Chapter Twenty-Three

THE EDUCATION OF THE INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN NIGERIA

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Introduction

Internally displaced persons and their education have become the concern of many, even the international community. According to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) are among the world's most vulnerable people. A clear-cut difference exists between refugees and internally displaced persons even though their meanings are misconstrued to mean the same. Refugees find solace and comfort by fleeing and emigrating to another country due to a lot of harsh situations viz: violence, war, famine, drought, or natural disasters. IDPs on the contrary fall victim of these unpleasant events but resort to the fate of leaving their homes, abode or domicile without necessarily leaving an internationally recognized border.

Despite the abrupt end of the Second World War, Cold War and the institutions provided by the Yalta conference of the 1948 and resultant declaration, hostility still continues in the global world. As pointed out by Abdulrazaq (2013), the new world order has been characterized by more unstable and turbulent conflict situations, unhealthy power politics, destructive ethnic insurgencies, national rivalries, religious bigotry, fanaticism, particularity among others. More importantly, it could be alluded to that insurgencies and terrorism have greatly proliferated the numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons. It is even disheartening that Nigeria being the 'giant of Africa' has maintained the lead in the countries with internally displaced persons. The thrust of this paper therefore seeks to address the education of the internally displaced and its inhibiting factors. The subsequent sub-headings vividly discuss these issues.

Types of Displacement

Ajiboye, Akinlabi and Ajokpaniovo quoting the UN (1999) identified three (3) main types of displacement and these are: (a) development– induced displacement (b) conflict–induced displacement (c) disaster-induced displacement. Development-induced displacement implies the relocation of people as a result of development programmes such as industrialization,

electrification, road expansion/construction and urbanization. Conflict-induced displacement means the forced and involuntary migration of people because of wars, confrontation, armed conflicts, terrorism, and violence. Disaster-induced displacement on the other hand is a situation where people are forced to flee their homes suddenly or unexpectedly in large numbers as a result of natural or man-made disasters but who are still within the country.

It is however pertinent to note that displacement could be seen from the three perspectives above. Nigeria is a special case where several cases in the three types exist. More often, it usually comes in form of conflict while the others have low currency. It is equally in the light of this that the traces of internal displacement will be x-rayed.

Antecedents of Displacement

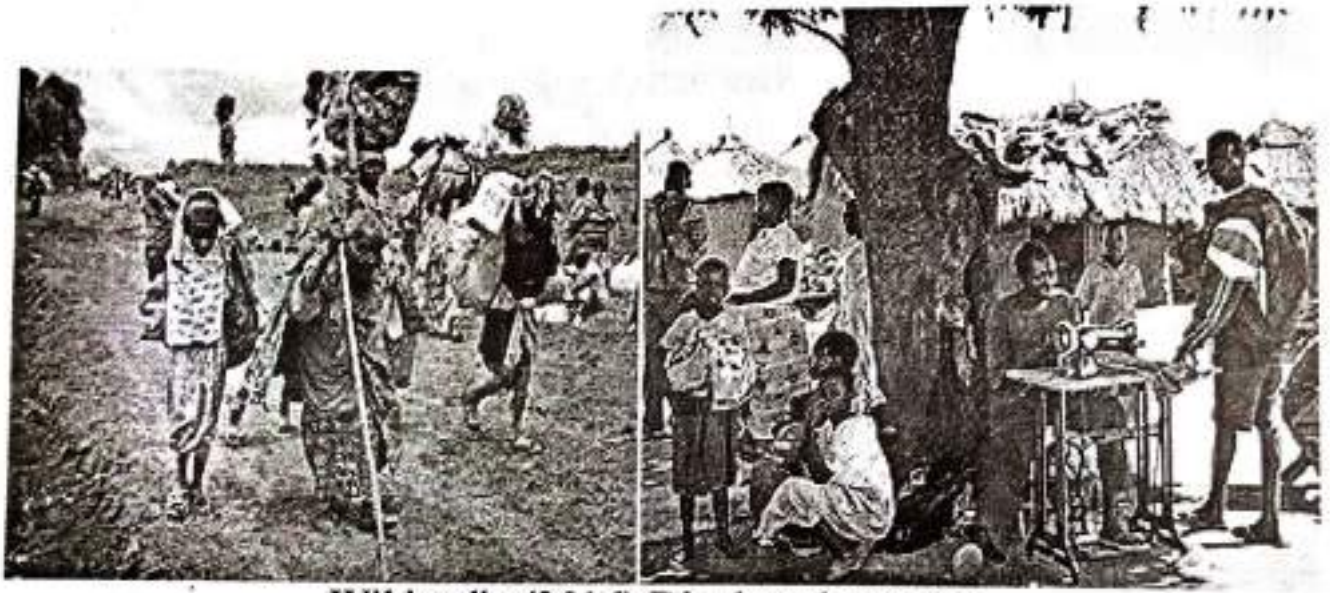
It is estimated that there are 26 million IDPs spread world over as a result of conflicts of which 13.5 million are children. There are more when those displaced by environmental disasters are included (IDP Monitoring Centre). In Nigeria, the number has greatly increased. Table 1 shows the break-down from 2001-2014.

Table 1: Summary of IDPs Spread Across Nigeria; 2001-2014

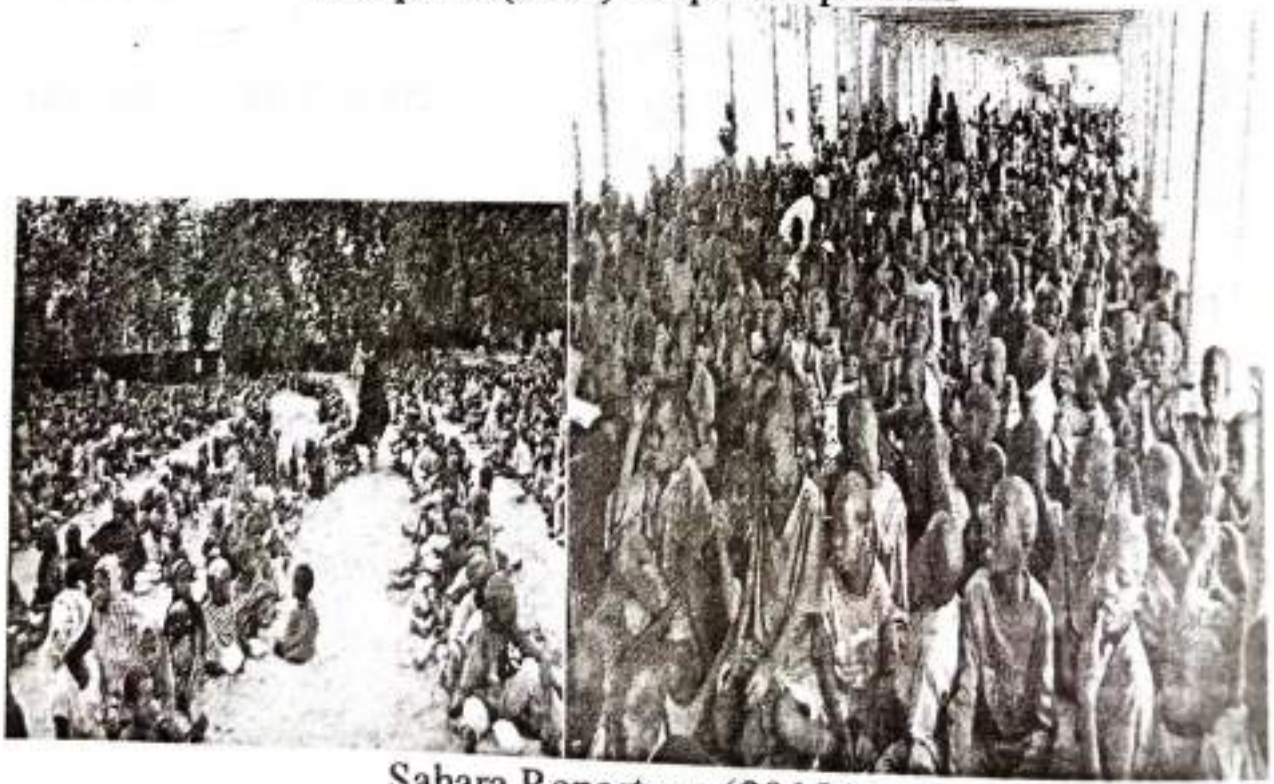
S/N	STATE	CAUSES	YEAR	NO. OF IDPs
1	Bauchi	Sectarian Violence	February, 2009	5,000
2	Bauchi, Yobe, Borno and Kano	Conflict between Islamic sect and Nigerian Army	July, 2009	4,000
3	Kaduna	Ethnic crisis as a result of the announcement of Sharia law	2001	63,000
4	Kaduna (Northern City)	Four day religious riots (Beauty context)	2009	3,000
5	Kaduna	Attack by Fulani Herdsmen	2013	10,000
6	Kaduna	Post-election violence	2011	22,141
7	Niger Delta	Resources allocation of benefits of oil exploration and exploitation	2006-2008	480,000
8	Cross River and Akwa-Ibom	International Court of Justice ruling gave BakassiPenisula to Cameroun	2007-2008	755,000
9	Jos, Yobe , Kaduna, Jigawa, Kwara, Kebbi and Gombe	Flood	2004-2012	450,000

Source: IDMC and NEMA networking report (Adapted from Balogun, A.O's Thesis 2015)

According to a survey covering from November to December 2015 by the International Organization for Migration's (10m) Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) team in 207 Local Government Areas (LGA) in 13 states of Nigeria; Abuja has 13,481 IDPs, Adamawa 136,010, Bauchi 70,078, Benue 85,393, Borno 1,434,149, Gombe 25,332, Kaduna 36, 976, Kano 9,331, Nassarawa 37, 553, Plateau 77, 317, Taraba 50, 227, Yobe 131, 203, and Zamfara 44,929. The number seems increasing on a daily basis.



Wikipedia (2016) Displaced persons



Sahara Reporters. (2015.)

Today, recent reports have indicated that the number of internally displaced persons have increased to 3.3 millions in Nigeria since 2014 making the third highest index in the world. The country has experienced series of unrest, inter-religious rivalries, terrorism, resource control, communal violence, man-made and natural disaster to mention a few of such rivalries (Egwu, 2011). This occurrence has greatly displaced so many people from their various habitat. Heterogonous nature of the country has been a factor in the displacement of people.

The north-east in particular has been a theatre of war and displacement arising from religious crises and jihadist militants who go by the name-Boko Haram which means "western education is not allowed". The aim is to fight western education and adherents of different faith. Notable among the group's act is bombing of schools, mosques, churches, police station etc. Since its emergence in 2002, the group has been responsible for the death of 3,000 to 10, 000 people in Northern Nigeria (IDMC, 2013). The former president of Nigeria; Dr. Goodluck Jonathan reported that over 13,000 people have been killed in Nigeria's insurgency (Ogunlesi 2014).

It is however evident that Boko Haram's activities have displaced so many people in places like Adamawa, Abuja, Borno, Yobe etc. Internally displaced people are product of these incessant killings and violence. Recently, the activities of the Fulani Herdsmen have also made people to vacate their original abode for security reasons. Countless indices point to the fact that internal displacement is now a social issue that needs a redress. Most times, the victims experience human right violation, rape, hunger, insecurity, disease and adverse weather conditions. Conditions attached to displacement have subjected many juveniles to high risks of discrimination, loss of document for school enrolment, lack of access to financial assistance and access to educational opportunities (Balogun, 2015). These children suffer the spate of several challenges which should be further examined.

Challenges of Internally Displaced Persons

There is no gain-saying the fact that internally displacement has become a global phenomenon not being isolated to Nigeria alone. For whatever reason being adduced, the point still stands that these helpless fellows are prone to several challenges viz:

a. Absence of first aid: Omojuwa (2015) asserts that as at May 2015, there were 21 IDP camps across the northern part of Nigeria. The inhabitants of these camps have to deal with critical challenges as life-threatening as absence of first-aid supplies. At the Yola St Theresa Church IDP

Camp one visited recently, they had run out of medical supplies.

b. Educational Problems: this is shrouded in the need to provide qualitative education for their wards and how to obtain sponsorships for their children's education. In most troubled areas there are no schools, no teachers, people are being cut-off from vocations and ad-hoc arrangements are not effective. Ferris (2010) in a paper commissioned for the EFA Global Monitoring Reports 2011 gave the analysis of children and youth who are affected by armed conflict and who lack access to formal education to be at least 27 million, out of which the chunk of 90 percent are IDPs. Children are at the receiving end in every conflicts, whether they are displaced or not. Schools are most times destroyed, teachers and resource persons are often unavailable, inadequate teaching materials occur and insecurity reduces the possibility of students to attend classes.

Towards the eve of 2012 and the dawn of 2013, killing of teachers, students, school administrators, and education officials was prominent. UNICEF report reads that an estimated 2.2 million people, including about 1.4 million children, have fled the fighting in the northeast, 952,029 of the displaced are children of school age. Only about 10 percent of the children are in government-recognized displacement camps, where some educational services are provided by volunteer teachers. The remaining 90 percent are with friends and family members, with little or no access to schooling.

c. Economic problem: this revolves around the dire need to meet the basic needs amidst the limited and scarce resources. Premium Times (August 2, 2016) reports that Taraba Government blocked distribution of food items to IDPs. This is an indication of the economic hardship experienced by IDPs. The displaced individuals experience hunger and most times un-satisfaction.

d. Problem of shelter: Ogundamisi (2015) opined that internally displaced persons meet new sets of problems in their settled community. They are lodged in schools or uncompleted buildings, with no running water, no mosquito nets, and no protection from the harsh elements in a city in which the temperature can go up to 37 degrees Celsius as a result of the climate of the area. The camps are grossly overcrowded and unable to accommodate the displaced individuals. Most IDPs prefer to go back to their villages out of frustration. The villages unarguably are the most deadly place to stay.

e. Communication problem: IDPs more often are prone to communication problem. They find it hard to communicate with their friends, families and relations. This is further aggravated by absence of electricity, network and other modern communication facilities.

On the whole, the internally displaced persons in Nigeria are hitherto exposed to an array of difficult and life threatening situations. Others are problem of insecurity and resettlement. These challenges are viewed from the perspective of education, health, economics, and social among others. Many researches carried out today clearly reveal that IDPs living in camps lack educational support services like scholarship. More so, there are no educational support services to meet the yearnings and aspirations of victims. Flowing from this vein, the education of the internally displaced persons will be discussed.

Internal Displacement and Education

Education is sacrosanct to the development of individual. Its importance could not be over-emphasized nor under-estimated. In actualizing the vision of "Education for All" programme, it is germane for everybody to have access to basic education regardless of age, sex, colour or race. Matters of displacement today have aggravated the access of displaced persons to education. Ambe-Uver (2012) noted that a distinctive challenge facing internally displaced persons (IDPs) are structured conditions that deny them access to the right to education. Displacement is a crucial time of transition and vulnerability not just for children, but for youth and adults as well; failure to incorporate youth and adult education as a standard component during displacement is a detrimental omission in the quest to secure sustainable peace and initiate long-term development (United Nations University for Peace 2010).



Educational Activities in an IDP camp in Maiduguri conducted by NEMA officials with support materials by UNICEF

Educational centres serve as effective gathering for imparting life-saving information about risks, including HIV/AIDS, Ebola, Lassa-Fever, Monkey Pox, etc. Part of the roles of education is that it integrates IDPs into the local community where they are relocated, as well as when they return to their home areas or are resettled elsewhere. In consonance with established international human rights law adopted in 1948, the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement underscore the responsibility of national authorities to ensure that IDPs receive free and compulsory education at the primary level. A rider to the principles enjoins authorities to make educational and training facilities available to the internally displaced, including adolescents and women, whether or not living in camps, as soon as conditions permit.

Many factors have hindered the dream of providing education to the internally displaced persons. The Executive Secretary of National Commission for Mass Literacy Adult and Non-Formal Education (NMEC), AlhajiJibrinPaiko, asserted that the commission and the State Agencies for Mass Education in affected states are aware of the need to meet the learning needs of IDPs. The commission is considering the provision of basic literacy to the IDPs which will enable them use printed and written information to function in the society, "achieve one's goals and develop one's knowledge and potential, with the ability to deal with the everyday literacy and numeracy demands in their own local context" (Tribune October 15 2015).

Individuals and most organisations/religious bodies like the Catholic Church visit the camps and provide relieve materials. Despite efforts made by humanitarian and faith-based organisations and government agencies to address some of the basic needs of IDPs, their exposure tend to be increased by obstacles and impediments to accessing education. Some IDPs are camped in school buildings, making education disrupted for both local host communities and displaced children.

Nigerian policy on internal displacement which is in harmony with the universal policy aims to promote the fundamental human rights of all internally displaced persons in Nigeria and ensure their maximum access to protection and assistance without any form of discrimination whatsoever. Internally displaced persons; be they aged, adult or children have equal rights with their counterparts as contained in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and national policy on IDPs.

National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) drawing an impetus from the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2010) has been responsible for protecting internally

displaced children and youths.It has been a formidable asset since its inception but it equally has its weaknesses which makes it wanting in its role. Education of the internally displaced adults have not been so much effective. This made Badau (2016) in his findings to assert that internally displaced persons while in camps, villages and settlements see multicultural education as their major or only hope for a decent future. This could be likened to the adult non-formal education. NEMA has achieved great feat by helping with primary school education for the children in camps and also in the host community. The camps which are now school facilities are supervised by NEMA. Well-meaning individuals, non-governmental organizations have also helped in providing education and material possessions for the disadvantaged persons. Despite all these, the provisions of these displaced persons are not commensurate even where available. It is against this back-drop that these recommendations are made:

a. Provision of schooling system synonymous with the nomadic education.
b. Provision of temporary structures to assist the displaced persons.
c. Allocation of budget for the welfare of the internally displaced persons.

Conclusion

The matter of internal displacement has become a serious matter both to the world community in general and Nigeria in particular. Being a new development, the term has been misconstrued to mean the same, whereas the identity of internal displacement is that of people who flee their original communities without necessarily crossing a defined border. A lot of challenges ranging from the social, political and economic to the education are seriously faced by these victims. As part of the palliative and lasting solutions to the problem of internal displacement, victims could choose to return to their community after the turbulent periods, integrate into their new found community or find settlement in a different part of the country. NPE (2013) states that no nation can rise above the quality of its teachers because education is the greatest instrument for national development. Education being a key to making functional members of the society is deprived of the displaced persons. The roles of the agencies like NEMA and the international bodies was not left out but the paper submits that government should rather intensify its effort in making education of the internally displaced persons paramount and sustaining it just like the education of the nomads.

Revision Questions

a. Differentiate between refugees and internally displaced persons.

b. Enumerate three (3) types of displacement.

c. Discuss four challenges facing the internally displaced persons in Nigeria.

d. Explain four barriers to the education of the internally displaced persons.

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