



SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF CONFLICT: THE PREDICAMENT OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN BENUE STATE

Patrick I. Ukase (Ph.D)¹* and Terungwa P. J. Jato (Ph.D)

¹Department of History and International Studies, Kogi State University, Anyigba, Kogi.

²Department of Business Administration, Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi

*Corresponding author E-Mail: patrickukase@yahoo.com; patrickukase@gmail.com; Phone: +2347035842604; +23408075399028

Cite this article:

Patrick I.U., Terungwa P.J.J. (2022), Socio-Economic Consequences of Conflict: The Predicament of Internally Displaced Persons in Benue State. African Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Research 5(5), 10-26. DOI: 10.52589/AJSSHR-ZA1BOPLM

Manuscript History

Received: 4 Aug 2022

Accepted: 1 Sept 2022

Published: 3 Oct 2022

Copyright © 2022 The Author(s).

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0), which permits anyone to share, use, reproduce and redistribute in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

ABSTRACT: *The main aim of the study was to examine the conditions of IDPs in Benue State, with other specific objectives. A data was collected from sample of 236,262 IDPs obtained from 3 official camps (Abagena in Makurdi, Gbajimba in Guma, and Anyiin in Logo) and 3 unofficial camps (Agatu, Gwer-West and Anyiin Community LGAs) out of the twenty-eight (6 official & 22 un-official) IDP camps with a population of 483,693 IDPs. Primary data was sourced essentially through oral interviews and Focused Group Discussions (FGD). Secondary data was obtained from published sources. The qualitative analytical approaches of grounded method and hermeneutic analysis were used to analyse the data from interview transcripts and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). These were complemented with descriptive methods. Findings of the study showed that the State Government could only provide shelter and other support for 15% of the IDPs leaving the 85% to fend for themselves. The effects of displacements on the affected rural communities in Benue State were found to include: land grabbing and likely extinction of the rural communities, changes in the demographic composition of the rural communities, economic and political backwardness, among others. In terms of the prevailing conditions in the IDP camps, the findings revealed that all IDPs are facing challenges of accommodation, inadequate food, inadequate employment opportunities, poor clothing, lack of access to quality education and poor healthcare. These have left the IDPs with unfavourable short and long-term impacts which include: homelessness, starvation/malnutrition, diseases, death, etc. Conclusively, though there has been support from both the State and Federal governments and humanitarian assistance from other spirited bodies, more interventions are urgently needed in the areas of shelter, food, clothing, health, education, and access to employment for vulnerable IDP families across Benue State, as they still wallow in pains in their current state of deprivation. The study also recommends that the Benue State government should ensure the implementation of the existing principles, guidelines, and strategies targeting IDPs to alleviate their suffering.*

KEYWORDS: Internally Displaced Persons, Herder-Farmer Conflict, Condition of IDPs, Benue State



INTRODUCTION

One state that has come under severe, intermittent and endemic attacks from the Fulani herdsmen is Benue. According to Wegh (2018), the ongoing war between Fulani herdsmen and crop farmers throughout the country, which has the largest geographical spread in Nigeria's history, has been the most devastating in the state. The attacks became so severe that virtually all parts of the state have been affected in one way or the other. It is no news that the attacks have left many people homeless and without a meaningful source of income. From what started in 2008 at Guma and Gwer-West Local Government Areas (LGAs) of the state as a minor skirmish, the Fulani-herders attacks on the farmers gradually proceeded beyond these two LGAs by 2010 and by January 2018, it had covered the entire Guma and several Council Wards in Gwer-West LGA. Other LGAs attacked include: Agatu, Makurdi, Okpokwu, Logo, Ukum, Kwande, Katsina-Ala, Tarka, Buruku and Gwer-East. The attacks assumed the dimension of a full-scale war of aggression, which has witnessed the use of sophisticated weapons by the rampaging Fulani herders and leading to the death of farmers, destruction of farm produce and farm lands, and eventually their means of existence.

Aside from causing the death of several people in the rural farming communities, the attacks by the Fulani insurgents have led to thousands of people becoming internally displaced, leading to enormous psychological, emotional, health and other related stress and social dislocations on those affected by these displacements. In fact, those mostly affected by these attacks are the vulnerable groups in the rural areas, such as women, children and the aged. The condition of these internally displaced persons (IDPs), who have remained in several camps in the state for more than three years, tend to be fast deteriorating thus turning the camps into permanent nightmare centres rather than the temporal comforting zones. It is against this backdrop that this study interrogates the dilemma and conditions of IDPs in Benue state, who from the hitherto comfort of their homes have suddenly become homeless and compelled to live in makeshift conditions for several years in the wilderness.

The study, therefore, sought to examine the dilemma of IDPs in Benue state. And specifically examine the nature of the prevailing conditions in the IDP camps and ascertain how the IDPs are responding to these conditions, analyse the effects of these displacements on the affected rural communities in Benue state, and assess the impact of the prevailing conditions on the IDPs, especially on vulnerable groups such as children, women and the aged.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Global Protection Cluster Working Group (2010), internally displaced persons (IDPs) are part of the broader civilian population that needs protection and assistance because of conflict and human rights abuses or due to natural disasters. In their condition of displacement, the IDPs tend to lose control of their social, economic, and political life and find it hard to live normal lives again; and thereby become vulnerable to any negative shift in these aspects of life. It is based on this that the United Nations put together the *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement* in 2004 to protect IDPs. Principles 1, 3 and 4 hold respectively that:

1. Internally displaced persons shall enjoy, in full equality, the same rights and freedoms under international and domestic law as do other persons in their country. They shall



not be discriminated against in the enjoyment of any rights and freedoms on the grounds that they are internally displaced.

3. National authorities have the primary duty and responsibility to provide protection and humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons within their jurisdictions. (It adds that) Internally displaced persons have the right to request and receive protection and humanitarian assistance from these authorities. They shall not be persecuted or punished for making such a request.
4. Certain internally displaced persons, such as children, especially unaccompanied minors, expectant mothers, mothers with young children, female heads of household, persons with disabilities and elderly persons shall be entitled to protection and assistance required by their condition and to treatment which takes into account their special needs (United Nations, 2004, p. 2).

Also, the Heads of State and government of the Member States of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region in 2006 produced the *Protocol on the Protection and Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons*, in which some of its article read thus:

Member States shall be responsible for assessing the needs of internally displaced persons and shall, to the extent necessary, assist them with registration and, in such cases, Member States shall maintain a national database for the registration of internally displaced persons.

Member States shall facilitate rapid and unimpeded humanitarian access and assistance to internally displaced persons (Article 3, Nos 4 & 6, p. 3).

Equally, the African Union, in its Special Summit held In Kampala, Uganda, on the 22nd October, 2009, adopted the *African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention)*. It contains, in part, the following objectives:

Establish a legal framework for preventing internal displacement, and protecting and assisting internally displaced persons in Africa;

Ensure assistance to internally displaced persons by meeting their basic needs as well as allowing and facilitating rapid and unimpeded access by humanitarian organisations and personnel;

Promote self-reliance and sustainable livelihoods amongst internally displaced persons, provided that such measures shall not be used as a basis for neglecting the protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons, without prejudice to other means of assistance (Articles 2b, 3j&3k, pp. 4-5).

Also, in 2019, United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR) came up with *Policy on UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacements*, whose vision is that: "all internally displaced people can find protection from harm, live peacefully, learn, work and flourish as contributing members of the communities in which they live, and find longer term solutions to build a secure future" (UNHCR, 2019, p. 7).

However, even with these documented efforts in place, the spate of internal displacement has been on increase and the conditions of the IDPs seem far from meeting the minimum



standard. There are various studies pointing to this. For instance, Nunez-Ferrera, Aubrey, Earle and Loose (2020) posited that “traditional humanitarian approaches to IDP integration and durable solutions in urban areas are inadequate. Funding streams, which tend to focus on direct support from people of concern, are limited, which often reach only a fraction of the caseload. They fail to consider weaknesses in urban systems and service provision, and the vulnerabilities of local communities” (p. 14). In the same light, Isaac et al. (2020) discovered that internally displaced persons in Abuja, experience severe housing, water, and energy poverty. The UNHCR (2017) equally observed that: “Despite the progress achieved since the Humanitarian Reform, concerns remain that IDPs still do not receive adequate attention...yet IDPs continue to face serious and persistent threats to their wellbeing and, as the phenomenon of protracted displacement grows, have limited opportunities to find solutions” (p. 2). Ashiru (cited by Ekpa& Dahlan, 2016) further asserted that “the protection and assistance of IDPs is confronted by series of legal and policy issues that collectively deny IDPs the much needed protection and assistance, given the interminable nature of internal conflicts in Nigeria” (pp. 109-110).

In Benue state, among other similar reports on the situations of the IDPs, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) (2019) reported that:

In the four camps where we work, we see a number of recurring health problems related to people’s living conditions and lack of water and sanitation. In places without proper shelters, our patients suffer from respiratory tract infections. The most common disease we treat is malaria, which increases even further during the rainy season. We see cases of acute watery diarrhoea and skin infections such as scabies. We also see patients with gastritis, which we suspect is often connected to the psychological hardships they have suffered.

The environment of the camps and informal settlements has a negative impact on people’s health. We see problems like improper waste management, overcrowding and stagnant water in which mosquitoes can breed.

These points to one fact, that either the protocols or guiding principles, have not been observed or implemented, or have failed to bring succour to the plight of the IDPs. As such, we may not only continue to have IDPs, but having several of them living in untoward situations. As the Global Protection Cluster Working Group (2010) observed, the primary responsibility for protecting IDPs and all persons within their own country rests with the national authorities of the country. Regrettably, some governments have been unable to live up to that responsibility. This further gives credence to the reason why continuous attention must be devoted to regular checks and assessment on the living conditions of the IDPs in their new abodes.

METHOD

Population/Sample Size of Participants

Data were obtained from the twenty-eight (6 official & 22 un-official) IDP camps with a population of 483,693 IDPs. A sample of three (3) official camps, Abagena (Makurdi), Gbajimba Camp (Guma) and Anyiin (Logo) and three (3) unofficial camps, Agatu, Gwer-West and Anyiin Community LGAs were selected. This is justified on the basis that each



camp picked represents a senatorial zone of the state. Further, a justification criterion for selection is based on the most populous camp within such a senatorial zone. But for the official camps, since none exist in Zone C, and to guide against skewness and bias, the study decided to add a third camp with the highest number of population, after picking the most populous camps in zone A and B. This has led to a representative fraction of about 50% (236,262 persons) of the total population of 483,693 IDPs. However, given the homogeneity of the population, as well as the enormous sub-population sample, the Taro-Yamane technique (see eqn.1) becomes relevant in enabling the determination of an ideal sample size for administration of the tools of analysis. Furthermore, the accompanying proportionate sample of the camps was also computed (as in eqn.2) to guide against bias.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2} \quad (\text{eqn. 1})$$

where:

n = sample size required

N = number of people in the population

e = allowable error at 5% or 0.05 level of significance.

In applying the Taro–Yamane formula for determination of sample size we have;

$$\begin{aligned} n &= \frac{483,693}{1 + 483,693(0.05)^2} \\ &= 399.74 \\ &\approx 400 \text{ persons} \end{aligned}$$

The study applied the following proportionate sampling method to enable equitable and unbiased sampling.

$$n_h = n \frac{N_h}{N} \quad (\text{eqn. 2})$$

where;

n_h = proportionate sample of the strata in this case the camp selected

n = sample size computed, which in this case is 400 persons

N_h = sample population of the strata selected

N = total population of the study

The application of eqn.2 led to the proportionate sampling population depicted on Table 1.

**Table 1: Sample size determination**

Official Camps					
S/N	Name of Camp	N_h	N	N	$n_h = n \frac{N_h}{N}$
o		Population of Camp	Sub-sample Population	Sample Population	Proportionate sample
1	Abagena (Zone B)	8,210	236,262	400	14
2	Gbajimba (Zone B)	29,500	236,262	400	50
3	Anyiin (Zone A)	7,466	236,262	400	13
Unofficial Camps.					
1	Agatu, (Zone C)	65,347	236,262	400	110
2	Gwer-West (Zone B)	60,243	236,262	400	102
3	Anyiin (Zone A)	65,496	236,262	400	111
	Total	236,262			400

Data Collection

Both primary and secondary data were used in the study. Primary data was sourced essentially through oral interviews and Focused Group Discussions (FGD). Those interviewed included IDPs from the selected official camps, health workers in the IDP camps, and officials of the Benue State Emergency Management Agency (BENSEMA). A Focused Group was adopted for the unofficial camps, with a focus group of 10-12 persons. These were done with strict adherence to the 'do no harm' principle by not violating the rights and dignity of the IDPs. To this connection, questions considered to be too sensitive and capable of revealing the privacy of IDPs were ignored. Secondary data were obtained from published sources like publications of relevant government agencies and NGOs; extant literature, such as books, journals and commissioned papers. Table 2 provides a brief guide to this.

Table 2: Data collection

	Theme	Method	Source
Activity 1	Location and Demographic Characteristics of Interviewed IDPs	Secondary data	Government, agency, institutional sources
Activity 2	Effects of displacements on the affected rural communities in Benue State	Secondary Structured Interviews	Government agency IDPs
Activity 3	The prevailing conditions in the IDP camps and how IDPs are responding to the conditions	Secondary Structured Interviews Focus group discussion (FGD)	Government agency, institutional sources IDPs
Activity 4	The impact of the prevailing conditions on the IDPs	Secondary Structured Interviews Focus group	Government agency, institutional sources IDPs



		discussion (FGD)	
Activity 5	The response of State and non-state actors to the challenges confronting IDPs	Secondary Structured Interviews Focus group discussion (FGD)	Government agency, institutional sources IDPs

Source: Authors' compilation, 2020.

The basic questions that will guard the interviews and FGDs are as coded below.

Table 3: Coded interview/FGD questions

Code	Question
Code 01	How would you describe the nature of your accommodation?
Code 02	How adequate would you consider your feeding habits?
Code 03	How will you describe the nature of your clothing
Code 04	How is the nature of primary health care, its accessibility and availability in the camp?
Code 05	For how long have you stayed away from school and do you have a functional school in the camp?
Code 06	What is your source of income and how adequate is the income from this source?

Source: Author's design.

For simplicity of aggregation and further analysis, responses to these questions from the interviews (for the official camps) and FGD (for the unofficial camps) were graded with percentages on a Likert type scale thus:

20% = very good situation

40% = good situation

60% = moderate situation

80% = bad situation

100% = worst situation.

These were ascribed in accordance with the description of the situation by the respondents.

Data Analysis

The study triangulated between some analytical approaches to explain the phenomenon by utilising a qualitative approach to analyse the information from interview transcripts and FGD. The grounded method, where interpretations were "grounded in" (or based on) observed empirical data, and hermeneutic analysis, the subjective meaning of the data interpreted within its socio-historical context, were also adopted for the study. The relevance



of the qualitative analysis to this study is to provide adequate explanatory understanding of the phenomenon, which explains the cause-effect relationship. Using quantitative analysis, which employed descriptive statistics like simple percentages and pictorial charts, the quantum representations and critical descriptions of issues of the study were done.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Camps

Although the Fulani herder attacks that heightened the rate of internal displacement in Benue state were widespread, covering several parts of the state and displacing many persons, only six (6) official camps were established. These include: Abagena Camp in Makurdi LGA; Daudu I, Daudu II and Gbajimba Camps in Guma LGA; Anyiin and Ugba Camps in Logo LGAs. These locations have housed 73,879 IDPs as at 2018 (see Table 4). With the attacks still on, coupled with the difficulty to rebuild, these camps still accommodate these numbers, which may have changed slightly.

Table 4: Official IDP camps Benue state

S/N o	Name of Camp/LGA	No. of IDPs
1	Abagena Camp (Mkd LGA)	8,210
2	Daudu Camp I (UNHCR SHELTER) (Guma LGA)	5,451
3	Daudu Camp II (Guma LGA)	20,172
4	Gbajimba Camp (Guma LGA)	29,500
5	Anyiin Camp (Logo LGA)	7,466
6	Ugba Camp (Logo LGA)	3,080
	Total	73,879

Source: Benue State Emergency Management Agency, 2018

Unofficial camps totaling twenty-two (22) were also self-created by the IDPs in Makurdi, Agatu, Guma, Gwer-West, Kwande, Ugba, Okpokwu and Logo LGAs. These camps, as in Table 5, collectively provided homes for 409,814 homeless persons

Table 5: Unofficial IDP camps in Benue state

S/N o	Name of Camp/Community	No. of IDPs
1	Abagena Community	7,691
2	Abeda Camp	2,668
3	Abeda Community	22,949
4	Agan Camp	4,798
5	Agan Community	5,517
6	Agatu	65,347
7	AngwanOchonu	4,951



8	Anini Village	4,962
9	Anyiin Community	65,496
10	Daudu Community	43,344
11	FHA	4,353
12	Gbajimba Community	28,875
13	Gwer West	60,243
14	Ichwa	9,587
15	Kwande	9,465
16	LGEANASME	23,151
17	LGEATyodugh	5,672
18	NEPA Quarters	8,008
19	OgiriAjene	9,506
20	Okpokwu	4,080
21	Tionsha	10,500
22	Ugba Community	8,651
	Total	409,814

Source: Benue State Emergency Management Agency, 2018

From the distributions above, a total of 483,693¹ persons were internally displaced as of 2018. Of this number, the government could only provide shelter for 15% of the IDPs; leaving the 85% to provide for themselves. This negates any of the protocol or guiding principles concerning the provision for IDPs earlier mentioned. If these provisions were to be taken seriously, all the IDPs would have been camped, or at least, the distribution would have been in the reverse in favour of those camped.

Gender

The sex distribution for persons aged 6 (six) years and older shows that of the IDPs in official camps, 28,023 were male; with 28,071 female. In the unofficial camps, 159,955 were male while 155,026 were female.

Table 6: Sex and age distribution of IDPs in Benue state

Camps	Total No. of IDPs	Children 0-5 Yrs	Children 6-17 Yrs			Adults 18+		
			Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Official – 06	73,879	17,785	12,353	10,290	22,643	15,670	17,781	33,451
Unofficial – 22	409,814	94,832	73,273	63,528	136,801	86,682	91,498	178,180
Total	483,693	112,617	85,626	73,818	159,444	102,352	109,279	211,631

Source: Benue State Emergency Management Agency, 2018

¹ It is worthy to note that beyond this figure is the number of IDPs that found shelter with relatives and which were not counted.

Age

The age categories, as in Table 6, indicates that children within the age bracket of 0-17 years make the greater percentage of the population in both official and unofficial camps. For instance, in the official camps the total number of children within the age bracket of 0-5 years totaled 17,785 while those in the unofficial camps totaled 94,832, bringing the total number of children in both official and unofficial camps to 112,617. Those between 6-17 years summed up to 159,444. This puts a total population of children in both camps at 272,061. This is followed by the population of adult females in both camps which totals 109,279 as shown in Table 6. The adult male population is the least with 102,352 males. The percentage distribution of these numbers in Figure 2 shows the extent of vulnerability of IDPs. The children and female populations account for 56% and 23% of the IDPs respectively, adding up to 79%. The adult male (active population) makes only 21%. This vulnerable group increases if we take into account the male aged 60 years and above.

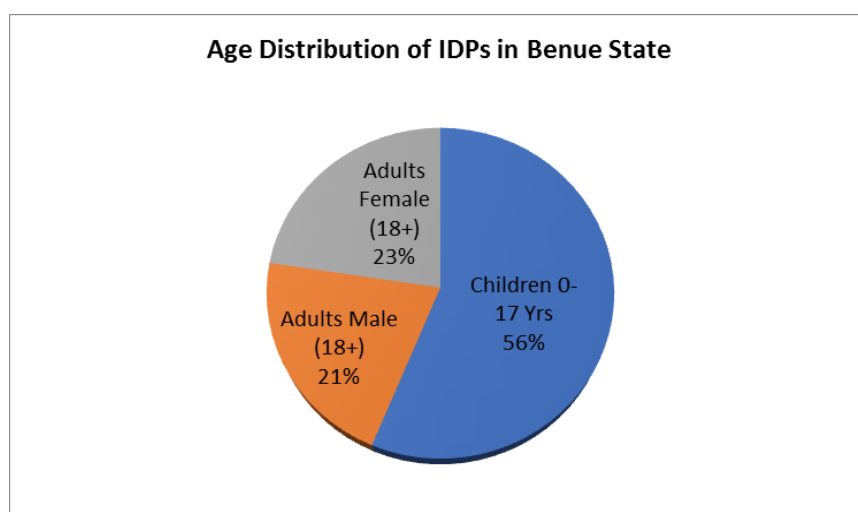


Figure 2: Age distribution of IDPs in Benue State

Other Demographics

A further vulnerability distribution of the IDPs in the state in terms of pregnant women, nursing mothers, the aged (60 years above), the injured, the sick, and malnourished showed that, of the IDPs in official camps, pregnant women were 1,983 (representing 3%), while 4,007 (i.e., 5%) were nursing mothers. Furthermore, 3,260 (making 4.35%) were aged, while those injured and sick were 225 (0.28%) and 190 (2%) respectively as captured in Table 7. The statistics further revealed that 5% (amounting to 3,475) of the IDPs were malnourished.

**Table 7: Vulnerability distribution of IDPs in official camps in Benue state**

S/N o	Name of Camp/LGA	No. of IDPs	Pregnant Women	Nursing Mothers	Aged 60>	Injured	Sick	Malnourished
1	Abagena Camp (Mkd LGA)	8,210	310	504	409	12	170	701
2	Daudu Camp I (UNHCR SHELTER) (Guma LGA)	5,451	196	391	241	7	115	166
3	Daudu Camp II (Guma LGA)	20,172	493	1,404	1,068	96	447	960
4	Gbajimba Camp (Guma LGA)	29,500	742	1,344	1,067	49	424	1,276
5	Anyiin Camp (Logo LGA)	7,466	191	260	316	19	118	211
6	Ugba Camp (Logo LGA)	3,080	51	104	159	7	70	161
	Total	73,879	1,983	4,007	3,260	190	1,344	3,475

Source: Benue State Emergency Management Agency, 2018

In the unofficial camps (see distribution in Table 8), 9,362 (6.04%) of the total number of women were pregnant, while 16,650 (10.74%) of the women were nursing mothers. The aged were 15,315 (9.57%); while the injured, sick, and malnourished were 1,309 (0.32%), 9,676 (3%) and 20,465 (5%) respectively.

Table 8: Vulnerability distribution of IDPs in unofficial camps in Benue state

S/N o	Name of Camp/Community	No. of IDPs	Pregnant Women	Nursing Mothers	Aged 60>	Injured	Sick	Malnourished
1	Abagena Community	7,691	191	424	266	28	229	247
2	Abeda Camp	2,668	52	101	86	7	39	45
3	Abeda Community	22,949	556	822	868	71	533	1,291
4	Agan Camp	4,798	153	308	371	9	32	158
5	Agan Community	5,517	185	257	200	13	107	508
6	Agatu	65,347	1,422	2,760	2,293	251	1,398	3,264
7	AngwanOchonu	4,951	104	262	270	23	422	360
8	Anini Village	4,962	171	315	169	29	133	351



9	Anyiin Community	65,49 6	1,360	1,953	2,100	98	1,08 7	3,119
10	Daudu Community	43,34 4	1,154	1,990	2,002	200	1,13 6	1,991
11	FHA	4,353	113	176	68	7	66	182
12	Gbajimba Community	28,87 5	802	1,182	758	92	507	1,370
13	Gwer West	60,24 3	1,219	2,364	2,183	146	1,21 6	3,185
14	Ichwa	9,587	263	475	345	64	247	460
15	Kwande	9,465	126	335	347	91	231	580
16	LGEANASME	23,15 1	474	942	852	29	299	1,283
17	LGEATyodugh	5,672	112	266	323	13	171	292
18	NEPA Quarters	8,008	174	376	333	5	367	38
19	OgiriAjene	9,506	271	456	409	45	631	330
20	Okpokwu	4,080	66	173	175	6	296	157
21	Tionsha	10,50 0	213	431	535	40	225	780
22	Ugba Community	8,651	181	282	362	42	304	474
	Total	409,8 14	9,362	16,650	15,31 5	1,309	9,67 6	20,465

Source: Benue State Emergency Management Agency, 2018

These figures, which are likely to have gone worse with passage of time, show how vulnerable the IDPs in the State are.

FINDINGS

The study's findings, in terms of the earlier set objectives, are discussed under the following subsections.

Effects of displacements on the affected rural people and communities in Benue state

The intermittent and endemic displacements arising from these attacks have had far-reaching effects on the rural people and communities so affected. In line with *objective one*, some of the identified effects of displacements on the affected rural people and communities in Benue State are discussed hereunder:

- i. Land grabbing and likely extinction of the rural communities:* It is clear and noted by many, like Bamidele (2018), that farmers have been displaced and dispossessed of their farms by armed Fulani herdsmen. In most of the rural communities that the Fulani herders invaded and caused forceful displacement, such communities have been taken-over by the invaders, with land and other assets of the displaced under the invaders seizure. As long as the land keeps producing green vegetation (which is the main reason



for the invasion), the herders are not willing to evacuate from these communities. This has made it hard for the indigenes to return back to their ancestral homes, even at places where the attacks have been relatively brought under control. If this should continue, it may lead to permanent take-over of the communities by the invaders, thereby casting doubts of the further existence of such affected communities. In Benue state, most of the rural communities displaced have been unable to return to their ancestral homes because of the threats from the herders. In Gwer-West, Guma, Makurdi, Anyiin and Agatu, several displaced communities have continued to perambulate in their respective Local Government Headquarters, while the others have remained in IDP camps.

- ii. Changes in the demographic composition of the rural communities:** One of the consequences of the internal displacement (ID) has been the displacement of large numbers of people, which has caused demographic changes in the ethnic composition of the affected communities. With over 3,000 people killed from 2008 to date and still counting, the population of these communities has drastically reduced. There are also those who have been maimed and may have remained incapacitated/disabled. Equally, some of the displaced are most likely not to return because of past traumas and a continuous feeling of insecurity, absence of economic opportunities, high rates of poverty, which will make it difficult for them to finance their return or the reconstruction of their pre-conflict homes. Besides, most of the IDPs, particularly the younger ones and those outside the official camps, may have re-established their lives and livelihoods and have built social capital in new areas of residence, and may no longer have connections with their place of origin or a desire to return there. Therefore, even when returning may occur, it is most likely that it will be the older and economically inactive population that may move back, which then alters the demography of the communities. This would in turn affect the dynamic of community life, as well as hampers the potentials for economic activity and development in these areas.
- iii. Economic and political backwardness:** Due to the disruption of economic activities and destruction of both consumable and reproducible goods by the attacks, economic life has been crippled and brought to halt. The estimated Naira value of loss of property to these communities runs into hundreds of billion. For example, the loss of one of the main factors of production – land – means that the post-conflict situation of these affected communities will increase unemployment rate, food insecurity, low income, and poverty. Therefore, such communities, if ever reoccupied by the indigenes again, will experience serious difficulties in resuscitating their economies not to talk of growing them. As such, their economies will ever remain backward.

Politically, there is a sense in which the affected communities have been disenfranchised and denied the opportunity to elect their representatives. For instance, the polling booths or units of the affected communities in Benue state recorded zero turn-out in the 2015 general elections due to the displacements. Besides, several youths who turned 18 years and would have had the opportunity to vote for the first time in their lives were denied the opportunity to do so. This has long term implications for the nation's democratic trajectory. These communities may become backward since their citizens may have developed political apathy arising from their disenfranchisement in the political and democratic process.



- iv. It creates historical and psychological negatives:** The memories of the attacks, the loss of loved ones and property, family separations, coupled with the discrimination and hardship that IDPs may undergo for being displaced are likely to create negative psychological memories, which they will have to struggle with for a long time. This may give the people of the affected communities a negative sense of their history and also develop some negatively fixated psychological habits like permanent hate against the Fulani ethnic group.
- v. Social and cultural decadents:** Hunger, unemployment, and depression can breed social and cultural ills like theft, kidnaping, armed robbery, prostitution, abortion, and general disregard for life of others. These are the likely consequences these communities will face or are facing as a result of the attacks and displacement of their people. In return, some imported deleterious acts will be introduced into the communities, which are antithetical to the existing customs, norms and values of these communities.

Prevailing Conditions in the IDP Camps

Objective two was set to examine the prevailing conditions in the IDP camps and ascertain how the IDPs are responding to these conditions.

As noted by Global Protection Cluster Working Group (2010),

Forced from their homes, IDPs also experience specific forms of deprivation, such as loss of shelter, and often face heightened or particular protection risks. These risks may include: armed attack and abuse while fleeing in search of safety; family separation, including an increase in the number of separated and unaccompanied children; heightened risk of sexual and gender-based violence, particularly affecting women and children; arbitrary deprivation of land, homes and other property; and displacement into inhospitable environments, where they suffer stigmas, marginalization, discrimination or harassment (p.1).

This situation, as described by Global Protection Cluster Working Group, is not far from what the IDPs in Benue state are facing; if there is any comparison, the woes of the Benue state IDPs seem more. Though these anguishes emanate from every facet of living of the IDPs, those critically interrogated are in the area of basic needs,² such as accommodation, feeding, health, education, and employment. Findings in these areas as presented in Table 9 and figure 3 and explained as follows:

Table 9: Aggregate responses per camp

S/No.	Name of Camp	%/Code Number ^a					
		01	02	03	04	05	06
1	Abagena	100	100	80	60	80	100
2	Anyiin	100	100	80	40	80	100
3	Gbajimba	100	100	80	60	80	100
4	Agatu	100	100	100	80	80	100
5	Anyiin Community	100	100	80	60	80	100
6	Gwer-West	100	100	100	100	80	100
Average (%)		100	100	86.67	66.70	80.00	100

^aThis is as explained in section 3.3.

Source: Author's compilation from field work.

² These, in line with the global human development standards, are among the indicators that define the minimum basic needs of any human existence and progress.

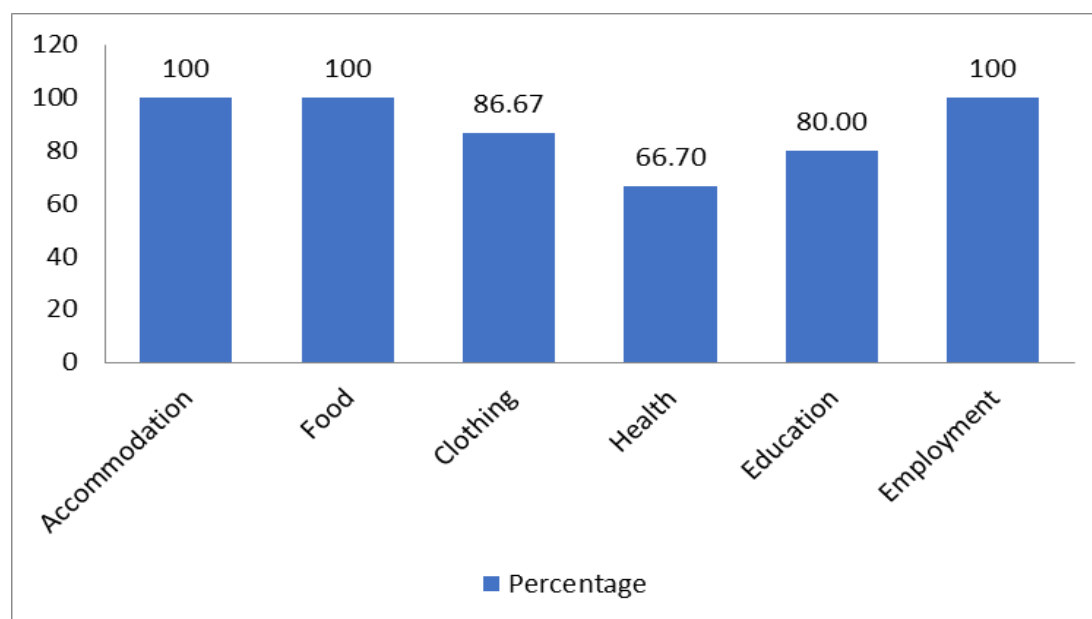


Figure 3: Percentage distribution of IDPs in Benue State on their conditions in camps

The percentages show that 100% of those interviewed said accommodation, food and employment are their major challenges. These were followed by clothing, education, and health which 86.7%, 80% and 66.70% of the respondents respectively indicated as their problems. These articles of challenges are further interrogated hereunder.

Accommodation

Accommodation is one of the major challenges confronting the IDPs. People, who hitherto lived in their relatively comfortable homes, now in displacement, suffer inadequate accommodation. However, recognizing the fact that the IDPs are no-less humans, Principle 18, Paragraph 1, of the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement stipulate that: “All IDPs have the right to an adequate standard of living.” This is contrary to what is obtainable in Benue state. Many IDPs, especially those living in temporary homes, in different parts of the state are grievously suffering from the problem of housing. Thousands of these IDPs have continued to live in very difficult conditions in collective centres called camps,³ while several others stay with relatives or informal-illegal settlements without a permanent housing solution. While those that are accommodated in government-run collective centres receive government support or humanitarian aid, those who live in so-called “unofficial camps” are not eligible to receive government support or humanitarian aid. Getting adequate accommodation has been identified as the most pressing need for the majority of the IDPs in both camps. These camps, which are built from makeshift materials and are small, lack the basic facilities like good water source(s), toilets, light, good road, and are located within dirty

³ Those which are the creations of the state government are referred to as “official camps” and other groupings, though accepted by the state government, termed, ‘Unofficial Camps’.



areas or in open fields. Often they occupy premises illegally and, therefore, exist outside the reach of basic social infrastructure and humanitarian assistance.

In their responses to interviews and in FGDs, all the IDPs (making 100%) said they were not satisfied with their accommodation condition, complaining of the size and the lack of other facilities that make a home comfortable or near comfort to what they were enjoying before their present predicament. For instance, EramoAtov in the official camp in Anyiin (on the 13th August, 2020) said that: “we don’t have adequate and clean water in the camp. Four (4) boreholes were sunk to ease the problem of water scarcity, but unfortunately two of them got spoiled – only two are functional. We used to go outside the camp to look for water.” On her part, KambagwaAsoona in the Abagena camp (on 14th August, 2020) stated that:

We don’t have adequate food in the camp. Again, our tents are not good for human habitation – some have no windows; some have no doors while in some the cement that overlaid the surface has been removed. In addition, there are no mats. Most of the mats that were given to us are torn.

MwueseNaakaa in her response (13th August, 2020) corroborated the above information by stating that, the tents are no longer good for human habitation, no beds and beddings and no toiletries. While all the camps remain in a dehumanising and deplorable state, lacking even the fundamental features of a home, some have some of the facilities in place. For instance, the IDPs in Gbajimba camp said they have adequate water supply in quality and quantity but lack other attributes to make it a home. The situation was worse in the unofficial camps with no government support or humanitarian aid. This was the fate of those in Gwer-West and Okpokwu with self-made camps.

Feeding

Apart from accommodation, another major challenge is the issue of feeding, which the IDPs ominously suffer in their camps. Getting food in the right quantity and quality has remained an imaginary situation to the people. Findings reveal that the IDPs are poorly fed in both the official and unofficial camps. This is reflective in their responses when interviewed as 100% decried inadequacies in food supplies. AkaayorAnyakpa from Anyiin (on 13th August, 2020) lamented that “apart from medical and health challenges, we have the problem of lack of food. We sell firewood to eke-out a living. Again, we have no clothes – most of the clothes that were given to us are torn. You can see that even the one I am putting on is worn-out”. EramoAtov (on the 13th August, 2020) in her response also identified lack of food as her major challenge in the camp; adding that: “it was this problem that propelled my son (IortumburAtov) and his father to go back home where they were killed by the Fulani militia.”

According to Fidelis Igbazwua (male, aged 53 years from Gwer-West – unofficial camp) “my basic problems here are food scarcity, no clothes and foot wears to put on, no sleeping materials, no kitchen. Had it been we are eating like normal people there would have been congestion in our toilets. But we eat less and the number of people that pass the night without food surpass those that eat before going to bed in this camp. Agatha Audu (female, aged 43 years from Agatu) decried the unavailability of food in their camp, stressing that food is often rationed. Several IDPs interviewed corroborated this information and expressed the challenges they are facing especially in terms of feeding. There is also the issue of the quality



of the food supplied, which quite often lacks the basic ingredients and nutrients. This has led to malnutrition, illnesses and deaths in the official and unofficial camps.

Clothing

Adequate clothing is yet another human basic need that the IDPs in Benue have expressed as barely unavailable. A cross-section of those interrogated, amounting to 67%, identified lack of clothes as one of their challenges in their new homes. Mentioning some of their challenges, Veronica Terhembra, female, 37 years, in Abagena camp (in an interview on the 14th August, 2020) listed lack of food, beds and beddings and lack of clothes. This is not a lone voice as DenvihinAkpera (on the 14th August, 2020) also acknowledged that clothing is a challenge in her list of challenges, which she said include “lack of food, farmland, toiletries, clothes, bed and beddings and tents [that] are longer in good shape.” Most IDPs depend on clothes supplied by public-spirited individuals and Faith Based Organisations (FBOs). One of such organisations, which pleaded anonymity decried the deplorable state of the camps, stressing that their organisation had supplied several thousands of used clothes supplied by church members to ease the clothing needs in some of the camps. A close observation in most of the camps visited indicate that despite the interventions from some of these FBOs, several children in the camps are always naked. This situation affects the dignity of these children with a number of untoward implications in the long term.

Health

The health of IDPs is of great concern, given that over time, the government's ability to provide basic health care to the general population has significantly deteriorated. Therefore, one cannot but imagine how bad it will be for the IDPs, who generally suffer greater health problems than the normal population. In view of the particularly vulnerable socio-economic situation, IDPs still face difficulties in accessing existing health care. Thus, the conclusion is that hygiene and health care standards are low among IDPs. The inadequacy of health knowledge and hygiene issues is compounded by limited availability of the health care facilities and the lukewarm attitude of health care providers. For example, children in IDP camps are poorly immunised and most of their women do not have access to basic toiletries to manage menstruation, which is further compounded by their inability to visit a gynaecologist for regular check-ups at pregnancy and at childbirth. For 97% of the women, like MwueseNaakaa, Iveren Simon, and Cecilia Ieren from the Ayiin, Gbajimba and Abagena camps respectively (in an interview), expressed a lack of sanitary kits during menstruation and resort to using pieces of clothes to absorb menstrual flow. This, according to them and several other respondents, has led to serious health complications associated with women.

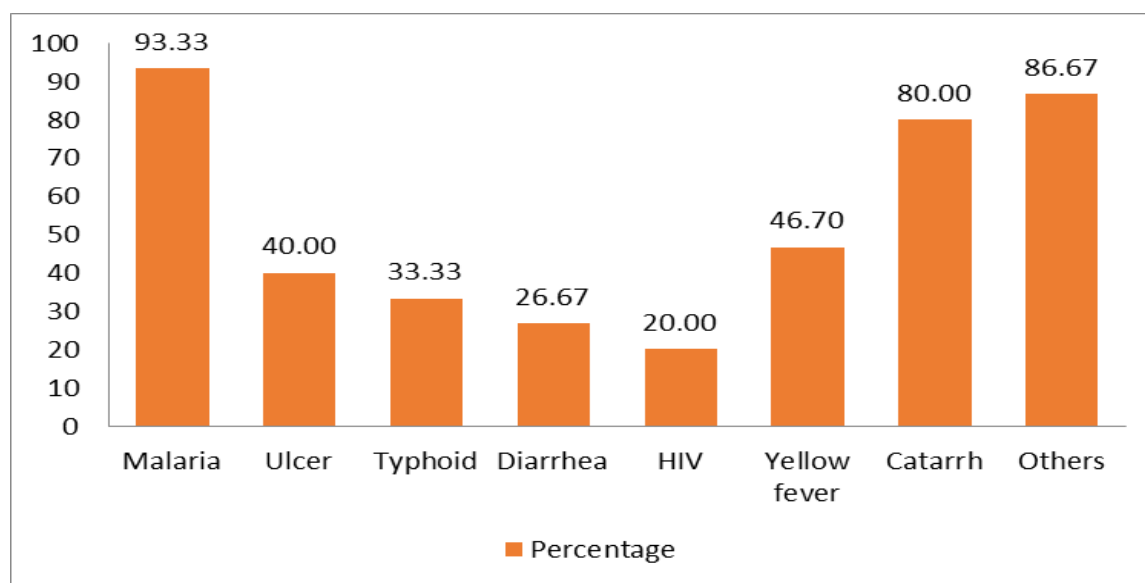


Figure 4: Percentage prevalence of illnesses in IDPs camps in Benue State

Responding to the which illnesses are most suffered by the IDPs in their camps, malaria, ulcer, typhoid, diarrhoea, HIV, yellow fever, catarrh, among others are identified. By way of prevalence rate, malaria, catarrh, yellow fever, ulcer, typhoid, diarrhoea, and HIV came top, in that order, as shown by the percentages in Figure 4. Among the other illnesses, stomach ache stood out as the most prevalent. Several health workers interviewed - and who pleaded anonymity - corroborated this information. According to a health personnel at Anyiin, “most often the number of doctors and other health workers available in these camps are overstretched by the astronomical number of the IDPs.” He also stressed that medical facilities and supplies are often inadequate to cater for the needs of the displaced persons. In the case of treatment of these illnesses and injuries, the IDPs in official camps have acknowledged the presence of health units, though with inadequate capacity and the spate of referral cases to hospitals outside the camps for treatment, at the expense of the IDPs is worrisome. In most instances, the majority of serious health cases go untreated when diagnosed. At the same time, the health conditions in which the IDPs in unofficial camps live are unimaginable. Against this backdrop, many of the IDPs have had cause to resort to herbal or traditional medicine to treat themselves whenever they face health challenges.

Education

In terms of education of the IDPs, the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (Principle 23, Paragraph 2) has it that: “To give effect to this right for internally displaced persons, the authorities concerned shall ensure that such persons, in particular displaced children, receive education which shall be free and compulsory at the primary level. Education should respect their cultural identity, language and religion.”

A considerable number of children in these camps, especially those in unofficial camps and probably those in no camp at all, are out of school as against the Guiding Principle 23 as aforementioned. Though it was found that in the official camps, the children are fully enrolled in primary schools, some have lamented the quality of education received in these



camp-schools. About 80% of the children in official camps visited said they are receiving formal education after an average of two years of no education. This was not the case with the children in the unofficial camps (which are more in number), where about 92% of them have stayed out of school for more than 3 years and are still out of school. Even where schools exist, the quality of education received is nothing to write home about. When interviewed, Torpaa Zan-Zan (on the 14th August, 2020) said: “yes, there is a school in the camp. The school is not functional – there are no enough teachers, no sound teaching, there are no classrooms – classes are held under mango and cashew trees and there are no seats as well.” The situation appears to be worse in the unofficial camps. For instance, Peter Ali (in a FGD on 26th August, 2020) said they (children) have been out of school for more than three years, pointing out that they had not received any form of education since they were displaced in 2017. Similarly, Iorlaha Sunday (male, 14 years from Gwer-West) affirmed that: “We don't have a school here. What we have here is adult school which is meant only for the adults.” These IDP children face a wide range of obstacles in their access to education, including loss of parents, chronic illnesses and abject poverty.

Those in schools above the primary level have faced even more difficult situations getting education as IDPs. Many of them have been forced to drop out of school with no hope at sight to further their studies. As Delem Bernard (in an interview) said that: “There is no provision for some of us to further our education. The zeal to further ahead with our education is a dead dream.” In another interview, Benjamin Omale (Agatu camp) said, he had to drop out of the Benue State Polytechnic, Ugbokolo since they were displaced because his parents have become financially incapacitated.

Employment

“Internally displaced persons, whether or not they are living in camps, shall not be discriminated against as a result of their displacement in the enjoyment of the following rights: [...] (b) The right to freely seek opportunities for employment and to participate in economic activities...” This is the position of Principle 22, Paragraph 1, of the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement as regards the employment of IDPs.

Although there are no pronounced cases of discrimination against the IDPs in Benue state in obtaining legal and gainful employment, there are, however, stiff economic conditions of weak private sector, high unemployment, a saturated nonpaying public sector that are standing as serious barriers against the vulnerable uneducated IDPs towards gainful employment. Consequently, a large percentage of IDPs work in “shadow economy” as fire-wood sellers, or as day labourers, home-to-home or street begging, with some young girls/women engaging in sex-work. For those in the official camps with government support or humanitarian aids, this allows families to supplement/complement whatever assistance they get to survive on a day-to-day basis; while those in the unofficial camps rely on these menial jobs as the only sources to make a living, which leaves them more vulnerable to negative conditions. For example, AdokwuOcheme, ElamayiNgbede and Joy Onoja (from Agatu camp) all stated that since they were displaced they have all had to rely on menial jobs for survival. According to them, members of their family - including their parents – have to rely on their daily income for feeding and other upkeep.



Others

Internally displaced persons are confronted with other conditions like security, discrimination and moral decay. From the interviews and discussions, it was discovered that the IDPs have great worries about their security as many of them have experienced attacks, child kidnaping, unwanted pregnancies, illicit sexual acts, early marriages, and feelings of discrimination.

Impact of the Prevailing Conditions on the IDPs

These unfavourable conditions suffered by the IDPs in their camps have untold short- and long-term impacts on their lives and future generations to come. These include, the following:

1. Homelessness

Being at home is a fundamental condition of the wellbeing of man, which when lost, brings about a feeling of irritation, dejection, depression, neglect, and loss of sense of oneness, among others. This is the feeling of the IDPs in the various camps. The poor housing conditions in the IDPs has only created a constant feeling of homelessness in them. This is shown in the outright expression of their displeasure with the state of their accommodation and the eagerness and calls on the relevant authorities to fast track their going back home when interviewed. As a people who had relatively comfortable homes, the present housing situation has only deepened the state of homelessness in the camps. Eryum Uche (male, 81 years) in a group discussion lamented that: “We are not satisfied with where we are staying. We were much more comfortable in our homes.” TerhemienLiambee (male, 69 years) decried his homeless situation in camp saying:

When I was at my house, I used to sleep inside a treated mosquito net but ever since I came here none has been provided. As such I've been exposed to mosquitoes. Now I have malaria and I don't have any way to treat it. The ailment is gradually killing me. I am weak every day, but there's no one to turn to. We are really suffering here. We sleep on the floor. We don't have food. No clothes. No water. No light. We live in darkness all through the night. As a matter of fact, the government should consider that we are humans as well because as it stands presently, we don't have a home. Our homes are taken over by strangers.

Speaking in the same vein, AdoyiOchagala (49 years) and Oche Abutu (52 years) both interviewed in Agatu lamented the deplorable conditions in their camp, stressing that as far as he is concerned, they are homeless presently. In a similar vein, Fidelis Igbazwua (male, aged 53 years) cried out saying: “I'm not satisfied and will never be satisfied when I'm homeless. I'm no longer a man. I've been rendered hopeless and useless to myself. I'll never forget the impact of this crisis in my life. Never!”

2. Starvation/Malnutrition

Food security entails getting food in the right quantity and quality on time and at affordable prices. Once this is not achieved, the set of consequences includes starvation and malnutrition. This is what the IDPs are suffering due to inadequate food in their camps. The responses of the IDPs accenting the scarcity of food points to the simple fact that the IDPs are starving and malnourished in their camps. Expressing their starvation, Fidelis Igbazwua (male, aged 53 years from Anyiin community – unofficial camp) posited that: “Lack of food



is a major problem to us here and we have been suffering from it for three years now. No doubt, individuals with humanitarian hearts have been supportive but our number outweighs them. We beg to eat.” Similar concerns were expressed by those who spoke during a group discussion. For instance, IorfaElizabeth stated that “there's no food. Nursing mothers suffer from lack of food a lot. Consequently, babies of these nursing mothers suffer malnutrition as well. We lack food daily.” To demonstrate the magnitude of the problem, tables 5 and 6 clearly capture the vulnerability distribution of IDPs in both the official and unofficial camps in Benue State. For instance, table 5 indicates that the number of those malnourished in the official camps as at January 2019 were 3,475 while the number of those malnourished in the unofficial camps stood at 20,465. This number is not only staggering but also very worrisome. The conclusion arising from the foregoing leads us to the conclusion that the conditions in these camps have thrown the IDPs into starvation and malnourishment, thus making them more vulnerable health wise.

3. Diseases and Deaths

The deplorable state of accommodation, poor health services, and poor feeding have resulted in a high rate of disease among the IDPs and accompanied by preventable deaths. This could be deduced from the key informant interviews and focused group discussions. TeremshaIgbadio, one of those interviewed asserted that: “I have malaria, ulcer and typhoid. But we don't have a clinic to go to for treatment. If you manage to get herbs, that's fine but if you don't, you resign to fate.” On his part, Delem Bernard said:

I was running away from the Fulani, I fell in a deep pit and my waist was affected. I can no longer engage in hard labour due to my waist. More so, lack of food has caused me to get an ulcer. I also have malaria and because we use the open toilet, I also have infections. The problem of infections and itches is very common amongst us here.

According to Fidelis Igbazwua:

I'm suffering from chronic ulcer and typhoid. I'm also a diabetic patient. I've been placed on food restrictions. Yet, I don't observe the order simply because there is no food. So whenever there's food I don't care whether it is the preferred one or not. After all, I consider myself dead already. My health condition has made me indebted to so many people but I don't have any means to pay my debts. My mind is restless with these debts.

Tables 5 and 6 provide the number of those who were sick in the official and unofficial camps as of early 2019. For instance, table 5 reveals that at least 1,344 IDPs were sick in the official camps while 20,465 were sick in the unofficial camps within the same period. In the face of the inability of the government to provide adequate medical care, one cannot help but imagine the magnitude of the diseases and deaths in these camps. The Executive Secretary of the Benue State Emergency Management Agency (BENSEMA), Emmanuel Shior was more forthcoming on this matter, According to him:

Since these camps were established, we have recorded some number of deaths. For example, we lost a total number of 16 IDPs in Gbajimba and another 16 in Anyiin camps before the close of 2018. We also lost five (5) at Ugba and 43 at Abagena bringing the total number of



deaths so far recorded to 80. The agency is still in the process of compiling the figures for Daudu I and II. Most of these IDPs died from ailments that were preventable or curable.⁴

4. Fall in literacy Level

The current state of poor quality of education or its complete absence in these camps can only foreclose a story of growing illiteracy of the IDPs. This poses a serious threat to the literacy level of the IDPs and their communities. For instance, table 4 reveals the significant number of out-of-school children, currently in the IDP camps. For example, as at 2018, there were well over 211,631 children in both the official and unofficial camps, who had their educational pursuits truncated, a situation that has not changed significantly in 2020. It is important to note that these figures are the officially recorded cases. There are several other IDPs, who are neither in the official nor unofficial camps that have not been captured by BENSEMA. This has serious social implications for the Benue society, as the youths who are basically in their prime of life, constitute the bulk of the character of the population in the IDPs. It is worrisome that increasing numbers of the youth in these camps could constitute serious social vices for the state in particular and the country at large.

5. Worsening Poverty Level

Inadequate sources of income attributable to being displaced and living in IDP camps has further plunged the IDPs below the poverty line. This scenario creates the likelihood of a poverty trap. This is a situation where the state of poverty may tend to persist due to a self-reinforcing mechanism, known as a vicious cycle of poverty. This is because of the negative feedback that exists between poverty and a number of circumstances, such as undernourishment, lack of access to insurance, population growth, poor health, and a degraded environment that causes poverty. Expressing his opinion on the extent of poverty, TerhemenLiambee (69 Years old from Gwer-West) asserts that: "I am a family man, I have so many responsibilities to handle for my family but I can't attend to any of them. I feel pain deep down in my heart. I don't even want to talk about it", and WanheeShenge (51 Years old, in a FGD in Gwer-West) said:

All my life, I have never experienced the hardship I am passing through presently. There is no food. Sometimes, I stay without food and water for days. If I eat, it is either I beg or someone gives it to me from his/her generosity. Even at that, I always feel embarrassed asking for food from people; however, I have no choice but to keep asking as many people as I can. I have now become a perpetual beggar for my survival. I feel so bad.

Apart from the trauma inflicted on these families in the IDP camps, the population movements and displacements have inflicted massive poverty on these households affected by the attacks. For instance, most of these households have not only lost all they have but also they are denied the opportunity of farming, leading to the loss of income. Their inability to produce for consumption and for the market is a serious threat to food security.

⁴See EmmanuelShior, "The Condition of the Benue Internally Displaced Persons Camp (IDPs)" Paper Delivered at a Workshop Organised by the Benue State Emergency Management Agency in Conjunction with Yavnielle Enterprises Limited with the theme "Displaced, Traumatized and Neglected: An Emerging Humanitarian Crises in Benue State," held at J.S. Tarka Foundation Makurdi on the 15th January, 2019.



6. Crime Life

Another impact of the poor living conditions of the IDPs is that many of the IDPs have taken to crime as means of living. Crimes ranging from theft to thuggery and armed robbery have become the way of life of some of the IDPs to make a living for themselves and surviving family members. This has thus completely altered their lifestyle to morally unacceptable standards.

7. Bleak Future for the Girl-Child

Yet as a corollary of the conditions against the IDPs in the camps are cases of rape, child pregnancy, abortion, sex working, or early marriage. These have become the plight of the girl-child in these camps. Nancy Swande (in an interview on 14th August, 2020) affirmed that she is aware of girl-child pregnancies in the camp. Adding that: "In fact, even my fourth daughter... got pregnant here in the camp." The cumulative impact of these ills have the propensity of exterminating the future of the girl-child.

8. Child Labour

The unfavourable conditions in the camps have equally compelled the children into forced labour. They work to feed themselves or support their parents with the family upkeep. Many of the children below 18 years interacted with said they are engaged in one form of activity or the other to raise money for themselves or their families. KyoyimaSewuese (female, 14 years) said: "I engage in small petty trading like hawking ground nuts, maize, and sachet water. But honestly, I wish I could be doing something else that is bigger." Another, TernguHee (male, 12 years) also said: "I do some unskilled jobs to get money and eat. I hawk firewood on the streets." There are others that have taken to jobs like house-helps, mechanics, and shop-helps, for survival.

9. Loss of Sense of Patriotism

Inbuilt in the hearts of the IDPs from their displacement to the harsh conditions faced in their camps is the lack of any sense of nationalism. Their suffering and the feeling of neglect by the government, or the inability of the government to do enough to support them has bred a sense of resentment, on the socio-political system by the IDPs.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The issues bothering on internal displacement have remained a key concern to both State and non-state actors. Given the ongoing insecurity and increasing displacement since 2008, the conditions of IDPs in Benue state have remained acute and are expected to deteriorate if much attention is not paid. These displacements have negative consequences on the affected communities. In terms of their living conditions in their camps, about 100% of displaced persons in the state, who hitherto had homes with the basic needs, on the average, lack the basic needs of housing, food, and employment; while about 87%, 80%, and 67% of them are facing acute lack in their clothing, educational, and health needs respectively. The high population of the displaced made up of children, women, widows and female headed



households, and the aged, coupled with high levels of unemployment has left many families in the IDPs camps highly vulnerable and unable to afford basic services. Inadequate government support and lack of humanitarian aid has further led to increased vulnerability amongst the IDPs in both the official and unofficial camps scattered across the state. Results from this survey indicate that though there have been support from both the State and Federal governments and humanitarian assistance from other spirited bodies; more interventions are urgently needed in the areas of shelter, food, clothing, health, education, and access to employment for vulnerable IDP families across Benue state, so as to address the growing humanitarian situation for displaced persons witnessed in the state. These conditions of lack have both short- and long-term negative impacts on the IDPs and the generations to come.

Recommendations

Based on the challenges confronting IDPs in Benue State, the following suggestions are put forward as prescriptions for ameliorating the problems.:

- i. The Benue State Government, Federal Government and all relevant bodies, should in unison employ all necessary modalities to combat and end the attacks and other factors that cause displacement in the state and its neighbouring environs. This will stop further internal displacements and make room for the IDPs to return to their ancestral homes.
- ii. The government of Benue state should ensure the implementation of the existing principles, guidelines, and strategies targeting IDPs, in an effort to alleviate their suffering. It should provide the relevant agencies or bodies with the mandate and adequate funds to assist and protect all IDPs, with the aim of achieving a comprehensive and harmonised institutional response to their situation.
- iii. The government and other local authorities should, in conjunction with international agencies and donors, urgently seek alternative housing arrangements for IDPs (in both the official and unofficial camps) without adequate housing, as well as appropriate institutional arrangements to fast track their return to their communities. It should develop a comprehensive plan and take measures to provide IDPs with an adequate standard of living.
- iv. The state authorities should step-up health services in those IDPs locations, as well as equally undertake measures to enable full access to health services for IDPs in locations where there is absence of health facilities. Besides, strategies should be put in place to cover health costs, especially that of the vulnerable groups within the IDP population.
- v. Benue state government, in cooperation with NGOs, CSOs, international agencies, and donors, should make education available to the IDPs in the right quality and at no cost, at least at the primary and secondary levels, while those ready to pursue higher education should be granted scholarships to attain their goal.
- vi. In terms of their feeding, the government should mobilise more funds, support and monitor the distribution of the same to the IDPs. Again, the state, through its Ministry of Agriculture and other relevant agencies, should make land, seedlings, and other



farm inputs to the IDPs, to enable them produce their food as supplement to the food donations.

- vii. As regards employment for the IDPs, the state should engage the active population of the IDPs in ministries of works, agriculture - on a temporary basis - in order to maximise their unskilled or semi-skilled labour services. This will provide cheap labour to the state, afford the IDPs a living and serve as succour against the enveloping psychological trauma.

REFERENCES

- African Union. (2009). *African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention)*.
- Asema, J. (2019). We are here to save lives: Health promotion in Nigerian IDP camps. Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF). <https://blogs.msf.org/bloggers/john/we-are-here-save-lives-health-promotion-nigerian-idp-camps>
- Ekpa, S. & Md. Dahlan, N. H. (2016). Legal issues and prospects in the protection and assistance of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Nigeria. *Journal of Law, Policy and Globalization*, 49, pp. 108-116.
- George-Genyi, M. (2014). *Introduction to Peace Studies and conflict Resolution*. Makurdi: Gwatex publishers.
- Global Protection Cluster Working Group (2010). *Handbook for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons*.
- Global Terrorism Index (2015). Institute For Economic and Peace.
- Haessly, J. (2009), *Promoting a Culture of Peace, Literature and Art*. USA: Grunt Blut.
- Igbahenah, F. (2016). "A History Perspective of Tiv/Fulani Crisis in Gwer-West Local Government Area of Benue State, 1960-2012", in Ukase, P.I. & Ugbeigili, S.I. (eds.), *Tyoshin in Historical Perspective*. Vol.1, Lagos: Integrity Publishers.
- International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (2006). *Protocol on the Protection and Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons*.
- Isaac, I., Danlami, G., Habila, J., Salami, H., Salami, R. O., & Abutu, P. (2019). Service Deprivation in Internally Displaced Persons' Camps in Nigeria: Case Study of Abuja. *SCHOLEDGE International Journal of Management & Development*, 6(12), pp.186-196.
- Nunez-Ferrera, I., Aubrey, D., Earle, L., and Loose, S. (2020). IDPs in towns and cities – working with the realities of internal displacement in an urban world. International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), Joint IDP Profiling Service (IPS) and UN-Habitat.
- Ukase, P.I. & Audu, B.J. (2017), "Population Movement and Displacements in North-Central Nigeria and its Implications for the Nation's Economy," paper delivered at a at the Next Generation Youth Initiative International Programme on Alternative Dispute Resolution, held at Royal Choice Inn, Makurdi on 26th April.
- Ukase, P.I. (2018), "Governance, Separatist Agitations and the Survival of the Nigerian State," Lead Paper delivered at a Conference on *Governance, Separatist Agitations and the Survival of the Nigerian State*, Organised by the Department of Political Science and Diplomacy, Veritas University (The Catholic University of Nigeria), Abuja held, on the 4th March.



- UNHCR. (2017). Operational review of UNHCR's engagement in situations of internal displacement. UNHCR
- UNHCR. (2019). *Policy on UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement*. UNHCR.
- United Nations. (2004). *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*. New York.
- Wegh, F.S. (2018), *Globalization of Tiv Social and Cultural Values* (Makurdi: Selfers Academic Press Ltd)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to sincerely thank the Catholic Diocese of Makurdi Foundation for Justice, Development and Peace (FJDP) who commissioned the study, and our research assistants, who worked tirelessly and within the stipulated time frame to enable us pull through and meet our deadline. They include Mr. TersooOrafa, TerkimbirIornenge and Joseph Ineke. Also to share in our appreciation is Dr. Jerome Andohol, who read the draft report and made very useful inputs especially on methodological issues. We also wish to extend our gratitude to all the Internally Displaced Persons in the various camps who provided useful information during our interview sessions.