destination. The development impacts of IDP on host communities, however, remain poorly understood. As the number of protracted displacement situations is increasing, it is especially important to understand these impacts to be able to develop evidence-based policy responses. Besides, many research studies have focused on the effects of displacement on the migrants themselves. However, IDP usually entails large population inflows to host communities that are unprepared to receive them. Yet the impact of IDP on host communities in Adamawa state has somehow been neglected. More generally, understanding the effects of IDPs on host communities is a first step toward creating rational

political responses from national and international bodies. Since the displacement, is often associated with social disruption, tension, grievance, social fragmentation and economic upheaval, which is usually transferred to the host communities. Not only that, the arrival of new people under circumstances of forced movement may exacerbate social and economic differences disrupting previous balances of tolerance, social acceptance and cohesion. The protracted nature of displacement has made the issue of long-term integration a pertinent concern for some hosting communities like Adamawa state.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to assess the impact of IDP'S on host communities to enable a better understanding of the phenomenon of host communities. The study also has the following to achieve:

- i. To identify host communities of IDPs in the state with the rationale for providing different kinds of assistance in each case;
- ii. To identify the impact of IDPs on host communities in Adamawa state so to provide an overview situation.
- iii. To assess the challenges of host communities with a view of overcoming them.

Methodology

This study adopted survey design method using qualitative tools to source data. This design is chosen it's believed that qualitative data will be needed to describe the firsthand experience and perspective of the phenomenon of the participants. Descriptive and analytical styles was employed in the design. The aim of the descriptive technique is to unravel the current situation in the study area.

The data used for the study was obtained from both secondary and primary data sources. The secondary data was gleaned from the records obtained by the services of the NGOs, Religious corporate bodies and Government agencies in the state. It was sourced from textbooks, journals, internet search and other published materials relevant to the study. Primary data was obtained through the use of semi-structured questionnaires, Key-Informant Interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), observation, walk through survey and checklist.

The study population was contacted through a multi-stage sampling procedure. The study concentrated in the 9 LGAs which was selected from each of the senatorial zones bringing a total of 9 LGAs in all. These LGAs include; Demsa, Mayo-Belwa and Numan from the

Southern Senatorial Zone; Girei, Fufure and Yola South from the Central senatorial zone while Hong, Mubi South and Mubi North was selected from the Northern senatorial zone. In each of the LGAs, a total of 6 communities were selected using playing cards.

Host communities of IDPs in Adamawa State.

According to Comolli (2017) Yola the state capital had a lot of these camps play host to so many IDPs, for example; the NYSC Orientation camp, St. Theresa's Cathedral, Malkohi camp etc, although, many families equally accommodate their IDP relations in their houses, the presence of these IDPs has impact on their host in so many ways.

These IDPs are force out of their homes due to attacks by either Boko Haram or herdsmen and other forms of conflict in Adamawa state and other parts of the country have led to thousands of people fled their homes to other neighbouring communities thereby putting more stress on the already strained resources of the host states and communities, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2014). From September 5 – 7, 2014, Madagali, Gulak, Bazza and Michika in northern part of Adamawa state were attacked by the insurgents leading to displacement and massive movement of people from neighbouring Local Government Areas (LGAs) such as Mubi and Maiha for fear of being attacked. These attacks led to further displacement of the IDPs from Gwoza and Damboa LGA of Borno State who were already taking refuge in Madagali and Michka LGAs. These communities had earlier suffered series of attacks by the insurgents between August 4- 17 2014. In response to the IDP influx into Yola metropolis, from the August and September attacks, the Adamawa State Emergency Management Agency (ADSEMA) opened an IDP camp at Children's home Karewa on Sunday 24 August registering 384 IDPs. On September 3, ADSEMA opened an IDP camp at the NYSC orientation camp in Girei LGA to accommodate the increasing number of IDPs. As of September, 2014, ADSEMA and Red Cross had registered 4,236 IDPs with daily registration of at least 100 IDPs while there is increased influx of IDPs into host communities across Yola, Mubi, Gomi, Fufure, Maiha, Numan, Lamurde, Ngurore and Girei LGAs. As of September 2014, OXFAM/CISCOPE had registered 66,792 IDPs living with host communities in Yola North, Girei, Yola South, Gombi and Maiha Local Government Areas (LGAs), while IRC had registered 5,063 and 10,976 IDPs in Mubi South and Mubi North respectively. Registration of IDPs in host communities is on-going.

The State/National Emergency Management Agency (S/NEMA), IOM, Nigerian Red Cross, Oxfam/CISCOPE, IRC, Federation of Muslim Women of Nigeria (FOMWAN), Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI) are the leading agencies supporting the IDPs in the NYSC camp. Mubi LGA of Adamawa State is also hosting a large number of IDPs that fled from Gwoza, Askira Uba, Damboa and Chibok LGAs of Borno State and Michika, Madagali and Shuwa LGAs of Adamawa State, Initially; most of the IDPs were accommodated at the Mubi Emir's palace, mosques and churches. As the number of the displaced grew, informal settlement emerged in four locations in Mubi LGA including: Church of the Brethren (EYN) Giwa and COCIN Yelwa.

Humanitarian partners are calling for urgent action to prevent the suffering of the displaced population. The priority needs remain around food, health, protection, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) activities in host communities.

Impact of IDP on Host Community in Adamawa state

Internal displacement affects the lives of displaced people, their host communities and those they leave behind in many ways. According to internal Displacement Monitoring Centre IDMC (2018) the most urgent are threats to their physical safety, wellbeing and human rights. It can also have significant and long-lasting effects on their socioeconomic development. Through the harm it causes to people's physical health, psychological wellbeing and environment, their ability to secure a livelihood and their access to security, education, housing, basic infrastructure and social life, internal displacement can weigh heavy on the economy at the individual, community and even national level.

According to Abdulrahman and Zuwaira (2016) Boko Haram insurgency and other violent conflicts have disrupted the entire spectrum of humanitarian activities in affected areas in Adamawa state and the entire North Eastern states of Nigeria. The pre-existing fragility combined with ongoing conflict have left civilians in a dire situation, where the threat of violence, starvation, lack of basic services and constant fear – in addition to trauma resulting from a seven-year conflict – have become constant features of life. The arrival of people fleeing the conflict, most of who live in local communities rather than camps, has put additional strain on limited food, shelter, land, health and sanitation services,

Socio-economic impact of IDPs on the host communities

Ovaga (2017) asserts that, the economy of Adamawa state has depreciated significantly as a result of the influx of IDPs from other states like Yobe and Borno, the population of the IDPs has affected the economy growth of the state. Mohammed (2012) reported those non indigenes who contribute largely to the development of the state have left to their states. The never-ending attacks by Boko Haram in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states, has increased the rate of poverty profile as released by the National Bureau of Statistics illustrates that there is prevalence of poverty in the north (Adamawa state inclusive) as compared to the south. According to Internal Displacement Monitoring Center IDMC (2018) displaced people often lose assets when they are forced to flee their home and land. They may also be unable to pursue their former work, leading to unemployment, underemployment or informal work, and a significant drop in income as such hosting such kind of people implies provision of these needs to them. Since livelihood loss lead to reduced access to food and an increase in malnutrition.

Internal Displacement Monitoring Center IDMC (2018) reported that the conflict has gravely affected traditional economic activities, particularly agriculture and trading, severely crippling the local economies and increasing the vulnerability of entire populations of Northeast. The displaced communities, being mostly rural, were forced to abandon their farms and livestock, which in many cases were taken over by the insurgents (Shiklam, 2012). The situation has significantly increased food insecurity levels and has created beggars from communities which hitherto were completely independent and, in some cases, even considered wealthy in terms of land and livestock ownership. In addition to livelihoods, IDMC (2018) said basic food and non-food items still remain the highest priority for IDPs, followed by WASH, and primary health services. Education is less of a priority for most of those interviewed. Most rural communities do not prioritise education, particularly modern education. Being a predominantly Muslim region, priority is given to Islamic religious education. A study carried out by International Alert and UNICEF in collaboration with local actors noted that many of the returnees face stigmatisation, marginalisation, and rejection by family and community members due to social and cultural norms related to sexual violence.

Impact on Housing and Infrastructure

IDPs are often forced to live in substandard camps, collective shelters or informal urban settlements where overcrowding and lack of sanitation has increase the prevalence of communicable diseases. Those with pre-existing disabilities are particularly affected by inadequate shelter and infrastructure, which may cause their health and living conditions to deteriorate. In an interview with a community leader of the host community at Malkoni IDP

camp, Yola LGA he explained that the conditions in their communities is never an easy one according to him “all of us both the host and the IDPs sleep on bare floor since the arrival of the IDPs here” he further said we don’t have enough mattress or mats. It is quite a very difficult situation; we are exposed to mosquitoes and all kinds of insects and reptiles at all time of the day. The medical services render is not enough to cater for us all we are crowded here, and you can see that the entire camp is not suitable for human habitation.” Displaced persons in host communities have mostly settled in locations that have little or no basic services, such as water, electricity, or primary health and education services. Income earning opportunities are also very difficult, as most are rural farmers with no access to land or cash, nor do they possess alternative skills to earn a decent living. The most vulnerable groups identified are women and children, which form the majority of the population of IDPs. This presents a number of challenges associated with camps, informal settlements, and host communities. One of the major findings is the exposure to dangers of sexual harassment and violence. In October 2016, Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported that 66 percent of 400 displaced people in Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe States said that camp officials sexually abuse the displaced women and girls. The issues of human rights violations and sexual abuse of IDPs, particularly younger, vulnerable IDPs, was confirmed through a survey carried out in the several formal and informal camps in the northeast where about 7% of IDPs indicated that they know someone who had been sexually abused on the camp. The IDPs confirmed that abuse was perpetrated by camp officials, all these acts are associated with lack of housing.

Impact on Health and Education

Only a couple of publications focus on the impacts of displacement on the health of host communities. Further research is needed to provide solid evidence that either supports or debunks concerns that IDPs’ presence has a negative health impact on their hosts’. Chief among those concerns is the fact that many host communities’ resources are scarce even before IDPs arrive, and that their arrival may presage food shortages, a deterioration in living conditions and an increase in cases of communicable diseases such as measles and malaria. The World Health Organization identified the resurgence of polio among the displaced as a very serious threat to the host communities. A study conducted in several Adamawa State showed that host community members have suffered enough in their communities as a result of sharing the little resources with the IDPs, they have wish they IDPs stays in their camp.

Children from host communities and those who remain in depleted communities of origin also have their education disrupted as a result of displacement; the arrival of large numbers of displaced children has reduced the quality of education the host community peers received.

Overexploitation of Natural Resources and Increased In Waste Pollution

The most often cited environmental impact of mass displacement is loss of forest coverage. Trees are felled to make way for shelters and other infrastructure, for construction timber and for use as fuel for cooking, heating and lighting. One study estimates that the world's displaced people burned the equivalent of 3.9 million tonnes of oil in 2014, mostly in the form of firewood and charcoal. It also estimates that those in camps use the equivalent of 26,000 hectares of forest a year to produce energy. The construction of emergency shelters for IDPs in Adamawa State used up around 25% of the country's forest cover. The overexploitation of water resources is also a significant issue. Wells in some parts of Adamawa State have dried up because of the need on water in most IDPs and the host communities.

Population increases clearly mean more waste, and displacement camps rarely have adequate waste management systems in place in Girei LGA a host community report indicated that lack of adequate water, sanitation and waste management as resulted in diarrhea diseases, the reduction of fish stocks and a drop in agricultural production.

Results/Findings

The study find out the efforts by both national, State governments to address the needs of IDPs are inconsistent, and the means of support from international

agencies and Nigerian civil society is also limited, people who live in or near camps receive some assistance, but often not enough to meet their food and other basic needs. They also tend to live in cramped and unhygienic conditions, the most vulnerable IDPs are the young, older people and those with disabilities are most at risk. There is lack of strategy humanitarian assistance to the host communities.

Further findings from the studies also observed that host communities are not prepared to receive the IDPs, response from a host community leader explained that government need to create a programme for awareness that will prepared the prospective host communities to adjust for the coming of the IDPs into their communities.

Conclusion

With peace slowly returning to the region, there has been a general decrease in the number of IDPs, as people slowly return to their communities. However, the scale of damage in returning areas is immense and new humanitarian challenges are emerging. Returning families still face security risks, economic disruption, and limited access to food, water, and sanitation, shelter, and health services to both returnee IDPs and host communities .

From the findings it is apt to conclude that IDPs hosting in a community is a problem globally and has affected many developing countries like Nigeria, When IDPs first arrive there is often an expression of solidarity and support as friends or family members help them to get settled. But such good will is often short-lived due to the limited resources of the host community. In general, IDPs are often treated with hostility by the general public. They may be viewed with fear, subjected to persecution for being displaced and blamed for increased crime rates and the fear of sharing the little resources they have.

Recommendations

Base on the findings of this investigation and conclusion, this study wishes to make the following recommendations:

- i. The support and assistance of host communities determine the peaceful stay of IDP's in the society. Hence, there is need for government and non governmental organizations to pay attention to the host communities by also giving them support of both food and non-food items.
- ii. Host communities in Adamawa state like others all over the world are unprepared to receive IDP's as such there is need for humanitarian organizations both nationally and internationally to raise the level of awareness of the host community about IDPs and how to adapt to the situations.
- iii. For better relationship between the IDP's and the host communities there is need to improve on the involvement of international and non-governmental organizations through actions which bring together host communities and IDPs.
- iv. Practical efforts should be made by the Nigerian government through agencies like National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and State Emergency Management Agency(SEMA) in building more internally displaced person's (IDP's) camps that are more conducive in terms of availability of proper water, sanitation, hygiene, (WASH)and food accessibility to IDPs as well as the

establishment of vocational and educational programmes that would aid internally displaced person's (IDP's) in full rehabilitation back to the society.

- v. The Nigerian government should carry out Amnesty programs which should include the willingness and readiness of Boko Haram members to surrender their arms, unconditionally renounce terrorism and sign an undertaking to this effect. In return, the Nigerian government must pledge its commitment to institute and adhere strictly to programs that would assist their disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation as well as reintegration.
- vi. The government should also work towards improving the economy in the North, especially in the North East region. The presence of the Lake Chad and vast number of arable lands should be capitalized to boost Agricultural activities; this would create more employment for youths and reduce the unemployment menace especially in North East Nigeria.
- vii. The Nigerian government should invest heavily in family planning programmes, this should be concentrated more in rural areas especially in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states where people are often poor, illiterate and with lots of children (ranging from 10-20) they cannot cater for. This programme would allow for parents to give birth to children they can adequately provide and cater for (maximum of four children) without them constituting a menace of street begging and thereby reducing the tendency of being recruited as foot/child soldiers by the Boko Haram sect.

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