

Assessment of the Impact of the National Policy on Displacement on the Resettlement of Women and the Girl-Child in North-Eastern Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The resolution of conflicts and internecine wars across Africa has often proved enigmatic due to the failure to comprehend, articulate and activate an adequate framework for post-conflict reconstruction. Scholars like Laury Ocen, Olu Arowosegbe, and Elizabeth Mutunga admit that as seen in Sudan, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and other conflict-ridden parts of Africa, post-conflict peace building must become integrative and indigenous in its approach especially as it relates to women and the girl-child. In Nigeria, there appears to be a prevalent difficulty in the interpretation and application of the National Policy on Displacement which unfortunately affects the wellbeing and procedure for the resettlement of displaced women and girl-child. In dissolving these concerns, the study therefore suggests that the roles of governments in rehabilitation and social reconstruction after conflicts as contained in its policy document, should be determined largely by an understanding of the peculiarities of the individuals and agencies involved in post-conflict justice, especially in terms of their worldview, culture and environment. It submits that this will undoubtedly assist in disparaging the monolithic disposition often adopted by governments or its agencies while at the same time assuaging the fears of displaced women and their children.

Keywords: Displacement, Conflict, Women and girl-child, Resettlement, Social-Reconstruction, NPIDN.

INTRODUCTION

The study focuses on the measurement of the impact of the National Policy on Displacement on women and girl child in conflict ravaged parts of Nigeria. It will investigate and interrogate the functionality of the policy as designed by government for social reconstruction during and immediately after the termination of conflicts. It will also undertake a critical analysis of sections of the policy and how its approaches to the issues concerning the female gender ensures post conflict rehabilitation, reconstruction and resettlement.

The research advances the proposition that by engaging in a discussion of the general idea and contents of government policies, critical issues relating to the moral dilemma of war victims especially as it concerns women will be resolved. The research will also attempt the clarification of the very idea of displacement and how it affects women and the girl child with the aim of evaluating the effects of the policy on displacement.

Before the Boko Haram insurgency, the socio-economic circumstances of some of the women in the north-eastern part of Nigeria is often considered deplorable. In some of the communities identified in the study female children typically, receive less attention and opportunities when compared to their male siblings. Upon entering the camps as a result of displacement arising from insurgency, they become further exposed to all sort of exploitation and dehumanization in the bid to meet their unending daily needs.

This concern becomes even more grave in the light of the evident gap in the national policy on displacement and the practicability of the resettlement of displaced women and girl child in the North-Eastern part of Nigeria underscored primarily, by the obtrusive failure in the implementation of government policy towards

mitigating the impacts of conflicts. Elizabeth Mutunga (2009) identifies a gender dimension to the problem of displacement when she explained that the prevalence of ‘issues such as sexual violence, denigration of women rights, socio-economic demands at the demise of spouses, and commercialization of sex are intertwined with displacement’¹ as they determine the efficacy of rehabilitation efforts at the end of conflicts.

Furthermore, it is opined that in certain instances, women are forced to subject themselves to these violations because they see it as a means through which they can actually sustain themselves in the midst of the ensuing violence. She argued that apart from rape and other sexual violence against women, ‘women have also been known to have also willingly turned themselves into sex objects in exchange for such basic necessities as food, shelter or protection’². According to her the ‘use of sex as a commodity becomes more visible during situations of violent conflicts’³ partly because there is a desperation to meet basic needs at all costs and the lull in economic activities constantly creates profound scarcity of goods.

For instance, this study establishes the fact that ‘women and children in camps experience hunger and malnutrition, and there is always a pressing need for basic amenities such as clean water, hygiene, medical facilities, food, decent shelter and clothing’⁴ and this can be traced to the inability of government agencies to fully activate the contents of the policies addressing these issues.

Closely linked to these apparent concerns about displacement is the continued increase in the recorded statistics on cases of dehumanisation within displaced peoples’ camp. The deterioration in the concern for basic human rights perhaps emphasises the notion that displaced people are endangered species. The implication of this is that human life becomes almost valueless for those who have been caught in the web of displacement. It is safe to say that displacement violates the notion of human dignity and all that enforces it which is often held sacrosanct no matter the prevailing situation and its impact is borne more by women.

The study therefore rethinks the fundamental issues involved in the rehabilitation and resettlement of displaced women and the girl-child in the northern-eastern geographical zone by recommending practical and proactive measures in resolving the issues affecting women and children in displaced people camps.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective of this study is to articulate a basis for the review of government’s social reconstruction efforts in conflict ravaged zones of the North Eastern part of Nigeria especially as it affects women and the girl-child. The research affirms that the review must commence with an evaluation of the National Policy on Displacement on the background of the perceived ethical issues in internally displaced peoples’ camps and how it impacts women and children particularly.

The specific objectives include the following:

1. To evaluate the performance of the policy in the North Eastern part of Nigeria.
2. To identify the factors responsible for failure in the implementation of the policy in the appropriate rehabilitation and resettlement of women and the girl child.
3. To identify other possible factors affecting the implementation of the policy.
4. To recommend an applicable strategic action in form of a model to enhance the rehabilitation and resettlement of the displaced women and girl child as viable amendments to the policy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Displacement refers to a situation where people are dispersed from their countries, cities, villages and homestead through means that have been theoretically categorized as arising from different situations and

eventually culminating in forced migration or retention camps built for the purpose of temporal accommodation in lieu of respite. It is important to clarify from inception that displacement in this regard will be used pertinently, to refer to or represent human displacement or a forceful removal of indigent people or members of a community from their original habitation where they have lived for as long as memory serves.

Displacement is so described because whenever and wherever it occurs, it leads to a forceful disconnection of an individual or his community from primordial social values, beliefs and in fact, the essence of their communal existence, in such a manner that he is left with no other viable option than to continue in search of means of surviving the horrors of displacement wherever else he is able to find refuge from the conditions that displaced him.

In some other cases, displacement can be as a result of other contributive factors other than conflicts, violence or war. It is in fact succinct to admit that it appears that conflict induced displacement is often common place in Africa as a recourse to different wrangling traceable to irredentism, religion or even, ethnic rivalries. In other climes however, especially where there are unmitigated natural disasters such as cyclones, landslides, earthquakes, typhoons and hurricanes, displacement recurs frequently without having recourse to conflicts of any kind.

Displacement is traceable or 'connected to factors such as wars, disasters, rainstorm, earthquakes and flooding, and in a positive sense, displacement can also be conditioned as a result of development which could involve a transformation of a rural habitation to a more urbanized setting'⁵. It is also instructive to admit that apart from conflicts and war, there are other reasons for displacement especially 'land degradation, desertification, progressive temperature increases in the area, and the possibility of rising sea levels in future'⁶. As a matter of fact, victims of displacement are often unable to lead a secure and stable life until conditions are created under which the *status quo ante* can be reinvented.

In cases where displacement is as a result of insurgence, armed conflicts or war there is always a need to establish a conflict adjudication processes or mechanism with the quintessential task of allaying fears associated with insecurity before all other reconstructive measures and activities come into the fray. This is considered germane because victims of displacement often feel betrayed and disgraced by their countries especially when they are forced to migrate to other countries. Forced migration creates an apathetic disposition that necessarily estranges them from all the sense of patriotism to their national cause.

For instance, displaced people do not necessarily feel that they owe it as a duty to their state to continue to contribute productively to its socio-economic development as citizens even after they have been repatriated. Also, they are faced with the difficulty of integrating into the social practices in the displaced persons camps, host communities, or even states, as a result of clash of norms and values. They are often unable to determine moral responsibilities as a result of the existing differences in their cultures.

On the part of the governments, there is an intricate web of moral, legal and political considerations on how to treat the displaced people without having to go beyond the elasticity of their economic proficiency. These attendant considerations which are peculiar to displacement generate a wide range of moral issues on the part of displaced women and girl-child and their host government.

It is important to state that on the part of the women, there is a crude, harsh and tortuous disconnection from their homeland which could have involved the loss of loved ones as a result of conflict. It creates for them a psychological and social dilemma since they are made to flee a place that they had hitherto known as their home to an unknown destination with little or no hope of survival. They are made to go through journeys with a constant fear of being attacked yet with a greater agitation of being rejected where they are headed. The constant fear of the war catching up with them enroute their safe haven is yet another tangible

opprobrium that ensues in their search for safety.

Displaced women are highly vulnerable. They suffer from discrimination, deprivation and frequently impoverished. Due to their situation, they are often marginalized because their cultural identity is always subsumed within the cultures prevalent in the host country. They suffer loss of economic opportunities, loosening of social and familial structures interruption of educational process.

While putting the issues associated with displaced women in perspective, Elizabeth Mutunga (2009) identifies a gender dimension to the problem of displacement when she explained that ‘the prevalence of sexual violence and the denigration of women rights are intertwined with displacement’⁷. Mutunga argues that whenever any form of conflict occurs it affects more women than men. She explains that ‘women have continued to be the worst hit in situations of violent conflict and are also affected differently from men in violent conflicts’⁸. Mutunga’s position affirms that when displacement occurs as an aftermath of war or violent conflicts, it is women that are mostly subjected to the cruelest forms of rights violation and sexual violence especially when they have no reasonable source of protection from the authorities that have been put in charge of these displacement camps.

Mutunga further asserts that ‘the most common form of violence towards women is mostly in form of sexual assaults. Although, women are subject to this hideous form of violence even in times of peace, it has been shown to greatly increase during situations of violent conflicts’⁹. While probing further, it appears that the idea of an increase in the violation of women right and sexual violence according to Elizabeth Mutunga, underscores the notion that during conflicts and displacement, the womenfolk become abjectly exposed to a vicious environment and that the warring states dispels with all notions of right or wrong with the intent of ensuring that it adopts all possible measures to outwit and subdue its opponent within the shortest period of time.

Furthermore, Mutunga opines that in certain instances, women are forced to subject themselves to these violations because they see it as a means through which they can actually sustain themselves in the midst of the ensuing violence. She argued that ‘apart from rape and other sexual violence against women, women have also been known to have also willingly turned themselves into sex objects in exchange for such basic necessities as food, shelter or protection’¹⁰. According to her the ‘use of sex as a commodity becomes more visible during situations of violent conflicts’¹¹ partly because there is a desperation to meet basic needs at all costs and the lull in economic activities constantly creates profound scarcity of goods.

In extreme cases, children of displaced women become prone to crime and instances of delinquency. It is also important to note that most of the problems arising from displacement is often faced by the women and children because in the first instance, they are the most likely survivors of conflicts or war and in their displacement from their original place of abode they are open to situations of general violence, molestation and deprivation of the basic rights considered as the entitlements as contained in the United Nations Charter on Human Rights.

Currently in the most affected part of northern Nigeria, ‘the number of displaced people has been on the increase since the beginning of armed conflicts’¹². According to the round 41 of IOM Report on Internal Displacement, the total figure has been put at a total of 2,197,824 ‘increasing on a monthly basis by an average of 1% from March 2002 across the existing 290 camps and other multiple camp-like settlements’¹³. The study puts the percentage of women at 24 while the girl child constitutes about 31% leaving 19% and 26% respectively for men and boys.

It is against this background that this research evaluates the National Policy of the Nigerian Government and how it guarantees the rights and safe passage of displaced women and girl child as permitted by the Geneva protocol and other standard regulations in the New Kuchingoro, Kuje and Lugbe Camps.

Appraisal of the Functionality of Relevant Sections of the Nigerian National Displacement Policy and Strategies

The national policy on displacement is a framework for national responsibility towards prevention and protection of citizens and, in some cases, non-citizens, from incidences of arbitrary and other forms of internal displacement, meet their assistance and protection needs during displacement, and ensure their rehabilitation, return, re-integration and resettlement after displacement.

The assessment of the policy as proposed in this research is not necessarily a commentary on the activities of government rather, it is an attempt to measure the level of the implementation and effectiveness of the policy in actualizing its set goals. As such, the goals and objectives of policies are exposed through public scrutiny.

Policy on Rights of IDPs (Women and Children)

The third section of the National Policy on Displacement is an outline of policy statements under the categories of displaced persons, women, displaced persons with disabilities, displaced persons living with HIV/AIDS, elderly persons and children. Specifically, sub-section 3.1.4 and 3.1.5 contains policy statements on the treatment and passage of displaced women and children. These sub-sections explain that government will ensure that displaced children which includes the girl child, 'shall be entitled to the full enjoyment of their rights under the Nigerian Constitution, statutes, and domesticated sub regional, regional and international human rights and humanitarian instruments'¹⁴.

The National Policy explains further that internally displaced children shall, in particular, enjoy their rights under the Child Rights Act and similar laws enacted at the State and local government levels in situations where the child has suffered the loss of parents, the policy provides for surrogacy and adoption'¹⁵. It also establishes that the National Policy 'shall ensure that internally displaced children (persons below the age of 18) are protected against torture, sexual exploitation, drug abuse, as well as early and forced marriage'¹⁶.

The policy establishes that 'schools are often destroyed during most disasters therefore, in order for the Internally Displaced Children to return to school while in camp, the Education Sector lead agency under the sectoral approach established by this National Policy, shall liaise with relevant agencies within the locality to assist in relocating the children to neighbouring schools that are ascertained to be safe. This shall not preclude the building of new schools in the place of relocation'¹⁷. With regards to internally displaced women, the policy establishes that 'women are an especially vulnerable group among IDPs and that some of them have been victims of different forms of indignity and abuse'¹⁸ and as such, the federal government in line with global standards and the contents of its policy on displacement, shall ensure the following:

1. That the sanctity of Nigerian womanhood shall not in any way be violated.
2. Every woman in an IDP camp shall have the rights to her privacy.
3. Women in IDP camps shall not be subjected to any form of indignity; including beating, forced labour, sexual abuse, or forceful stripping either for medical examination or other reasons whatsoever without her consent.
4. Under no circumstance shall women and men be lumped together in a room except as husbands and wives or as members of the same family.
5. It is the policy of government to protect Internally Displaced Women from forced marriage. Thus, nobody shall determine the partner of, or the period within which internally displaced women ought to get married.
6. Women in IDP camps shall be entitled to hold any position of authority in camp without any form of discrimination.¹⁹

Policy on the Rights to Voluntary Return, Local Integration and Relocation.

This sub-section establishes the rights of displaced persons including women and the girl child, to determine when their plan to exit displacement camps begin, local integration and more importantly, choose where to be resettled and rehabilitated.

It also affirms that displaced persons reserve the right to any special or general existing empowerment initiatives of the government and that 'IDPs shall be entitled to a comprehensive rehabilitation for return and local integration or relocation based on needs assessment including shelter, food packages, provision of household items and transportation for vulnerable persons'²⁰.

FINDINGS

In its overview, this study discovered that there are economic, social, cultural, demographic, political and environmental factors responsible for the failure of the practical implementation of the National Policy as it relates to women and the girl-child especially as captured under "Policy I and II" in the aforementioned.

The study through interviews and study group discussions was able to determine that the functionality of the National Policy is often hampered by factors that are externally motivated but inseparable from the daily realities of displaced women and the girl-child. The experiential manifestation of these factors will be discussed in the following with an attempt at highlighting the specific areas where the National Policy had failed in pertinently addressing the plight of displaced women within selected Internally Displaced Persons Camps in Nigeria.

Lack of Basic Needs

The study discovered that displaced women in these camps are mostly faced with lack of basic needs which includes food and other items like mattresses, blankets, mosquito nets, clothing, and sanitary towels and drugs needed to sustain their livelihoods and also cater for their children. An analysis of reports submitted by NEMA on food availability on a daily basis in some of the camps falls short of expectations when compared to what was made available in the camps upon investigation. A more realistic and independent observation showed that protein intake is found to be deficient among the women, ranging from 25.4 to 30.4g a day, if they are lucky. Sorghum, rice and millet are available most of the time, attesting to a starch-heavy diet, seriously deficient in protein, vitamins and minerals.²¹

This is primarily as a result of under-declaration and over-declaration of the materials made available by government agencies and NGOs or in some cases the unwholesome activities of camp officials. Lack of access to food at these camps unfortunately mirrors the current state of poverty within the polity which predisposes displaced women to poor nutrition and healthcare. It is therefore evident that most of these women and children in the camps are mostly trapped in poverty due to the inability of government to actualise its policies primarily as a result of the prevailing national economic condition.

It is noteworthy that the women in these camps are mainly from parts of the North-East part where they were mostly disadvantaged economically and of a low income, even before the outbreak conflicts.

Displacement by insurgency for women of generally low-income level who are also exposed to the lack of other basic needs such as clothing, security and shelter despite living in camps established by the Nigerian government therefore accentuates their plight in even more profound ways. This is so when we consider the fact that most of the women were yet to recover from the shocks and stress of the insurgency, having lost their homes, husbands and in some case, their children and independence.

Consequently, for them, the sustenance of livelihoods appears to take precedence over the improvement of dwelling conditions in these camps since they appeared accustomed to that way of life prior to their

displacement. Unfortunately, the concern for sustenance of livelihood through the provision of basic needs by government as contained in the national policy is made more tedious by the fact that 'NEMA's operational capacity to ameliorate the plights of displaced women has been whittled down due to the protracted nature of the insurgency, legal restriction on its operational mandates, corruption, and limited funding'²².

The policy on the rights of women and girl-child as contained in the third section and sub-section 3.1.4 to which pledges to guarantee the sanctity, privacy and dignity of women appears ineffective in the light of the inadequate provision of basic needs for the women despite its affirmation in the policy guideline.

Illiteracy

Due to restricted access to educational opportunities as a result of religious beliefs, cultural practices and more recently, insurgency, a very high percentage of the female children in the camps visited did not have basic literacy skills or education. It was also noticed that despite the guidelines provided for schooling in the National Policy, the actualization of educational opportunities within most of these camps through makeshift schooling arrangements, are unrealistic.

The study discovered that the girl child is mostly unable to concentrate due to the various distractions within the camp and their parents mostly falling within the same category of deprivation, are unable to assist them through home-learning which will keep them occupied for the period that will be spent in the camps while government plans for resettlement.

Due to illiteracy, displaced women are unable to build and consequently, utilise their human and social capital effectively due to their educational deficiency. Interactions with some of the women within the focus discussion groups in the camps also showed that despite the fact that most of them have innovated means of generating income from basic skills acquired prior to their displacement, due to little or no formal education and training, they are unable to keep proper accounts of their transactions and by implication they are unable to manage their small businesses beyond the germination stage.

Our study identified at least five existing and thriving means of income-generation for the women in the camp, which may be classified broadly under the following categories:

1. Trading
2. Shop-Keeping.
3. Livestock Management.
4. Agriculture.
5. Merchandising

Friction Between Government Officials and NGOs

According to the National Policy, the government is expected to facilitate access to relief materials from its agencies and non-governmental agencies that are primarily concerned with providing support services such as skills training, medical outreach, credit facilities, and educational support for displaced persons. It was however discovered that in certain places where these complementary services are available, the propensity for favouritism by government officials, politicians and volunteers or program officers from government parastatals and NGOs always lead to friction and conflicts.

In some of the focus group discussions, it was discovered that sometimes when politicians visit the camps to make donations of large sum of money to the occupants of the camps, women are hardly recognized or allowed to partake in the sharing or allocation of these donations and gifts. In some instances, it is either that

the funds are diverted by camp officials for personal usage or used purportedly to cater for other 'pressing needs' within the camp.

Since aids from philanthropists, individuals and organisations are always committed to the camp officials and administrators, who are expected to distribute them amongst the displaced persons, officials always claim that logistical problems account for their inability to adequately capture the women in the camp especially when their distribution process is replete with favouritism and corrupt practices.

Clashes between NGOs and government officials were reported to be a fundamental reason for difficulty in actualising certain parts of the National Policy in the camp. In other cases, relief materials from government either fails to arrive on time or are not made available at all as against government's propositions thereby nullifying relevant guidelines in the National Policy document. This often has the potential of creating negative publicity for government while at the same time affecting the welfare of women and the girl child who are incidentally, always the receiving end.

Interactions and discussions with some of the women revealed that due to some of the reasons adduced above, government has not been able to live up to its recommendations especially with regard to the safeguarding of individual rights of displaced persons against exploitation and unfair treatment. There were also reports of considerable lack of gender sensitivity on the part of camp management and government agencies.

Deficient Social Networking

In order to access humanitarian assistance and other benefits provided by the government and other non-governmental agencies, social networking between women living in displaced persons camps is of utmost importance. This is in the sense that fraternal interactions always promote the actualization of goals, articulation of common problems, sharing of responsibilities and enhanced disposition to communal welfare in peculiar situations where women have a general feeling of abuse and desperation. It is also often assumed that the impact of these inter-personal relationships on the part of displaced women in the establishment and actualization of governmental policies cannot be over-emphasised since its comprehension underscores the essence of post-conflict rehabilitation and resettlement.

Unfortunately, displaced women and their children often do not have the required coping mechanism needed for the networking or even, the creation of avenues to vent, relate or relay their harrowing experiences due to the fact that most inmates of the camps are practically disoriented and embittered about the failure of government to prevent conflict-induced displacement. Evidently, their social cohesion and a sense of community has been disrupted by the insurgency, and exacerbated by hardships in the camp. The study discovered that this is further accentuated by their experiences of loss of loved ones and disconnection from their homestead.

Our study therefore projects that the lack of an adequate front or will to articulate and project their needs through a network of confidants determines in an adverse manner what becomes of interventions and palliative programs by government agencies and NGOs.

In this sense, it is appropriate to state that social networking and effective inter-personal relationship would ordinarily have served as a veritable tool of social support for women in these different camps, unfortunately this study reveals that a general disposition to fear and mistrust created as an aftermath of the insurgency has led practically to a deficiency in social networking.

It was also discovered that in situations where relatives found themselves within the same camps, they tend to evolve a rare structure of communalism where a similitude of the extended family is created but the welfare of women and their children are not always adequately catered for with the little resources that are made available. In some other cases, women without children are left to fend for themselves.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The study identified that monitoring and evaluation is fundamental to the actualization of policies, especially as it concerns the specific policies that will activate the set goals of government as it applies to the rehabilitation and eventual relocation of displaced women

The study discovered that camp administrators did not often monitor personal concerns such as access to basic hygiene, healthcare, sanitary discipline, accommodation and appropriate allocation of space or even, evaluation of the activities of tutors in the makeshift educational facilities provided for the girl-child.

In some of the interviews and discussions, the women were able to vehemently affirm that the imbalance in their treatment and welfare despite their status as women with children, is a major pointer to the failure of the monitoring and evaluation process of the government despite making different appeals and presentations to the officials of the camps.

Internally displaced women were found to be mostly disoriented in the determination of what rehabilitation after displacement should really mean. It was discovered that most of them are unable to determine whether post-war rehabilitation is actually reparation, retribution, re-integration or the three aforementioned processes rolled into one composite whole.

Through Focus Group Discussions and interviews, the study endeavoured to explicitly educate different categories of displaced women about the import and meaning of post-conflict rehabilitation as different from the complex rendering in the National Policy Document. It also engaged the camp administration on the need to constantly allay the fears of the women in places where there appears to be a lack of confidence in the activities of government.

Lack of Adequate Sensitisation on Resettlement.

According to some of the interviewees, the National Policy document is grossly deficient in its ability to sensitise displaced women on the process of resettlement. They claim that this is especially evident in terms of failing to thoroughly envision a lucid approach that resonates and underscores the inputs of displaced women about where to be resettled at the termination of conflict or the closure of the camps.

The National Policy document vaguely avoids the possibility of settling displaced women in locations or environments different from where they were initially dislodged despite the existence of experiential knowledge that foregrounds the fact that some of the women would ordinarily refuse to return to their former homes where they had faced traumatic experiences of annihilation of their partners and wanton destruction of properties.

When the idea of resettlement is broached, it often leads to a continuation of the traumatic experiences. The extension of this trauma often puts the displaced women in a quagmire as to the decisions relating to the choice of resettlement or even, rehabilitation. They were found to have expressed little or no confidence in government's proposal for resettlement based on the reality on ground particularly as it concerns the implementation of policies which to them, is in total defiance to the national working document.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The study recommends that there is an urgent need to review the National Policy Document on displacement to reflect current economic and social realities in Nigeria. The review must necessarily consider the peculiarity of Nigeria while attempting to also resonate international best standards as recommended by the comity of nations and reputable international organisations.

2. That there is a pertinent need to ideate, document and enforce a lucid demarcation of responsibilities for camp administration, NGOs, International Aid Agencies and other non-state actors in IDP camps in order to effectively resolve frequent overlap in the responsibilities, duties and obligations of all the active participants in order not to jeopardise the basis for creating these camps in the first instance. It is also recommended that host communities are also to be giving special concessions in terms of revenue allocation and matching grants that allows them to actively become receptive to the idea of allowing the eventual settlements of the displaced women within the local community.
3. Arising from multiplicity of concerns and the inability of government through its agencies, to adequately ensure the practicability of the policy, the study recommends that government must decentralize the administration of camps by encouraging and engaging more non-state actors to provide support for the process of rehabilitation and resettlement. The cogency and demand for cooperate and private initiatives is to reinvent the approach towards the amelioration of the plight of displaced women. This proposition is premised on the discovery that the injection of current ideas will further reinvigorate the implementation of policies while at the same time afford these non-state actors the requisite opportunities to partner with government in reconstructing the built environments for resettlement. In situations where some have been seen to play active supportive roles in ameliorating the plights of displaced women, their engagements should be structured and appropriately documented to attract more and meaningful interventions from sectors that are yet untapped.
4. To allay the fear and claims of forced resettlement, government should ensure that the displaced women become active participants in the decision taking process regarding the location and conditions of resettlement.

CONCLUSION

It is instructive that we admit that conflicts are inevitable in human societies and also that effects of these can be addressed within a proper legal and moral framework. It is also admissible that it is the responsibility of government alongside some other non-state actors to determine through the formation of applicable policies, the safe passage, protection, rehabilitation and resettlement of displaced women and the girl-child within displaced peoples camps.

At the termination or resolution of conflicts, policies formulated by governments must necessarily and as a matter of last recourse, lead to *status quo ante bellum* that is, a return to the original situation that was in place before the declaration of conflict.

ENDNOTES

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