

Theory-Practice Disconnect: Problematising Human Security, Insurgency, and Displacement Crisis Management Policy in Nigeria since 2009

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Abstract

From the rustic society of hunter-gatherers who relied on simple tools for food, shelter, clothing and security to the contemporary world of atomic science, nuclear and thermonuclear technology, and communication super-highways where the possibility of mass destruction, chemical weaponry and extirpation of whole groups as well as faster information sharing has risen exponentially, security remains a central issue. Human beings continuously strive to secure their spaces and resources from invasion by other human and non-human elements, thus leading to competition of ideas, knowledge and actions among different groups of people. It becomes more complex where insecurity occurs within a given human society among different classes or interest groups. This typifies the Nigerian situation under Boko Haram since 2009. This study, therefore, problematises the trends of breakdown of human security that resulted from the Boko Haram insurgency and the its main consequence of forced migration (displacement) of persons. Managing the insecurity and human displacement are interrogated within the context of the Nigerian forced migration crisis management policy with a view to assessing its appropriateness beyond theory to actual practice. This, in a fundamental way, will answer the question as to why the Boko Haram insurgency has remained seemingly insurmountable.

Key Words: Human Security, Insurgency, Displacement, State Intervention,

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1. Introduction

Security is universally acknowledged as arguably the most important function justifying the existence of government in the human society. This underscores why every human society, from the dateless past, has always tried to organize its members around the purpose of safety as a primary condition for their individual and collective coexistence, and consequent activities of social interactions. Robert McNamara (1967) acknowledges the desirability of security in his argument that “No sane citizen, political leader or nations wants thermonuclear war”. However, he cautions that “But merely not wanting it is not enough. We must understand the differences among actions which increase its risks, those which reduce them and those which, while costly, have little influence one way or another. But there is a great difficulty in the way of constructive and profitable debate over the issues, and that is the exceptional complexity of nuclear strategy. Unless these complexities are well understood, rational discussion and decision-making are impossible”. The issue of security has become more important in the modern, “complex and uncertain world” (McNamara, 1967).

In a related vein, the choice of settlement and desire to move from one location to another are core human existential elements that govern how human life is conducted. In other words, migration is inherent in the human nature and historical movement of civilizations across climes, spaces and times. Ordinarily, migration is supposed to be a vehicle for learning other people’s culture and exploring their systems of development which can be domesticated by the learner or learning group of migrants. This supports the view that, for the purpose of increasing human capabilities for societal development, governments should, as a matter of policy, encourage and respect people’s choice to migrate from one place to another. However, there are real-life paradoxes to this preference whereby migration may be forced as is common in many parts of the Third World where extreme poverty and insecurity are pervasive. Essentially, poverty and insecurity forced many people to migrate from their homes to locations with mixed bag of perceived economic fortunes. Thus, people move not because they really want to, but because it becomes expedient to either break the shackles of want or to keep themselves from continuing danger. In the former, those who migrate sometimes travel along dangerous corridors where they are vulnerable to extreme situations: injury, banditry, sexual harassment, and even death. This is common with many Nigerians who attempted migrating to Europe and traveled along the Sahara Desert-Niger Republic-Mediterranean Sea route. In the latter in some cases, while the anticipated locations are believed to be a ready space for greener

pasture, it is often found (albeit lately) that some of such locations are in worse socio-economic conditions for decent human living. Either way, it is a case of forced migration, which may also occur as internal displacement where man-made challenges like war, and natural disasters like earthquake, landslide, flooding, inferno and so on render people threatened, homeless and displaced.

Therefore, the increasing complexity and uncertainty of the contemporary world continue to provide the security/insecurity matrix and offer the converging, over-arching context within which this paper examines the Nigerian example of war-induced forced migration (otherwise known as internal displacement) in the Boko Haram insurgency since 2009. The article evaluates the policy adopted for managing the challenge and concludes with a justified recommendation of a marginal but significant change that might propel better management. Split into five sections, the study begins with this brief introduction, proceeds to explain internal migration in Africa as the context of study, presents the background to, outbreak and the major aftermath of the Boko Haram insurgency, undertakes an appraisal of Nigeria's displacement crisis management policy. This is followed with a note of conclusion and recommendations. The study dwells specifically on explaining the nexus between insecurity and forced migration due to the Boko Haram insurgency as a major antithesis of development in Nigeria since 2009. Some pertinent questions therefore arise: What is the background to the Boko Haram insurgency and its popularity? What is the immediate consequence of the insurgency on human settlement? How has Government managed/mitigated the impact? How successful is government intervention policy? What can be done to improve the policy output? Answers to these questions are the core of this article.

2. Theoretical Context

Human security theoretical framework is considered most appropriate to be adopted for effective unpacking of the intersection of key issues of human security, insurgency and forced migration crisis as being experienced in Nigeria. This choice is hinged on the realization that the current situation of insurgency that has threatened human security through killings, social deprivation and forced human displacement, coupled with the extant largely defective architecture of human displacement crisis management, presents a glaring example of critical and multi-impact human security situation. Essentially, while security as a concept is as old as human society, the idea of 'human security' became more popular with the changing paradigms of social scientific discourses provoked by scholars who had hitherto been grossly dissatisfied with the antiquarian perspectives of security from the national/state and international paradigms. Even beyond intellectual contests over the relevance, or otherwise, of theories, the experience in Nigeria since 2009 has depicted a clear, real-life demonstration of the Hobbes' perception of state as a Leviathan. It underscores that, once the state is entangled in the cesspool of certain powerful and entrenched private interests, the social order can no longer be said to exist. In such circumstances, the individual is, once again, in the state of nature and therefore subject only to the laws of nature and not to those of the pre-existing social order. While Immanuel Kant's philosophy on the human dignity (1795), without directly using the term 'human security', serves as the classical pace-setter for intellectual discourse on human security, the post-World War II and post-Cold War developments culminating in the emergence of a global hegemon (the USA) and increasing spread of globalization popularized human security as a topical issue in global public and intellectual discourse. As Jackson-Preece (2019:54) argues, "We see evidence of the human security paradigm at work post-1945 in the universal protection of human rights, humanitarian law and the idea of crimes against humanity. All three of these concepts accord moral primacy to the well-being of men, women and children over and above the rights and interests of states or of international society". Also, Schneider (2018:1) avers that;

As the world in the 21st century becomes progressively globalized, interconnected, and inhabited by ever-increasing numbers of humans and modes of collaboration, the vast concepts of *danger*, *vulnerability*, *security* and *insecurity* evolve alongside in response to emerging realities. Advances in science and technology make the merits of modernity obvious for many people and reflect the successes of centuries of innovation and ingenuity across many levels of global society, creating a sense of control over many rudimentary threats to existence. Yet, a simple survey of the widespread instability, poverty, disease, and violence around the world reveals a stark picture.

All these hints and snippets accentuate the appropriateness of human security framework as a very useful tool to unpack security in modern times.

Human security theory emphasises the need for paradigm shifts in building security architecture that protects states and international society to protecting individuals such that their well-being is paramount and structures are erected to deal with sources of threats against individual human. This is encapsulated in the core principle of people's right to three freedoms: freedom from fear, freedom from want, and freedom from indignity. To guarantee these

freedoms, some seven domains of human security are further espoused. They include economic security, food security, health security, personal security, political security, community security and environmental security. Obviously, the human security perspective is more effective in explaining the whole gamut of security. For instance, it has been noted that;

security extends beyond the protection of borders, ruling elites, and exclusive state interests to include the protection of people. To confine the concept of security exclusively to the protection of states is to ignore the interests of people who form the citizens of a state and in whose name, sovereignty is exercised. It can produce situations in which those in power feel they have the unfettered freedom to abuse the right to security of their people... All people, no less than states, have a right to a secure existence, and all states have an obligation to protect those rights (Report of Commission, 1995: 46,48).

The foregoing indicates that state's role to provide security for the human citizens is a very complex and challenge-ridden one. However, it becomes inevitably expedient in the socio-political corridors of state-citizens relationship. In other words, it is a relational, broad and diverse responsibility firmly emplaced in the socio-political gamut of modern society. Human security is underlined by complex elements and phenomena that necessitate wide-ranging levels of analysis to understand (Graf and Zwierlein, 2010: 7-21). This is further espoused that 'Doing' security is a political process in the sense that it is constructed through relations between varying interests and exercised through power relations in society (Wibben, 2016: 2). This implies that security is only partially a technical or military subject. It is also subsumed within the socio-political milieu where it is profoundly shaped by the interactions and power dynamics of various actors and groups as centrifugal and centripetal forces within a society. In turn, these interactions and power dynamics determine the definition, prioritization and attainment of security as collective objective.

Generally, it is the consensus among scholars that the term 'Human Security' enjoyed its first phase of global popularity through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The UNDP (1994:3), in its Human Development Report, conceives of human security as "safety from the constant threats of hunger, disease, crime, and repression. It also means protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the pattern of our daily lives – whether in our homes, in our jobs, in our communities or in our environments". Therefore, as Graf and Zwierlein (2010: 7) argue,

Human security demands that the policies of international organizations must be directed towards the protection of individual human beings, that their security and basic rights must be more than just a side-effect of the protection of borders, governments and the sovereignty of countries against external violence. Human security emerged as a central category in debates on security policies after the Cold War and often alludes to a new postmodern and postnational (sic) age.

The instinctive and experience-based belief of peoples under the distress of insecurity, which forms the basis of the above UNDP's conception, and the basic requirement for the necessary thrust of security policies by international bodies readily explains the Nigerian reality of security challenge and potential solutions to the challenge. Also, Kant's and other scholars' shared belief that the protection of human security is *sine-qua-non* to the actualization of state and international security fuels the perspective that human security is the most important of all. Therefore, these views uphold the position that an overriding duty of all states and of international society as a whole to defend human security is a preferred choice to the sentimental stand of repudiating the basic premise of non-intervention. To that extent, this study argues that a broad understanding of the Nigerian security challenges is better situated in the context of the human security theoretical framework, which will provide justification for the compelling need to grow an all-embracing architecture for handling the human security issues in Nigeria.

3. Internal Migration in Africa – An Overview

Except it is done with detailed study and analysis driven at specifying or differentiating between economic and forced branches of migration, the issue of African migration is very complex. While it would seem that the pendulum of African migration tilts more to Europe and North America, it is truer that forced migration within or among countries in Africa has higher statistics than economic migration. To be sure of this, it is pertinent to situate this discourse within the contextual framework that, according to Antil et. al. (2016), "There are numerous causes of population displacement in Africa; none of these are new, whether they occur within countries, across the

Continent or toward Europe. The term “migrations” covers a wide range of situations, which differ in their internal and international implications”. The situation of internal migration with local and global, and by extension, development-centric, implications, has been prevalent in many instances in Nigeria from the civil war of 1967-70 (Ibhawoh, 2020); religious conflicts since the 1980s (Adesoji, 2011); and inter-tribal wars; to the most recent Boko Haram insurgency (Badejogbin, 2013; Agbiboa and Mainangwa, 2014). Some authors have explained internal migration in Africa within the push-pull factor framework, and identify factors like economy, family reunion, security, education, persecution, booming economy in destination country and/or lack of basic infrastructure, unemployment, poverty, political instability and insecurity in originating country among others as the causative factors (Akanle and Adesina (2017; Akanle (2018; Akanle and Ola-Lawson, 2022). Basically, internal migration is a phenomenon of both positive and negative dimensions. Migration is an important part of the agenda for regional economic integration that has made progress in the past years (Ratha, 2011) as typified, for example, in the ECOWAS system in the West African sub-region. However, Africa is famous in extant migration discourses for negative reasons. It is common knowledge that Africa is a considerably mobile continent consequent upon the people’s penchant for migration. In other words, as a mainly migrant sending continent, Africa is origin, transit and destination for migrants (Akanle, 2018). This is usually due to the migration triggered by, and in turn further propelling, huge poverty of Africa, political instability and insecurity on the continent. Thus, Africans are by nature and nurture migrants. It is possible to opine that the extant and contemporary history of Africa is the history of migration particularly internationally (Akanle and Ola-Lawson, 2022)

4. Background, Outbreak and Aftermath of Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria

4.1 Background

Boko Haram (translated to mean 'Western education is a sin') was a movement founded as *Jama'atu Ahlissunnah Iddi'awati wal Jihad*, meaning 'people committed to the propagation of the Prophet's teachings and Jihad,' by late Mohammed Yusuf in Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria in 2002. The background to Boko Haram can be safely situated in some factors that promoted its spread and popularity. The first consideration is the religiosity of an average Nigerian. It is beyond dispute that Nigerians as a people are one of the most religious in the world. Predictably, in addition to being the lifeblood of the fundamental existential reality and daily experience of such people, religious sentiments, emotions and explanations are rife justifications for commonplace or politically motivated realities among them (Enwerem 1999: 123). It is therefore always easy for religious leaders with a good measure of power for persuasion to win converts. Also, such situation quickly fertilizes the gradual growth and sustained spread of fundamentalism (Suberu 1997:477-508). Adesoji (2011:98-119) argues rightly that “Although, the politicization of religion became stronger in the late 1970s, religious fears and the use of religion for propaganda have been important features of Nigeria”.

The Sharia debate in the Constituent Assembly of 1977-78 preparatory to handing over of government to civilian government in 1979 was the first attempt in Nigeria to deploy religion as weapon of politics. There was the suggestion for establishment of a Federal Sharia Court of Appeal. This generated a lot of furore along ethnic, religious and political persuasions in the Constituent Assembly. There were three categories of respondents to the Federal Sharia Court of Appeal (F.S.C.A) debate: staunch supporters; moderates; and extremist opponents. As Laitin, (1982: 411-430) argues, “For pro-F.S.C.A. members, 'moderates' were those who acknowledged the difficulties yet still supported the Sharia, while 'extremists' were those who either did not equivocate and/or used threats against non-supporters. For anti-F.S.C.A. members, 'moderates' emphasized the technical problems involved in the proposals, but did not rule out some accommodation, while 'extremists' were in ideological opposition against all Sharia courts”. For example, while the Yoruba delegates mainly constituted the moderates and helped in managing the nagging challenge, the Igbo were mainly against the idea of a Sharia court. Again, as Laitin (1982:411-430) suggests, The M.C.A.s (Members of Constituent Assembly) in the East and South-east with virtually no Muslims in their constituencies and none in their delegation could not get particularly excited about the issue; certainly not enough to take 'extreme' positions. As Sam Mbakwe (Imo) (as quoted by Laitin 1982:411-430) pointed out, “There has been a lot of talk here about Sharia, Sharia at one stage I got so depressed about this Sharia Court that I then asked myself 'Is that why I had to travel that distance to come to Lagos to talk about a subject I have not heard about in my life?'” However, the crisis was not allowed to result in armed conflict among the disputants, but the *Maitatsine* Uprising of 1980 might have found some measure of inspiration from it.

In turn, the Boko Haram insurgency might have been, in part, inspired by the proponents of the *Maitatsine* conflict. Of course, ideology strongly embedded in Sharia was a major factor that popularized Boko Haram. The Movement was driven by the ideology that Western civilization, democracy, and other forms of the secular architecture of governance and social life were against the spirit and letters of the Shari'a (Islamic legal code). As such, a true

membership of Boko Haram must be demonstrated in the unwavering commitment to pursue and promote the agenda for a change of government in Nigeria (Dung, 2018:2) starting from Borno State. Meanwhile, there had been pervasive complaints of alleged misgovernance against the government of Borno State shortly after the 1999 transition from military rule to civilian government to the early 2000s, which provided the enabling social context for the popularity of Mohammed's ideology of a 'sane and neat' society. He leveraged it and deployed his personality cult to attract a huge following in no time.

As Curtas (2006:1) argues, "Insurgencies do not happen if the population either supports the government or sees nothing to gain from fighting". In the Boko Haram case in Nigeria, the perceived 'godliness, kindness and generosity' of Mohammed, characterized by his fiery rejection of the allegedly corrupt secular state while building a community based on *Shari'a* principles and the provision of basic needs enabled him to seamlessly draw his followers. Of course, from the start of his Movement, Yusuf attracted followers by "offering one meal a day, arranged low-cost marriages, and provided loans for petty commercial activities, thus offering basic social dignity to the poor and unemployed" (Meagher, 2014). This underscores the impact of poverty as a major factor of insurgency in Nigeria (Adetoro, 2012: 21-26). The foregoing is the panoramic overview of Boko Haram and its popularity in Nigeria.

4.2 Outbreak of Insurgency and Its Immediate Aftermath

Following its establishment in 2002 and its style of operations from then, the Boko Haram movement became an organization to be hunted down by Government. Thus, Mohammed Yusuf soon became a fugitive 'freedom' fighter. His eventual controversial (perhaps extrajudicial) death in the custody of the Nigerian Police in 2009 at Bauchi was the spark that ignited the dry tinder of an outright rebellion against the Nigerian State. Since then, it has carried out several deadly attacks against the Nigerian state. The organization has grown in influence and deadly attacks beyond its immediate base in the famous Sambisa Forest in Northwest Nigeria to become an international body of terrorists covering a broad swathe of space across entire Northern Nigeria and the West African Sahel. This is in addition to sporadic attacks in some towns and cities of Southern Nigeria, thus making the trajectories of the Boko Haram operations across Nigeria quite unprecedented. Over the years, the insurgents have adopted well-coordinated but often sporadic attack styles entailing scorched earth tactics, mass killing with AK-47 and other rifle brands, use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and suicide operations in locations (motor parks, open bars, drinking joints, churches, mosques, police stations, military formations, and so on) where a sizeable number of harmless and (often) unsuspecting armless victims assemble.

The major impact of the Boko Haram insurgency is internal displacement of persons. This can be understood in the context of a combination of variables, which contributed in varying degrees to displace people and forced them to migrate or be migrated to camps. One of these is human security, which In the Nigerian instance, is in a dire strait. This is best captured in Jackson-Preece's argument that

The core idea embodied by human security is essentially that the security of the person, the security of the state and the security of the society of states are fundamentally interconnected – you cannot have one without the others. If any one man or woman or child in the world is unsafe, then nobody else can be safe either. To tolerate personal insecurity in one state risks spreading insecurity to other states, and by extension, international society itself.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee, more than 1.5 million people, mostly farmers were forced to flee their homes as Boko Haram intensified its insurgency between 2009 and 2014. Amalu (2015: 38-40) identifies other variables) including food and nutrition, health, shelter, education, and protection, as impact of the Boko Haram insurgency. The first three are particularly directly connected with forced migration. The chaotic atmosphere set loose by the insurgency disrupted the once peaceful transportation of persons and goods. This difficulty predictably led to high cost or outright scarcity of food. The Central Bank of Nigeria stated that the disruptions on food distribution because of the insurgency are among the largest inflationary risks faced by the economy. Eme et. al. (2014) noted that Boko Haram has stopped the flow of beans, while regular supply of pepper and tomatoes from the North to other parts of Nigeria was also stifled. Thousands of homes were also destroyed by the insurgents thus rendering some millions homeless and vulnerable. According to International Organisation on Migration (2015), over 2.1 million were displaced in Nigeria by the Boko Haram insurgency. These internally displaced persons were forced into migration to live in host communities and are in dire need of appropriate shelter and in the long-run resettlement. Sadly, most internally displaced people are camped in schools, churches and makeshift accommodations which are mostly uncompleted buildings or derelict houses. Consequently, this grim

social reality has provoked a situation in which the displaced humans are exposed to the most harrowing of living experiences in IDP Camps, where their human dignity is constantly threatened. Indeed, “Many of the communal and make shifts shelters are overcrowded and unsuitable in terms of water and sanitation facilities, cooking and privacy, especially for women” (HNO, 2014: 11).

Closely connected with this is that the insurgents have severally used kidnapping as a powerful tactic. The kidnapping of school children is also a powerful tactic of Boko Haram. The 2014 and 2018 individual cases of Chibok, Borno State, and Dapchi, Yobe State, where young female secondary school students were kidnapped, readily come to mind. Other people, including marrying couples, teachers/lecturers, and clergy members, particularly of the Christian faith, have also been kidnapped. The physical and psychological trauma that usually comes with these horrendous activities of the insurgents goes beyond measure. The World Health Organisation (WHO) Report on Violence and Health launched on October 3rd 2002 *stated* that each year, more than a million lives are lost and many more experience injuries as a result of various forms of violence.

5. Nigerian Government’s Forced Migration Crisis Management Policy

The roles and responsibilities of the Nigerian Government in the management of internally displaced persons are governed by the thrust of the National Policy on Internally Displaced Persons in Nigeria (National Commission for Refugees, 2013). The policy thrust is captured thus;

This policy provides a framework for national responsibility towards prevention and protection of citizens and, in some cases, non-citizens, from incidences of arbitrary and other forms of internal displacement, meet their assistance and protection needs during displacement, and ensure their rehabilitation, return, re-integration and resettlement after displacement. The policy spells out principles guiding humanitarian assistance and implementation of durable solutions in situations of internal displacement in Nigeria (National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Displaced Persons, 2013:19).

In concurrence with the above policy thrust, which emphasizes ‘rehabilitation, return, reintegration and resettlement’, since the outbreak of the Boko Haram insurgency and the proliferation of its attendant damning consequences particularly the menace of forced migration, the Nigerian Government has adopted a three-pronged strategy, which for the purpose of this essay, can be coined with the CSR (Counterinsurgency-Settlement-Relocation) abbreviation. Counterinsurgency is a strategy deployed mainly to achieve two purposes: to save the image and integrity of the State as a Leviathan, and to nip the main cause of forced migration, insurgency, in the bud. This, it was believed would help to stem the tide of homelessness and pervasive acute poverty in the areas within the war zone. In other words, counterinsurgency is the other half of armed conflicts in the insurgency situation in Nigeria. It involves the process of allocating resources and defining war strategy as ‘the employment of battles to gain the end of the war’ (Paret, 2012: 837-45). Essentially, this entails the process of distribution and application of military resources to achieve set objectives of policy. Settlement is the second strategy whereby Government created Internally displaced persons (IDPs) camps in locations considered relatively safe for human habitation. Between 2009 and 2022, the Boko Haram insurgency (in cahoots with farmer-herder’s conflict and banditry), has pushed about 4,244,332 million Nigerians out of their homes (National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Displaced Persons, 2021). This is especially in the Northeast; the main hotbed of insurgency; the Northwest and the Northcentral (Middle Belt) regions (UNHCR; 2012, IOM: 2021, Human Rights Watch: 2022). Of course, the Northeast accounts for about 2.2. million of the displaced persons, while over 300,000 of them were settled in camps in Cameroon, Niger and Chad all in a bid to give them some temporary relief. In the 2021 official records, Borno State alone accounted for 1,630, 284 million of the figures of displaced persons in Nigeria. Hundreds of the IDP camps are located across almost all states and the federal capital territory in Nigeria. This humongous number of humans are being resettled in camp houses, makeshift shelters and in some instances church or mosque premises for temporary relief, and to receive feeding, clothing and medications. Relocation is the third arm of the Government’s strategy to address the displacement issue. This is about Government’s conviction that the dust of attack and its accompanying trauma has settled, thus necessitating closing down IDP camps and returning the displaced back to their homes.

6. Appraisal of Strategies

6.1 Counterinsurgency

Since 2009, the Nigerian military in collaboration with foreign partners have sustained counterinsurgency against the Boko Haram insurgents. Available evidence suggest that many insurgents have been decimated in the various counterinsurgency operations. Yet, the insurgency and spate of displacement has not abated. What factor(s) accounted for this failure to crush a group of rag-tag, sporadic attackers? This has been explained in the complex contexts of the insurgency. Ibrahim argues that “Insurgency and displacement are composite and intrinsically linked phenomena that predictably help us understand the tenor and dynamics of conflicts in any given society”. He adds that, based on a thorough consideration of the impact of independent variable on the dependent variables of economic, political, social and cultural contexts of the society within which Boko Haram insurgency broke out, it became clear that counterinsurgency would not end the war (2023:199). Scenarios that have played out over the years within the Nigerian political and elite class would seem to validate this position.

6.2 Settlement

It bears no over-emphasis that life in the IDP camps is less humane and very harrowing. Victims have been offered only the minimum available quality of food, shelter and clothing as well as health interventions. More importantly, the reality that grown up, once-industrious adults were constrained to depend on food and drug handouts from Government and some humanitarian organizations were sufficient agony. Laced with this grim situation is the bureaucratic red-tapism and attendant corruption by civil servants who often were the managers of the process of settlement.

6.3 Relocation

Efforts by Government to close IDP camps and return the victims to their homes seemed not to have achieved the set objective of reintegration. It was a transition from one suffering from insurgents to another from government. This is more so because there is no convincing evidence that effective mechanisms of post-trauma rehabilitation are deployed to accompany relocation. In other words, the victims whose means of livelihood, social life, family bonding, and peace of mind were destroyed are yet to be assured of ways and means of restoring those critical components of minimum decent human living. Thus, the decision to return them to their homes, which are no longer homely is akin to order them to the dungeon. As one victim whose real identity was covered for security reason mentioned to reporters for Human Rights Watch (2022), “We already suffered at the hands of Boko Haram before now and we are still suffering at the hands of the government”.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

This essay has modestly interrogated the Nigerian government’s policy on human displacement crisis management from the prism of human security theory and within the context of the Boko Haram insurgency. The study evaluates of the strategies adopted for implementing the policy. In closing, the essay offers some recommendations towards ameliorating the sufferings of displaced persons who are victims of forced migration in Nigeria. In view of the obstinacy of the insurgents and the mounting sufferings of IDPs across different camps, rejigging the policy architecture has become compelling. This should start with tinkering with the option of military engagement. A process of socialization whereby diplomacy and dialogue between government and representatives of the insurgents with the observer role by critical stakeholders like religious and traditional leaders should be initiated without delay. Two, any civil servants or public officials caught in the web of corruption or overbearing red-tapism in the process of settlement of IDPs should be made to face the wrath of the law. Three, government in collaboration with the UN and other intervention agencies should quickly expand the net of intervention by implementing a more comprehensive rehabilitation program for the victims as a means of re-establishing them close to their former social status, and empowering them to start a new life on a strong pedestal. Overall, strong subscription to guaranteeing the human security should necessarily be a guide for the Nigerian government henceforth. Not intended to radically change the extant policy, these steps will help because they hold strong promise of situating action within the context of Nigerian social context to produce positive results.

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