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INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS, HUMAN SECURITY AND CHALLENGES OF STATE FAILURES IN NIGERIA

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Abstract
Increased humanitarian crisis occasioned by high level insecurity and terrorist activities has been responsible for increase in internally displaced persons in Nigeria. The country has had its share of insecurity, insurgency, and large scale terrorism plaguing different parts of African continent. This has resulted in the proliferation of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Nigeria, with concomitant socioeconomic, health, and environmental challenges, bothering on increased unemployment, physical insecurity, food insecurity, poor sanitation, and diseases. This paper examined the challenges of internally displaced persons in Nigeria. Anchored on the failed state theoretical framework, the paper argued that weak institutions and bad leadership are responsible for state's failure to protect and provide welfare for the IDPs. Qualitative data collected through secondary sources were systematically discussed. The study found that IDPs face many challenges ranging from poor housing, hunger, a gross violation of human rights, high risk of physical attack, sexual assault, and abduction. Findings further revealed that failure to effectively allocate and manage materials of humanitarian aid aggravates the plights of the internally displaced persons. The study concluded that much as the internally displaced persons are confronted with numerous challenges, its unabated proliferation in Nigeria constitutes significant challenges to the survival and integrity of the Nigerian state. The study recommended that the government of Nigeria should prioritize resettling and reintegrating the IDPs into their communities through dedicated curtailment of the conditions that displaced them.

Keywords: Displacement, Humanitarian aid, Humanitarian crisis, Insurgency, Internally displaced persons

Introduction

Increase in global insecurity and disasters which often prompt the people to flee for safety has been responsible for increased displace ment of persons both within and without the borders. Nigeria owes its people the primary responsibility of protecting lives and properties while enhancing and sustaining economic prosperity. This responsibility includes the guarantee of the human security conceived in terms of freedom from fear and wants, including the protection of people displaced within its borders. Nigeria's widespread insecurity – occasioned by terrorism, banditry, and violent conflicts – has worsened the incidents of internal displacement, causing people in their numbers to flee for safety. The factors of insecurity include widespread unemployment and poverty, elitist's exploitation of ethnic and religious differences, systemic corruption, weak security apparatus, porous borders, marginalization, inequality, underdevelopment and bad governance. This complexity has rendered the insecurity situation intractable. Increasing and unmitigated level of internal displacement is symptomatic of state failures. Challenges associated with internal displacement constitute substantial threat to human security in Nigeria. Government's incapacity to functionally administer the state has subjected the people to different dimensions of insecurity. This has affected not only the internally displaced persons but also the people who are daily pressured to relate with how to cope with the reality.

In a bid to assuage their conditions, the displaced persons are usually provided with temporary shelters in camps while awaiting the delivery of lasting interventions designed to mitigate the challenges by the government and other partner agencies. However, the displaced persons in camps have not been spared of occasional attacks by armed men. Like those outside the camps, they are exposed to poor basic living conditions such as food shortages, poor access to education, poor personal hygiene, shortage of potable water, diseases, and psychological trauma largely due to loss of loved ones and means of livelihood (Adewale, 2016; Adeola, 2017). Even worse, the internally displaced persons who escaped to nearby villages and communities are left to start over in their host communities, where they are left to their destiny. Such displaced persons are viewed as strangers in their new communities, where they have to deal with extreme socio-economic difficulties and social exclusion. Most decisions on internal displacement, including the provision and administration of humanitarian assistance, do not sufficiently reflect or address the needs of the displaced persons (Adekeye et al., 2019) usually because they are targeted to short term solution. In this context, the paper examined the challenges of internally displaced persons in Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

The failed state theory postulates that a state can be crippled by vices such as spiral corruption, bad leadership, bad governance, and weak institutions. These vices are also evidences of state failure. While the state exists in principle, it fails in the discharge of its fundamental obligations including the provision of welfare and protection for the people. Zartman (1995) offered a very basic conception of state failure which occurs when the basic functions of the state are no longer performed. Concurring, Potter (2004) extended Zartman's position that the failure of the state is not only related to the collapsed states which are in a civil war and/or in anarchy but also a situation whereby the state fails to discharge its responsibilities due to a steadily declining capacity. Thus, state weakness is akin to state failure characterized by declining of state capacity and loss of monopoly of the use of force.

Critics argued that the theory is too complex to understand the exact yardstick for measuring a

failed state. Thiessen (2015) argued that the word "failure" is itself ambiguous for developing countries as it indicates that such state was once a "successful" state (comparable to its Western counterparts). Such is not the case with those states now designated as failed. For instance, such critic would question if Nigeria was once a successful state which has now failed. Thus, the theory is criticized for its "neocolonial underpinnings, definitional ambiguity, western centrism and analytical reductionism" (Thiessen, 2015, p. 129). Notwithstanding the limitations of the theory, its observable factors of failures or fragility are prevalent in the Nigerian state leading to internal (and in some cases, external) displacement. A state also does not need to completely break down, like a machine, to be regarded as failed. Inabilities to administer taxes, enforce law, and maintain security and order, etc., are characteristics of a failed state (Newman, 2007; Orman, 2016). Among other things, Potter (2004) identified state failure as the one which cannot or will not safeguard minimal civil conditions, such as peace, order, and security, in its domestic sphere.

The Nigerian state has been variously described as weak, fragile, or failed. Some authors refer to it as "failing" to signify that the situation is not beyond redemption. These attempts at objectivizing the declining state of the country reveal the inherent defects in its capacity to exercise power and authority over the state and non-state actors in its jurisdiction. Incidents of internal displacement in Nigeria have been associated with man-made, more than natural, disasters. These man-made disasters – terrorism, banditry, armed herders, etc. – have festered for a long period of time, and calling to question government's capacity to decisively deal with it. In the same vein, the worsening conditions of the internally displaced persons in or out of camps portray the Nigeria state as failing to meet its obligations to this vulnerable demography of the state. Increasing poverty, insecurity, and hunger only points to the failure of the Nigerian state to meet its primary responsibility to the people. In a nutshell, the inability of the government to address the conditions of displacement in Nigeria is a function of state failure.

Human Security

According to Imobighe (2005), security has to do with freedom from danger or from threats to a nation's ability to protect and develop itself, promote its cherished values and legitimate interests. The security of a nation is very important in ensuring social harmony and peaceful coexistence among its people. It is one of the responsibilities of a leader of every sovereign political entity to ensure the survival of his/her nation. Human security originated as a result of many debates on 'collective security' towards the end of the Cold War. Collective security in this sense means a holistic and encompassing security that cuts across many aspects of human life and not just about state security. In other words, the main objective of security policies or referent object is the primacy of human life. This explains the nexus between traditional security and human security (Fukuda-Parr & Messineo, 2012). Also, Alkire (2003) provided a working definition of human security as "to safeguard the vital core of all human lives from critical pervasive threats, in a way that is consistent with long-term human fulfilment".

Although, the definition of human security has not been without different approaches, the salient ones that bear meanings to this literature are worthy of note. Baldwin (1997) asserted that "human security can no longer be understood in purely military terms. Rather, it must encompass economic development, social justice, environmental protection, democratization, disarmament, and respect for human rights and the rule of law." He further noted that human security means "freedom from pervasive threats to people's rights, safety or lives". Embedded in this definition are five foreign policy priorities adopted for advancing

human security. This has to do with protection of civilians, peace support operations, conflict prevention, governance and accountability, and public safety. One pertinent point that cuts across most of the definitions of human security is the guaranteed "freedom from fear" and "freedom from want"; this makes it different from the traditional security. Tadjbakhsh (2014) presented different thoughts on the definition of human security, thereby presenting it as a concept that has no widely accepted definition. These schools of thought are:

i. The realist and neo-realist tradition that sees human security to lack analytical rigour but a political agenda and therefore human security is not a new or acceptable paradigm worthy to study.

ii. The second school of thought accepts the term of human security but limits its definition with a focus on 'freedom from fear' and factors that engineer violence.

iii. The third approach adopts a broad definition that is seen as an essential tool for understanding contemporary crises. This definition aligns with "freedom from want", 'freedom from fear', and freedom from indignity.

Human security is not about weapons; it deals with human life and dignity (UNDP 1994). The UNDP highlighted salient definitions of human security as encompassing with economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security and political security. Complimentarily and comprehensively, Adeniyi (2014) described human security as "the keyword to comprehensively seizing all of the menaces that threaten the survival of daily life, and dignity of human beings and to strengthen the efforts to confront these threats". Thus, Adeniyi (2014) provided the elements that lie at the core of human security concept to encompass: a clear focus on individual human lives (in contrast to state security models), an appreciation of the role of society and social arrangements in making human lives more secure in a constructive way, a reasoned concentration on the downside risks to human lives and a choice to focus on the 'downside', emphasizing the more basic human rights.

Taking a cue from the definitions and concepts of security and human security that have been identified so far in this section, it is also worthy to note that security, particularly human security with its multiple definitions and approaches does not rest only on the government, who has to provide security at the national and international levels. Rather, human security is collaborative, starting from the smallest unit of the society in ensuring personal security to a collaborative and cooperative security for the state. However, it is on this wider and collaborative approach of multiplicity of actors on human security that has brought the concept to criticism. Human security is an overlapping of security at the individual, national, and international levels that seeks to address real life problems, yet the concept is a contending issue with reasons mentioned earlier by different scholars.

Accordingly, UNESCO (2008) noted that human security is people-centered, which means a method of addressing security issues from the general to the specific needs. The fundamental freedoms expressed in the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, along with the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind noted in UNESCO constitution and the values enshrined in spiritual and religious traditions are integral for cultural diversity practiced by individuals in their daily lives. In other words, human security should be understood from the perspectives of ethical, normative and educational frameworks. The UNDP report 1994 defined the seven key elements of human security:

economic security, food and health security, environmental security, personal security, community security, political security (UNDP 1994). According to this program, human security is composed of two branches:

i. Freedom from fear: This is the narrow conception of human security; it is the assumption that people should be free from the threat of violence.

ii. Freedom from want: This is a broader conception as it encompasses all the menaces that threaten human survival daily life and dignity such as hunger, poverty, environmental degradation etc. Human security ensures that the elimination of insecurity is driven by considerations of human development and human rights and not the by the interests of the state (Jolly & Ray, 2006).

According to the United Nations (2017) in its Human security handbook, the four pillars of the human security approach are:

i. People-centred: The human security handbook established four pillars of human security. The first one is people-centred which aims to place people at the center of the policy (UN, 2017). According to these criteria, people should participate in the identification of insecurities and definition of their needs. Furthermore, they must also be involved in the responses to insecurities National Counter-Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST). The NACTEST encourages the use of a soft approach to security. This soft approach implies actors from different sectors: from the government but also traditional or religious leaders or civil society actors (Ugwueze & Onuoha, 2020: 556).

ii. Context-specific: According to the Human security handbook human security also has to be context-specific, (UN, 2017). This requires a deep analysis of the situation in order to develop responses tailored to the local realities

iii. Prevention-oriented: According to the Human security handbook, the last criterion of human security is prevention-oriented (UN, 2017). The human security approach should focus on preventive responses rather than reactive ones.

Components of Human Security

UNDP Report 1994 divided human security in seven components: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security and political security

i. Economic Security: Nigeria is the primary economic power and most populated country of the African continent (Franceinfo Afrique, 2019). A small number of Nigerians are rich while the majority is very poor (African Statistical Year Book, 2014). It is also a country with important geographical contrasts; the North is economically devastated in part due to Boko Haram while the South has a very important economic activity (Pérouse de Montclos, 2014).

ii. Food and Health Security: The UNDP Report 1994 defines food security as a situation where all people at all times have both physical and economic access to basic food. (UN 1994). According to Coker, food security has three aspects: food availability, food access and food adequacy (Coker,2015). However, it recognizes that poverty is a driver of terrorism and these phenomena are interlinked. Furthermore, the strategy also generally plans to create conditions to prevent people from joining terrorism (Ugwueze & Onuoha, 2020). It can be considered that the guarantee of food security is one of them. Indeed, some people are becoming terrorists to survive; access to food could dissuade them from joining these organisations. Health security means that basic healthcare is available and affordable for all the people (Jolly & Ray, 2016).

iii. Environmental Security: Environmental

security is defined by a safe environment which does not suffer from the negative impacts of desertification, pollution and other threats that threatens people health (Innocent, 2018). The climate became increasingly unpredictable, the country has been experiencing excessive flooding and increased aridity which severely impacted agriculture.

iv. Personal Security: According to the 1994 UNDP Report, personal security has seven dimensions and these are: threats from the state which is the state violence towards its population; threats from other state which is war and invasions; threats from other individuals which can be religious or ethnic conflicts; threats from gangs which is the violence emanating from insurgents, militants, drug cartels; threat to self which concerns the violence that an individual can inflict to himself with acts such as suicide and drug abuse and lastly threats are the ones directed against women and those directed at children; in Nigeria, threats to personal security are increasing overall (Innocent, 2018). Indeed, attacks by herdsmen, terrorists or other armed groups are threatening the population.

v. Community Security: Community security refers to the need to respect the cultural identity and values of individuals and to ensure the preservation of these values (Johns, 2014). Furthermore being member of a community can also cause discrimination. In Africa, religious, ethnic, and cultural marginalization has contributed to many conflicts (Innocent, 2018). Currently, religious differences are exploited by jihadists to radicalize and recruit people.

vi. Political Security: Political security defines a situation where people live in a society that guarantees their basic human rights (UN, 1994). In Nigeria, the citizens' access to political resources is a fundamental issue (Johns, 2014). There is a link between poor governance and the development of terrorism because it fuels grievances among the population which is more vulnerable and eager to join terrorist groups. Good governance must be ensured for an effective counterterrorism strategy because it can reduce grievances and bring socio-economic transformation (Eji, 2016).

From a critical point of view, human security exhibits ambiguity and vagueness in execution as a policy. Human security lacks clarity of usage and implementation regarding which threats the individual should be protected from, by who, and how. Because of the widening scope of security, human security simply prescribes the need to secure the people without direct reference to the reality of achieving the proposition. As such, it is overly ambitious. Human security should be in line with the state's security. This is because political, socioeconomic, and environmental challenges of the state are tackled by the state in the interests of the people. The survival of the state means the survival of its people, and vice versa. This major division in the theoretical perspective of human security indicates lack of unity in its conceptual proclamation.

Notwithstanding, displacement reflects a lapse in security (human security) of a state. This lapse translates to the state's incapacity or failure to protect. People are forced to flee due to insecure environment that is life threatening. Continuous displacement shows the incapability of the Nigerian state to ensure the welfare of individuals. They are forced to flee their homes for safety. The internally displaced persons remain largely unprotected, suffering from insufficient sheltering, a shortage of food, and potable water education, and healthcare services (Adekeye et al., 2019; Ajayi, 2020). The Nigerian state failed in protecting them from displacement which exposes them to further challenges associated with food, environmental, economic, health, personal, community, and political insecurities.

Internal Displacement in Nigeria

The phenomenon of internal displacement is a recurrent issue in national and international discourse. Until recent times, internal displacement receives only scant attention in international discourse as it was regarded as an issue within the domestic affairs of a state. A number of factors, which may be natural or man-made, are responsible for internal displacement of persons. Internal displacement in Nigeria frequently results from violent confrontations with ethnic, religious, or political overtones (Alobo & Obaji, 2016). Many people have been forced to flee their homes due to natural disasters including flooding, land erosion, oil spills, and construction projects (Okon, 2018). Violent confrontations between government forces and armed non-state organizations, armed non-state groups and armless civilians, as well as between armed herders and farmers also contribute greatly to incidents of displacement in Nigeria. For instance, a number of people have been displaced from their communities in Plateau, Benue, Kaduna, and Zamfara states owing to incessant attacks by armed herders and bandits who daily terrorize their communities.

It is important to add that apprehension of imminent attacks by state or non-state forces also propel people to flee for safety. This has aggravated incidents of internal displacement in Nigeria as such people may find it difficult or impossible to return to their ancestral home. For instance, the fear of retaliatory attacks by the military for the recent attack and killing of soldiers in Okuama community of Delta state has forced many people to temporarily or permanently abandon the community (Amaize & Omafuaire, 2024).

By conception, internally displaced persons (IDPs) are persons who are forced to leave their home but who remains within their country's borders (Salleh et al., 2018). They are often referred to as refugees, although they do not fall within the legal definitions of a refugee (Orchard, 2016). As of May 2022, the countries with the largest IDP populations were Ukraine (8 million), Syria (7.6 million), Iraq (3.6 million), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (2.8million), Sudan (2.2million), South Sudan (1.9million), Pakistan (1.4million), Nigeria (1.2million) and Somalia (1.1million) (Einar, 2023). Ahmad (2017) and Cantor (2018) described internally displaced persons (IDPs) as 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 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.

This notion of an IDP was elaborated by Akume (2015) based on two components: that the person's movement is coerced or involuntary (to distinguish them from economic and other voluntary migrants); and that the person stays within internationally recognized state borders (to distinguish them from refugees). Additionally, Basova (2017) and Gerasymenko et al. (2022) noted that habitual residence in a country is enough, and a person does not need to be a citizen of his or her country to be considered an IDP. Non-citizens, foreigners, and stateless people may also qualify as IDPs if they fled their habitual residence, a place where they had lived for a significant period of time and had the intention of remaining. Hurin (2019) also stated that former refugees who have returned to their country of origin but are unable to find a durable solution to their displacement-related vulnerabilities should also be considered an IDP.

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) stipulated other criteria for identifying internally displaced persons. These include:

i. Families caught between warring parties and

having to flee their homes under relentless bombardments or the threat of armed attacks, whose own governments may be responsible for displacing them.

ii. Indigenous communities forced from their ancestral lands to make way for the construction of dams and other infrastructure projects.
iii. Families pushed to leave their homes by constant harassment by local criminal gangs.

iv. Rural communities whose livelihoods are decimated by drought, leaving them unable to feed their families and forced to seek external help elsewhere.

v. Communities from coastal, mountainous, or arid areas whose land and livelihoods are irrevocably lost because of gradual environmental degradation linked to the impacts of climate change.

Among other things, these are potent factors of displacement in Nigeria. The IDP Atlas (March 2024) identified armed banditry and kidnapping, communal clash, farmer-herder clash, insurgency, and natural disaster as major reasons for displacement. The report also identified a total of 1,092,196 internally displaced persons in 2023. Opara et al. (2019) noted that IDPs are entitled to enjoy the same rights and freedoms under international and national laws as other people in their country. The typical needs and protection risks that accompany internal displacement include family separation, loss of documentation, loss of freedom of movement especially when in camps, loss of property, and further exposure to the risk of secondary or onward displacement. Achieving a durable solution to internal displacement would mean that IDPs no longer have any specific assistance and protection needs that are directly linked to their displacement and can enjoy their human rights without discrimination on account of their displacement (Abonyi, 2021).

Such durable solution would consist in return to place of origin, local integration in the place of refuge or complete relocation to a another place (Betts et al., 2017). Countries, including Nigeria, adopt this solution based on its capacity and other considerations. Where return or relocation is not feasible, internally displaced persons are housed in protected camps- called IDP camps- where the government is expected to meet their basic material needs. As part of its commitments to the internally displaced persons, Nigeria operates a number of such camps in different parts of the country, especially in the North East, North West and North Central zones. The UNHCR (2021) reported that Nigeria maintains 309 camps and camp-like settings which housed an estimated forty percent of IDPs in Nigeria. The other sixty percent live in 2,072 host communities.

Notwithstanding the various forms of assistance by the home government, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations to salvage the conditions of the IDPs, the displaced persons experience challenges associated with personal insecurity, food insecurity, livelihood and economic insecurity, health insecurity, socio-environmental insecurity, among others. The government's manifest incapacity to tackle the conditions that displace the people has hindered the realization of the outcomes of such interventions. They are deprived of basic rights and necessities of life. Terrorism, banditry, and kidnaping have held the country down for more than a decade, killing thousands of people and displacing hundreds of thousands of people. To lessen or restrain internal displacement, effective conflict management technique would demand that these underlying causes of conflicts that result in displacement must be addressed.

Another major issue is the challenges associated with reintegration, resettlement, or relocation. Having been forced to flee their

original domicile, the displaced persons have been put in a condition akin to "stateless" and "homeless" wanderers. The best they could do for themselves is to be reintegrated into their host community, if not in camps. This is not as easy as it sounds. The stigma of displacement may not be easily cast off, more so when they are alien to the ways of life of the host community. While it is easy to preach brotherliness and oneness, its practice is another thing entirely. The task of resettlement or relocation is often difficult based on prevailing circumstances. For instance, there is need to ensure the original place has been rid of the threats of displacement and it is now actually inhabitable before the displaced persons should be returned there, lest they suffer the same fate twice, thereby making a mockery of the state. In the same vein, the government must be sure of the condition of life in the place to relocate the displaced persons in case it is considered necessary. While resettlement is return to the original habitat, relocation is the movement of the displaced persons to a new space and place, usually by the government, where they begin life afresh. Both requires substantial financial commitments from the government or volunteer organizations to reestablish and reform persons who have lost fortunes and resources. Lack of such commitment is the bane of any meaningful intervention for the IDPs.

Nigeria's Responses to Internal Displacement

The responses of the government to the increasing displacement in Nigeria consist in legal and policy terms. The rights to education, housing or shelter, health, food, employment, social security, a reasonable standard of living, a secure environment, cultural life, and development are embedded in the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1981) to which Nigeria is a signatory. These rights are equally applicable to the internally displaced persons. The Charter was domesticated through the National Human Rights Commission (Amendment) Act of 2011, in a bid to ensure adequate protection for all Nigerians. Nigeria is a party to the Kampala Convention (2009) on the protection of internally displaced persons. The Convention strives to reduce and halt numerous types of displacement caused by either man-made or natural calamities, and provide durable solutions for displaced people (Bamidele & Pikirayi, 2023). In the same vein, the National Commission for Refugees (NCR) was created through decree 52 of 1989 to manage the challenges of refugees in Nigeria (Mohammed, 2017; Onu, 2021). Necessitated by the rapid rate of displacements in Nigeria, the scope of the Commission was expanded in 2004 to the management and care for the forcibly displaced persons, through the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants, and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI) Act.

National Human Rights Commission is to protect the rights of everyone, including IDPs. It promotes, protects, and fulfils Nigeria's human rights commitments in accordance with the UN General Assembly resolution which encourages member-states to create national human rights institutions to promote and protect human rights. The Commission also helps victims of human rights violations but cannot make judgments on violations. It plays a significant role in human rights protection. Above all, the 1999 constitution mandates the Nigerian state to protect the rights of everyone in Nigeria. The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) was established in 1999 for the management of IDPs and other emergencies in Nigeria. NEMA responds to emergencies, formulates and implements the Nigerian government's policies on management of all forms of national disaster, as the first point of call. Government's programmes on such disaster are coordinated by the government (Raji et al., 2021). NEMA's efforts are supported at the state level by the State Emergency Management Agency

(SEMA). This, in effect, includes programmes relating to the wellbeing and resettlement of the displaced persons. Without prejudice to supports from donors and partners, the federal and state governments make annual commitments to the welfare of the IDPs through distribution of food items, clothing, and other essentials, under the supervision of NEMA and SEMA.

A challenge to the government's responses to displacement is the overlap of duties between the above agencies. For instance, the mandates and organizational structures of the National Commission for Refugees and NEMA are analogous. This probably leaves both establishments with the question of who to do what and when. As a consequence, a significant part of the job risks being left undone. Additionally, the partnering agencies like Non-Governmental Organizations and humanitarian organizations may get confused as to which of the two government establishments to relate with (Eweka & Olusegun, 2016). It goes without saying that corruption remains a clog in the wheel of administration of welfare materials to the IDPs. Though the government may make commitment; but how often does the commitment to gets to the targeted persons. Adeola (2017) noted that despite the number of policies created by any government to combat internal displacement, the success of such efforts is hampered by a lack of political will, corruption, and resource misallocation. Another major impediment to the government's response to displacement is Nigeria's lack of a specific legal framework for the protection of IDPs. Nigeria's responses to displacement in Nigeria are based on its adherence to the Guiding Principle for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons which cannot be equated with a standing and enforceable legislation.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper examined the conditions of the internally displaced persons as symbolic of state failure in Nigeria with consequent implications for human security. The displacement of persons is conditioned mostly by threatening security situation which has refused to abate in a decade. Whereas environmental and natural disasters also contribute to displacement, violent attacks are a major factor. It is concluded that much as the internally displaced persons are confronted with numerous challenges, its unabated proliferation in Nigeria constitutes significant challenges to the survival and integrity of the Nigerian state. The displacement and subsequent dehumanizing living conditions is symptomatic of state failures. Forces of corruption and weak institutions have prevented the state from protecting its people from being displaced, and catering for their needs after displacement. Thus, the following recommendations are made.

1. Government of Nigeria should intensify efforts to curtail the vagaries of security threats largely responsible the displacement such as terrorism, kidnaping, and banditry. The people should not be left to the mercies of these unscrupulous non-state forces. In other words, government needs to exercise agency in the government and security of the hitherto ungoverned spaces in Nigeria through which the people are attacked and held to ransom. This may require the presence of more military and security personnel.

2. Flowing from the above, and having done all to recover their territory, the government should also prioritize resettling and reintegrating the displaced persons into their communities. The camps or local communities where the displaced persons dwell cannot be as conducive as a place called home. To be displaced is to suffer community and social insecurity. The displaced persons should be assisted to reestablish their place or integrated into the new found communities. Social safety as free housing, health, education, and empowerment programmes will go a long way

in achieving this and improving their livelihood.

3. While the government is enjoined to intensify support and provision for the displaced person, incidents of corruption, maltreatment, and diversion of resources meant for the displaced persons should be curbed. The government, and especially its agents on disaster management – such as NEMA – should be purged of corrupt practices and those who are found guilty are to be punished according to the law. Maltreatment, harassment, and exploiting of the conditions of the displaced persons should be handled with all needed legal forces.

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