



The Problem of Refugees, Gender and Religious Differences in Nigeria's IDP Camps

Masalah Pengungsi, Gender dan Perbedaan Agama di Kamp IDP Nigeria

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ABSTRAK

Masalah pengungsi saat ini menjadi isu utama dalam urusan internasional. Ini terkait erat dengan seluk-beluk perdamaian dan keamanan dunia juga. Pengungsi sekarang memiliki dampak besar pada politik dunia dan urusan dalam negeri di banyak negara. Nasib para pengungsi di hampir semua bagian dunia, dan khususnya di Afrika, semakin sering menjadi bahan diskusi di arena nasional dan internasional. Isu hak asasi manusia tidak dapat dipisahkan dengan persoalan perpindahan manusia, sehingga tidak mungkin mengkaji satu tanpa mengacu pada yang lain, ketika pengungsi meninggalkan rumah, masyarakat, dan negaranya sendiri karena takut dibunuh, disiksa, dipenjara, diperbudak, dirampok, atau kelaparan. Makalah ini berusaha memberikan eksposisi tentang kamp pengungsi dan pengungsi seperti yang dipraktikkan dan dieksekusi di Nigeria. Intinya adalah untuk menunjukkan penyebab kamp pengungsi dan pengungsi dan tantangan yang menyertainya. Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk menunjukkan fakta bahwa kamp pengungsi dan pengungsi di Nigeria masih jauh dari standar PBB untuk pendirian dan praktik kamp pengungsi dan perawatan pengungsi. Tulisan ini berpendapat bahwa penyebab pengungsian dan pengusuran internal antara lain adalah militansi, fanatisme agama, dan banjir. Inti dari tulisan ini adalah bahwa agama, sentimen etnis, serta nafsu indriawi, telah mengaburkan praktik sebenarnya dari kemah pengungsi dan pengungsi serta pemberian perawatan. Makalah ini bersifat ekspositori..

Kata Kunci: pengungsi; Nigeria; berkemah pengungsi; Masalah Gender.

ABSTRACT

The refugee problem today is a major issue in international affairs. It is intimately linked to the intricacies of world peace and security too. Refugees now have a substantial impact on world politics and domestic affairs in many countries. The plight of refugees in almost all parts of the world, and especially in Africa, is an increasingly frequent subject of discussion in the national and international arena. The issue of human rights is inextricably linked to the question of human displacement, so that it is impossible to examine one without referring to the other, when refugees abandon their own home, community, and country because they are frightened of being murdered, tortured, imprisoned, enslaved, robbed, or starving. This paper seeks to provide an exposition of refugeeism and IDP camps as they are practiced and executed in Nigeria. The essence is to point out the causes of refugeeism and IDP camps and the challenges that come with them. This paper is aimed at pointing out the fact that refugeeism and IDP camps in Nigeria are still far from reaching the UN standard for the setting up and practice of IDP camps and caring for refugees. This paper holds that the causes of refugeeism and internal displacement are militancy, religious fanaticism, and floods, among others. The core of this paper is that religion, ethnic sentiment, as well as sensual desire, have beclouded the actual practice of refugeeism and IDP camping and care giving. This paper is expository in nature.

Keywords: refugee; Nigeria; IDP camping; Gender Problem.

1. INTRODUCTION

The refugee problem is one of the most agonizing tragedies of modern age. It is the product not only of the most destructive wars of history, World War I and World War II, of modern dictatorial regimes and of the national awakening of the people, but also of the closed frontier characteristic of the twentieth-first century (Burke 2017). It is an age-old problem, and there were refugees in earlier centuries, but there is no refugee problem in the modern sense. In recent times, the refugee problem has been distinguished from the refugee movements of the early days by its scope, variety of causes, complexity, and intractability. Modern refugee movements, beginning in Europe and subsequently becoming worldwide, have given rise to a new class of people who are homeless and stateless and who live in conditions of threat to life, abject poverty, and deprivation that erode human dignity (Stonebridge 2018). They have caused grave political, social, and economic problems for the countries concerned, which have proved too burdensome for the administrative facilities and financial resources of private organisations and national governments.

Furthermore, while in its earlier stages, the refugee problem was seen as a temporary and limited phenomenon, it has now come to be acknowledged as universal, continuing, and recurring. In response to this challenge, the international community has developed a mechanism of worldwide cooperation involving a tripartite partnership of national governments, private agencies, and international organizations. No longer confined by strict definitions of the term “refugee”, it has been prepared with the view of approaching the problem in all its aspects—political, social, economic, and humanitarian. There is no single definition of “refugee” that is applicable for all purposes. When associated with humanitarian aims, the connotation of the term differs from the one used in international agreements since the human aspects of the refugee problem are distinct from the question of a refugee’s status in any given situation. However, all refugees have in common the following characteristics: they are uprooted, they are homeless, and they lack national protection and status.

A refugee is an involuntary migrant, a victim of politics, war, or natural catastrophe. Every refugee is naturally a migrant, but not every migrant is a refugee. A migrant is one who leaves his residence (usually for economic reasons) in order to settle elsewhere, either in his own or in another country (Colson 2003). A refugee exodus results when the tensions leading to migration are so acute that what at first seemed to be a voluntary movement becomes virtually compulsive. The uprooted become either internal refugees (persons who have been displaced in their own country) or “international refugees” (persons outside their country of origin). The

1951 United Nations Refugee Convention was the culmination of an important historical development in the definition of basic minimum legal standards for the treatment of refugees on the international plane. It has been gradually accepted “that the refugee has a special status that sets him apart from the ordinary alien because he is without any country’s diplomatic protection” (Lehmann, 2020, p. 59). In common usage, we can say that a refugee is a person taking refuge, especially in a foreign country, from war, persecution, or natural disaster. Alternatively, Refugees are people who are uprooted from the land of their own and forced to run away to a different place for the safety of their lives. In the Swahili language, the word for refugee is *mikimbizi*, which literally means “a person who runs”—in other words, someone who runs away from their homeland in fear for their survival (Das 2005). The fundamental justification for this forcible eviction and population movement may vary from country to country, but it is generally because of the multi-religious and pluralistic cultures prevailing in almost all third-world countries.

This paper is concerned with the issue of refugeeism and IDP camps in Nigeria. These two phenomena were alien to Nigerian society until recently, most especially in the 1990s. The reason for this paper is that there is a rapid increase of refugees and internally displaced persons as never before in our beloved nation, hence the call for concern on the part of Nigerians to reshape these practices for good. Therefore, the essence of this paper is to highlight the causes and challenges of refugeeism and IDP camps in the country. This paper shall first look at the contextual meaning of key concepts such as gender problems, refugeeism, religious differences, and IDPs. Afterwards, the paper will examine the main issue, which is the unveiling of the causes and challenges of refugeeism, gender problems, and religious differences in Nigeria’s IDPs camps. This paper, therefore, starts with the explication of concepts.

2. REFUGEEISM

To be a refugee, the person must demonstrate that he/she is outside their country of nationality and has a well founded fear of persecution for any one or more of five reasons (race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion), and because of that fear, he feels that he cannot return to his own country (Bhatia 2020). The concept known as refugeeism is derived from the root word ‘refugee’ which refers to any person who:

as a result of events occurring before 1st January 1951 and owing to well – founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion is outside the country of his (or her) nationality

and is unable, or owing to such fear, is willing to avail himself (or herself) of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being made outside the country of his (or her) former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it..." (Oduwale and Fadeyi, 2013, p. 4).

Also, the OAU convention of 1969 gives more comprehensive definition of concept 'refugee'. This definition is stated thus:

the term 'refugee' shall also apply to every person, who, owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part of the whole of his (or her) country of origin or nationality, is compelled to leave his (or her) place of habitual residence in order to seek refugee in another place outside his (or her) country of origin or nationality (Oduwale and Fadeyi, 2013, p. 4).

The fact is that the idea of "refugee" involves "persons who have fled their countries because their lives, safety, or freedom have been threatened by generalized violence, foreign aggression, internal conflicts, massive violations of human rights, or other circumstances which have seriously disturbed public order" (DiGiacomo & Kang, 2019, p. 119). A refugee is one who, for one reason or the other (most especially when it has to do with the violation of his/her human rights or threat to life), has left his/her place of residence and is taking residence in another place for safety or security reasons. This phenomenon is what is here referred to as 'refugeeism'.

Fear is one factor that aids refugeeism. Fear, of course, is a subjective feeling of apprehension regarding the safety of a person's life and/or freedom. Absence of freedom, by itself, is not sufficient to make you a refugee. In a refugee context, legitimate fear must be supported by objective realities as well as socioeconomic and political conditions in your country of origin; conditions that cause you and your family to flee your native land in search of safety and refuge. If your fear is based on these realities, if you have a reasonable or likely possibility of being persecuted for them, this fear will be treated as a well founded fear.

Persecution, in general terms, means a serious threat to one's life and freedom, along with serious violations of fundamental human rights that result in harm to the individual, which are linked to one or more of the five grounds in the refugee definition. Although

discrimination alone is not persecution, however serious it might be, systemic discrimination based on the five grounds that may lead to serious negative consequences or harm to an individual, may amount to persecution. The five grounds are:

1. Race

In the present connection, race has to be understood in the widest sense of the term, to include all kinds of ethnic groups that are referred to as "races" in common. Frequently, it will also entail membership in a specific social group of common descent that forms a minority within a larger population (Weber 2016). Discrimination for reasons of race has found world-wide condemnation as one of the most striking violations of human rights. Racial discrimination, therefore, represents an important element in determining the existence of persecution.

Discrimination on racial grounds frequently amounts to persecution in the sense of the 1951 Convention. This is often the case if, for example, as a result of discrimination, a person's human dignity is affected to such an extent as to be incompatible with the most elementary and inalienable human rights, or where the disregard of racial barriers is subject to serious consequences. The very fact of a person's belonging to a certain racial group will normally not be enough to substantiate a claim to refugee status. There may, however, be situations where, due to particular circumstances affecting the group, such membership will in itself be sufficient ground to fear persecution.

2. Religion

The universal declaration of human rights and the human rights convention proclaim the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, which includes the freedom of a person to change his religion and his freedom to manifest it in public or private in teaching, practice, worship, and Persecution for "reasons of religion" may assume various forms, such as prohibition of membership of a religious community, of worship in private or in public, of religious instruction, or serious measures of discrimination imposed on people because they practice their religion or belong to a particular religious community. Mere membership of a particular religious community will normally not be enough to substantiate a claim to refugee status (EL-Awad et al., 2022). There are, however, some situations where just being a member can be a reason for people to be punished.

3. Nationality

It refers to the membership of an ethnic or linguistic group and occasionally overlaps with the term "race". Persecution for reasons of nationality may consist of adverse attitudes and measures directed against a

national, ethnic, or linguistic minority, and in certain circumstances, the fact of belonging to such a minority may in itself give rise to a well-founded fear of persecution (2012). It may not always be easy to distinguish between persecution for reasons of nationality and persecution for reasons of political opinion when a conflict between national groups is combined with political movements, particularly where a political movement is identified with a specific “nationality” (Ugurel Kamisli, 2021). As a rule, people from a minority group are afraid of being persecuted for their nationality. However, there have been many cases on different continents where people from a majority group were afraid of being persecuted by a dominant minority.

4. Membership of a particular social group

People of similar backgrounds, habits, or social status may comprise the type of group that is referred to as a social group. These people may be defined by innate and unchangeable characteristics such as linguistic background, gender, or sexual orientation. Some of them may also be people who associate for reasons that are so important to them that they can't be made to stop.

5. Political opinions: this refers to people who either hold political opinions that are not tolerated by the authorities or are assumed to hold such opinions by them.

Overall, whatever their reasons for having become displaced and being driven out of their home countries, refugees are a group of people not well received anywhere at all. The very creation of the group called refugees is the result of hostile attitudes and strife against them in their native lands, which in turn is the basis for the well-founded fear they feel, because of which they are reluctant to return home (Ugurel Kamisli, 2021). The 1951 UN definition of the term “refugee” was expressly designed to identify the refugees created in the post-World War II period in Europe, but it soon became obvious that it needed to be extended in order to deal with the many and continuing refugee movements around the world. This new need led to the addition of the later 1967 protocol, which defined a refugee as a person:

... who, owing to [a] well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear or for reasons other than personal convenience, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a

nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence, is unable, or owing to such fear or for reasons other than personal convenience, is unwilling to return to it (Higgins *et al.*, 2018, p. 889).

A few years after the 1967 protocol, in 1969, the Organization of African Unity's Convention on Refugee Problems in Africa accepted the U.N. criteria but also recognized as a refugee a person who has had to flee his or her country “owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination, or events seriously disturbing public order...” (paragraph 1). In 1984, the Central American nations, along with Mexico and Panama, adopted a declaration that builds upon the Organization of African Unity (OAU) definition, adding to it the additional criteria of “massive violation of human rights”. Although not a legally binding instrument, the Cartagena Declaration has become the basis for refugee policy in that region. The United Nations, too, follows the OAU and Cartagena definitions when it works in these areas. Some even say that the expanded definitions have now become part of customary international law, which is what the United Nations does.

The issue of arriving at a competent and all-inclusive definition for the term “refugee” is important because, as political scientists Aristide Zolberg, Astri Suhrke, and Sergio Aguayo have written, “Refugee status is a privilege or entitlement, giving those who qualify access to certain scarce resources or services outside their own country, such as admission into another country ahead of a long line of claimants, legal protection abroad, and often some material assistance from public or private agencies.” They identify three groups that are likely to become refugees: dissidents, target minorities, and victims of violence. A fourth category, the victims of massive human rights abuses, can be added to the three. Between then and now, the declarations cover all of the categories. The first two are covered by the 1951 Convention as victims of persecution; the third was codified in the OAU Convention, and the fourth was identified in the Cartagena Declaration.

At the conceptual level, it is possible to make a distinction between the involuntary and forced displacement of people and the voluntary movements of people arising from their own volition. This conceptual difference sets the “refugees” apart from the “migrants.” The state, and powerful communities within a state, are generally responsible for creating conditions that compel people to seek refuge across their borders. These conditions include internal conflicts arising for a variety of reasons, all generically reflecting the failure of governance by the state. These conditions need to be distinguished from the various population movements caused by natural calamities and environmental degradation, or those arising as a result of developmental

policies pursued by the state, or those motivated by the understandably human desire of people to pursue a better quality of life (Egu & Ilozobhie, 2015; Ilozobhie & Egu, 2018). Involuntary and voluntary moves can happen both inside and outside of states, and they can happen both ways.

A major part of the migration from rural to urban areas within developing countries and from the developing world to the developed world is driven by the search for gainful employment and a better quality of life. It is not feasible to describe such migrants as refugees or to classify them as internally displaced people who are in need of state or societal support. States have an understandable desire to distinguish between involuntary and voluntary population movements in forming their national policies. The various developed countries of the world are increasingly making this distinction in order to prevent the unmanageable entry of people seeking gainful employment, or other advantages, in the guise of seeking asylum.

Over time, worldwide practical experience has demonstrated that these distinctions are eroding rapidly, and it is becoming more and more difficult for states to distinguish between legitimate immigrants seeking asylum due to a well-founded fear of persecution in their home countries and people motivated by much simpler economic reasons. Ideally, "the emphasis in the matter needs to shift from a focus on the factors that created the refugees to a focus on the definition of a refugee by the circumstances that they are currently living in, such as a constant condition of statelessness and vulnerability to abuse" (Williams 2008). This more humane formulation has to be weighed against the basic principles guiding the international refugee regime, which envisages the temporary protection of the immigrants, although the issue of their permanent residence could also be addressed with reference to their original homes. The immensity of the problem can be gauged by the fact that the UNHCR estimates that at the end of the 20th century, some 150 million people were living outside the country of their birth, amounting to about 2.5 percent of the world's population, or one out of every 70 people.

3. THE MEANING OF REFUGEE AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPS)

The need to clarify the difference between refugees and internally displaced persons can never be over-emphasized. A myriad of people, both literate and non-literate, often use these terms interchangeably, as though they are the same. There is a clear-cut difference between these concepts. At the special summit of the African Union (AU) held in Kampala, the capital of Uganda, the term "internally displaced persons" (IDPs) was clearly defined. The Kampala convention, as it is

popularly called, defines internally displaced persons (IDPs) as

Persons or groups of person who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border (Information Resources Management Association, 2019, p. 1336).

According to Eni and Synda, the United Nations (UN) defined internally displaced persons (IDPs) as "... persons who have been forced to flee their homes suddenly or unexpectedly in large numbers, as a result of armed conflict, internal strife, systematic violations of human rights or natural or man-made disasters, and who are within the territory of their own country" (Eneanya 2018, p. 107). The most important point to note in this definition is that, although the internally displaced persons are forced to flee from their habitual residence, they remain within the borders of their own country and have no institutional or legal mechanism for receiving international assistance. They remain under the jurisdiction and responsibility of their governments. Internally displaced persons are catered for either by their families, government/non-governmental organizations, or a combination of both.

On the other hand, refugees are citizens of a particular country who have crossed an internationally recognized border into another country in order to seek a safe haven. The term "refugee," according to the 1969 (OAU) (AU) convention, refers to

every person, who, owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in part or the whole of his/her country of origin or nationality is compelled to leave his/her place of habitual residence in order to seek refuge in another place outside his/her country or nationality (Kumar et al., 2017, p. 22).

Unlike internally displaced persons, refugees are those who have crossed an internationally recognized border or territory of a recognized state to seek refuge. They are eligible for international protection and assistance under the mandate of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The UNHCR 1951 Refugee Convention in Geneva defined refugees as "people who

are forced to flee their country because of a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinions, or membership in a particular social group" (Eneanya 2018, p. 109).

The main distinction between IDPs and refugees is that the former are those who flee their habitual residence in order to seek refuge in a safe place within the territory of their own country. While the latter are those who flee their country in order to seek a safe haven. Again, refugees are entitled to international protection and are being catered for by international organizations. But, IDPs are not entitled to international protection and are catered for by the government of their own country. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is mandated by the United Nations to lead and coordinate international action for the worldwide protection of refugees and the resolution of refugee problems.

4. INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN NIGERIA

The assertion that internal displacement is a problem endemic or peculiar to Africa is not true, as some people assumed. Internal displacement is a global phenomenon; it is a problem found on every continent in the world. According to Owoaje et al., (2016), "Globally, over 40 million people were displaced as a result of wars and violence due to religious and ethnic conflicts in 2015, while 19.2 million were displaced by natural disasters such as famine and floods" (p. 161). However, Africa has the highest rate of internally displaced persons as a result of the incessant violent ethnic conflicts and the high rates of insurgency in the continent. But, in Europe and America, people are internally displaced mainly as a result of natural disasters such as tsunamis, hurricanes, and floods.

Among the countries in Africa with internal displacement problems, Nigeria has the highest number of internally displaced persons. Maryam and Mohammed posit that "The National Policy on Internally Displaced Persons (NPIDP) notes that thousands of Nigerians are annually internally displaced as a result of conflicts and natural disasters, including floods, erosion, oil spillage, as well as development projects" (Ibrahim, 2021, p. 193). However, the Boko Haram insurgency, religious conflicts, and inter-communal conflicts are the leading causes of internal displacement in Nigeria, particularly in the northern region (Chima et al., 2018; Obilor et al., 2018). As of October 2016, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in collaboration with the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) in its 12th round of displacement tracking Matrix (DTM) program estimated the total number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) at 2,155,618 across 13 states in Nigeria. As of December 2016, the DTM Round 13

Report estimated 1,770,444 IDPs in the northeast (Simms & Trim, 2011).

Jones & Hope (2021), opines that "the hazardous undertakings of the Boko Haram insurgency have generated a huge upsurge of displacement in the north eastern part of Nigeria" (p. 43). Eme, T. et al. also state that:

In Nigeria, the insurgent activities of Boko Haram in the past 6 years have forced over a million people to flee their homes. This has resulted in an unprecedented humanitarian crisis in the North-eastern part of the country and the Lake Chad region. Furthermore, inter-communal clashes resulting from ethno-religious disputes, tension between Fulani herdsmen and farmers have resulted in over 700,000 people being displaced from the Middle Belt region of Nigeria (Thurston, 2021, p. 73).

From these assertions, we can deduce that the major cause of internal displacement in Nigeria is not natural disasters but man-made problems, such as the insurgence perpetuated by Boko Haram, conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers, inter-communal clashes, and ethno-religious crises.

Internal displacement has a wide range of negative consequences, not only for refugees and internally displaced people, but also for the country as a whole. Some of the effects of displacement on internally displaced persons include psychological trauma, socioeconomic problems, depression, etc. According to Haruna et al., "Being displaced can have several adverse effects on the physical, social, emotional, and spiritual well-being of a person" (Dominelli 2018, p. 456). The main effect it has on the country as a whole is the disruption of economic activity in the affected local government areas and states.

The plight of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Nigeria is becoming alarming. This is as a result of the ineptitude of the government to provide for the basic needs of those in internally displaced persons camps. The plights of internally displaced persons in Nigeria include lack of access to health care services, no food and water to drink, no electricity, no source of livelihood, frequent sexual abuse, no shelter and, above all, insecurity of life. As a State Party to the Kampala Convention, the Nigerian Government has the primary duty and responsibility to assist and protect IDPs in its territory. According to Fatima

Despite Nigeria being a signatory to the Kampala Convention and other international instruments this has not been adequately reflected in national

policy and strategies because most of these policies and strategies have either not been adopted into national legislation and/or suffer from poor implementation. In the absence of a policy framework on internal displacement in Nigeria, the response to the plight of IDPs has remained largely fragmented and uncoordinated; and the response to the root causes of internal displacement has been very poor and ineffective (Isokpan & Durojaye, 2016, p. 53).

Despite the government's best efforts to alleviate people's plights, some corrupt officials have been attempting to sabotage its efforts. According to Maryam and Mohammed, "there are disturbing allegations of corruption in the management of IDP camps in Nigeria, as food materials made available by the government and private individuals are siphoned by officials responsible for disturbing them" (Ibrahim, 2021, p. 193). Adam avers that "in Geidam, a local government area in the north of Yobe, NEMA and FEMA officials have been accused of allowing aid to go astray. He further asserts that "various international organizations deliver aid to the IDPs in northern Nigeria, including Yobe state. They include the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Action Against Hunger and a number of United Nations (UN) agencies (Institute for War and Peace Reporting). The News Agency of Nigeria reports that protesters in Makurdi IDP camp intercepted a truck containing relief materials that was trying to divert the items to another place. A NAN correspondent who was at the camp reports that the protesters overpowered the security guards at the camp and blocked the camp entrance to prevent the vehicle from moving out with the materials.

These lapses show the ineffective strategies of the federal government to ensure that the relief materials sent to various IDP camps get there and are used by victims of internal displacement. Refugees are more advantaged than IDPs because relief materials are sent by the United Nations and other international organizations and are monitored by the same organizations.

5. AN EVALUATION OF THE PLIGHT OF WOMEN IN IDPS AND REFUGEE CAMP IN NIGERIA

Among the victims of internal displacement, women and children suffer the most. Judy posits that "the enormity of the ever-growing problem of IDPs surpasses humans" (as is the case with refugees), and women and children bear the brunt of it (Arai 2017). The report has it that "an overwhelming majority of

internally displaced persons in Nigeria are women and children" (Oladejo & Okoli-Uwajumogu, 2019, p. 53). These women are usually marginalized and oppressed by men. Human Rights Watch posits that "government officials and other authorities in Nigeria have raped and sexually exploited women and girls displaced by the conflict with Boko Haram". According to Owoaje et al., (2016), there have been reported instances of rape, sexual harassment, forced marriage, infant marriage, sexual diseases, and uncontrolled birth, occasioning high infant and maternal mortality in make-shift IDP camps in Nigeria (p. 161). In the absence of resources, internally displaced women trade sex in exchange for food. In late July, 2016, Human Rights Watch documented the sexual abuse, including rape and exploitation, of 43 women and girls living in seven internally displaced persons camps in Maiduguri, the Borno state capital (Abdulkadir 2019).

Women in internally displaced camps suffer a series of health challenges because of the vulnerability of their body systems. A number of studies have reported that women and girls were victims of physical and sexual violence in IDP camps. Women are at higher risk of unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, maternal morbidity, and mortality. In Nigeria's IDP camps, women lack access to reproductive health care services. Pregnant and nursing mothers in IDP camps in Nigeria are not well taken care of. They also live in fear because their lives are not secured. Women in refugee camps do not suffer as much as women in internally displaced person's camps. The veracity of the matter is that they are citizens of the international community. They are protected by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. While in camp, the women receive health care services, education, skills training, and nutritious food. UNHCR protection officers monitor the refugees' international refugee laws, delineating their human rights and physical safety.

6. UNVEILING OF THE CAUSES AND CHALLENGES OF REFUGEEISM, GENDER PROBLEM AND RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES IN NIGERIA'S IDP CAMPS

Refugeeism and IDP camps are now living existential realities in Nigerian society. This is to say that they have come to become part of society in a way that cannot be brushed aside. And a lot of factors are behind the coming into being of these phenomena that were far from Nigerian society. Some of the causes of these phenomena include flooding, inter-communal, inter-ethnic, interstate, and even international conflicts and wars, as well as religious conflicts. In the context of flooding, most of the flood-related IDP camps occur in areas that are found close to the river bank. And flooding occurs when water overflows its banks, destroying the lives and properties of those who live in the affected

area(s). These affected people have no choice but to relocate to another settlement, and if such a settlement is provided for them by the government or any non-governmental organization, it can be said to be an IDP camp. Closely linked to this is the issue of natural disasters such as flooding or soil erosion. In conflict-affected states, natural disasters have complicated displacement and return patterns and have, in some cases, made it difficult to distinguish between people displaced by conflict and other causes (Oduwole and Fadeyi 2013).

Militancy is also a cause of internal displacement of people in Nigeria. For example, Rivers, Bayelsa, and Delta states in the Niger Delta have been plagued by violence since the 1990s. This is due to their struggle for resource control as part of their rights. A Joint Task Force (JTF) has been commissioned to restore peace in these affected areas; hence, the repeated use of air strikes and land and water attacks on the said areas. There are also constant clashes between the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) and other militant organizations with JTF, resulting in internal displacement of the people. This is very evident with the May 2009 clash between MEND and JTF, wherein many people were displaced from their homes and communities, villages, etc (Irobi 2010).

It is pertinent to note that the main cause of the internal displacement of people in Nigeria, which has resulted in the formation of IDP camps, is religion. So, this section will spend more time discussing this factor here. As stated earlier, Nigeria is a multi-religious state, with adherents of these religions not really relating well with each other. It has been observed that instead of members of these religious groups seeing their religion as a complement in their quest for the understanding of God, they rather see their religion as contradictory to each other. On this note, they are engaged in a battle for superiority or supremacy. This quest tends to have no end in sight. While religion unites its members on one hand, on the other hand, it brings about a deep divide between its members and non-members. This schism is to the point that they see themselves as irreconcilable enemies. It is this mindset that has led to the religious crises that are experienced from time to time in the country. This is also the view of Maduka (2012), who asserts that since Nigeria's independence, the country has come under a strong religious crisis that has led to several riots and destruction of lives and properties. He also notes that these crises and riots are mainly caused by adherents of Christianity and Islam. Agi (1998) does not see this religious crisis as restricted only to Christianity and Islam, but that it also involves African traditional religions. According to him, there are six faces of religious violence in Nigeria, and they include: Muslim-ATR, Muslim-Muslim, Christian-ATR, Christian-Christian, Muslim-Christian, Muslim-the rest

of us.

Eze Felix Chibueze (2014), sees this to be a result of the failure of these religious groups to instill in the minds of their faithful moral and spiritual consciousness as well as unity of purpose in their various religious faiths, which can in turn bring about a peaceful and united Nigeria. These religions do not foster peace and unity in the nation; they instead ferment violence and disunity among the citizens of Nigeria. This is based on the fact that religious groups in Nigeria breed fanatics who think of their religious faith above those of others and the interests of the nation. These fanatics will do anything to promote and protect their religious beliefs and teachings, even if it leads to the split of the nation. It is with this mindset that these religious fanatics have helped to bifurcate and polarize the nation of Nigeria, instead of fostering socio-political integration.

S. S. Iwe (1979) also has issues with the way religions in Nigeria have helped to weaken the socio-political unity of Nigeria and Nigerians, as he notes that "religious prejudice and arrogance give rise to dangerous polarization of religious affairs." Religious prejudice beclouds spiritual vision, induces unjust discrimination, and militates against social integration and solidarity "(p. 220). By implication, Nigeria has been so divided along religious lines that one who is not of the same religion as another person is regarded as non-human or sub-human and unworthy of existing as a Nigerian. This is what has led to the ceaseless religious unrest in the country. It is this religious unrest that the country is experiencing today in the open rivalry between the adherents or faithfuls of Christianity and Islam in the northern part of the country. This is not good news for the country's unity and progress. It leads to underdevelopment since there is a massive loss of lives and properties. A case in point is the Boko Haram crisis that is being experienced in the northern part of Nigeria today. The focus of this Islamic militant group is to islamize Nigeria. The reason for their desire to islamize Nigeria might be due to the fact that Nigeria is the giant of Africa and islamizing it will act as a springboard to islamizing other African countries. This is like the view of a Muslim leader quoted by Robert C. Douglas (1988), which reads, "Unless we win London over to Islam, we will fail to win the Western world" (p. 15). Just as London is considered to be the gateway to Europe, so too is Nigeria considered to be the gateway to Africa. Hence, they go all out to attack Christians and other non-Muslims residing in Northern Nigeria with the aim of sanctifying Nigeria by non-Muslims.

Not only is this Islamic sect a threat to Christianity and other non-Muslims, but it is also a threat to Islam itself. This is apparent in the fact that the sect attacks even Muslims who are given Western education, which they hold to be influenced by the teachings of Christianity, and is ungodly. The main themes of Boko Haram include the rejection of secularism, democracy,

Western education, and Westernisation. It is due to this that some Muslims who are top politicians are also the targets of this Islamic sect.

The worst part is that the activities of this Islamic sect called Boko Haram have led to the loss of a lot of lives and properties, dislocating people in the northern parts of Nigeria from their homes. Most of these people are resettled in IDP camps, where they somehow face a lot of unplanned and untold challenges. In contemporary Nigeria, in addition to Boko haram, is the menace of herdsmen, who are going around attacking and killing and destroying the homes of people in the middle belt such as Plateau State, Benue State, etc. The "middle belt," which runs across Nigeria, is the area with the highest concentration of minority ethnic groups. It comprises Taraba, Adamawa, Plateau, Nassarawa, Benue, and Kogi states, as well as Southern Zaria and Southern Kaduna (Tajudeen & Adebayo, 2013). All these areas have witnessed intra-ethnic or inter-ethnic conflicts that have spread across different states. Researchers have pointed to a crisis of citizenship" in which different attitudes to citizenship contribute to political conflicts (Idowu 1999), articulated around the "shelter-native" identity, with conflicts fuelled by feelings of exclusion and struggles for recognition (Tajudeen & Adebayo, 2013). For instance, clashes between security forces and an Islamic group called Boko Haram led to the death and displacement of many people. Though depicted as an ethno-religious conflict, analysts read the violence as the result of weak or inefficient governance and widespread poverty. Also linked to violence that frequently displaced people was the bloody violence perpetrated by members of the National Union of Road Transport Workers and post-election violence in 2011, which claimed the lives of ten (10) National Youth Corpsers posted to serve their fatherland in Nigeria's Northern states and displaced others (Oduwale and Fadeyi, 2013). These activities of these herdsmen have also facilitated the formation of IDP camps, just as Boko Haram has been doing.

With this stated, it is germane to turn to the challenges that internally displaced individuals and refugees in Nigeria face on a daily basis in their various IDP camps. There are lots of challenges in refugeeism in Nigeria's IDP camps. This finds its manifestation in the form of gender problems and religious differences. It is pertinent to start by highlighting and discussing the negative effects of gender. The truth is that, in many situations, women are always the worst sufferers of whatever happens. They are at the receiving end of the human challenges that confront humanity in any given society. This holds true for the refugee and IDP camps across the globe and, in particular, Nigeria. There are cases of women in IDP camps experiencing all-around insecurity. For example, Grace Akuto (2013) claims that women and girls were raped, sexually abused, and

battered on a daily basis in these camps. Writing on this, Akuto (2013) notes that:

The challenges of internally displaced persons either overtly or covertly has a tremendous negative effect on Nigerians and inimical to development. The following are some of the challenges faced by IDPs in Nigeria. (one of the issues is) (i)nsecurity: Women and girls are been raped on daily basis as a result of insecurity in the camps. Youths indulge in hard drugs, smoking and other criminal activities (p. 23).

It is pertinent to point out here that women are not the only ones who are marginalized, oppressed, or segregated against in IDP camps; men are also. Hence, the problems of IDPs are faced by both men and women. While those of women have mostly to do with sexual abuse, those of men also involve sexual abuse in terms of homosexuality. What this entails is that sexual abuse is not one-sided. Both men and women face this challenge in the IDP camps across Nigeria. This has resulted in the deaths and illnesses of victims, as well as unwanted pregnancy for females. This also results in some sexually transmitted diseases in the victims of sexual abuse. On this issue, Grace Akuto (2013) avers:

Sexually Transmitted Diseases: This is also another challenge that the IDPs are facing, they have unprotected sex which result to all kinds of STDs like HIV/Aids, gonorrhoea, syphilis etc. They also suffer from hypertension, diabetes and other diseases due to lack of medical health facilities (p. 23).

Apart from the above mentioned problems, there is the problem of trauma and bitterness. The fact is the IDPs are traumatized and frustrated due to the new condition or situation they find themselves. "Most of these IDPs live in bitterness due to painful separation from their spouses, families and loved ones" (Akuto 2013, p. 23). There is furthermore the challenge of hunger and starvation. On this Akuto (2013) writes:

It is said that a hungry man is an angry man and because of the level of hunger and starvation faced by the IDPs you see them protesting and demonstrating with their children at the camps. d. Acute Malnutrition: When one is not feeding well, it has an effect on one's health such as changing the colour of one's hair, eyes and teeth which may result to death. It is discovered that people give them only one type of food item i.e. carbohydrate which affects them not to have a balanced diet. (p. 23).

Furthermore, there is the challenge of education among those in IDP camps. This directly and really affects youths and children. IDPs are facing the challenge of educating their children or family members because they are always in transit or floating. Furthermore, there are no provisions by the government in this regard.

IDPs' Rights: There is an insufficient understanding of the rights of IDPs as set out in the UN guiding principles on internal displacement and the Kampala Convention. These rights include the right to life, freedom of movement, association, human dignity, personal liberty, the right to private and family life, and so on. It is also necessary to note that shelter and accommodation are challenges that face those in the IDP camp. Regarding this, Akuto (2013) posits that "the most common shelters used by IDPs in Nigeria are schools, tents, bunkhouses, churches, mosques, town halls, abandoned and uncompleted buildings" (p. 24). This leaves one wondering how it is possible for human beings to live in such places comfortably. The fact is that in Nigeria, IDP camps are nothing to write home about. They are a very poor shadow of what they ought to be. They are not in any way close to the international standards demanded by the UN guiding principles on internal displacement and the Kampala Convention. The worst part is that housing facilities are assigned in the northern region of the country based on religious faith. It is assigned first to Muslims, while non-Muslims are denied the opportunity to use this facility. This is also the case with the sharing of food and other basic amenities distributed in IDP camps. There are also cases of the male distributors of housing and other basic amenities and necessities of life assigning them first to the female gender with the aim of having sexual gratification. This implies that it is not only women that are marginalized and oppressed in Nigeria; men are also objects of marginalization and oppression.

Closely related to the above is the challenge of waste management and electricity. According to Akuto (2013), "there is often no proper waste management and electricity for the IDPs." This explains the regularity of hygiene-based epidemics in camps and the total darkness in camps "(2017, p. 24). Moreso, there is a lack of good water. This is due to the overcrowded nature of camps. With this, it becomes difficult for the IDPs to access good water for cooking and sanitation facilities. These challenges have led to the deaths of a lot of IDPs that the government and non-governmental organizations have failed to account for. In all, they have no access to counseling of any kind, much less good counseling and psychologists that help them manage effectively their psychological trauma and stress that they go through every day. This is the most painful part of the story of the IDP camps in Nigeria. Victims go around with their pains with no one specific to share them with. This goes a long way to show that

many of those who die in IDP camps die out of frustration, trauma, and mental or psychological breakdown.

7. CONCLUSION

This work has exposed and highlighted the state of refugeeism and IDP camps in Nigeria. The work has also shown that there are a lot of factors behind the internal displacement of people and the formation of refugee and IDP camps. Some of which include militancy in the Niger Delta, religious bigotry and fanaticism in the Northeast, floods, etc. It was noted that people in the IDP camps are not faring well as compared to the UN standard for IDP camps. It is on this note that this paper calls for a rethinking of the formation and management of these camps run by the government and other non-governmental organizations to follow UN standards. This will enable refugees and internally displaced persons to have a sense that they are also humans like others.

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