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## **THE STATE OF CONDITIONS AND CHALLENGES FACED BY INTERNALLY DISPLACED WOMEN (IDW) IN NIGERIA: A SOCIAL INCLUSION PERSPECTIVE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This paper examined the state of conditions and challenges encountered by internally displaced women (IDW) at three selected internally displaced persons (IDPs) camps in Malkohi, Fufore and Durumi. This study was conducted in an attempt to create awareness of the conditions of IDW at IDPs camps in Nigeria. It captured the experiences and livelihoods of IDW at the camps and generated information on the state of conditions and challenges of the IDW through human security concept, empowerment and social inclusion theory. The study employed a narrative interview for data collection and thematic analysis for data analysis. It revealed that IDW encountered various forms of challenges ranging from economic challenges to absence of social networks and lack of targeted support.

The responses of the IDW revealed inadequate measures by the government to enhance their standard of living at the camps. It is important to note that ensuring the protection and safety of IDW should extend beyond providing shelter and adequate facilities, to include provisions to protect their rights, ensure adequate livelihood and equal economic opportunities.

**Keywords:** Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), Internally Displaced Women (IDW), IDPs camps, Nigeria.

## INTRODUCTION

Towards the end of 2018, a total of 41.3 million people were projected to be living in internal displacement due to conflict and violence which was the highest figure recorded (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre [IDMC], 2019). Three quarters of the displaced people were found in 10 countries, including the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Syria and Colombia. An unidentified number of people remained displaced as a result of disasters that occurred in 2018. The Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa were highly affected by displacement related to conflict and violence and new waves were also recorded in South Asia in 2018. In addition, displacement related to major disasters affected East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia, both regions with high levels of population exposure and susceptibility to hazards (IDMC, 2019). It is evident that internal displacement is a global crisis with destructive effects on victims. These destructive effects include sexual and gender-based violence, loss of shelter, human rights abuse, lack of security, and social disintegration (Oyefara & Alabi, 2016).

The 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement defined IDPs “as persons or groups of persons who have been forced, obliged to flee, 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” (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 1998).

On the other hand, the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa have recorded large internal displacements in countries like Ethiopia, Somalia, Central Africa Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo and Nigeria. The Boko Haram insurgency has been attributed to be the longest insurgency in the history of Nigeria which has resulted in prolonged displacements and created much attention to issues of internal displacement and IDPs. Internal displacement in Nigeria has not only resulted in the vulnerability of victims but it has also led to an increase in poverty, underdevelopment, a threat to national security, malnutrition especially among displaced children and widespread communicable diseases such as diarrhoea.

Recently, Nigeria has been beset with issues on migratory crises such as insurgency and conflict, resulting in large numbers of its people fleeing their homes to neighbouring countries as refugees and asylum seekers or within their country as internally displaced persons (IDPs), (Mukhtar et al., 2018). The Boko Haram insurgency which emerged in 2002 began to use force in 2009 when the leader of the group, Mohammed Yusuf, was killed while in police custody (Emmanuelar, 2015). About 3.3 million people have been displaced in north-east Nigeria which is the worst hit region by the Boko Haram group (Adekola et al., 2019). Similarly, the Boko Haram started taking control of large parts of the territory in north-east Nigeria in July 2014. By February 2015, over a million people in north-east Nigeria fled to state capitals due to insecurity and attacks by the Boko Haram. The insurgency has marked citizens with various forms of attack; in mosques, schools, and entire villages. The Boko Haram insurgency controlled 27 local government areas in Borno state, five out of 21 in Adamawa, and two out of 17 in Yobe state (Nwanchor & Nsude, 2017).

The Boko Haram insurgency has led to a humanitarian crisis which has subjected women to endless protection risks and increases the rate of gender-based violence (GBV) that requires intervention from the government and NGOs (Alli et al., 2017, as cited in Titilope et al., 2019). Apart from children being victims of child labour, both the children and women have become victims of rape and therefore robbed of their good health and education. The victims of displacement, lack adequate basic amenities especially IDW are frequently more exposed and at risk than men (Olanrewaju et al., 2018). Furthermore,

Kayode (2016) asserts that the increase in the population of IDPs is an opportunity for government officials to get rich and for non-governmental organizations to neglect the vulnerability of the victims. Lack of good food has led to kwashiorkor and marasmus (a form of severe malnutrition) among the victims of internal displacement in Kuchingoro camp (Abuja). According to Enwereji (2009), the government and international organizations do not have adequate intervention programmes or services available to IDPs. Apart from this, there is a lack of orientation and health care services for rape victims.

In the course of disasters and conflicts, women and girls are at risk of various forms of violence such as sex trafficking, forced labour, and sexual oppression. In some cases, they are approached by caregivers for sex in exchange for protection, food, and assistance. These susceptibilities are a result of the increase in gender inequality and the weakening of systems that generally protect them (Dynes et al., 2016, as cited in Olanrenwaju et al., 2018). Boko Haram has kidnapped countless women and girls in north-east Nigeria. The insecurity in north-east Nigeria has made people abandon their homes, while they seek refuge in host communities; government recognized and unrecognized IDPs camps.

IDW is a category of concern and amongst the most vulnerable victims during displacement with the violation of certain human rights of the women and a serious debate within the humanitarian crisis. To this extent, this study examined the state of conditions and challenges encountered by IDW during displacement. Qualitative research was employed by way of narrative interviews in three selected IDPs camps in Nigeria. The results revealed the state of conditions of the women in the camps and the challenges they encountered as victims of internal displacement in Nigeria.

## **Theoretical Framework**

This article is anchored on the concept of human security, empowerment theory, and social inclusion theory. It is vital to address the concept of human security when discussing internal displacement because in most cases what led to internal displacement is the threat to the human security of the victims and to achieve durable solutions, these

threats must be eradicated, prevented and the human security of the IDW must be ensured. The 1994 Human Development Report (HDR) emphasized two main mechanisms of human security which are freedom from fear and freedom from want. These freedoms, from the prelude to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, are part of the four human freedoms that President Franklin D. Roosevelt mentioned in his speech in 1941. He was encouraging a world founded on freedom of speech and expression, freedom of worship, freedom from want and freedom from fear, and freedom to live in dignity which was added in the 1990s through consequent debate. The 1994 HDR was more precise, citing seven vital scopes of human security which are: Economic, Health, Environmental, Community, Political, Personal, and Food Security. Thus, IDW is a group of concern because internal displacement is linked with the violation of certain human rights of people and a critical debate within humanitarian circles. However as victims of displacement, their human security is being threatened and therefore the human security concept provides the framework to look into the plight of IDW in IDPs camp as well as understanding the provisions that have been put in place by the government to ensure their safety and protection of their human security.

The word, ‘empowerment’ emerged in the late 1970s, used by aid-workers, community development, public health, social psychology, social services among others in the English-speaking world and today empowerment has been used in almost every sphere of life (Simmon, 1994, as cited in Calvès, 2009). In the 1990s the concept slowly gained a basis in the international gender and development agenda and by the end of the decade, it secured recognition of the international development organizations on poverty reduction (Calvès, 2009). In an attempt to describe empowerment, most theories have defined empowerment in related terms (McWHIRTER, 1991) however the precise definition of empowerment is unclear. In debating empowerment, some theorists placed importance on power such as Perkins and Zimmerman (1995), Zimmerman (2000), and Zimmerman and Warschausky (1998). However, Gutierrez (1995) defined empowerment as the method of amassing personal, interpersonal, or political power so that families, individuals, and societies can take a step to develop their conditions. Hence, the main aim of empowerment theory is the sociopolitical liberation of oppressed or relegated communities (Carr, 2013, as cited in Turner &

Maschi, 2015). Empowerment theory provides the basis to interview the IDW about their socio-economic status including understanding how the government has been able to protect the economic rights of the IDW at the camps.

Social inclusion contributes to the sustainability of humankind, by aiming to integrate into society people who have been habitually omitted from the opportunities and resources of a healthy world. Encountering enormous global and local problems such as poverty, segregation, inequality, and conflict, social inclusion could be our utmost opportunity for connecting as a society and safeguarding the well-being of the whole (Bulger, 2018). There are five perspectives of social inclusion that are important to its measurement which include: economic participation, health, and access to services, education, personal independence, and self-determination, interacting with society, and fulfilling social roles (Taylor & Room, 2012). Therefore, the social inclusion theory provides a framework to understand how IDW have been able to connect as citizens of the country and how their well-being have been safeguarded from the period that they have been displaced.

## **METHOD**

### **Study Design**

This study used narrative interview to examine the state of the conditions of IDW and the challenges they encountered in the IDPs camps. The narrative interview aims to accumulate data on the particular experience of an individual or group by asking questions that require the participant(s) to respond in a narrative manner; that is a summary of events that are bound together by a common theme or meaning. This form of interview allows participants to be in charge of their feelings and by this the participants will narrate their experience(s) or ordeal and this will prevent the researcher from being in charge of the participants' feelings (Etherington & Bridges, 2011). Thus narrative interviews are useful to report detailed stories, and life experiences as information can be obtained through different types of sources which may be from personal, family, or social origin.

A narrative approach guided the data collection among IDW. Its primary aim was to understand the challenges of IDW through their stories. The narrative approach is a term that covers personal and human dimensions of experience over time and explains the relationship between individual experience and cultural context (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). This type of interview enabled the displaced women to share their real stories and experiences with the least interference from the researcher.

### **Study Location**

The study was conducted at three IDP camps in two different states in Nigeria; the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, and Adamawa state. They consisted of the Durumi IDPs camp which is in Abuja, Malkohi IDPs camp, and Fufore IDPs camp in Adamawa state. The IDPs camps were selected for this study because of their accessibility at the time when the research was carried out. Permission was obtained from the appropriate management before accessing the IDPs camps.

### **Population and Sample**

The study was a gendered study focused on women's perspective on the state of conditions at the IDPs camps and the challenges they encountered as victims of internal displacement. In this study, significant participants were chosen for interviews at three different IDPs camps in two states in Nigeria which were Adamawa and Abuja (the Federal Capital Territory). The researcher chose snowball sampling because of the difficulty of getting in touch with the participants due to risks to their safety. It was also challenging since the participants thought that the interviews were related to government affairs. Thus the researcher viewed snowball sampling as the best option in this context. According to Babbie (2001), snowball sampling is used when potential participants are difficult to find; it enables research to take place where it may be impossible to conduct due to the lack of participants.

Snowball sampling is a way of expanding a sample by asking an informant or participant to endorse others for interviewing (Babbie, 2001; Crabtree & Miller, 1992). Snowball sampling is defined as a method for finding research subjects. One subject provides the researcher with the name of another subject, who also gives the

name of a third and so on (Vogt, 1999, as cited in Atkinson & Flint, 2001). Similarly, snowball sampling which falls under nonprobability sampling is a situation where members of the population do not have an equal chance of being selected (Pierce, 2008, p. 91). Hence, non-probability samples include snowballs, volunteers, theoretical samples, and nomination. In this study, snowball sampling was used which dictated the number of participants that were interviewed until saturation was attained among the displaced women. Morse (1995, p. 147) posits that saturation is the key to outstanding qualitative research; however, there are no rules or tests to examine adequacy for assessing the sample size needed to reach saturation.

### **Data Collection**

Interviews were used to gather information from the displaced women specifically single/married, widowed, divorced/abandoned, and aged women. A total of 65 interviews were conducted of this number, 17 interviews were conducted among IDW at Malkohi IDPs camp (referred to as Camp 1), 22 IDW at Fufore IDPs camp (referred to as Camp 2), and 26 IDWs at Durumi IDPs camp (referred to as Camp 3). Most of the discussions were held in the Hausa language which is the major language spoken by the IDW and the interview with each participant lasted between 45 minutes to an hour. Discussions were stopped when the researcher noticed that there was no new information derived from the participants which in turn was attributed to saturation.

### **Data Analysis**

In the process of conducting a narrative interview, field notes were taken because this was the only way the IDW consented to be interviewed. The written responses from the participants were then analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a method of recognizing, examining, establishing, unfolding, and reporting themes derived within a data set (Braun & Clarke 2006). Also, Boyatzis (1998) defined thematic analysis as an interpreter for those speaking the languages of qualitative and quantitative analysis, allowing researchers who make use of different research methods to connect. Therefore, the researcher made use of Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework for conducting the thematic analysis. The steps were as follows:



- After collecting the data, the researcher read the data thoroughly to become familiar with it.
- After comprehending the data as a whole, the researcher organized the data into a meaningful and systemic manner. This was done through coding which transformed the data into small, meaningful pieces.
- Then the researcher looked for themes. A theme is an outline that identifies something substantial about the data or research questions.
- At this stage, the researcher reviewed the themes to see if they were coherent with the research work by amending and developing the initial themes that were identified.
- Next, the themes were defined and the goal was to recognize the importance of each theme (what each theme was all about).

Finally, the analyzed data was put together in writing. The analyzed responses provided the emerging themes and trends. However, to protect the identity of the participants, the researcher referred to them by their initials.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The majority of the participants were 30 years and above and had been displaced for three to four years. Overall, there were 65 IDW who voluntarily participated in the interview and the findings were categorized into sections. The findings revealed that these themes emerged from the participants namely: the state of the camp, economic opportunity, social networks, and targeted support.

## **The State of the Camps: An Overview**

This section captures the experiences of IDW at the camps which were gathered from the interviews. It showed that they were still dealing with daily struggles to survive. The participants from the three IDP camps shared their experiences and observations about the camps they lived in and what their lives were like. Generally, it seemed that they shared almost similar experiences.

The camps were described as “overcrowded” (M Malkohi IDPs camp, 28th March–11th April 2019; F Fufore IDPs camp, 14th–30th April 2019; A Durumi IDPs camp, 5th–18th May 2019), “restriction of movement” (U, A Malkohi IDPs camp, 28th March–11th April 2019; F, K from Fufore IDPs camp, 14th–30th April 2019), “sometimes food and water were not enough” (G Malkohi IDPs camp, 28th March–11th April 2019), “food not too good” (D Fufore IDPs camp, 14th–30th April 2019; A Durumi IDPs camp, 5th–18th May 2019), “no financial support from the government” (D Fufore IDPs camp, 14th–30th April 2019; Z, H Durumi IDPs camp, 5th–18th May 2019). However, there were some positive remarks from some of the participants, “they are feeding us” (Z Fufore IDPs camp, 14th–30th April 2019; Z Durumi IDPs camp, 5th–18th May 2019) and “no attacks in the camp” (M Fufore IDPs camp, 14th–30th April 2019).

Besides the general observations about the state of all the three camps, the following are selected excerpts which revealed the state of the camps.

U expressed that the camp was not conducive, food was inadequate, and movement restrictions was imposed on all IDPs at the camp. She said:

*“Home is the best place to return to, if everything is back as it used to, I will return but if not I can live anywhere apart from the camp. The camp is not conducive for us there is restriction and sometimes food is not enough” (28th March–11th April 2019, Camp 1).*

M mentioned overcrowding which made the camp less favourable to stay;

*“The camp is not where we can stay for a long period, it is just for a short time, we are too many here, a lot of things that are needed for daily use are not available to us but it is good because there has not been any Boko Haram attack since we got here” (28th March–11th April 2019, Camp 1).*

Similarly, F stated that the camp was overcrowded;

*“...the camp is overcrowded, we are being restricted, I prefer to be at home” (14th–30th April 2019, Camp 2).*

A mentioned lack of money and food at the camp;

*“...I don’t have money, the food is not good, we are too many and the camp won’t be able to accommodate us as time goes by so, I think home or somewhere else that is comfortable” (5th–18th May 2019, Camp 3).*

More so, K mentioned the restrictions in movement at the IDPs camp. She said:

*“...they did not ensure we are comfortable, we are just packed in a tent, not a house, they should get us a comfortable home to stay in, not this tent they gave, at times two different families share one tent” (14th–30th April 2019, Camp 2).*

K.D. stated that tent was used as a room;

*“I will like nothing more than to return home, the IDPs camp is not home, there is no money, no house but a tent used as a room so, it is a difficult period for me” (5th–18th May 2019, Camp 3).*

The IDW also reported that there was no attack from the Boko Haram. M stated that she liked the camp because there was no attack from the Boko Haram group. She stated that, “the camp is still preferable due to the current situation at home so, I will say I like the IDPs camp because there is no attack” (14th–30th April 2019, Camp 2).

Hence, it can be gathered that the issues faced by the IDW at the camps were relatively similar. At the Malkohi IDPs camp, issues such as lack of good or adequate food, movement restrictions and overcrowding were major issues affecting the IDW at the IDPs camp. Out of the 17 IDW interviewed, only three revealed that they liked the camp for its food, water, and the absence of attacks by the Boko Haram groups. Their age ranged between 30 and 50 and they were married women. In addition, safety, availability of food and water were mentioned as some of the positive aspects of staying at the IDPs camp after losing their homes to the Boko Haram insurgency. Lack of money was the main difficulty encountered by the IDW followed by congestion at the Durumi IDPs camp due to the limited rooms and the struggle for food. A total of 26 women participated in the interview, out of which two mentioned that food was not a problem at the camp but lack of money was the major problem. These women were between 20 to 40 years and they comprised single and divorced IDW. Lastly, the issues raised by the IDW at the Fufore IDPs camp, concerned the conditions of the camp: the movement restrictions, and the lack of financial support to cater for their daily needs. However, the availability of food and water were described as the positive aspects of staying at the IDPs camp. Additionally, only four women revealed that they liked the camp. Their reason being the availability of food; their age range was between 20 to 30 years and they comprised married and single IDW.

A study by Olanrewaju et al. (2018) recognized the absence of adequate care and financial capability as the major issues affecting the displaced women in Nigeria. Kasali (2016) asserted that the current situation of IDW and children required evaluation to ascertain what the agencies and the government could offer which included food, shelter, clothing, water, proper sanitation, protection, and healthcare. The International Crisis Group (2016) mentioned that continuous hoarding, stealing and deviation of relief materials by emergency and security operatives at camps in the north-east including host communities in Abuja IDPs settlements are some of the unlawful acts that were common in displacement camps around the country. Consequently, IDPs were deprived of food and non-food items including placing them in extreme vulnerability.

The human security concept mentioned seven vital scope of security. Adequate and sufficient food must be provided to the IDW. The fear of running out of food must be eradicated which is why ensuring

food security of IDW must be safeguarded to prevent vulnerability of the displaced women. In addition, economic security is the ability to secure basic income through productive and lucrative work hence financial capability will emerge when IDW are provided with good and well-paying jobs to cater for their needs. Similarly, the Boko Haram insurgency has posed a threat to the environment especially communities of the IDW and for durable solutions to be achieved environmental dangers caused by the Boko Haram insurgency especially must be eliminated and environmental safety must be protected. Basic amenities such as food, housing, and health care services must be adequately provided by the government and actors to IDW because these are the essentials needed for day-to-day activities. According to Saunders (2013), shelter is an important factor for survival in the first phases of a disaster. Aside from survival, shelter is needed to provide security and personal safety, safeguard from climate change, and improved resistance to ill health and disease.

### **Economic Opportunities**

This section discusses the limited economic opportunities available to the IDW at the IDPs camp which affected their economic independence and financial capability. Hence, the participants from the three IDPs camps shared similar experiences, the most prevailing condition that they mentioned from these three camps were, “No jobs” (A Malkohi IDPs camp 28<sup>th</sup> March–11<sup>th</sup> April 2019; A Fufore IDPs camp, 14<sup>th</sup>–30<sup>th</sup> April 2019), “lack of funds to start a business” (M, M. H. Malkohi IDPs camp, 28<sup>th</sup> March–11<sup>th</sup> April 2019; I Durumi IDPs camp, 5<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> May 2019), “I need a job” (A Fufore IDPs camp, 14<sup>th</sup>–30<sup>th</sup> April 2019; Z Durumi IDPs camp, 5<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> May 2019), “government not doing enough to ensure we have a job” (D Durumi IDPs camp, 5<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> May 2019).

A, mentioned that she was a farmer before the Boko Haram insurgency and had no funds to start a business at the camp. She said:

*“Look at me I am 54 years old and I am not lazy. Before the war, I was into farming and doing pretty good to the extent that I can feed myself and my children. When the war arrived at our village in Gwoza, I abandoned everything. By now they would have destroyed everything*

*I laboured for; though they taught us some skills, but even if I want to start, no funds to do that. The assistance from the government is not enough and we are not allowed to move in and out of the camp like ordinary people, the soldiers are there to monitor where we go and what we do. Everything we own has been burned down to ashes” (14th–30th April 2019, Camp 2).*

In the same vein Z stated that she needed a job to fend for herself and family;

*“I need a job or something I can be selling so that I can fend for myself and my family everything is not working in our favour” (5th–18th May 2019, Camp 3).*

At the camp, they were given various training like bead and soap making but they could not move forward as there was no money to start the business.

M mentioned what she had learned at the camp and the obstacles affecting her skills;

*“I was not working before the Boko Haram came. I take care of our home and children. My husband provides for us but when I got to the camp I learned bead-making but the lack of capital and resources is affecting me” (28th March–11th of April 2019, Camp 1).*

Similarly, M. H. mentioned that she learned soap making but had no money to start a business. She stated;

*“My husband told me not to work back home. That my job is to take care of our home and look after the children. I was happy with what I was doing and he tried his best to provide for us as much as he could but, since the Boko haram people came everything is not the same as it used to be. I have learned soap making and I even got the certificate but no money to start the business. I am trying to raise money to see if I can start something but it is hard. Tell the government to help us” (28th March–11th April 2019, Camp 1).*

However, very few of them can secure jobs at the camps. F was able to secure a job at the camp by making local snacks and selling it to camp officials and other IDPs. She said;

*“I was a farmer before we got here but instead of not doing anything, I was able to gather some amount of money and I started making local snacks at the camp. The people at the camp and the camp officials patronized my local snacks stall” (14th–30th April 2019, Camp 2).*

Hence, it can be seen from the interviews that lack of economic opportunities was an issue faced by IDW at the camps. The lack of economic opportunities particularly, lack of jobs was a huge concern among the IDW at the three IDPs camps (Malkohi, Fufore, and Durumi). This was one of the challenges they encountered and which also represented one of their needs and demands. Their responses showed that there were no adequate provisions for the restoration of their economic opportunities. The absence of little to no economic opportunities was significant among the IDW at the three IDPs camps which indicated that adequate economic opportunities were not provided to the IDW at the IDPs camps.

Economic participation of IDW is crucial to a successful integration as this will enable access to jobs, resources, and different economic opportunities. The provision of skills acquisition is not enough to facilitate the economic participation of IDW; adequate and equal access to resources must be ensured including access to markets as this will enable IDW to be wholly involved in the economic process. According to Nagaraja (2016) the lives of people are influenced by different factors, they are inclined by where they live. Employment opportunities is one of the important influencing factors which determine the level of well-being of the people in which economic participation and opportunity are some of the indicators to measure the well-being of people.

The skills training given are not adequate to empower the IDW economically because women economic empowerment involves women's capability to participate equally in existing markets, access to and control over useful resources, right to decent work, control over their livelihood, and time; and to have a voice, support and

significant participation in economic decision-making at all levels starting from the household, to markets and international institutions. To this extent, for the IDW to be economically empowered, equal access to resources, jobs and markets are crucial in achieving durable solutions. According to Perkins and Zimmerman (1995); Rappaport (1987); Zimmermann and Warschausky (1998), empowerment is both a significant alignment for working in the community and a theoretical model for accepting the method and magnitude of efforts to use control and impact over a choice that affects one's life, organizational functioning, and the quality of community life.

### **Lack of Social Networks**

The lack of social networks creates an obstacle for IDW in accessing economic opportunities be it in securing a job, being financially independent, or to elicit emotional support. An occupational network or social network will assist as strong support for the needs and demands of IDW or the labour market but in the case of IDW, they lack contacts, social and personal networks, or occupational opportunities due to movement restrictions placed on them at the IDPs camps.

The responses concerning the lack of social networks gathered from the three IDPs camps pointed out that the IDWs shared similar issues regarding the lack of social networks. The lack of social networks are explained as “they taught us skills but not useful at the camp because no one will buy from us” (H Malkohi IDPs camp, 28th March–11th April 2019), “I believe the community will help us if we are allowed to go out” (T Malkohi IDPs camp 28th March–11th April 2019), “I make beads for a living but no customers to buy my beads” (U Malkohi IDPs camp 28th March–11th April 2019).

Below are excerpts that conveyed the lack of social networks mentioned by the IDW at all the three IDPs camps: Malkohi, Fufore, and Durumi.

They believed that local or nearby communities were crucial in supporting their displacement and post-displacement. They were fully confident that the communities could provide them with a platform to market their products or services which they have learned from the



camps. The skills were not useful if they could not produce and sell, and hence, social networks with nearby communities were vital. U stated that a major challenge was limited funds and lack of customers to patronize her business:

*“I make beads for a living but there is limited funds and I do not have customers who patronize my beads because I don’t go out or to the market to sell the beads I made” (28th March–11th April 2019, Camp 1).*

T shared her concern. She said:

*“We are restricted at the camp, but if we are given the opportunity I believe the people in this community will help us maybe by giving us a job or by buying what we are selling” (28th March–11th April 2019, Camp 1).*

Similar concerns could be seen at this camp, too. They stated that the lack of social networks was affecting their livelihood since interaction could provide them with a market for their goods. M mentioned:

*“I was a farmer before I lost everything and I do go to the market to sell and sometimes people come to my house to buy from me (I was into chillies, tomatoes and all). So here at the camp, the officials must not see you moving in and out, there is no way we can have a job or sell whatever we want to sell because we do not interact with the community and that is the only way we can get support” (14th–30th April 2019, Camp 2).*

Khadija W mentioned that not relating to people outside the camp would affect them adversely as nobody would buy their products. She said:

*“I think the programme was provided so that we can earn a living but at the moment, there is no job here or at home and we do not relate or know anybody here, and how we are going to sell things?” (5th–18th May 2019, Camp 3).*

The responses of the IDW clearly identified that the lack of adequate support from the government and the movement restrictions at the IDPs camps had a direct impact on their social networks which in turn affected their job and economic opportunities. The IDW at the three IDPs camps (Malkohi, Fufore, & Durumi) explained how the lack of social networks had affected them.

The social network is an essential aspect of integration because it does not only result in physical but also emotional support. The IDW must be given access to the community as this will enhance relations between the IDW and the community. Williams et al. (2008) posited that the act of frequent displacement itself may disrupt the human rights of those affected: the loss of the right to lands, personal documentation, homes, family members, livelihood and social networks which can adversely disturb the ability of IDPs to proclaim and enjoy a whole range of fundamental rights.

Social inclusion of the displaced women will not only put an end to the segregation between the host communities but it will avert inequality, increase economic opportunities, and allow the displaced women and host communities to connect. According to Bulger (2018), social inclusion contributes to the sustainability of humankind, by aiming to integrate into society people who have been habitually marginalised from the opportunities and resources of a healthy world. Encountering enormous global and local problems like poverty, segregation, inequality, and conflict, social inclusion could be our utmost opportunity in connecting as a society and safeguarding the well-being of the whole. To this extent, social network whether formal or informal are foundations of an associated and supportive community. The Intergroup Contact Theory argues that diversity in relations of larger out-group size offers opportunities for helpful intergroup contact and increased contact, particularly when on equal terms, can also improve positive experiences of out-group approaches (Alport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1998 as cited in Fajth et al., 2019). To this extent, the social network of IDW with the community is important for economic activities and integration because this will enhance the relationship between the displaced women and the community.

## **Lack of Targeted Support**

The displaced women had pointed out the lack of adequate support especially towards ensuring security, rebuilding their homes, re-establishing small scale businesses and rebuilding destroyed marketplaces at their respective communities. The participants from the three IDPs camp shared their perspectives and observations concerning the support they received from the government which were found to be similar based on their responses.

Overall, the support received were stated as follows: “the skills programme is the only support and we cannot make use of it for now” (J Durumi IDPs camp 5th–18th May 2019), “the government has not been doing anything to support us” (J Durumi IDPs camp 5th–18th May 2019), “the government is trying but they can improve” (Z Fufore IDPs camp 14th–30th April 2019), “nothing has been done” (A Fufore IDPs camp 14th–30th April 2019), “houses, security, and water are very important to us, nothing has been done concerning that in our hometown” (K Fufore IDPs camp 14th–30th April 2019), “I do not have any news on what the government is doing to help us” (M Malkohi IDPs camp 28th March–11th April 2019). Similarly, the camp officials responded on the support rendered to the IDW by the government, “the government must create an avenue where the acquisition of skills will be useful to the IDW” (Camp official 1, Durumi IDPs camp 5th–16th May 2019), “there are programmes for skills training which might not be very useful at the IDPs camp” (I.O.M. member, Malkohi IDPs camp 28th March–11th April 2019), “a lot of organizations have come in and assisted the displaced women with entrepreneur skills (Camp official 1, Fufore IDPs camp 14th–30th April 2018).

Aside from the overall observations about the lack of targeted support at all the three camps, below are thematic excerpts which shed more light on the lack of support.

Camp official 1 mentioned that the IDW hardly engaged in entrepreneurship before displacement but, civil society has taken roles to empower the women by giving them training. He said:

*“Before displacement, the women hardly engaged in entrepreneurship so a lot of organizations have come*

*in and assisted the displaced women with entrepreneur skills that make them self-reliant and this will be useful to them when they leave the camp” (Camp 2, 14th–30th April 2019).*

This concern was also shared by other IDW from the Furore Camp, who said:

*“The government is trying but they can improve and make everything better for us, our situation can be better than this if the government put in more effort to assist us” (Camp 2, Z, 14th–30th April 2019).*

Similar to the previous camp, the concern was also related to the sustainable benefits of the training given to the IDW.

Camp official 1 shared his perspective on the lack of adequate support given to the IDW. He commented that the skills would empower them economically, however, there needs to be an intervention from the government to enable the women to benefit from the training. He said:

*“...the skills acquisition will aid their economic independence. Although a few skills acquisition schemes are currently on-going, more needs to be done and the government must create an avenue where the acquisition will be useful to the IDW” (Camp 3, 5th–18th 2019).*

As observed at the two IDPs camps, a similar concern was raised at this camp, on the training given to the IDW. Although they commented it was good and useful for the women, yet, it would not be useful if there was no avenue for them to create some products and market them. One of the I.O.M. team members shared his perspective:

*“There are programmes for skills acquisition for women where they learn new skills training which might not be very useful at the IDPs camp but will be useful when they are out of the camp and able to sell something” (Camp official 1, 28th March–11th April 2019).*

Besides the training issue, other concerns were raised. Some believed that there was no action from the government to provide them with sustainable places to settle in. A believed that:

*“I believe that the government is not doing anything if they are doing something we should be at home by now, the support we have is not enough to settle in, cater for our needs, and replace what we have lost” (28th March–11th April 2019).*

The lack of targeted support by the government has received a great deal of attention from the IDW at IDPs camps. Based on their responses, there is no doubt that the government with other stakeholders have provided skills acquisition but it seems like this is the only significant support rendered so far at the three IDPs camps (Malkohi, Fufore & Durumi). Despite the training given, it appears that the IDW could not enjoy sustainable benefits from the training as there is no platform for them to produce, practice, or manufacture and sell products or services. It is purely skills acquisition and their fear is, it might be forgotten later on as they do not practise it. They have also expressed disappointment since this can be a tool or a way to build better lives during the displacement and post-displacement period. In addition to this support, on the whole, the IDW expressed the lack of support in terms of facilitating or providing them with sustainable homes and security.

Targeted support simply means support that truly reflects the needs and wants of the IDW. The entrepreneurship skills offered have not been useful to the IDW so far; destroyed houses have not been replaced and security in their places of origin are not adequately safeguarded. The provision of these measures will produce personal independence and self-determination of the IDW that is the ability to make choices based on preferences, cognizance of personal preferences, interests, and strengths. However, if this support is not rendered achieving a long-term solution may be difficult and the IDW will continue to be susceptible to threats and chaos. According to Buchenrieder et al. (2017) human security is concerned with two major elements, freedom from want and fear, and these two elements are enclosed by the right to live in dignity. Overall, it can be noted that human security emphasizes the protection of individuals from lingering and unexpected threats and the protection of livelihoods, survival, and dignity when confronted with these threats. Moreover, according to Acharya (2001) human security has been differently accessible

as a means of decreasing the human costs of violent conflict, as an approach to allow governments to address basic human needs and balance the inequalities of globalization and as a basis for providing social safety nets for people underprivileged and relegated by the unexpected and severe economic crisis.

## **CONCLUSION**

The responses of the IDW at the three IDPs camps showed similar concerns affecting the IDW including difficulties and challenges encountered at the camps. However, it is important to note that some positive action have been taken by the government such as the provision of skills acquisition among the IDW which is apparent at the three IDPs camps. This will promote self-reliance among the IDW. Self-reliance is the ability to meet essential needs for day-to-day activities and enjoy social and economic rights in a viable and noble manner. Thus, self-reliance protects and improves the livelihoods of displaced women. Also, the lack of attacks at the IDPs camps as mentioned by the IDW indicated that the government has been taken adequate measures to protect the safety of the displaced women especially from armed attacks which are mainly caused by the Boko Haram group.

Conversely, the challenges encountered by the IDW at the IDPs camps cannot be overlooked. The IDW faced different challenges ranging from movement restrictions, to financial difficulties, lack of opportunities to start a business, inadequate assistance from the government, overcrowding and lack of adequate food and/or water. The findings of this study have extended beyond existing studies on displacement. Apart from adding to the body of knowledge on displacement, it points out the loopholes in ensuring the safety and protection of IDW in Nigeria. In addition, the findings also indicate that the government must support the IDW beyond providing clean food and water, by freeing them from all forms of violence or threats that lead to their displacement. In addition, to provide the IDW with an eco-system to build their own lives by way of access and networking with their local and nearby communities and equal distribution of economic resources.

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