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INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPs) CAMP OF BORNO STATE, NORTHEAST
NIGERIA: AN APPRAISAL

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APPRAISAL**

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ABSTRACT

This article appraises the role and challenges Non-governmental Organization (NGO's) encountered in providing assistance to the internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Borno State, Northeast Nigeria. Data was collected from secondary sources which include relevant journals, textbooks, newspapers, official documents among others, which were analyzed using the content analysis techniques. The paper found that NGOs working in the IDP camps in Borno State have been able to provide complement role to the government at all levels in Nigeria. These roles include providing fund, health care and schools to the IDP in the State. However, these NGOs are often faced with a number of challenges which include continuous insecurity, mistrust, diversion of relief materials, and lack of collaboration among NGOs in the forefront of the struggle for better life for the IDPs. It's therefore recommended that there should be an involvement of all stakeholders in the provision of humanitarian assist to the internally displaced persons in Borno State, and the NGO's and IDP needs to be protected against all forms of insecurity in the State.

Keywords: Challenges, Non-governmental Organizations, Role of Internally Displaced Persons; Borno State.

1. INTRODUCTION

North east, Nigeria since 1999 has been characterized with plethora of one crisis or the other. The conflict in this region of the country ranges from the activities of Boko Haram insurgent, which has ravaged not only are Northeast region, but almost the entire Northern Nigeria which have seen mass number of death (Dass, 2015). The once peaceful region and home to tourist attraction, with advancement in socio-economic activities and thriving farming and cattle rearing has turned to home for internally displaced person (IDPs), with a lot of youth taking to criminals activities just to survival. The youth in the Northeast who hither to engage in socio-economic activities such as beans production, tomatoes farming, many perishable goods, rice farming, yam farming, fish production and onion farming have been crippled as a result of insurgents especially, the activities of Boko Haram (Mohammed & Yalwa, 2018). State like Yobe, Borno, Adamawa, Gombe and Taraba, which consists the Northeast, Nigeria has been ravaged by the activities of insurgency, particularly Yobe and Borno States. The insurgency had brought untold hardship, halted economic activities and loss of live, which have made the resident of the area to move in camps in Borno State and across the North east geo-political zones. Those internal displaced persons (IDPs) from Northeast suffers devastating effects of the insurgent, thus they are left in the hands of government and non-governmental organizations for their daily survival. Internal displacement in Nigeria's Northeast remains recurring, and in large-scale and small scale mainly caused by the activities of insurgent, and other natural disaster and human right violations also have been on the increase. The activities of insurgent group in Nigeria have placed the country's IDPs to 3.3 million, which is the highest in African continent (Odon, 2018). The internal displacement of the citizens and resident alike and those in need of human right protection have being on the increase not only in Borno State, but across the globe, thus being a change form of large scale displacement of amplified internal displacement (Olanrewaju, et al 2019; Onimisi, 2014). The increasing number of IDPs as a result of insurgency has led to increase in human right abuse overtime. According to Adekole, et al (2019) IDPs are at the high risk of unexplained disappearances, sexual assault, human trafficking, arbitrary detention, forced conscription, deprivation of food, loss of suitable comprehensive health care, loss of education opportunities especially early child education, these amongst other are what victims of IDPs faced. This was made worst by increase in the activities of the "Ahl al Sunnali al al Da' wawa al Jihad", popularly known as Boko Haram which has been operating in North East, Nigeria since

1999, and has unleashed grievous humanitarian crisis in the region (Ikelegbe, 2010). This pathetic situation had made life in communities such as Baga, Bama, Kawuri, Ajigin, Gamboru, Chibok, Giwa, in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe States has been nasty, brutish and short (Salkida, 2012). These areas have not seen peace for a decade. The areas have witnessed lot of human right abuses, human casualties, food insecurity, refugees debacle, population displacement, lack of social amenities, and loss of means of livelihood (Imasuen, 2015). Hence, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) had to step into arrest an awaiting disaster by the pitiable situation of the IDPs mainly caused by the insurgent in Borno State. The number of people in the IDPs camps in the state was made more difficult for the government alone cannot handle the situation because of the increase in attack on the resident of Borno and its environment which invariably leads to increase in IDPs. The deadly attacks on border residents and communities curb the destruction of businesses, farmlands, properties, and the killing of over 2000 people in 2014 alone force many indigenous people and resident to flee to nearby IDPs for survival (Okon, 2018). And these incidents make the IDPs more vulnerable and susceptible to any forms of neglect, abuse, manipulation and exploitation. These categories of person forced to flee their respective home to IDPs camps because of the fear of their lives tend to be more vulnerable, hence the need for NGOs to step in to assist. It is against this background that this paper seeks to review the role of NGOs in IDPs camps in Borno State, Northeast, Nigeria. The paper is divided into six sections, which are as follows the introduction, conceptually clarification, theoretical underpin, NGO's and IDP in Borno State, challenges faced by the NGOs in Borno State IDP camp, and finally conclusion and recommendation.

2. RESEARCH STATEMENT:

The activities of the Boko Haram group in Northeast Nigeria has assumed a different dimension. The insurgent have displaced great number of people from their place of resident and work place. They have forcibly removed both indigenous people and resident of the state, especially the youths and adults from their homes into IDPs. The insurgent has done a lot damage to the young population of Borno state, Northeast Nigeria which has led to the NGOs to step in to help or assist the people. The lack of food security, shelter, and basic needs of life are the reasons why the IDPs the need youth empowerment urgently. Hence, the paper appraisal the role and challenges of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) face in internally displaced persons (IDPs) camp of Borno state, Northeast Nigeria.

3. CONCEPTUALLY CLARIFICATION

Non-governmental Organizations

The concept of non-governmental organizations have been described by various scholars from different orientation they have about the concept in general. For example, Diamond (1999:16) sees non-governmental organizations as an organized social life that is self-generating, self-supporting who possess autonomy from the State but bound by the rule of law where they exist. The scholar captures NGO's does:

“The realm or organized social life that is voluntary, self-generating, self-supporting, autonomous from the State and bound by the legal order set of shared rules. It involves citizens acting collectively in a public sphere to express their interests, passions, and ideas, exchange ideas, exchange information, achieve mutual goals, made demands on the stage, and hold State accountable. It is an intermediary entity, standing between the private sphere and the State.”

Diamond's precessions of NGO's seems holistic, because he particularly identify it as an organization with set goals interest in accountability and mutual coexistence of the State and it citizens. Non-governmental organization is a non-profit body that operate independent of the State and conventional international government organization, who get their operational funding from donations and runs mainly by number of volunteers (Mohinuddin, 2017). NGOs no-matter the definition its often have same or similar structure as they are diverse organizations and groups engage in range of social-amenities, assuming different forms across the globe. However, for purpose of this paper NGO's that focuses on rending humanitarian services to vulnerable people especially the people of Borno State, is our center of concern. According to Brodhead (1987) NGOs is any voluntary non-profit agency involved in the field of development co-operation or in education and policy advocacy activities.” To World Bank (1990) NGOs is that “institutions outside the public and private sectors whose goals are primarily value-driven. Thus, NGOs and those organizations that are not profit-driven, not affiliated to political institution, voluntary in nature and are concern about the socio-economic well-being and safety of the vulnerable people in the society.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

Various scholars have come up with meaningful explanation of the concept IDPs from their various perceptions. The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (cited in Okon, 2018:28), sees IDPs as:

“Internal or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their home or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict situations of

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generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State boarder.”

The United Nations office for the coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2004:1) sees “internal displacement is one of the greatest tragedies of our time and internally displaced persons (IDPs) are among the most vulnerable of the human family.” This perception is understandable because factors that often led to internal displacement range from insurgency, crisis, natural disaster, such as flooding which became a problem across the world. According to UNHCR (2017:1) “An internally displaced person is someone who is forced to flee his or her home but who remains within his or her country’s borders”. IDPs are people forced to flee or leave their home particularly in situations of armed conflict – are generally subject to heightened vulnerability in a number of areas, displaced persons suffer significantly higher rates of mortality than the general population. For the purpose of this article, IDPs are those displaced in Borno State as a result of insurgent, particularly Boko Haram, who are now vulnerable and in need of humanitarian assistance.

4. THEORETICAL UNDERPIN

This paper is centered on vulnerability theory. The key scholar here is Marth Fineman, who sees vulnerability as defamed, deprived, victimhood, stigmatized people, and dependencies of sets of people or groups with a given period and population (Fineman, 2005). The universal state of all human beings perfectly describe vulnerability, which is a constant aspect of human condition, as at one point or the other potential of being dependent, justify the vulnerability of human being (Fineman, 2005; Olanrewaju, et al 2019).

In relations to IDPs in this case are category of people displaced in Borno State, Northeast Nigeria as a result of the activities of insurgency and natural disasters. These are vulnerable social groups who are exposed to exploitation and risk of their lives (Fineman, 2008). Thus, they are disenfranchised, marginalized, and at a disadvantage from the mainstream society. Following Fineman, line of thought, Olanrewaju, et al (2019) posit that internal displacement is obviously a human condition that portrays vulnerability and the inability of victims to meet their basic needs during the period of displacement. This is where NGOs come in, they help the IDPs in achieving their potential even in the face of vulnerability. The theory suits this paper because it provides the necessary framework for the investigation of the IDPs and the NGOs working to curb the exploitation and the vulnerability of this people at the camp. It also provides an understanding of how the NGOs came to the help of the displaced persons since they seem to have been neglected by the government and how their fundamental human rights as entrenched in the constitution has been violated. Thus, the theory provides a framework to interrogate how the activities of these NGOs which provide assistance or have done otherwise to these vulnerable sets of people.

5. METHODOLOGY

This paper discusses issues related to IDPs in Borno state and the ethical considerations were also taken seriously. This study centers on the role and challenges of NGOs in the IDPs in Borno state, Northeast Nigeria. The paper adopted secondary sources of data collection. The secondary sources of data collected include official documents, non-official documents, books, scholarly articles, government information in gazettes, magazines, newspapers online information that are relevant and related to IDPs, and empowerment of the camps in Borno state, Northeast Nigeria. The document analysis served the purpose of and its triangulation involves search for related/relevant themes, words and literatures which in turn help to answer the research questions. It equally helped to facilitate the collection of the large and multiple amounts of information from authorized sources without necessarily subjecting too many people to questioning. Furthermore, content analysis carried out helped the researcher to evaluate existing documents.

6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Role of NGOs and the IDPs in Borno State

The effort of the government and other international institutions towards mitigating the challenges faced by these people at the IDP camps across the geo-political zone. One of the fundamental and obvious roles the NGOs have placed in Borno State IDP camp is the provision of relief materials at various camps in the geo-political zones and across the Federation (Mohammed & Yalwa, 2018). Other contributions made by NGOs to IDPs are:

Provision of Fund

The NGOs in no small measure have provided funds to the IDPs in Borno State, and in particular camps in Maiduguri. Counting on its complementary role, the NGOs here provided counterpart funding with the Federal, State and local governments. The NGOs, since the beginning of the insurgent activities in 1999 here have been in the front in terms of providing financial assistance to the IDPs. The contribution of the NGOs to persons in the

internally displaced camps goes beyond relief materials to the provision of huge sum of cash to alleviate the sufferings of the masses especially the youth in the State.

Health Care

It is imperative to note that NGOs serving in Borno State, Northeast, Nigeria have equally provided quality health center and health care services to the victim of Boko Haram insurgency overtime. The health care provided by the NGOs also includes resettlement of the displaced persons spread across the country (Mohammed & Yalwa, 2018). Since the IDPs lack an adequate health care, and they do not have access to quality health care facilities, even where there exists primary health center, they lack needed tools. NGO's have placed the role of health care provided to the IDPs and the communities ground the camps in Borno State.

Advocacy

Advocacy is another important responsibility of the NGO's in Borno State. The NGO's more than not, support and provide advocacy role to the IDPs. While the awareness role or responsibility of the NGOs is often targeted at the youth, this is to draw the attention of the youth to the danger of their involvement to insurgents.

Schools

One fundamental role played by the NGO's in Borno State, Nigeria, through IDP remains the establishment of schools not only for the IDPs but those living around the area of the camp equally has the opportunity of enjoying from the benefits of the established schools.

Social Amenities

The role NGO's play in Borno State cannot be overemphasized NGO's have helped to strengthen social amenities and field operations in and round Borno State. The expansion of community-based health centers, first-aid programmes, sanitation initiative, urgent water mobilization, provision of clean water, medical supply to the IDP cannot be overlooked (Imasuen, 2015). Their activities have help in increasing supplies of water, food and shelter to the IDP in Borno State.

7. CHALLENGES FACED BY NGOS IN BORNO STATE IDPS' CAMP

Diversion

Despite the glaring difficulties faced by the IDP in Borno State, Northeast Nigeria, diversion of the little available relief materials by collection of certain elements among officials saddled with the responsibility of providing relief to the people remains a fundamental challenge to the activities of the NGO's in the region. Those entrusted with responsibilities of providing, co-ordinating, organizing and distributing relief materials in the IDP camps in Borno State unfortunately have unpatriotically engage in diversion of relief material, thus increasing the suffering of the IDP, and reducing the impact in the activities of the NGO's.

Insecurity

The lofty ideals of the NGO's towards the IDP in Borno State have been hindered by insecurity. Insecurity has led to the proliferation of IDPs camps in Borno State, due to the activities of insurgent remains a big challenge to the activities of NGOs in Borno State, Nigeria. It is imperative to note that a number of persons among the NGO's have been at one point, killed, rape and robbed during the cause of carrying out their responsibility. This unfortunate security situation has not only limited the intervention of the NGO's to the people living in internally displaced camps, it has equally hampered to a great extent. The activities of the NGO are in the State.

Mistrust

The military and the NGO's crisis over certain reportage or insecurity is an important example, where trust was loss in the humanitarian activities among those two groups in the State. According to Mohammed & Yalwa (2018) some NGOs come under the guide of providing humanitarian services to the people of the State to make some profit from the available resources in the land. Thus, because of the mistrust in the activities of some NGOs, the government, military officials and the citizens tend to be careful in dealing with the NGO's. The mistrust among the people and the government officials was further deteriorated by the discovery of some fake NGO's claiming to be on humanitarian services, with accreditation, thus contribution to the already existing mistrust, inherent in the role of NGO's in Borno State.

Lack of Collaboration

One fundamental challenge faced by the NGOs operation in Borno State is the lack of collaboration and co-ordination between the NGOs, the government and security officials. Even the lack of co-ordination and collaboration amongst the NGO's across all levels of the federation has led to duplication of ideas, operations, and consequent over stepping of bounds (Lathaa & Prabhakarb, 2011). The absence of collaboration and co-

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ordination has affected the voluntary participation of the indigenes of Borno State. The proliferation of IDPs with similar or same mandate or overlapping ideas, including government agencies with similar structures and mandates has not help matters. For example National Commission for Refugees (NCFR), now National Commission for Refugees, migrants and internally Displaced persons, State Emergency Management Agency Nigeria Emergency Management Agency, all these mandates to cater for IDPs, which here create dilemma and some level of ignorance of responsibility and duties (Olanrewaju, 2019). This remains a challenge because it has led to clashes of role, confusion, overlapping of duties, and multiplication of responsibility which has affected the IDP management by NGOs and international organization (Olanrewaju, et al 2019; Cohen & Dens, 1998).

Negligence

The NGOs assisting the IDPs in Borno State are often face with the challenge of negligence by the State actors. Olanrewaju, et al (2019) believes that neglect of responsibility by the government and State actors, significantly hinders the IDPs and those NGOs to come to assist them. To these scholars the necessary care needed for the survival of the people has been neglected, this remains a major challenge to the activities of NGO's in Borno State and indeed the entire North east, Nigeria. Negligence on the part of the government has made IDPs to rely mostly on NGOs, religion organizations, donor agencies and individuals, in alleviating the situation of the IDPs in Borno State. The absence of humanitarian guideline, law and framework of operation affects the NGO's in North east Nigeria. The absence of codified laws affects the role and responsibility of these bodies. This invariably has affected the systematic collectives of data of IDPs in Borno State.

8. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This paper has attempted to appraisal the role of non-governmental organization on internally displaced person (IDPs) in Borno State, Northeast Nigeria. The paper concluded that the role the NGO's place in Borno State is that of complementary, in order word the NGO's here helped to complement the ideal of the Federal & State government and other international organizations in the State. The paper further posits that the NGO's have provided fund, social-economic assistant to the IDPs in Borno State despite the numerous challenges confronting them. The NGO's remains an important partner in mitigating the challenges of the IDPs in Borno State. IDPs is a socio-economic problem which requires all stakeholder to come together in providing solution to it because of the humanitarian challenges if have thrown up.

This paper further recommends that critical stakeholder such as the NGO's should be provided the needed security require as this will assist them in carryout their humanitarian duty to the people of the State. The government at all level must provide the needed security not only for the NGO's the IDP needs protection as well because of their vulnerability. The paper recommends that the government should continue to provide enabling environment for NGO's to thrive in the State. The government needs to provide codified comprehensive documentation and guideline for humanitarian activities. This should include NGO's and governmental agencies and all other critical stakeholders. The article also recommends that government should collaborate with the NGO's in improving the standard of living of the people through agricultural support since the people are mostly farmers. The NGO's and the government can provide agricultural tools for the IDPs, as this would provide employment for the people and meaningful engage their mind in a productive venture. Thus, this paper has added to the body of knowledge particularly on the role the NGO's plays on IDPs especially in Borno State and the challenges face during the cause of discharging their activities. The paper further concludes that the IDPs are vulnerable people who needs constant and consistent intervention such as the one they are getting from the NGO's.

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