Nigeria and the IDP situation since 1999

Nigeria has been facing daunting challenges since it returned to civilian rule in 1999. These include growing insecurity which manifests itself in frustration and agitation, culminating in the formation of ethno-religious militias and separatist groups. Among these militias is the dreaded Boko Haram terrorist sect which violently undermines the territorial integrity and authority of the Nigerian state and engenders widespread internal displacement, human rights abuse, and public safety and humanitarian crises. Since 2009, Boko Haram has launched several attacks on lives and property in Nigeria. These attacks targeted churches, higher institutions, mosques and even the UN headquarters in Abuja (2011), and several other attacks that led to the deaths of several people and the displacement of huge populations to internally displaced persons camps in Northeastern Nigeria.

What then is Boko Haram? Boko Haram claims to be an Islamic organization but it solely performs un-Islamic acts like its sister groups Al-Qaida and ISIS (Lugga 2016). The group started in 1995 but its active insurgency activities became obvious in 2009. According to Olufolahan (2015), the insurgents operate in six categories: the original Boko Haram; the abducted and conscripted; the financiers; the new members; the sympathizers; and foreigners. Of the original group that started in 2009 by bombing and killing policemen, only a handful are most probably still alive. The abducted victims from Adamawa, Borno, Yobe and Gombe States are most likely not locked up; eating free food and drinking free water; they have been conscripted and forcibly trained in the use of weapons (Olufolahan 2015). Any resisting abducted victim is summarily executed. Some of these victims can be unwilling suicide bombers. Feeling helpless and not knowing how to de-activate the explosives they carry, they walk or drive to their target, killing themselves and others. The financiers have become enslaved and their families ensnared by what they permitted a few years ago. They most likely want to stop but do not know how. New members are recruited by being promised heaven while some are simply sympathetic to the cause of Boko Haram. The militant foreigners are mainly from Chad and are fewer in number than the Nigerians (Olufolahan 2015). Boko Haram is the most complex, destructive and mind-boggling security challenge that Nigeria has ever faced.

One grave effect of the activities of Boko Haram is the displacement of people from their ancestral homes. People have also been displaced psychologically, emotionally and socio-economically. Over 1.4 million of the displaced reside in Borno state alone, where humanitarian access to desperately vulnerable communities has been severely limited by the ongoing conflict. Also, the instability has hindered families from having access to food, clean water and health care.

Furthermore, with the recent regain of control of some of Boko Haram's strongholds by the Nigerian army, many Nigerians who fled are now returning to the devastated villages and towns. There is a need for urgent repair and rehabilitation of all health facilities in the newly-accessible areas that have been vandalized or seriously damaged to improve access to and the quality of service provision. The most pressing needs according to the International Medical Corps (2016) are food, potable water, shelter, health, nutrition, and the restoration of livelihoods.

Imasuen (2015) affirms that insurgency has become a threat to global peace and security in the 21st century. This he attributes to the fact that it is the highest contributor to humanitarian crises in the form of a rise in human casualties, internally displaced persons, refugee debacles, food insecurity, and the spread of various diseases. Its impact is felt in different parts of the world including Africa because it has grown both in strength and trend. Nigeria has not been left out and has had its own share of the effects of this menace. It is evidently a challenge to national security and a real enemy to national development (Fatile and Bello 2015).

The general objective of this article is to establish that the dislodgment of the Boko Haram sect from their Sambisa forest base by the Nigerian Army has not translated into peace in Northeastern Nigeria, because the reintegration of internally displaced persons (IDPs) has been bedeviled by enormous socio-economic challenges. The article examines: the ethno-religious conflicts that culminated in the Boko Haram sect in Nigeria; highlights the activities of the Boko Haram insurgency resulting in the killing of many and the displacement of about two million people; investigates the socio-economic challenges associated with the reintegration of IDPs after the dislodgement of Boko Haram from its last stronghold; and proffers a sustainable strategy for the enduring reintegration of IDPs.

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The paper adopts an historical-narrative-cum-analytical approach, with a combination of primary and secondary sources of information which incorporate both qualitative and quantitative approaches, hinging on social conflict and the Galtung theory of structural violence. This research has identified the challenges associated with the socio-economic re-integration of IDPs and presents strategies for sustaining the relative peace being currently experienced in Northeastern Nigeria. To illustrate this theoretical framework, Timeline Conflict Analysis and Conflict Tree tools were adopted to trace the trend of the root causes of Boko Haram activities in Nigeria, which date back to the colonization of Nigeria by Great Britain and particularly the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern protectorates of the country into one entity named Nigeria, which revealed the incompatibility between Northern and Southern Nigeria in the socio-economic and political strata and led to conflict and violent activities in the Nigerian state until today.

The Conflict Tree tool was used to analyze the root causes of the Boko Haram insurgency including Westernization (western education), bad governance, and the corruption of the elite. The trunk of the tree represents the core conflict which, in this study, is the challenge of reintegration of IDPs; and the effects are as shown on the branches and leaves and include attacks, insecurity, the disruption of family and communal life, displacement, among other things.

Social conflict theory and structural theory

Social conflict theory and Galtung's structural theory have been adopted as the framework of analysis for this article. As observed by Marshall (1998) cited in Fatile and Bello (2015), social conflict theorists emphasize the importance of interests over norms and values, as well as the ways in which the pursuit of interests generate various types of conflict as normal aspects of social life, rather than abnormal or dysfunctional occurrences. However, the existence of groups with different interests does not mean that they will be in conflict all the time. There may be periods of truce or it may be that some social groups are persuaded that their interests are not different from those of other groups; nevertheless, periods of harmony do not last forever and, eventually, conflict will return (Collier et al. 2003, cited in Fatile and Bello 2015). The main idea of social conflict theory revolves around

competition over scarce resources (such as money, leisure, and sexual partners), structural inequality in power and reward, as well as revolution and war (Ogunbameru 2008). Based on the above assumptions, social conflict theory is apt and relevant for the appreciation of the conflicts and challenges facing Nigeria most especially the Boko Haram insurgency which has led to the continued rise in the number of IDPs in the North Eastern geopolitical zone. It offers deep insights into the interlocking factors that sustain conflict. Furthermore, it presumes that once conflict has occurred, it worsens and it becomes challenging to restore peace on account of a number of factors including ethnic pluralism, the proliferation of arms, the displacement of people, the mass killing of people, the existence of income disparity and social inequality, domination by a particular ethnic group over the other groups, the existence of hoodlums, and the activities of criminals.

Galtung's theory of the Violence Triangle (1969), stipulates that cultural and structural violence cause direct violence. Direct violence reinforces structural and cultural violence. Direct violence, physical and/or verbal, is visible as behavior in the triangle. However, this action does not come from nowhere; its roots are cultural and structural. According to Galtung, direct violence can take many forms. In its classic form, it involves the use of physical force, such as killing or torture, rape and sexual assault, and beatings.

According to Galtung, structural violence exists when some groups, classes, genders, or nationalities are assumed to have, and in fact do have, more access to goods, resources and opportunities than other groups, classes, genders, and nationalities, and this unequal advantage is built into the very social, political and economic systems that govern societies, states, and the world. (Bobichand 2012). Theories of structural violence explore how political, economic, and cultural structures result in the occurrence of avoidable violence, most commonly seen in the form of deprivation of basic human needs. Structural theorists attempt to link personal suffering with political, social, and cultural choices. Johan Galtung's original definition included the lack of a human agency; that is the violence is not a direct act of any decision or action made by a particular person but a result of the unequal distribution of resources (Bobichand 2012). Thus, in Northeastern Nigeria, the Boko Haram sect believed that Western education had made government, political office holders, and some elites corrupt

and powerful, enjoying, alone, the common wealth meant for all and because of the unequal distribution of resources, they resorted to violent attacks against the government and its security apparatus and this, eventually, affected an entire strata of the nation.

Nigeria's history of conflict and crisis that led to the IDP situation

The Nigerian state was created in 1914, as an act of British colonialism, by the amalgamation of two existing British colonial states, the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria and the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria. The two protectorates ceased to exist as separate legal entities and were replaced by a single entity called the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria.

Figure 1: Map of Nigeria showing where Boko Haram was most active (Source: www.britannica.com/topic/Boko-Haram)

Historically, after assuming control of the country in 1861, the British failed to modernize the northern territories and instead co-opted the exhausted Islamic institution left by the Sokoto Caliphate with its capricious warlords. This system led to a bifurcated country with a productive south flush with oil wealth and an impoverished north, struggling to reconcile modernization with the dictates of orthodox and rapacious power brokers. These differences widened on the British withdrawal, leaving Nigeria with a split identity. Two political cultures, informed by competing values and interests, created some of the starkest economic and political violence and repression (Wall 2015). A former Minister of Petroleum Resources, Professor Tam David-West, has stated without mincing his words that the country exists along ethnic and religious divides.

The circumstances that forced the British Government to amalgamate the Northern Protectorate with the Southern Protectorate on January 1, 1914 were motivated neither by political exigencies nor by a close cultural understanding among the diverse elements of the conglomeration that was later to be called Nigeria. It is abundantly clear that the primary interest of the British administration was economic (Soeze 2014). The seeming incompatibility has caused ethnic and religious conflict in different parts of the country. The conflict can be perceived in the Maitatsine crisis and the emergence of the Boko Haram group.

The Maitatsine crisis

Northern Nigeria, in particular, witnessed religious conflict in the 1980s that became known as the Maitatsine crisis and caused havoc in the major cities of Northern Nigeria. Muhammed Marwa (identified by his town's name) was an Islamic scholar who migrated from the town of Marwa in Northern Cameroon to the city of Kano in 1945. While in Kano, he became an Islamic zealot concerned with the purification of Islam. He believed that Islam had been corrupted by modernization (Westernization) and the formation of the modern state. His incessant preaching became highly abusive and provocative, especially against established institutions like the emirate and the political class, to the extent that the Emir of Kano, Alhaji Sanusi Lamido, expelled him from Kano. Marwa found his way back to Kano

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in 1966, presumably after the death of Alhaji Sanusi. Between 1972 and 1979, Marwa was detained in prison several times for his provocative preaching and acts of lawlessness against the state (Danjibo 2009). There is a growing suspicion among Nigerians about the real identity and motive of the Boko Haram sect. Most Muslims see it as an extension of the Maitatsine sect which was established in 1945 to transport turmoil to Islam because it was confirmed that Marwa was not a Muslim until his death; a reasonable number of Christians see it as an attempt to Islamize Nigerians while some are indifferent (Sheu 2014).

The history of the Boko Haram group

Since 2002, the Northeastern region of Nigeria has been under fire as a result of the activities of Boko Haram (otherwise known as Jama'atu Ahlis Sunnah Lidda'awati Wal Jihad, meaning the Society of Members of Sunnah for Preaching and Jihad) which, in Arabic means "People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad" (Liolio 2013, 33). Since Boko Haram began its campaign of terror against the Nigerian state, several people have been forced to flee their homes for safety across Northeastern and North-central Nigeria to Itumo and Nwobashi (2016). The outcome of this has been to create an unprecedented humanitarian crisis for the country with a colossal effect on public safety and human security (Okoli and Lortyer 2014 cited in Fatile and Bello 2015).

The Boko Haram group was originally formed by Mallam Lawal in 1995 in Maiduguri, Borno State. Boko Haram in local parlance means "Western Education is evil or sinful." It emerged as an unusual group and in 2001 Mallam Yusuf was officially recognized as its founder and the group was named the Yussufiya Movement. Its membership consisted of youths under the leadership of Mohammed Yusuf who was assisted by Abubakar Shekau. The youths were mainly students studying under one Sheikh Faisal and were motivated by his opposition to Westernization especially Western education and Western culture, which they claim are directly against Islamic values. For example, they oppose lumping adult males and females together in classrooms and lecture halls. They also oppose the use of the mace as the symbol of authority in parliament, because legislators bow to it. According to their belief, sovereignty belongs to Allah and therefore

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the Western type of democracy that gives sovereignty to states or to people is un-Islamic

For Yusuf and his sect, the introduction of Islamic law or Sharia in the Northern States in 1999 was not enough. They pushed for the eradication of everything and anything Western. The group saw the Nigerian government and prominent northern leaders as irredeemably corrupt and beclouded by Western indoctrination which they call evil and un-Islamic. The group leader propagated hate messages against the Nigerian state, claiming that poverty, corruption, and poor leadership in the country was a result of Western education. Violent conflicts and hostilities erupted in 2009 between Boko Haram extremists and the Nigerian security operatives. This ultimately transformed the group from a small sect of religious extremists into a radical Islamic militia, up in arms against the state establishment.

Trouble started when police confronted Boko Haram mourners participating in a funeral procession on 11 June, 2009 over the refusal to wear helmets while operating motorcycles. In the midst of the melee, a Boko Haram member shot and killed a police officer, which angered the police who retaliated and killed seventeen Boko Haram members in the violent conflict that erupted. Boko Haram condemned police brutality against its members and vowed to avenge the deaths. The Boko Haram group made good its vow and launched a series of attacks on the Nigerian police force in Maiduguri, Borno state, while the Nigerian police force and other security agencies including the military, enraged by the attacks of the Boko Haram sect, launched a counter offensive and repelled, killed, and arrested many of the Boko Haram insurgents.

Thereafter Boko Haram further organized a series of coordinated attacks in Bauchi, Borno, Yobe, Kano and fourteen other states including Abuja, Federal Capital Territory. The attacks targeted churches, higher institutions, mosques, and even the UN headquarters in Abuja (in 2011), among several other attacks which led to the deaths of several people and the displacement of huge populations to internally displaced persons camps in Northeastern Nigeria. Between 2009 and today, Boko Haram attacks have resulted in the killing of more than 20,000 people, the abduction of between two and seven thousand women, girls, and children for various criminal and anti-social activities including suicide bombing, forced labor and sex-slavery,

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while more than 2.5 million people have fled their homes leaving 2.2 million internally displaced and 177,000 seeking refuge in the neighboring countries of Cameroon, Chad, and Niger. According to the Global Terrorism Index, 2015, Boko Haram caused 6,644 deaths in 2014 alone, thereby making it the world's deadliest terrorist organization. In the latest release of the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) on June 25, 2017, the DTM has identified 1,825,321 IDPs (330,680 households) across Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe States. This represents a decrease of 59,010 individuals from the previous DTM Round, reflecting the continuing trend of IDPs returning to their local government areas, particularly in Borno State, but most of these IDPs still retain their status because they could not return to their actual places of abode (IOM, 2017).

Possibilities of IDPs return and re-integration

In December 2016, President Muhammadu Buhari gave a statement that the "final crushing of Boko Haram terrorists by the Nigerian Army in their last enclave in Sambisa forest," which is in Borno state in Northeastern Nigeria, was the last straw that broke the camel's back, since when the terrorists have been on the run and no longer have a place to hide (Guardian, 2016b). The implication of this was that sporadic bomb attacks on the lives and property of the people and movement of victims of the insurgency to displaced persons camp had stopped, thereby bringing relative peace to the Northeastern region of the country. Apart from the dislodgement of Boko Haram in the vast Sambisa forest enclave, there has been marginal decrease in the number of IDPs in recent times (IOM 2017). This decrease has been attributed to recent attacks by Boko Haram on villages that has caused an influx of IDPs into townships; a large number of IDPs moving from the newly accessible villages to other local government areas; the return of IDPs to their places of origin; the start of the planting season necessitating the return of IDPs to carry out cultivation in safe areas; and an inability to continue paying rent or find alternative livelihood.

As the Boko Haram-induced crises has begun to subside in Nigeria due to the apparent dislodgment of the sect from Sambisa forest by the Nigerian troops and because of the five reasons mentioned above, Northeastern Nigeria has since returned to the path of steady prog-

Table 1. Timeline of Conflict in Nigeria

Period	Incident	Duration	Effects
1861	Colonization of Nigeria by the British	100 years, 1861-1960	Nigeria under colonial rule
1914	Amalgamation of Northern and Southern Protectorates to form Nigeria	1914 till today	Incompatibility in culture, religion, commerce, educa-tion, etc., leading to conflict
1945 -1980s	Maitatsine crisis (reli-gious conflict, similar to Boko Haram)	About 40 years	Hate messages, violence and arrests
1995	Formation of Islamist Fundamentalist group by Mallam Lawal (unnamed)	7 years	Hate messages against Westernization
2001	Officially founded by Mallam Yusufu and named the Yussufiya Movement	1 year	Islamic education for youths and followers of Yussuffiya
2002	Movement named Jama'atu Ahlis Sunnah Lidda'awati Wal Jihad (Boko Haram)	7 years	Hate messages against Westernization and government
2009	Trigger event between Boko Haram sect and police	Until the present	Attacks, bombings, killings, maiming, destruction of prop-erty, displacement, insecurity

ress towards peace, in spite of disparate attacks from the surviving remnants of the insurgent group. However, President Muhammadu Buhari has noted that the current challenge facing his administra-tion is how to reintegrate over two million IDPs who are the victims of Boko Haram insurgents. According to him, since life had started returning to normal where the IDPs were displaced, it was important for his administration to re-unite them with their families, ensure the

full rehabilitation of the displaced persons, and find lasting solutions to combat threats of terrorism in the country (Olalekan 2016).

Thus, with this situation as presented by the government of Nigeria, one can believe that there is relative peace which only requires an effort towards the reintegration of the IDPs. However, the daunting challenges facing reintegration of IDPs make it clear that the peace obtained is just in the abstract. It only exists in an idealized form. It is not real, is not physical, neither is it concrete in existence. It has been found that the re-integration of the IDPs from their respective camps back into the communities has brought various challenges to the government on the one hand and to the returnees on the other hand.

Challenges of re-integration for NEMA

In Nigeria, the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) is the government agency in charge of the management of disasters and particularly IDP camps. Since the reintegration exercise started in 2017, the agency has been faced with the problem of transporting the huge population of IDPs to various distant communities and this has brought with it a lot of logistic implications. Some of these challenges include the difficulty of access to remote communities, the problem of connecting unaccompanied children who are too young to know or to remember their communities with their parents or families, the reintegration of orphans who are too young and who may become permanent camp residents (if no family member comes forward to receive them), the deployment of security agencies to monitor peace in the communities because of lingering suspicion among people, and among others. For example in Yola township in Adamawa state, Michika open market days were separate for the Christians and Muslims (Christians transact business in open market on a different day from the Muslims), to prevent clashes because of mutual suspicion among people of different religious beliefs in the community.

Challenges of re-integration for IDP returnees

Since the process of re-integration of IDPs commenced, the returnees have been faced with some socio-economic challenges ranging from lack of shelter to lack of food and non-food items, medical services and

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water, sanitation, and hygiene. Also, some returnees with absolutely nothing are forced to return to the camps, when confronted with the devastation and ruin of their abodes and livelihoods. Some cultural values have been affected in many communities, while the education of school-age children has been thrown into disarray because many did not have access to education in the camps, while those that managed to get education got it on an impromptu and not on a regular basis. Pupils in advanced classes were merged with lower classes for lessons, meaning that pupils of different classes were taught the same lessons, resulting in under or over learning capacity which is adverse to good education. Other daunting challenges are feeding, social cohesion, lack of economic empowerment, health challenges, the effect of unexploded ordinances on farming, the lack of farm input, the fear of further attacks from the Boko Haram, and pockets of attack by Boko Haram groups on farmland and in communities. For example, the BBC News reported on 27 July 2017, that more than forty people died in north-eastern Nigeria during an attempt to free people who had been ambushed in a convoy by the militant Islamist group Boko Haram in Maiduguri, north-eastern Nigeria.

Reintegration of Chibok girls

The capturing of about 276 Chibok girls by the Islamist group Boko Haram in April 2014 caused an international outcry, leading to their release in batches. *The Guardian* newspaper reported that 21 of them were released in October 2016 and were being kept in the federal capital Territory (Abuja), for counselling (Guardian 2016a). In May 2017 another 82 were released and until now (July 2017) have not been allowed to go back and live with their families. The joy at their freedom was quickly followed by concern for their privacy, and fears over threats to their full integration. Survivors tell of being forcibly prepared for "suicide missions," having henna on their hands and bombs around their waists. Many of the captives had been forced by the militant group to carry bombs to busy areas and explode them, killing themselves and hundreds of other civilians. They have been raped and many captives were forced to "marry" militants, indoctrinated and even forced to fight for Boko Haram. With this situation, the returnees are seen as security threats which require "purging"

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before full integration back into their communities is possible.

Analysis of conflict

Using the conflict tree in Figure 2 to analyze the IDP situation in Nigeria, we can identify the core conflict of increase cost of governance, disruption of family, destruction of infrastructure, and other effects as follows:
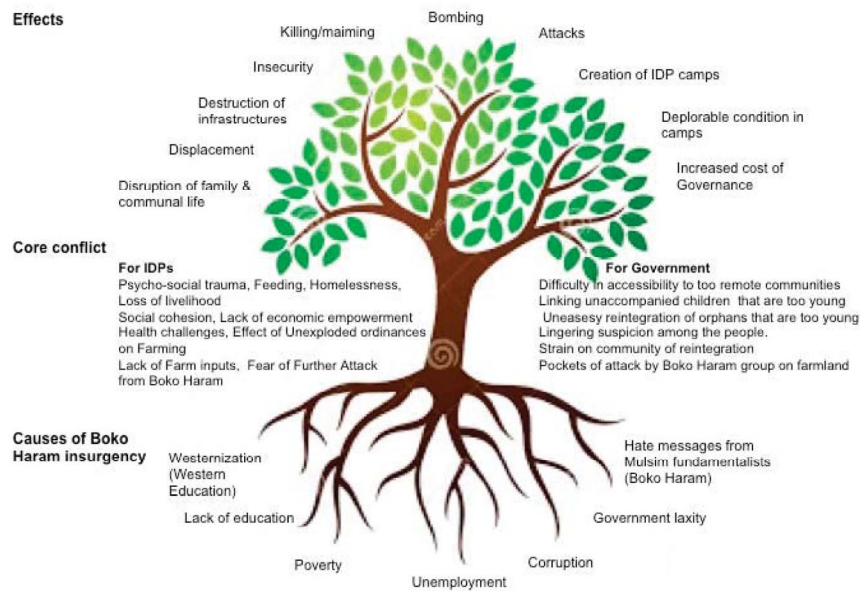

Figure 2. Conflict tree (Source: www.dreamstime.com/royalty-free-stock-images-tree-roots-logo-leaves-icon-image34346189)

Increased cost of governance

Principles 5-7 of the 1998 United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement provide that, once persons have been displaced, they retain a broad range of economic, social, cultural, civil, and political rights, including the right to basic humanitarian assistance (such as food, medicine, and shelter), the right to be protected from physical violence, the right to education, freedom of movement and resi-

dence, political rights such as the right to participate in public affairs, and the right to participate in economic activities (Principles 10-23). Displaced persons also have the right to assistance from competent authorities in their voluntary, dignified, and safe return, resettlement, or local integration, including help in recovering lost property and possessions. When restitution is not possible, the Guiding Principles call for compensation or just reparation (Principles 28-30). Also, the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention), made provisions for the protection of IDPs against deprivation; providing assistance during and after conflict; and obliges governments to assess the needs and vulnerabilities of the forcibly displaced and the host communities, in order to address the plight of people uprooted within their borders. These international obligations have increased the cost of governance to Nigeria's government. As observed by Adamu and Rasheed (2016), the situation has forced the Nigerian government to deploy a high volume of the nation's resources to fight Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeastern part of the country. For instance, in 2014 a national budget of over one trillion Naira (USD 2.8 billion) was voted for security. The relocation of the Defence Command Centre from Abuja to Maiduguri by President Muhammadu Buhari on 29 May 2015 and provision of welfare items to IDPs in various camps are typical examples of how insecurity has forced the federal government of Nigeria into extra budgetary spending.

Disruption of family and communal life

Since the insurgency started, a lot of people have lost their loved ones and others have been forced to separate from each other, thus leading to painful experiences. Also, it has invariably visited hardship on many, while others are still undergoing emotional and psychological trauma resulting from the act of insurgency.

Destruction of infrastructure

Most of the houses and property of the IDPs were destroyed, looted, or burnt down leading to most of them taking refuge in temporary shelter such as schools, public buildings, and places of worship having been deprived of their homes and sometimes, their lives and livelihoods. This led to the collapse of these facilities.

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Voice and grievance mechanisms

Lack of outlets for the peaceful expression of IDP voices and their exclusion from political processes has encouraged violence since this is seen as the only way in which the displaced can be heard. In addition, the lack of effective grievance mechanisms can result in the misclassification of ordinary political engagement as radicalization (Lischer 2005).

Protracted situations

Based on the challenges of reintegration, if the IDP crises become protracted there is a greater likelihood that displaced persons will become involved in political violence and be susceptible to militant recruitment (Olukolajo 2014). Eventually, they may develop into a highly organized and militant states-in-exile. In addition, protracted situations may result in reduced expectations for the future and an increasing feeling of hopelessness, as well as desperation among displaced persons. Moreover, the host societies are likely to become less hospitable the longer the IDP crisis lingers. Also, a general atmosphere of mistrust, fear, and frenzy may develop, especially between Northern Christians and Muslims, and between Northerners and Southerners resident in the North.

Government efforts on reintegration of IDPs

The Nigerian government, with the aid of international organizations and other sovereign governments, has made progress in recent times in curbing the activities of the Boko Haram. The Nigerian military has made tremendous progress in recapturing the towns, villages, and local councils previously controlled by the sect. However, the aftermath of the reign of terror that Nigeria has endured is still evident in the regions where the Boko Haram once dominated. The challenges of rebuilding the homes of those who had been affected by this group is a vital task for the government, non-profit organizations, and private individuals who wish to aid in the recovery. Africa's richest man, Aliko Dangote, has donated millions of dollars to help with the IDP situation and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has given about a million US dollars. International donors have also channeled funds

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to Nigerian agencies and government, adding to the billions of Naira officially budgeted by the Nigerian government and its institutions. Yet, there are still a significant number of malnourished IDPs, most of them children. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), there were about 100,000 cases of child malnutrition in Northern Nigeria in 2016. These numbers bring in to question the efficiency of the aforementioned aid and the effectiveness of the strategies employed in the utilization of these funds to aid the IDPs in the country (Ojo 2017).

The government agency NEMA has overseen all supplies of welfare items and relevant donations and services from international agencies, NGOs, and other bodies in all the government camps in Northeastern Nigeria. This ensures the distribution of items and services to camp residents, though the supplies are grossly inadequate leading to malnutrition, infant mortality, prostitution, and gender-based violence in the camps. To stem this situation, some of the IDPs, especially women, have been trained and are still receiving vocational training for self and family sustenance, while tools of trade have been provided by the government and relevant international bodies like UNDP.

In addition, government has provided farmland and together with some international agencies has made provision for seeds and fertilizer to some farmers to enable them to engage in farming to sustain themselves and their families on the path to reintegration. In addition, government, through NEMA along with the Red Cross provide transportation of IDPs to their respective communities for necessary re-integration, including the Chibok girl returnees.

Conclusion and recommendations

Findings from the study reveal that the protracted conflict in Nigeria is the root cause of internal displacement. Conflicts originating from bad governance, youth unemployment, impunity, endemic corruption, lack of transparency and accountability, and religious intolerance has culminated in the rise of groups that embrace violence including the dreaded Boko Haram insurgents, leaving an unprecedented number of IDPs in its wake, particularly in the three states of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa. This study concludes that though the Boko Haram militants have been dislodged from the stronghold

enclave in Sambisa forest and some IDPs are returning to their various communities, thus reducing the resident population of IDP camps, which suggests the return of peace in Northeastern Nigeria, this relative peace is just abstract, it is not actually in existence, as is made evident by the pockets of fresh attacks by Boko Haram sect, the security threat of Chibok girls returnees, and daunting socio-economic and political challenges of reintegration as identified and discussed in this paper. The prolonged conflict has led to increased cost of governance, disruption of family and communal life, and destruction of infrastructure and grievance mechanisms.

This study identifies that there is a need to consider different strategies that might be more efficient, especially in reintegrating these individuals into the society. Apart from food, drugs, and shelter, empowerment is critical to ensure a sustainable action plan that will permanently resolve the issue of internal displacement in Nigeria. One such strategy for a solution to the IDP challenge is youth and women empowerment. Programs geared towards youth empowerment and self-employment of IDPs should be introduced by governmental and non-governmental organizations for the purpose of reducing idleness among children and women; such programs would empower IDPs to fend for themselves. These programs should be organized in all IDP camps in the country, providing recipients with the means to develop themselves and acquire skills in vocational and creative enterprises such as art and design, fashion, media, and information technology. These programs will set things in motion towards achieving a more successful and sustainable recovery process for IDPs in the country.

Displacement of any sort has a psychological effect on the mind of the displaced. Therefore, another important strategy to adopt in the reintegration plan is to introduce a mental health recovery action plan that will help the IDPs reintegrate properly into the society. The services of psychologists and other mental health experts can be employed to help people cope with their experiences while looking forward to a better tomorrow (Ojo 2017).

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