



THE CHALLENGES OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDP) IN NIGERIAN CAMPS PARTICULARLY THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN

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Abstract

This paper examined the condition of women and children in various IDP camps in Nigeria. It is confirmed that women and children constitute 80% of total population among IDPs and they seemed to be more vulnerable to several social problems in the cause of been displaced persons. Some of these problems encountered by women and children include abuses from camp leaders, security agents and members of the host communities. In the consequence of the abuses on women and children which mostly was transactional sex and forced marriages, these women and children have continued to be in pitiable state as they remained hopeless. Hence, there is a need to put to light, the plight of these women and children in order to make the government(s) and non -governmental organizations and religious/humanitarian bodies to help in harnessing a lasting solution to the perils of the IDPs, especially as it affects women and children. This study utilized a combination of socio-historical, phenomenological and descriptive research methodological approaches, as it finds out that women and children suffer more in several ordeals that befalls on them as a result of their displacement.

Key words: Internal Displacement, Non-Governmental Organizations.

Introduction

Insecurity in the present Nigeria has continued to be headlines of almost every newspaper on daily bases in recent time. In the consequence of much killing, kidnapping, and destruction of farm and properties by the insurgency of the Boko Haram, herdsmen, kidnappers and bandits in Nigeria, IDP camps have become refuge for many of the victims of these attacks. The IDP camps now exist in several locations in Nigeria, especially in the north-eastern part of Nigeria and the middle belt states like Kogi, Benue and Jos. In most of the places that attacks have taken place, it is men that are been killed and this has left many women and children as widows and orphans respectively. Therefore, these women and their children run to IDP camps for safety of their lives and that of their children. Men, during war are more at the receiving end since they lost their lives in a bid to ensuring the safety of their women and children (Zamzan 201). Life on daily bases has continued to unbearable



for women, whose husbands have been killed and are left to play double roles as father and mother of their children. The well cherished traditional family structure among Africans, meant for a balanced and good child upbringing has been broken on the account of this problem. Moreover, in Islamic Religion, the traditional practice of *kulle* which was meant to maintain respect and dignity of women folk, especially in the northern area of Nigeria is becoming a forgotten tradition. The stress of catering for the whole family has become very much the responsibility of women. It is such that many of them end up engaging in transactional sex for money and material things in order to fend for their family members. These abuses are brought upon them by men who serve as leaders of the camps, security agents: vigilantes, police and military men as well as men from the host communities who take advantage of the pitiable situation around these women. Many children victims have become school drop outs and this poses cogs to peaceful existence of the society in the nearest future. Among other problems are forced marriages, impregnation of adolescents and rape cases among the camp members. This is the terrible situation been faced by women and children in the IDP camps and there is an urgent need for government and humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations to come to the aid of these women and children (OCHA, 16)

The Challenges facing Women and Children IDP camps

IDP camps are not normal habitats for people. They are emergency grounds for people due to natural disasters or man-made problems such as outbreak of war. They are temporal arrangements for victims until their situations becomes better. Many of the camps are not comfortable to the people like their homes. There are numerous challenges facing women and children in IDP camps that are surmountable but due to inaction people perish.

Based on the 1998 guiding precepts, internally displaced persons are people or group of people who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of armed conflict, or to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situation of generalized violence, violations of human rights, or natural or human-made disasters and who have not crossed an international border (UN, 2003). As a result of several attacks and activities of the Boko Haram insurgency, there have been a high level of displacement in the country. The impact of these insurgencies is more felt in the northeast. In the north-eastern Nigeria, insurgency has lasted for about 12 years. The activities of the insurgents have remained within this region until about six years ago, precisely in 2015, after the presidential election that the insurgency has begun to escalate into middle belt (north central states like Kogi, Benue and Plateau States (UNDP 2021, premium times 2020).

In 2016, Boko Haram got divided into two and its rural ISIL (ISIS) that is an allied faction of Islamic state in west Africa province (ISWAP) end up becoming dominant threat. In spite of several military operations carried out to quell the activities of the Boko Haram and ISWAP in the northeast, the group has launched attacks and has extended the brutality to the neighbouring Cameroun, Chad and Niger republics (Aljazeera, 2021). In the same way, the activities of insurgents have been extended within Nigeria, to north central states in the cloak of Fulani herdsmen, bandits and kidnappers. Many



have been killed, kidnapped and displaced from their ancestral homes on the activities of these insurgents. According to UN report (2021), over 3.2million people were displaced in Lake Chad area. In this same year (2021), the UNDP has gathered that about 5.3million people have been displaced and at the same time are experiencing food insecurity in the cause of conflicts in the north-eastern Nigeria (world bank 2021). The estimated 5.3 million of people facing displacement and food insecurity in northeast Nigeria has increased in recent time to 13.1 million people. Among the people, 8.7 million need urgent help and for their need of help have run into the internally displaced persons camps. The causes of these insurgencies are not the focus of this study; however, the causes have been adduced to have political, religious, social and economic under tones. The lingering nature of insurgency in Nigeria has continued to increase the number of IDP camps in Nigeria. The recent report has noted the number of IDP camps to 10,500 camps, and the number of persons running to these camps has reached an alarming rate. More worrisome in recent time is that while people run to camps to get secured, they have met some insecurity challenges in these camps. The situation makes these displaced persons to begin to run from one camp to another. In most cases, their movement from one camp to the other in-view of security is like jumping from frying pan to fire. Many IDPs find it difficult to recover from psychological trauma of loss of families, friends and properties. In addition to their woes, they are encumbered with security challenges together with their welfare problems.

It is becoming obvious in Nigeria that the IDP camps are not even safe as a good number of these camps have been attacked by the insurgents. For example, in September, 2015, a terrorist group in a suicidal mission launched attack on IDPs in Madagali and Yola. This resulted in killing about 12persons. It was also reported by the same source that bombs were detonated inside a tent at the camp in one of the attacks. In like manner, at least 86 people were murdered in Dalori which is about 12kilometres to Maiduguri on 31st January 2016. On the 10th of February, 2016, 80 displaced persons were attacked and killed in one of the IDP camps in *Dikwa*, Borno state. This is a camp that once hosted about 50,000 displaced persons (premium times 2016). This situation of existing insecurity challenges in IDPs camp is making the Nigerian IDP camps unsafe for the displaced persons.

The Situation of Women And Children In The IDP Camps

It is interesting to know that apart from general insecurity challenges in IDP camps, women and children living in these camps are vulnerable to some social problems like rape, being a school dropout, unsound upbringing, forced marriages, becoming pregnant at under age, infections of diseases, child labour and child trafficking etc. These unique experiences of the displaced women and their children, especially the girls is our concern in the next passage. There are about 2.152,000 internally displaced persons in Nigeria and over 56% of the entire population of the displaced persons are children of over 5years and 42 % adults and 92% of the IDPs were displaced by violence (IDMC 2016). In 2014, displacement level was heightened by 79%. The IDPs in Nigeria came mostly from Borno which amount to 62%. Adamawa and Yobe results to 13% respectively. The



IDPs which reside with their host families is 87% while those residing in the camps are 13% (DTM, 2015).

Among the several challenges faced by IDPs in Nigeria, women and children are more vulnerable than men. It has been that the insurgency in Nigeria has displaced 1.17 million girls (LEDAP 2020). There is also a record of 350,000 deaths and most of them are children below the age of five (United Nations 2021). Out of this population of the displaced children, 170 are claimed to be dying daily for malnutrition, disease infection and hunger.

In his presidential visit with his entourage to Malcohi IDP camp in southern part of Adamawa state in November 2015, president Buhari simply described the situation as unfortunate and stated categorically that children and women have received the worst hit. Sidi, NEMA director general made it known that there were 80 pregnant women and 175 unaccompanied children. In like manner, Marama, Yusuf and Ojeme reported that several IDP camps that got established as a result of Boko Haram activities were experiencing cases of unwarranted pregnancies while some were raped. They also noticed child labour/trafficking and cases of sexual transmitted diseases (vanguard news, 2015). There is much sexual harassment going on against women and children in IDP camps. However, the spate of the sexual harassment, and other challenges faced by women and children in IDP camps seem to vary in different camps. Therefore, in the following passage, let us take a look at how these challenges are been experienced in some selected IDP camps in Nigeria. The researcher hopes that the experience could be the same all over other IDP camps in Nigeria.

Selected Study Areas

This survey is carried out in six work fields namely; TseYandev camp, Kuchingoro camp, Government Lodge camp, Nbyiro camp, Sabuwa and Malkohi camps respectively. These camps are representatives of the remaining IDP camps in Nigeria. In each camp, a total of ten questionnaires are distributed, five for women and their daughters and five for children between the age of 18 and 25 years. Below is a discussion of the research findings:

TseYandev Camp

This is an IDP camp located in Makurdi Benue state capital. There are over 10, 407 IDPs here with over 5000 households. The IDPs here came from different neighboring villages within Benue state. Also, they have a record of seven families from Taraba state. Most of them use abandoned or spoilt mosquito nets to erect structures that they live in. Some of them made use of dried grasses to produce a thatch roof for themselves while the rest sleep in the open field. The site of the camp is not fenced so they are vulnerable to different attacks from host communities and villagers. During rainfall, they experience unimaginable hardships and the rain has to drench them and their remaining properties. At the time of this visit, several properties have been lost to rainfall already. The camp is overcrowded and this is a representative of the 20 IDP camps in Benue state.

Five women and five children were given the questionnaires which they answered and returned to the researcher. Every one of them said that they do not like the camp and gave various reasons which range from lack of adequate care, inaccessibility to the basic needs of life. The eldest woman among those who were interviewed and who is 53 years of age said that she has never experienced suffering



all her life like what is obtainable in the camp. The woman attest to the fact that they are been abused severally, as if that is not enough, even their daughters are also abused. A 19 year old girl confirmed that she was abused by different men the same night. Sometimes, she would be abused at least two times a week because every male around claim to admire her beauty. Her greatest ordeal is the fact that she later discovered that one of those who abused her is from the same village with her but different clan.

They experience sexual abuse from local vigilante groups within federal housing metropolis in North Bank situated in Makurdi and even from some of the leaders in the camp. They cannot tell the exact number of women and girls that get pregnant within a particular period of time in that, some wouldn't disclose it but leave the camp quietly. What they have noticed over time is that over twenty women and girls get pregnant within a year and they can't tell which is legal or illegal. What makes it difficult for them to ascertain the specific number is that some of the perpetrators of this wicked act will take the women and girls out of the camp to abort the fetus. Some other ones would just leave the camp out of shame when they discovered that they are pregnant. The psychological trauma of unwanted pregnancy is beyond human description and comprehension they said. A 21 year old girl said she nearly lost her life just before delivery as a result of complications. A 32 year old woman maintained that she had miscarriage because there was no provision for antenatal during her conception at the camp. A 29 year old woman said that her conception resulted to ectopic pregnancy as a result of lack of adequate nutrition. A 41 year old agreed that she had some health challenges before coming to the camp. When she conceived, other complications set in because she was always sick with no medical attention. In the long run, she lost the pregnancy.

An analysis of the response from the questionnaires showed that there is no adequate care for IDP children. They are seen roaming from one end of the camp to another. Because they aren't really busy, it was gathered that many of them have turned into thieves. In fact, the experience at the camp is such that there is nothing that cannot be stolen. When they wash their clothes, they have to keep a close watch over it so that no one picks it and start using it. Even while cooking, they don't stay far away or else the pot of undone food would be stolen. A 23 year old boy responded that his boxer and his younger sister's underwear were once stolen in the camp. It was also gathered that the children do not eat very well in the camp. An 18 year old boy said sometimes they eat once in three days and when the food is provided, it won't go round everyone. The experience in the camp is simply a survival of the fittest. That is why some of the camp leaders would fight for them and later come back for sex. So, sex is been bartered for water and food mainly. The present situation shows that there is no hope for children's future except there is an intervention

i. Kuchingoro camp

This IDP camp is located in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja. Most of the IDPs here are those who came from Gwoza local government area of Borno state while some of them came from Bogoro local government area of Bauchi state as well as others from Nassarawa, Plateau and Kaduna states respectively. They made use of tarpaulin and plastic bags to construct their homes in the camp. A few of them made use of zinc for the construction of their houses. The researcher's observation



shows that there is poor hygiene and lack of frequent sanitation of the camp. The IDPs live indiscriminately and the camp is sparsely populated and this is a representative of the four IDP camps in Abuja.

Not less than ten persons were interviewed in the camp. On their states of welfare, various reasons were given which include insufficient light, poor nutrition, lack of good drinkable water, and the inability to access the basic needs of life. The women and their daughters are abused and it has resulted to several illegal families at the camp. Security men and camp leaders abuse them the most since they are closer to them. A 35 year old woman said since some of the camp leaders do not reside in the camp with their wives, it gives them more opportunities to live a promiscuous life. A 23 year old girl said she was deceived by one of the camp leaders who sent her to get him alcohol. On taking it to his tent close to the IDP camp, he overpowered her and violated her. In the same way, 33 year old woman explained her sexual ordeal that she was asked to come to assist one of the camp leaders in cooking for him after which she was raped in his tent. A 22 year old girl narrated her story that she was asked to assist one of the security men in fetching water. Being about the age of her late father, she never thought that any evil would befall her. He gave her lakacera apple drink to take not knowing that it has been drugged. On taking it, she slept off and he end up sleeping with her.

It is difficult to tell how many get pregnant per time but within a year, at least ten people will give birth and they cannot tell which is legal and illegal. The psychological trauma of unwanted pregnancy is a terrible one according to them. A 20 year old girl said that each time she sees the person that got her pregnant, she feels like killing him and killing herself. After making wonderful promises of marrying her after the conception, he abandoned her and stopped coming to her tent to even ask of her when he discovered that she was pregnant. Her condition is more critical in that it was this particular camp leader that deflowered her. A 24 year old girl said she wished that she could turn the hand of the clock; she wouldn't have gotten herself into the present mess. A 36 year old woman said life in the camp is difficult, so becoming pregnant in the midst of hardship made her to suffer double tragedy.

The children in the camp are not well cared for. They do not eat good food. The outcome is that some children have died out of malnutrition. Just looking at them is a pathetic scene and when the infants are carried, one would discover that they have lost some weight over time. There is no provision for school in the camp. However, some good people among the IDPs who are educated used to teach the children from time to time. Some churches within FCT metropolis also send people to teach children some Christian doctrines. Muslims among the IDPs do the same for their Muslim counterparts. But there are some that just call upon everyone who is willing to learn irrespective of his or her religious affiliation. They do not spend much time in the learning process in that one cannot effectively learn in the midst of terrible hunger. The reason had been that the assimilation capacity of the brain will be affected adversely. The situation implies that there is no hope for the future of the children except there is an intervention

ii. Government lodge camp



This is located in Yobe state. Most of the IDPs here are from Bade and Geidam local government areas. A lot of them were into farming, craft making/handicrafts/artisan, transport business, petty trading, livestock rearing, fishery and almajiris. The camp was overcrowded. This informed why the government couldn't cope with them at a time. Initially they had a record of about 2000 IDPs but because the government couldn't control the crowd, some of the displaced persons started withdrawing back to the host communities and other relatives around. In the process of time, well – meaning Nigerians came to their aid. However, Camp leaders lost control of the camp because the place is too small for the population. This is a representative of other IDP camps in Yobe state. Ten questionnaires were administered to ten respondents. Five of them were women and girls while five were given to children between the age of 15 and 20.

In Their responses, all of them hated the camp experiences. In fact, that informed the reason for mass exit from the camp when they first arrived. Whatever that is made available for them is insufficient so they have to scramble for food, water and everything as far as livelihood is concerned. If one fails to get it within one period of time, it might take another five days before the opportunity to fight for any of the basic needs of life come again. This researcher gathered that the women are abused mainly because of shelter and food. Usually, nothing goes for free since they are aware about the plight of the IDPs. In this camp, sex is been traded mainly for nutrition and housing between the IDPs and camp officials, security men and members of the host community. A 28 year old woman said she had to give into one of the camp officials after pestering her for a long time because she hadn't taken her bath for two days neither has she eaten too: a situation the man promised to help her out. In the same vein, as a result of unavailability of housing, a 34 year old woman followed one of the IDP to a neighbouring place. She never knew that those relatives had plans to rape her. Late into the night, her counterpart left the room after that she had slept two men from the host community raped her one after the other.

Sexual assault is so rampant in this camp that they cannot specifically pinpoint the number of women that get pregnant within a stipulated period. However, a 45 year old woman estimated that she has witnessed six have given birth within the space of one year. A 36 year old woman said she lack sufficient adjective to qualify the psychological trauma of having unwanted pregnancy in the camp. She has given birth to one child before, but conceiving in the camp is a disastrous experience. A 19 year old girl said the abandonment she suffered after the conception is her greatest ordeal. According to her, no one really care and everyone seem to be rejecting her. A 25 year old woman said since the government has not been able to adequately take care of the IDPs, how can he take care of pregnant women? So, they are usually left to suffer alone as some of them even give birth in the camp without antenatal care, what a risk!

The children are not well cared for. They do not eat good food because whenever food is brought; those who are stronger get some while those in charge of the distribution process who are male take undue advantage of women and the girls. Because there is hunger in the camp, some children between the ages of 1 and 9 have died out of starvation said a 55 year old woman. There are no schools in the camp. An 18 year old boy said her greatest challenge in the camp is that he cannot continue with his studies after been displaced.



iii. Nbyiro camp

This IDP camp is located in Fufore, Adamawa state. A lot of the IDPs came from Michika, Madagali and Songe regions. This is a home to 425 IDPs and they are scantily populated. The people here do not have access to good drinkable water, light and basic healthcare. They live wildly and do not have access to the fundamental needs of life. A total of ten questionnaires were distributed to five women and five children. This is a representative of the rest IDP camps in Adamawa state.

None of them like the camp because of the various problems they experienced while at the camp such as lack of food, good water, sexual abuse and the likes. The women and the daughters are abused greatly. A 26 year old woman was raped simply because she went to fetch water. Not only was the experience a terrible one, but that she is battling with infection due to the unprotected sex that she had. A 30 year old woman said she cannot tell how hepatitis B positive became part of her and that she thinks she got it through sex with one of the security men, who she claimed to have died of the same illness briefly after the sexual intercourse.

A 39 year old woman laments over the situation as she said men are not even ashamed presenting sex as a condition for any form of assistance that need to be rendered to a female folk in the camp. It has become a common thing in form of trade by barter. A 40 year old woman said it is a shameful thing that children are forced into marriages in the camp. They cannot tell how many women and girls get pregnant within a period of time but they just know that sometimes, as much as over 30 get pregnant within a year and they cannot tell which is legal and illegal. A 23 year old woman explained her experience of becoming pregnant in the camp outside her wish, but she later thank God when she had miscarriage. She regretted every bit of it.

The children are not well catered for and this informed the reason for the high rate of infant mortality. A 23 year old boy said two children once died before his eyes in a day out of malnutrition. A 19 year old boy said there is no provision for any form of education in the camp. A 20 year old boy said some of them who could speak English before coming to camp have only resorted to pidgin, because there is no way they can continue with their education.

iv. Sabuwa camp

This is located in Katsina state. Most of the IDPs came from neighboring villages. The people here live indiscriminately because the camp is overcrowded. Usually, some level of restrictions is placed upon the people as they cannot move at will. As is the case with so many IDPs, this camp lacks direct access to the basic needs of life. A total of ten questionnaires were given to five women and five children. This camp is a representation of all other camps in Katsina state. All those interviewed said they do not like the camp. Reasons such as lack of hygiene, lack of food and shelter and the likes informed their responses. A 26 year old woman said transactional sex is a common thing in the camp and its environs. A 34 year old woman said whenever they want to have canal knowledge of any woman; a common strategy employed here is to send her on errand. A 47 year old woman said when they discovered that some of the women go for errand in group, they arranged with the security and it became compulsory for the women and girls to walk alone. Forced marriage



takes place in the camp. Sometimes, an elderly man would attach himself with two or three women/girls or more and call them his wives even if he is of age to give birth to such children. The precise number of women/girls that get pregnant cannot be ascertained. The reason had been that the women/girls won't disclose cases of rape and sexual abuse because there has never been a justification for such report so far. It becomes difficult for camp officials and security agents to discipline the perpetrators since they are equally doing the same thing. Therefore it becomes an unfortunate experience to get unwanted pregnancy in the camp they said.

The children are not properly cared for. Also, they do not eat well in the camp. The food given to them is not usually to their satisfaction but just what can keep them alive they said. The outcome of the insufficient food is that some of the children die of starvation. There is no provision for school in the camp therefore the children are just wasting away in the camp.

v. Malkohi camp

This is located in Borno state. Most of them come from nearby villages as a result of Boko Haram insurgency. The dwelling places are tents which were constructed by the IDPs themselves. They are overcrowded in this place and they struggle for the little available resources daily. They live in a disorderly manner. Observation about the environment shows that there is poor hygiene. The people here have a lot of restrictions of movement except that they are only free to move or carry out any function outside the camp when they are sent on an errand either by the camp officials, the security or military as the case may be. The IDPs here do not have access to the fundamental needs of humankind. A total of ten questionnaires were distributed to five women and five children and this is a representative of the remaining 32 camps in Borno state.

All those interviewed said they do not like the camp and they gave different reasons which include lack of nutrition, lack of good drinkable water, no access to healthcare and the likes. A 27 year old woman said the women and their daughters are abused at the slightest opportunity by the men. A 48 year old woman said since women aren't really allocated any serious work in the camp, their major role is that of fetching water, firewood and even to go to the market. Whenever they are sent to carry out any of those functions, the outcome would be that they are raped. To buttress her point, a 43 year old woman recanted that her daughter who is almost 18 years was raped when she went to fetch water. Most of the people that abuse the women and girls are camp officials, security men, local vigilante, the police and soldiers respectively. Sometimes the security men will invite them to their tents for an assignment and rape them there. The police and soldiers also rape women and girls at gun point and threaten to kill them if they fail to cooperate with them and also if they disclose what happened to anyone.

They cannot ascertain the exact number of women and girls that get pregnant but it is obvious that so many of them get pregnant through frequent rape. This researcher gathered that some of the women and girls are living with double tragedy of rape and unwanted pregnancy. The women and girls attest to the fact that the psychological trauma of having unwanted pregnancy in the camp is a very disastrous one. The children in the camp aren't cared for very well. The children do not eat good food in the camp. This researcher gathered that food is neither in good quality nor good



quantity and so in the long run, the rate of infant mortality rate is heightened because of poor nutrition. There is no provision for education too.

Effects of Displacement on Women and Children

One of the hardest experiences of the contemporary times in Nigeria for women and Children is their displacement from their ancestral home. At the initial stage of any displacement, the pains of women and Children is that of either loss of loved ones: Husband, Children or siblings and properties as the case may be. Any of such situation leaves them with psychological/emotional trauma. As times goes on, the losses and concomitant challenges of their welfare may eventually lead to depression and visible imbalances. And in no time, post-traumatic stress syndrome becomes the experience of women who have been displaced. Displacement of Children leads them to poverty state or condition as living in such a displaced situation has a broad spectrum of adverse effects on the physical and mental health and total well-being of the Children (Adamu 10).

It has become very obvious that in any case of displacement, women and children have a lot of untold sufferings to experience especially if they eventually made their ways to the IDP camp. Apart from the above initial sufferings in any case of displacement, which has psychological, emotional and spiritual dimensions, there is much serious hardship in the various IDP camps for displaced women and children.

Lack of fair shelter, good health care, lack of food and clean water and lack of basic needs of the life constitute the weight of depression the displaced persons encounter. Their plight becomes compounded with their abuses within the camp by people who supposed to secure and care for them. As earlier noted, in most of the IDP camps in Nigeria that the researcher has been able to reach, there existed several stories of sexual harassment, impregnation, rape and all forms of sexual transactional activities, cum nepotistic disposition of camp leaders in sharing of food items, and other relief materials that are made available by government, humanitarian organisations and NGOs. From the just foregoing problems faced in IDP camps, women and children living in any of the camps in Nigeria are experiencing dehumanization, enslavement, and discrimination etc, and if care is not taken, the situation could have some adverse effect on nation cohesion in times to come.

In what ways have displacement experiences affected the ways of life of women and children? In the following passage attention will be given to this question.

i. The challenge of Dual/Dynamic Gender Functions

In the occurrence of displacements of women and children, the woman is expected to play the strange role of the father and at the same time that of the mother. With the emotional stress, fulfilling the both roles on children would become cumbersome for women, especially in the North and North Central Nigeria, where women have not been empowered educationally and economically (Segura et al, 97). On the long run, there will be imbalanced child upbringing and this could invariably affect the Nigerian society in times to come.

ii. Lack of Sociable and Customary Ties



Africans generally from time immemorial, as oppose to European individualistic society live and cherishes their communality. Africans enjoys living together, caring for one another as they eat, play, celebrate and sorrow together as the case may be. As such, displacement from such one's society is a big ordeal on one's existence. Therefore, women and children in the situation of displacement loss ties with their family, traditions, culture and their general well- being as humans. The children who supposed to learn in their schools found themselves in a place that it becomes impossible for them to learn. The grown up girls cannot talk of getting married in any of such situation. The seeming effect of this loss of sociable ties that hold Africans together as peoples, may lead to breakdown of social order in times to come.

iii. Gender Brutality

The ugly experiences in the IDP camps as experienced by the researcher in the cause of this study is capable of leaving some degrading emotional trauma on not only the lives of the women and children, but also a damage on the integrity of their gender. Due to the accident of displacement, many girls give birth to children against their wish. The situation could have some lasting effect on these girls and also on their children. The condition of displacement in Nigeria leaves several women with responsibilities which puts them at high risk such as injuries, over working themselves, rape, coerced prostitution, disease infections etc. These and more are the effects of displacement on women and children in IDP camps in Nigeria and these increase the vulnerability of women and children.

The international community has not been given blind eyes to the peril of human displacement from ancestral homes in Nigeria. From just immediate foregoing, various responses of the international organizations have been put to light. However, these are not enough to liberate women and children from the problem that displacement has shielded them. There is definitely more needed efforts by the internal community to bring a lasting solution to the plight of the displaced persons in Nigeria, Much attention needs to be given to address the effect of displacement on women and children, considering the obvious fact that they are more vulnerable in such situation. It is very important to note here that material needs are not the only needs of the displaced persons, even though this is very necessary as integral part of life, their human dignity needs to form topics for discussion on the international meeting floors. This will help to maintain the dignity of human persons that is the hall mark of all human organization and it will definitely minimize abuses going on in IDP camps in Nigeria.

Conclusion

This paper has been able to look at the conditions of women and children in six IDP settlements located in six states in Nigeria. It has been gathered that the situation of women, girls and children in the various IDP camps is very appalling. This special group of people (women and children) constitutes 80% of the total population of the IDPs yet they seem to be neglected and they are more at the receiving end of all that goes on there. Insecurity level in the camp and the impact of



displacement on women such as dynamic gender functions, gender brutality, lack of sociable and customary ties have been duly analysed. The research findings were discussed and the involvement of internally displaced women was looked into. Responses to needs of internally displaced women from different agencies such as United Nations, U.N Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA), United Nations International Children Education Fund (UNICEF), United Nations High Commissioner For Human Rights (UNHCR), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Development Fund For Women (UNIFEM) and World Food Programme (WFP) were critically evaluated and recommendations provided.

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