

Responding to the Inflow of Insurgency Victims to the Southern Nigeria: Issues and Solution

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Abstract

There is a unique set of forcefully displaced persons from Bandits, Terrorists and Boko Haram insurgency affected areas in the north-eastern part of Nigeria that wandered to the southern part of the country, majority of them we see today as okada (bike) riders. These people are not in any IDP center or camp, but came to settle down among the people whose culture and religion is different from theirs. Existing studies on peace building and conflict transformation processes have been on how to minimize conflicts and make peace a lasting process. However, scanty attention is given to people affected by the insurgency and compellingly displaced from their ancestral homes. This research examined to what magnitude the people of the south are responding to transforming the lives of these migrated displaced persons. Semi-structured interviews were conducted among fifty randomly selected persons in Ibadan metropolis. Some available documents were also used in analyzing the collected data. The study revealed that the government does not pay attention to this set of people and the public is not doing anything to responding to transforming the lives of the migrated displaced persons in their area, those who have become a kind of menace in communities where they settled down because they are left to struggle for survival which has led them to pick jobs they were never trained for such as Okada riders through which many people have been maimed or killed. It is recommended that the government should be proactive to keep a register of these displaced people in order to respond to transforming their lives, and faith-based organizations should intensify their efforts in responding to transforming their lives and they should start having documented records for these efforts.

Introduction

The world is a violent place full of many crisis, conflicts and wars.⁴⁵ These conflicts arise because of various political, economic, religious and other reasons. While some of these conflicts have caused many people to become refugees in other countries, it is more saddening that many people have become internally displaced in their countries. They are often camped in internally displaced persons' (IDPs) camps or centers where governments, non-governmental organizations

⁴⁵ Conflict Barometer 2015, a publication of the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (HIIC) at the Department of Political Science of Heidelberg (retrieved May 23, 2020. Refugees from the Former Yugoslavia, Professional Councillor, vol. 4, 2014. Retrieved May 23, 2020 from <http://tpcjournals.nbcc.org/counselling-people-displaced-by-war-experiences-of-refugees-from-the-former-yugoslavia/>

(NGOs), faith-based and other humanitarian organizations care for these people. Nevertheless, there is a set of people that are negatively affected by religious crises in the northern part of Nigeria especially the Boko Haram insurgency.

The case of conflict in Boko Haram insurgency has made many people to migrate from the northeastern part of Nigeria back to the southwestern part of the country.⁴⁶ This type of migration has been described as a forced/involuntary or irregular type because of the nature of the movement of the people concerned which “involves a change of residence under pressure which may therefore not be wholly permanent but may involve further movement, whose timing and direction are uncertain.”⁴⁷

The displaced people in this case study is rightly referred to as migrated displaced persons rather than the popular term internally displaced persons because of their peculiar displacement. While most internally displaced persons in Nigeria are put in IDP camps and centers throughout the country and are “excluded from participating in the sociopolitical affairs of their host community...and are referred to as settlers or non-indigenes.

Background to Nigeria

Nigeria is situated in West Africa with boundaries to Cameroon and Chad in the east, Niger in the north, Benin Republic in the west and the Atlantic Ocean in the south. Although, “without a proper roundtable agreement”, Nigeria came into existence as a nation as a result of the amalgamation of the then northern Nigeria protectorate and southern Nigeria protectorate by Sir Frederick Lord Lugard in 1914.⁴⁸

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa. It is a multi-ethnic country with over 400 ethnic groups. Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba and Ibo are the major ethnic groups of the country. These major ethnic groups represent around 70 per cent of the population. The Hausas are mainly in the

⁴⁶ Albert T. Akume. 2015. The Question of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Nigeria: A Reflection on Present Realities. *Journal of Third World Studies*. Spring 2015, vol. 32 Issue 1. Retrived May 23, 2020 from <http://connection.ebscohost.com/c/articles/110434800/question-internally-displaced-persons-idps-nigeria-reflection-present-realities,221>

⁴⁷ Personal interview with Ven. Dr. Sunday Adepoju, a clergy in Ibadan North Anglican Diocese on April 15, 2020.

⁴⁸ Jacob Oluwole Odeyemi. 2014. A Political History of Nigeria and the crisis of Ethnicity in Nation Building. *International Journal of Developing Societies*, Vol. 3, No. 1 2014

northern part of the country; the Yorubas dominate most part of the southwestern part of the country; and the southeastern part of the country is the home of mostly Ibos.⁴⁹

Nigeria is a multi-religious state. Christianity and Islam are the two major religious groups. Although, there is no scientific representation of either the numerical strength of these religious groups or their geographical distribution, however, if the country is divided along its socio-geographical zones, Islam dominates the northwestern and northeastern zones of the country; Christianity is more prominent in the southeastern and south-south zones; and the southwest and north-central zones have considerably balanced numbers of Muslims and Christians. Traditional religions and other religious groups are noticeable in the country.

The country is a heterogeneous society with a vast cultural history and heritage. The diversity in people, languages and cultures of Nigeria is more or less a curse than a blessing to the country. This is because since the country gained independence, there have been rivalries among the major tribes (and even the minor tribes), the two predominant religions and the political class of the country. Such rivalries brought about Boko Haram insurgency.

Terrorism and Religious Violence

Scholars may have not agreed on a definition of terrorism, however, Sandler described terrorism as “the premeditated use or threat to use violence by individuals or subnational groups to obtain a political or social objective through the intimidation of a large audience beyond that of the immediate noncombatant victims.”⁵⁰

Historically, the word “terrorism” first originated during the French Revolution (1789-1799) when it was used to describe the government. By 1848, the word was used to describe violent revolutionaries. The meaning of the word changed to portray the violent acts of some organized groups, like labor organizations, anarchists, nationalistic groups, and ultra-nationalistic political organizations by the end of the 1800’s and early 1900’s. Finally, nationalism became the major

⁴⁹ Nigerian People, History and Culture, Retrieved May 23, 2020 from <http://africa-news-uk/nigerian-people-history-culture-10576/>

⁵⁰ Todd Sandler. 2014. Terrorism and Counterterrorism: An overview. Oxford Economic Papers. Retrieved May 23, 2020 from <http://oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2014/11/05/ogpu039.full.pdf+html,1>.

reason for acts of terrorism. Although, recently, a clear change has already begun as religion become the main reason of terroristic reasoning.⁵¹

Terrorism has been categorized into different categories that serve to differentiate terrorist organizations according to specific criteria, which are usually related to the field or specialty of whoever is selecting the categories. These categories include: separatist, ethnocentric, nationalistic, revolutionary, political, religious, social, domestic (or "homegrown"), and international or transnational. However, Suberu⁵² cited Robert Pape that simply classified terrorism into three. These are demonstrative terrorism that seeks to be known publicly; destructive terrorism that wants to force people through threat harm and death in order to mobilize support for them; and suicide terrorism that makes the attackers to kill themselves with others.

It is unfortunate that "terrorism in the name of religion has become the predominant model for political violence in the modern world."⁵³ This kind of terrorism is a political violence that is inspired by a total belief that a strange force has authorized terrorist violence for the better exaltation of the belief. It is believed that acts committed because of the belief will be forgiven by the strange force and possibly be rewarded hereafter.⁵⁴ No wonder, more terrorist attacks are linked with one religion or the other.⁵⁵

Historically, Martin⁵⁶ briefly highlighted some religious violence like Judeo-Christian Antiquity as referenced in the Bible, Christian Crusades during the Middle Ages, The Order of Assassins in Persia in 11th century, A Secret Cult of Murder in India between 13th and 19th centuries, modern Arab Islamist extremism in the Arab world that passed through several important political phases during the 20th century, mysticism and rebellion in Uganda that had two phases

⁵¹ C. C. Rausch. 2015. Fundamentalism and Terrorism. *Journal of Terrorism Research*, Volume 6, Issue 2 – May 2015. Retrieved May 23, 2020 from <http://doi.org/10.15664/jtr.1153>, 29

⁵² Ibrahim Suberu, (2015). Martyrs or Terrorists: Suicide Bombing in Islamic Hermeneutics. *Ilorin Journal of Religious Studies*. Vol. 5 No. 1. 2015, 121

⁵³ Gus Martin. 2011. *Essential of Terrorism: Concepts and Controversies*. Second Edition. Thousands Oaks, Sage Publications, Inc.; 130

⁵⁴ Gus Martin. 2011. *Essential of Terrorism: Concepts and Controversies*. Second Edition. Thousands Oaks, Sage Publications, Inc.; 130

⁵⁵ Israel Silberman. 2005. "Religion Violence, Terrorism and Peace: A meaning-System Analysis." In Raymond F. Paloutzian and Crystal L. Park (eds.). *Handbook of the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality*. New York, The Guilford Press

⁵⁶ Gus Martin. 2011. *Essential of Terrorism: Concepts and Controversies*. Second Edition. Thousands Oaks, Sage Publications, Inc.; 130

(the Holy Spirit Mobile Force and the Lord's Resistance Army) in 1987, and the Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion that originated in czarist Russia. Recently, there are ongoing conflicts that involve religious terrorism such as

...conflicts between Jews and Muslims in the Middle East, Hindus and Muslims in India, Catholics and Protestants in Ireland, and Christians and Muslims in the former Yugoslavia, East Timor, Lebanon, Russia, and many countries in Africa [particularly Boko Haram insurgency in] Nigeria; and the killing of physicians and nurses by Christian antiabortion groups.... [Worthy of note are] the 1995 nerve gas attack on the Tokyo subway by Japanese followers of Shoko Asahara in the Aum Shinrikyo sect who were trying to hasten a new millennium, the September 11th, 2001, attacks on the United States in which thousands of civilians were killed by members of the Al-Qaeda organization, and a wave of bombings of civilian buses and public gathering places in Israel by the Islamic Hamas terrorists.⁵⁷

As indicated from samples provided above, terrorism is a global phenomenon. However, a report attributed over 80 per cent of the lives lost to terrorist activity in 2013 occurred in only five countries – Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nigeria and Syria.

This researcher is of the opinion that religion in itself is not the problem of terrorism. The overzealous adherents of these religions are the problem. All these terrorist acts in the name of religion can be stemmed if every adherent of one religion or the other can be tolerant of people of other faiths and be ready to live peacefully with other people regardless of their faith or background.

Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria

The Name “Boko Haram” According to Adesoji,⁵⁸ is derived from a combination of the Hausa word Boko ‘book’ and the Arabic word haram ‘something forbidden, ungodly, sinful’. Literally, it means ‘book is sinful’, but its deeper meaning is that Western education is sinful, sacrilegious, or ungodly and should therefore be forbidden.

⁵⁷ Israel Silberman. 2005. “Religion Violence, Terrorism and Peace: A meaning-System Analysis.” In Raymond F. Paloutzian and Crystal L. Park (eds.). *Handbook of the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality*. New York, The Guilford Press

⁵⁸ Abimbola O. Adesoji. 2011. Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Response of the Nigerian State. *Africa Today*, Vol. 57, No. 4 (Summer 2011). 99-119. Retrieved May 4, 2020, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2979/africatoday.57.4.99>

It is commonly used to refer to a radical Islamist sect in northeastern Nigeria. However, the real name of the sect is disputed. In spite of the fact that Azumah⁵⁹ agreed that ‘Boko Haram’ means “Western education is forbidden or sinful” and that the group is “opposed to aspects of Western education because [it believes that Western education] is sinful and religiously forbidden.

The official name of the sect is *Jama'iatu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awata Wal-Jihad*, which means "Association of Sunnis for the Propagation of Islam and Jihad"⁶⁰ or “People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet’s Teachings and Jihad”. The sect is referred to as “*al-Qaeda’s* African ‘monsters’”. Specifically, the sect “has ties to northwest Africa-based al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, Somalia's *al-Shabab*, and *al-Qaeda* in the Arabian Peninsula.” Apart from linking itself with “Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), the leadership of Boko Haram claims today that it wants to be known as the Islamic State West Africa Branch (ISWAB).”

Emergence of Boko Haram

There are many conflicting reports about its emergence in Nigeria. While many people widely believe that it came into existence in 2002 by one Mohammed Yusuf, but became prominent in 2009 after his extra-judicial killing,⁶¹ Bukar Abba Ibrahim, as quoted by Ogunmade,⁶² argued that “the sect had been in Nigeria since the 1970s following the killing of its spiritual leader in Egypt in 1970 by President Gammal Abdel Naseer. Ibrahim noted that the sect was not political miscreants created by some political leaders, but an ideological group who hate western democracy. According to Azumah,⁶³ Boko Haram’s origins can be traced “back to the mid-1990s, to a youth group...in Maiduguri...under the leadership of one Mallam Lawal. Mohammad Yusuf assumed the leadership after Lawal left for studies in Saudi Arabia.”

It has grown into a conflagration that has spread into different parts of northern states of Nigeria and it is perhaps one of the most well-coordinated mass-destruction religious violence in Nigeria

⁵⁹ Azumah, John (2014). ‘Boko Haram’ in Retrospect. *Journal of African Christian Thought*. Vol. 17, No. 1, June 2014, 50-63.

⁶⁰ Campbell, John. 2014. Boko Haram: origins, challenges and responses. Retrieved February 27, 2016, from <https://www.ciaonet.org/attachments/27796/uploads>

⁶¹ Campbell, John. 2014. Boko Haram: origins, challenges and responses. Retrieved February 27, 2016, from <https://www.ciaonet.org/attachments/27796/uploads>

⁶² Ogunmade, Omololu. 2015. How Boko Haram Entered Nigeria. Retrieved February 27, 2016, from <http://www.thisdaylive.com/articles/how-boko-haram-enterednigeria/216981/>

⁶³ Azumah, John. 2014. ‘Boko Haram’ in Retrospect. *Journal of African Christian Thought*. Vol. 17, No. 1, June 2014, 50-63

in recent times. Terwase et al⁶⁴ were of the opinion that the inability of the northern part of Nigeria to complete its eight years of ruling Nigeria as a result of the death of the then President Umaru Yar'Adua and ambition of Goodluck Jonathan from the southern part who succeeded him empowered the Boko Haram sect to become a veritable tool to fight the government of Jonathan and the people of Nigeria. This opinion was originally posited by the Late General Andrew Azazi as cited by Liman⁶⁵ According to Idahosa,⁶⁶ it is the belief of many people that Boko Haram is leading an armed insurgency against corruption, abusive security forces and economic disparity in northern Nigeria security forces and economic disparity in northern Nigeria and feeding off tension that have existed between Muslim dominated north and Christian dominated south of Nigeria.

Whichever was the correct time of its emergence, Boko Haram has become one of the most dreaded terrorist groups in the world. Akande⁶⁷ opined, "The Boko Haram insurgency has been described either as a political or religious problem. However, the fact that the sect itself claims to belong to a particular religion, Islam, and often times attacks Christians makes it more religious than political.

As a religious movement, its combination of a sectarian agenda with violence is distinctive and its goal (according to the movement's rhetoric) is to create God's kingdom on earth through justice for the poor achieved by the rigid application of Islamic law, or sharia. As a political movement, it initially found support from dis-satisfied northern politicians in both of the country's main political parties that hoped to use it as influence to perpetuate themselves in power or gain power. It was even alleged that some northern governors made monthly payments to the sect, although it is unclear whether these politicians supported the sect or the sect imposed itself on them.

⁶⁴ Terwase, Isaac Terungwa, et al. (2015). The Psychological Trauma on Boko Haram Victims in Nigeria: Conflict Resolution Perspective. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*. Vol 6 No 6 S4 MCSER Publishing, Rome-Italy December 2015. 519-525. Retrieved June 8, 2016, from

<http://www.mcser.org/journal/index.php/mjss/article/viewFile/8326/7990>

⁶⁵ Liman, A. 2014. Boko Haram: Why the Northerners Believe Jonathan is Guilty. Retrieved June 8, 2016, from <http://leadershing/features/396929/boko-haramnortherners-believe-jonathan-guilty>

⁶⁶ Idahosa, Osaretin. 2015. Boko Haram and the Nigerian State: A Different Perspective. *Glocalism: Journal of Culture, Politics and Innovation*. 2015, 3, DOI: 10.12893/gjcp.2015.3.5. 1-28. Retrieved June 8, 2016, from www.glocalismjournal.net/ImagePub.aspx?id=287157

⁶⁷ Akande, Tunji. 2014. Youth Unemployment in Nigeria: A Situation Analysis. Retrieved July 13, 2016 from <http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/africa-infocus/posts/2014/09/23-youth-unemployment-nigeria-akande>

Philosophy of Boko Haram

Boko Haram may be seen today as a terrorist group. However, it was founded as a Sunni Islamic fundamentalist sect that wants to promote strict form of Sharia law. It is a fanatical Islamic sect whose basic beliefs are different from those held by the majority conservative Muslims in Nigeria. It developed into a *Salafist*-Jihadist group in 2009. Members of the sect believe that their interpretation of the Quran is the ‘true’ Islam. They are of the opinion that this ‘true’ Islam is holistic and embraces all aspects of Muslims life in readiness for life after death. They reject Western civilization and its products like education, culture, and modern science.

As part of the ideological statement cited by Cook,⁶⁸ the sect is fighting against among other things:

...Western Ways of life which include: constitutional provision as if relates to, for instance the rights and privileges of Women, the idea of homosexuality, lesbianism, sanctions in cases of terrible crimes like drug trafficking, rape of infants, multi-party democracy in an overwhelmingly Islamic country like Nigeria, blue films, prostitution, drinking beer and alcohol and many others that are opposed to Islamic civilization.

The concept of Jihad according to the insurgents

Since members of Boko Haram sect claim to be propagating Jihad, it is necessary to know more about this concept. A common definition of the word jihad is to struggle or strive (in the way or sake of Allah)” or, as erroneously defined by many people, “a holy war undertaken by Muslims against non-believers. Boer⁶⁹ argued that “the meaning of jihad varies greatly among Muslims; it can be violent or peaceful, communal or personal, political or spiritual. Malik⁷⁰ opined that the primary meaning of Jihad “is investing effort (in the sense of energy) in order to achieve a particular aim or to endure an effort (in the sense of a difficulty) caused by carrying out an action or putting a message into practice.”

⁶⁸ Cook, David. 2011. Boko Haram: A Prognosis. The James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy of Rice University. Retrieved June 9, 2016, from <http://bakerinstitute.org/media/files/Research/535dcd14/REL-pubCookBokoHaram-121611.pdf>

⁶⁹ Boer, Jan H. 2009. Christians and Muslims: Parameters for Living Together. Studies in Christian-Muslim Relations. Volume 8, Part 2. Belleville, Essence Publishing

⁷⁰ Malik, Ibrahim. 1994. Jihad - Its Development and Relevance. The Palestine-Israel Journal. Vol.1 No.2 1994 / Religion and Politics. Retrieved June 9, 2016, from <http://www.pij.org/details.php?id=741>

Having corrected the erroneous belief that jihad is an armed conflict or fanatical holy war, Martin⁷¹ cited Burek and Norton in differentiating between the greater jihad and the lesser jihad. The former is the internal struggle that each person has in order to do what is right and good, while the later has to do with the outward (which includes military) defense of Islam when the Islamic community is under attack.

Nevertheless, various terrorist groups (Boko Haram inclusive) have portrayed “jihad” as a “holy war” they are fighting in the cause of Allah. In contrast, many Muslim scholars have dissociated Islam from such activities. Quoting severally from Hadith, Suberu⁷² asserted, “Islam has made it forbidden for a Muslim to kill another Muslim or to kill another person unlawfully.” In fact, Ahmad⁷³ emphatically declared, “As far as Islam is concerned, it categorically rejects and condemns every form of terrorism. It does not provide any cover or justification for any act of violence, be it committed by an individual, a group or a government....” Therefore, it can be concluded that all terrorist groups claiming to be fighting a holy war of jihad to propagate Islam are doing so erroneously or with other ulterior motives.

Trauma Caused to victims of insurgency

Simply, trauma is a deeply distressing or disturbing experience. Physical and sexual abuse, neglect, bullying, community-based violence, disaster, terrorism, and war can cause trauma. While other injuries can be less visible, but have equally demoralizing effects, witnessing dreadful violence and seeing the bloody aftermath can lead to psychological trauma and impact negatively on psychosocial welfare. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) has been identified as the most frequently reported consequence of war exposure. There are three categories of people that are affected by trauma as a result of terrorism. These categories of people are:

1. Survivors of past traumatic events (e.g., refugees of wars, terrorism or torture, and survivors of domestic violence, child abuse or street crime). These individuals may have a heightened sense of vulnerability.

⁷¹ Martin, Gus. 2011. *Essentials of Terrorism: Concepts and Controversies*. Second Edition. Thousands Oaks, Sage Publications, Inc

⁷² Suberu, Ibrahim. 2015. *Martyrs or Terrorists: Suicide Bombing in Islamic Hermeneutics*. *Ilorin Journal of Religious Studies*. Vol. 5 No. 1. 2015, 119137

⁷³ Ahmad, Hazrat Mirza Tahir. 1990. *Murder in the Name of Allah*. Amritsar, Printwell. Retrieved June 9, 2016, from <http://www.alislam.org/library/books/Murder-in-the-name-of-Allah.pdf>

2. People who personally witnessed or were victims of the terrorist attack.
3. People who experience traumatization from learning of relatives, friends and acquaintances who were subject to the violence, or from exposure to repeated media accounts of the trauma.

Many people have been affected by the Boko Haram terrorism leading to psychological trauma. While there are many instances of terrorist attacks that have led to trauma both to people that are directly affected and people are indirectly affected, a good example of the victims of the Boko Haram terrorism that were psychologically affected were the parents of the Chibok girls. Unfortunately, there is lack of proper mental health support from the government and other organizations for the affected people in dealing with psychological and physical trauma associated with these Boko Haram insurgents.

Theological Bases for Humanitarianism

To be humanitarian is to have concern for or help to improve the welfare and happiness of fellow human being. The Holy Bible states, “God created man in His own image” (Genesis 1: 27).¹¹³ With this assertion, every human being is to be treated with dignity irrespective of the situation he/she finds him/herself. This is the foundation of every other teaching of the Bible about how to relate with or treat other human being. As a matter of fact, the Bible affirms that whatever a man does to his fellow human being (especially the less-privileged), he does it to his Creator. The writer of the book of Proverbs stated: “He who oppresses the poor reproaches his Maker” and “He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord” (14:31; 19:17). Jesus Christ reiterated this in His Parable of the Sheep and the Goats in Matthew 25:31-46: “Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.... Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me” (verses 40, 45).

The exodus of the people of Israel from Egypt and later exile in foreign lands are good examples of migrated displaced persons (see Exodus 13ff and 2 Kings 24:10-16). The people were cared for on their journey to the land of Canaan, and countries that refused to care for them were punished (see 1 Samuel 15:2). Because of these experiences, God instructed the people of Israel not to discriminate against the less privileged and strangers (including those who are temporarily displaced, internally displaced, or forced out of their homeland to become refugees in other

countries), rather the people of Israel should take care of, and respond with love and justice to the plight of displaced persons. The writers of New Testament also re-echoed this. Taking care of people in needs is even considered the pure religion!

Basic Needs of displaced Boko Haram victims

It is evident that what the migrated displaced Boko Haram victims' need most are basic needs of life like food, water, clothes, accommodation, and security.

Psychological Needs

Apart from meeting basic needs of the displaced people, the churches also responded by meeting the psychological needs of the people through visitation, encouragement, and counseling.

Social Needs

It is a fact that migrated displaced persons are socially victimized in our society today. In meeting the social needs of the displaced people, the social welfare of the displaced people should be a major concern of the church. There is a need in engaging the migrated displaced persons in cooperative societies where they can borrow money to establish themselves.

Spiritual Needs

It is interesting to discover that only few Christians are praying for the displaced people as a way of helping them. It is the conclusion of this researcher, therefore, that the churches do not see the need to respond to the plight of the displaced people spiritually or the churches do not attach much importance to the spiritual dimension of their responses to transforming the lives of the displaced people.

Constraints in Responding to the Displaced People

The major constraints as forty-six out fifty people interviewed indicated is lack or insufficient funds to meet the basic needs of the migrated displaced persons. Even pastors of some churches that this researcher considered to be buoyant financially also gave this complaint. These pastors opined that their churches would have done better if they have sufficient funds.

Undoubtedly, this constraint leads to another one as indicated by fifteen clergy: lack of needed resources to meet the immediate needs of the displaced persons. They admitted that they know what to do in providing for the displaced persons, but the resources to do such things are not

readily available because of insufficient funds. One way of resolving this is pulling resources together through the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) to do what churches cannot do individually.

One of the reasons for the insufficient or lack of funds is another constraint indicated by twelve clergy in their responses during the interview sessions: economic situation of Nigeria in general during the time of the research. The economic situation of Nigeria generally as a nation is getting worse,⁷⁴ and this affects every aspect of life of Nigerians. As at the time of doing this research, many government workers and workers of some private sectors had not received their monthly salaries for over six months. The clergy interviewed admitted that this harsh economic situation is affecting their church members adversely coupled with the lockdown of churches due to Corona pandemic commonly referred to as COVID-19 and by inference, it is affecting the income of the churches as well.

Other constraints that at least one clergy interviewed mentioned are:

1) Psychological Effects of the Insurgence to the Migrated Displaced Persons: many of the migrated displaced persons have not still overcome the psychological trauma of what they went through during the insurgency and on their ways back to the new community. Some of them are still referring to their properties and loved ones that they have lost. This is not far-fetched because it has been estimated that 50% of refugees [and internally displaced persons] experienced higher levels of PTSD [that is, post-traumatic stress disorder], depression and other psychiatric problems.”⁷⁵ These are hindering them from settling down. The churches are struggling to encourage and counsel them to forget the past and move on with their lives.

2) Unwillingness/Reluctance of the Migrated Displaced Persons: it is interesting to discover that some of migrated displaced persons are “reluctant or even unwilling to indicate that they are displaced persons.

3) Religious Barrier: in spite of the fact that there was no discrimination [in responding to the migrated displaced persons] as even Muslims among them are also helped, many Muslims prefer to stay away from the assistance that the churches are rendering in responding to transforming

⁷⁴ Helena H. 2016. Nigeria is headed for a full-blown economic crisis. Retrieved on 13, May 2020 from <http://uk.businessinsider.com/nigeria-gdp-head-into-full-blown-crisi-2016-5>.

⁷⁵ Knezevic and Olson

the lives of the displaced people. However, this researcher is of the opinion that making a church building or religious center a meeting point for the migrated displaced persons will hinder people of other faiths to freely come and mingle with others, especially in a society where religious affiliation is strongly pronounced.

4) Church Members' Unfaithfulness: a clergy lamented, "Some church members are unfaithful in their act of giving to the church and commitment to helping those that are in needs. It is the opinion of this researcher that the economic situation of the people may be a factor in this.

5) Church Members' Ignorance of the Plight of Migrated Displaced Persons: some church members do not really know what the migrated displaced persons have passed through during the insurgency that made them forcefully left their places of abode, and what the displaced persons are still passing through psychologically. This ignorance is making many of the church members to be indifferent to the displaced persons. These church members could empathize with the migrated displaced persons after enlightenment about the situations of the displaced people.

6) Church Members' Illiterate Mentality: this factor related to the one just discussed above also is a challenge to a church pastor interviewed during the research. Some church members because of their illiteracy do not see the need to help the displaced people. They are of the opinion that they also need the help of the church. What these church members need is education about helping other people.

7) Church Peculiarity: one pastor indicated, the peculiarity of his church being mostly a student-oriented church [that is, a church that ministers mostly to students in tertiary institutions] is a constraint that makes many displaced persons not to consider joining the church or seeking help from the church. However, he admitted that his church has been contributing to the conference whenever there is need to for the cause of the migrated displaced persons.

More Effectives Methods of Responding to the Displaced People

Foremost among the methods is more cooperation among churches. This researcher is not surprised that forty seven out of fifty pastors interviewed were of this opinion. These pastors agreed that it would be far better to pull their resources together and let the Christian body (CAN) coordinate the efforts of transforming the lives of the displaced people. A pastor

emphatically declared, “We just have to come together to meet the needs of these people [that is, the migrated displaced persons].

Another prominent method on ways the churches could do better in their responses is more awareness among church members about the migrated displaced persons. Thirty two pastors were of this opinion “Ignorance is the most serious disease of mankind and is the cause of all its ills. Healing is achieved through knowledge,” attributed to Buddha reiterates this. A pastor put it this way: “If church members are more aware about the plights of the displaced persons, pastors and church leaders would not have much difficulty in leading the church to respond to transforming the lives of the displaced persons.

Availability of more funds is another factor that could make churches respond more to transforming the lives of the displaced persons. This is the opinion of forty out of the pastors interviewed.

Creating a center (or centers) where the migrated displaced persons will be meeting and receiving assistance is another way those interviewed felt the churches could do better to respond to transforming the lives of the migrated displaced persons. A pastor even opined, “a church should be established purposely for [the migrated displaced persons] in order to meet their peculiar needs. However, in the opinion of this researcher, such center (or centers) should be different from many internally displaced persons (IDPs) centers that are uncared for because “[Nigeria’s] government’s support for the IDPs is grossly insufficient.

Inasmuch as the migrated displaced persons cannot continuously depend on what they are receiving from the churches, twenty seven out of the pastors interviewed saw the need to quickly integrate the displaced migrated persons into the society.

As part of the integration, forty pastors agreed that churches would do better if they could provide jobs for the migrated displaced persons. This will make the displaced people less dependent on the churches. Closely related with this is the issue of victimization by societies or associations of professionals and artisans. Twelve pastors were of the opinion that churches should come together to speak against this issue in favour of the migrated displaced persons.

Other ways to be more effective in responding by churches to the plights of the migrated displaced persons according to one pastor each are: providing farmland for the migrated

displaced persons; more organization among the migrated displaced persons; giving of loans to the migrated displaced persons; appealing to the politicians on behalf of the migrated displaced persons; and prayer for the migrated displaced persons.

Effects of the Displaced People to Church Members

Mostly, the migrated displaced persons might have needed the assistance of the churches, and the thrust of this research has been to find out to what extents these churches respond to transform the lives of these displaced people.

Positively, the presence of the migrated displaced Boko Haram victims making members of the churches to be more aware of [the migrated displaced persons] and what are happening to people in the northern part of the country and other conflict-affected parts of the world.

Another positive impact of the presence of the migrated displaced Boko Haram victims in the society is that it makes the church members to be more committed in their faith. The reality of Boko Haram insurgency and the presence of its migrated displaced victims quicken the faith of Christians in the area and “keep church members on their toes and make them to be more alert and more committed. In fact, the presence of migrated displaced victims increases the faith of the church members and draws them closer to God.

Another important positive impact of the presence of the migrated displaced Boko Haram victims is that these displaced persons increase the membership of some churches in the area. Some of these victims are even active in church activities as “there is a case of one of [the migrated displaced persons] that has become a Sunday school teacher in the church.

The presence of the migrated displaced Boko Haram victims is a wake-up call in reaching out with the Gospel to the victims in the area and other places where there are internally displaced persons. A pastor was even suggesting sending out missionaries to these people.

Lastly, the positive aspect of the migrated displaced Boko Haram victims is that their presence enhances the need to pray more for affected people in conflict-prone areas and for peace in these places. Churches may not be able to actively do much in bringing peace back to those areas, but they can pray.

Negatively, the presence and situations of the migrated displaced Boko Haram victims increase the burdens/concerns of churches in the area and their members. The financial burden in

particular because of the economic situation of the Nigeria is making the churches to have concerns on how to respond to transforming the lives of the migrated displaced persons. This is in addition to other burdens that the churches already have.

Recommendations

1. Based on the findings of this study, therefore, the following recommendations are made for more effective faith-based responses to the displaced Boko Haram victims:
2. Human rights of all people should be upheld at all times, including the rights of displaced persons, asylum seekers and refugees;
3. Political leaders should demonstrate ethical and non-partisan leadership in policy debates on immigration and the global movement of displaced persons; and
4. We encourage Christians to act as advocates for displaced persons and to develop plans to respond with compassion and hospitality to the needs of displaced persons.
5. Churches should lay more emphasis on meeting the psychological and spiritual needs of the displaced persons as the displaced persons may not get these needs met by other organizations that are not faith-based.
6. The church should organize awareness programmes for people on how to come together to establish small-scale business where these migrated displaced persons can be engaged.
7. The church should also encourage those that have small-scale businesses to assimilate the migrated displaced persons. Churches could be encouraged to do similar things. Churches should also speak up against victimization of displaced people in their chosen professions.
8. Church pastors should preach more and enlighten their members and others about peaceful coexistence with other people.
9. Churches should seriously consider organized prayers for displaced people and for peaceful coexistence where there are conflicts.
10. We call upon governments at all levels to uphold universal human rights and develop just and compassionate policies with provisions for:
 - a. Access to the protections afforded to displaced persons in international law including non-discrimination with respect to religious and ethnic identity;
 - b. Access to adequate psychological, social, and medical care;

- c. Ensuring that displaced persons whose claim for refugee status has been denied are treated fairly while awaiting repatriation;
11. We also urge governments to use peaceful means to address human rights violations in countries of origin and to pursue policies to strengthen regional cooperation and expand protection of displaced persons.

Conclusion

There is a unique set of internally displaced persons (referred to in this research as migrated displaced persons). These persons are unique because they are not concentrated in any IDP center or camp; Churches are responding in some ways to transforming the lives of these displaced persons; while there are some constraints and challenges that these churches are facing as they respond to transforming the lives of the displaced persons. There are better ways the churches can be more effective in their responses to transforming the lives of the displaced people; and the presence of the migrated displaced persons is having positive and negative impacts on the members of the churches.

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