

Effects of Women Vulnerability in Wassa Internally Displaced Persons' Camp in Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the effects of women vulnerability in the management of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Wassa Camp Abuja, Federal Capital Territory. Intersectionality Gender theory and Human Needs theory were utilized. The paper adopted both primary and secondary methods of data collection. For primary data, the paper administered 120 Questionnaires, out of which 100 were returned: for 60 women and 40 men. 7 Key Informant Interviews were also conducted with management staff of the camp, including security operatives assigned to the camp. Simple statistical tools and content analysis were used to analyse the data. The secondary data consulted books, journals, newspapers, reports of NGOs and internet materials. Simple statistical tools and descriptive content analysis were used to present the data. The findings revealed that the strategies deployed in the management of the camp include aligning with the National Policy on IDPs, construction of makeshift tents as shelters, partnership with NGOs, occasional rationing of food and provision of security. It was further discovered that the management strategies adopted by the IDP have negative impacts on women within the facility in terms of discomforting sheltering, health related concerns, maternal mortality, sexual harassment and exploitation. Some of the measures that have been put in place by the management of the camp and government (FCTA) include proposal to relocate the camp to another conducive environment, increase in supply of essential materials and consumables, improvement in partnerships with NGOs and other stakeholders and introduction of schools for the children. This study concluded that despite the efforts of stakeholders at addressing some of the challenges cited above, their negative impacts on women still largely persist. It is therefore recommended that state and non-state actors, being the stakeholders should always conduct thorough gender-sensitive needs assessment in the camp to better understand the unique challenges and vulnerabilities being faced by women.

Keywords: Internally Displaced Persons (IDP), Management, Wassa Camp

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) is on the rise globally. According to the United Nations report of 2016, there were about 33.3 million IDPs in the world as at 2014 who were displaced by both social conflict and natural disasters, out of which Sub-Saharan Africa alone hosts 15 million IDPs; Nigeria alone in Sub-Saharan Africa has 3.6 million IDPs (IDMC, 2016). In the North-east of Nigeria alone, over 2 million people have been displaced-a situation that has made Nigeria one of the six largest hosts of IDPs in the world (IOM, 2016). As the number of IDPs continues to soar, attempt at management of the camps become more challenging for many countries including Nigeria. Managing Internally Displaced Persons' camps is one of the most critical humanitarian tasks not only in Nigeria but the world at large because it demands for the considerations of a number of factors, including the unique requirements and difficulties experienced by vulnerable groups like women, children, people living with disabilities and the aged (Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Humanitarian Emergencies, 2015).

The history of internal displacement is not a new phenomenon in Nigeria. Since independence of Nigeria in 1960, the country has recorded much violent conflict that had caused internal displacement of citizens. The first major violent incidence that displaced Nigerians on the large scale was the Civil War from 1967-1970. Although it is difficult to determine the exact number of people displaced during this period due to conflicting figures and unreliable data, several sources have estimated that over 2 million people were either displaced or in need of humanitarian assistance within and across the borders during the war (Greenhill, 2010).

Subsequent conflicts that caused internal displacement in Nigeria were in forms of inter-ethno-religious conflicts. The majority of inter-communal/ inter-ethnic clashes that have led to displacement have taken place in Taraba, Plateau, Nasarawa, and Benue states between 2000 and 2002 and were centred on the issues of land, boundaries, and indigenes/settlers. Other specific examples include; Kaduna, in the north central area in the 1990s, which escalated in the year 2000. By 2002, more than 30,000 people were displaced during a four-day religious riot in Kaduna. The year 2000 violence caused large-scale population displacement, leading to a sharp segregation of communities in some areas. Other examples of communal clashes include the disputed results in the Plateau State elections led to inter-communal unrest in 2008, tensions primarily reflected resentment between the indigenous (Christian) minority and settlers from the Hausa-speaking Muslim north (Adesote, 2015). Between 2003 and 2008, the National Commission for Refugees estimated at least 3.2 million people were displaced due to ethnic and religious conflict, from and within various states in the country (Adesote, 2015). In August 2008, Nigeria ceded the Bakassi Peninsula to its neighbour, the Republic of Cameroon, following many years of dispute and an intervention from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in October 2002. An estimated 400,000-755,000 people were forced to move across the border to Cross Rivers and Akwa-Ibom states in the Niger Delta region(migrationpolicy.org) Many were left landless, homeless, and cut off from their means of livelihood for years. There are approximately 100,000 people that are yet to be resettled according to state authorities (migrationpolicy.org) Internal displacement of people in Nigeria has been made worse by the insurgency in the North-East that started in 2009, the Herders/Farmers clashes in North central and the banditry in North West.

High population of IDPs, insufficient funding, corruption, lack of reliable data base of the IDPs and total neglects are some of the factors that have caused the poor management of IDP Camps in Nigeria. Poorly managed IDP camps such as the ones scattered all over Abuja have the tendency of increasing risk of violence against women, including sexual harassment, assault, and exploitation. Insecurity in IDP camps usually make women fear moving around the camp, accessing basic services, or even using restroom facilities, impacting their overall safety and well-being. Inadequate shelter arrangements, limited sanitation facilities, and overcrowding in IDP camps can result in a lack of privacy and personal space for women. This can be distressing and may also expose them to further risks of harassment and abuse. Poor management of IDP camps can lead to inadequate access to essential health services, including reproductive healthcare. It can also result in substandard sanitation facilities, which can cause health problems, particularly for pregnant women and young children (W.H.O, 2019). The displaced people in Wassa Camp are majorly from Gwoza Local Government Area of Born State. Gwoza people are Nigerians who have been displaced due to the ongoing conflict in the northeast region of the country. They are currently residing in many camps in Abuja, such as Wassa camp, New-Kuchingoro camp, Lugbe IDPs camp, Durumi camp and others which is located in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) of Abuja.

Wassa camp is one of several locations in Abuja that have been set up to accommodate people who have been forced to flee their homes due to violence, insecurity, and other factors. The camp is managed by the Nigerian government and various humanitarian organizations, who provide basic services like shelter, food, water, and healthcare. However, conditions in the camp are often difficult, with overcrowding, poor sanitation, and limited access to education, livelihoods, and other essential needs. Many of the IDPs from Gwoza have suffered trauma and displacement-related stress, and may require psychosocial support and other forms of assistance to recover and rebuild their lives. Every academic research is usually necessitated by problem in the society. This study is not an exception as it examines the problems of poor management of IDP camps in Nigeria with special focus on its effects on women in Wasa camp Abuja. Wasa camp is the biggest IDP camp in the Federal Capital Territory with over five thousand people (Okah, 2021). The camp like every other camp in the FCT has suffered neglect since its establishment in 2014. While there have been empirical works on IDPs generally, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, this is perhaps one of the very few works to be done in assessing the management of

IDPs of Wasa and its implication, or more so the vulnerability of the women gender.

The Wasa IDP camp had lost thirty expectant mothers due the non-availability of medical facilities and personnel (Guardian, 2020). The report further stated that the experiences of women in IDP camps in Abuja are often marked by gender-based violence, including sexual violence, exploitation, and abuse. Women and girls are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence, as they may be forced to exchange sex for food, shelter, or other basic necessities. The lack of security and privacy in IDP camps can also contribute to an increased risk of gender-based violence. Additionally, women in IDP camps may face restrictions on their freedom of movement and access to education and other opportunities. This can limit their ability to rebuild their lives and contribute to the long-term development of their communities.

Wassa IDP camp is a reflection of the state of internally displaced persons' camps across Nigeria. Previous research efforts have focused more on the problems of lack of healthcare infrastructure, poor living conditions, lack of basic amenities and services, arising from the poor management of IDPs by stakeholders (Ebunoluwa, 2019).. However, adequate researches have not been carried out to interrogate the extent to which these problems predispose women to risk of diverse dimensions. The study, therefore examines the extent of women vulnerabilities to the management of IDP camp at the Wasa Camp. To be more precise, this paper interrogates the risks associated with woman in the management of the Wassa Camp. It is primarily guided by the following objectives: to identify the strategies being adopted to manage the IDP, to assess the effectiveness of these strategies and to investigate the extent to which these predispose women to multifaceted risks in the IDP Camp.

Conceptual Clarifications

Internally Displaced Persons Camp

An Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp is a temporary settlement or sheltering area established to provide refuge and protection for individuals or groups who have been forced to flee their homes due to conflict, violence, natural disasters, or human rights violations but remain within the borders of their own country. IDP camps are distinct from refugee camps, as refugees cross international borders to seek safety, while IDPs remain within their country's borders (Odebiyi, 2020). The UNHCR defines IDP camps as facilities or settlements where groups of internally displaced persons find temporary refuge and assistance after fleeing their homes but remain within the borders of their own country (UNHCR, 2020). According to Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC, 2014), which is part of the Norwegian Refugee Council, describes IDP camps as formal or informal sites where internally displaced people seek refuge, often under the management or supervision of authorities, humanitarian organizations, or community leaders. (IDMC, 2020). In a similar definition, the IOM defines IDP camps as "locations where internally displaced persons temporarily reside, usually in makeshift shelters, waiting for a safe return to their homes or a durable solution. (IOM, "Glossary on Migration, 2021). Global Overview of Trends and Developments (GRID) 2020, described IDP camp as "camp-like settings or organized sites established to accommodate and provide humanitarian assistance to internally displaced people. (GRID 2020).

Internally Displaced Persons

Many institutions have defined the concept of Internally Displaced Persons. It is clear that most of the definitions show similarities. According to UNHCR, Internally Displaced Persons can be defined as individuals or groups of people who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence due to armed conflict, generalized violence, human rights violations, or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border (UNHCR, 2016). Very close to this definition above, is the one given by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). According to ICRC, internally displaced persons refer to individuals or groups of people who have been forced to flee their homes, but have not crossed an internationally recognized state border. They are often referred to as "displaced persons" when their movement is caused by armed conflict, violence, human rights abuses, or natural disasters (ICRC, 2006). The Brookings Institution and the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies see Internally Displaced Persons as individuals or groups of people who have been forced or obliged to flee 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, violation of human rights, or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border (Brookings Institution, 2006).

Women

The term 'women' is often used to describe the specie of gender other than the men folks. According to Izzi and Adiola (2021) woman can be used to describe the human person with the womb and having the tendency to procreate. Often times, women generally considered as the adult female specie; however, the scope of this paper applied a wider sociological usage including girl, mother, aunty, lady and indeed the aged female gender. These set of persons are deeply and mostly affected by armed conflict, insurgencies, terrorism and natural disasters, particularly in a situation where they have to make a sudden flee from their ancestral homes for safety or a more secured environment.

Camp Management

A Camp Management Agency works with a wide range of camp stakeholders to ensure that the camp population has equitable access to the assistance and services that they need and have a right to. It does so through the management of information about the camp and the population; through developing coordination forums and advocating for adequate provision; through developing partnerships with all those involved and by effectively mobilising camp residents to participate in leadership structures, decision-making and the daily life of the camp.

Empirical Review of Internally Displaced Persons in Nigeria

Internal displacement is a global phenomenon and not unique to Nigeria. There exists considerable body of literatures on Internally Displaced Persons in Nigeria. Thus, scholars have provided their divergent views on the causes, frequency and management of internally displacements, as well as their origin and impact on human and national development. In the report submitted by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre in 2019, 41.3 million internally displaced persons were recorded globally due to scores of conflicts and violence around the world. This estimate is outside the cases of human displacements occasioned by natural disasters and other causes (IDMC, 2019). The IDMC also gave other vital statistics from their findings, which revealed the countries with the highest number of new displacements in 2019, including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Syria, and Ethiopia. According to the report, more than half of all IDPs worldwide are located in just ten countries: Syria, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Yemen, Afghanistan, Sudan, South Sudan, Nigeria, Iraq, and Somalia (United Nations Report, 2019). Furthermore, the report revealed that women and children account for majority of the Internally Displaced Persons' population, were the women accounting for 54% of all IDPs, while children under the age of 18 account for 45%.

In Nigeria, insurgency has led to a free flow of internal displacement of people particularly in the northeastern part of the country, where terrorism and insurgency holds sway. The Boko Haram insurgency, which began in 2009, has caused tremendous human rights violations, including the displacement of millions of people. Many people have been forced to flee their ancestral homes as a result of fear of attack, abduction, and killing. The myriads effects of the insurgency has led to a serious destruction of infrastructures such as homes, schools, and businesses and many has been left homeless without means of live leaving many without shelter or livelihoods. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre as of 2020, Nigeria had the third-highest number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) globally, with over two million recorded (IDMC, 2020). The majority of these IDPs are in Nigeria's north-eastern states of Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe. In a study conducted to introduce a national framework for the protection of IDPs in Nigeria, Muhammed Ladan argues that being displaced within the geographical boundaries of one's country does not bestow special legal status in the same way that being a refugee does: IDPs are expected to enjoy the rights available to the citizenry as a whole. He does, however, submit that 'because of their special situation, specific needs and the heightened vulnerability that flow from the fact of being displaced, they are entitled to special protection and assistance. As such, increasing numbers of migrants fleeing Boko Haram violence in the north have virtually no access to lawful tenancy when they arrive in Abuja. They are forced to live in uncompleted buildings and IDP camps in various locations in Abuja, which house thousands of IDPs. While the camps are not prisons, the IDPs live in a state synonymous with that of

prisoners. Some of the IDPs in Abuja confessed to having fled their homes without taking anything. Many of these people, who are farmers, wandered in the bush for more than eight days before they could get to the city. Many still wear the clothes they wore when they left home. They have no money; they have nothing but hope and the will to survive. The situation in these camps has become so unbearable that the IDPs are now openly expressing their grievances. For example, on 5 February 2015, 700 IDPs in Abuja Camp in Sabon Kuchingoro protested their continuous neglect by the government. Sadly, rather than assisting them, some of their countrymen are compounding their woes. The IDPs are taken advantage of on a daily basis by criminals who disguise as IDPs and hijack donations to the IDPs. With regards to the nature of IDP camps in Nigeria, it is noted that the men folks in IDPs are also exposed to ranges of vulnerabilities, such as joblessness and lack the capacity to meet the basic human expectation of their family. Although when one compare and contrast the experiences of both gender it is evident that men manage to sustain or manage the impact of the psychological and social situation better; this may be due to the geographical and mobility before the rupture. According to Miller and Dehass in their study on the protection of internally displaced persons in Nigeria posit that the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (the Kampala Convention) is the first mechanism, both regionally and internationally, that seeks to impose on governments in Africa the duty to protect the rights and well-being of its citizens under conditions of displacement due to conflict, natural disasters or large-scale developments (Castles, Dehass and Miller, 2013). Despite having signed and ratified the convention, and even producing a draft policy for internally displaced persons since 2012 the constitution of Nigeria requires that all treaties shall not have the force of law unless passed by the National Assembly in whole or in part. In view of these rights violations, it is imperative that Nigeria starts the process of domiciliation of the Kampala Convention.

Adamu and Rasheed (2016) examined the insecurity situation in the Northern Nigeria and its effects on the IDPs. It is evident from the beginning of the paper that insecurity situation in contemporary Nigeria has forced large number of Nigerians to be vulnerable and susceptible to all forms of exploitation, abuse, neglect and many rendered homeless in the northern part of the country. The current figure or number of the IDPs camps across the country shows that the federal, states, local governments and the host communities are all suffering from the effect of insecurity in the north. As recommended in the paper, there is need for intelligence gathering and surveillance so that law enforcement agents could be proactive and reasonably predict potential crime with near perfect accuracy rather than being reactive. Eweka and Olusegun (2016) comparatively interrogated the management of internal displacement in Nigeria and its neighbouring Cameroon. With special focus on (dis)similarities in managerial stakeholders and their number, challenges, and degree of success recorded by both countries, the study showed that no one country is more successful than the other in IDPs management, rather both countries have a lot to learn from each other, and there is an urgent need to improve on the management of IDPs in both countries. Ibeanu (2015) in his work titled 'Between Refuge and Rights: Internally Displaced Persons and Inclusive Electoral Process in Nigeria' was of the view that some people expressed concerns about the introduction of IDP voting. Among their concerns was the possibility of abuse, if not in 2015, in the future. This is especially plausible if you do not have the right type of institutional checks. A second concern raised was whether what was introduced was really inclusive considering that it was limited to three states and hundreds of IDPs are scattered across the country. These are legitimate concerns, but it is a novel development that should be encouraged. Not starting at all would have been a terrible travesty considering for instance that the total number of IDPs, who potentially could have been disenfranchised in Borno State, was 561,999. If you also consider that the total number of voters who were credited for the Presidential and National Assembly elections on 28th March in Borno State was 544, 75912, then you see the magnitude of potential disenfranchisement. The challenge however remains to continue to expand the net of democratic inclusiveness by ensuring that other IDPs and indeed other excluded groups are given the opportunity to exercise their fundamental democratic rights.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This paper adopted both Feminist and Human Needs Theories to explain the sordid circumstances of women in the IDP. Although Feminist Theory has a broad scope of intellectual application, its intersectionality aspect provides detailed experiences of women based on their social category. In its original form, Kimberly Crenshaw, the proponent of the theory (cited in Davies 2007 & Agbonifo, 2020) developed it to challenge the notion of

homogenous experiences of black American women with regards to their work and other related activities. According to Davies (2007:68), intersectionality describes:

...the interaction between gender, race and other categories of differences in individual lives, social practices, institutional arrangements, and cultural ideologies and the outcomes of these interaction in terms of power for Bilg (2010) intersectionality is the product of multidisciplinary theoretical framework that defines social inequalities and identities using a multi-dimensional approach. The essentials of this theory lies in its capacity to go beyond highlighting the differences men and women but also recognizes the interception of other power relations among women in terms of social status, family status, age and other considerations. These forms of historically constructed identities further accentuate discrimination, exclusion and marginalization of internally displaced women (Agbonifo, 2020). The Basic Needs Theory was popularized by Galtung (2005). He stated that there should be a clear distinction of want, a wish, a desire or demand of the human expectations. John Galtung's analysis is very essential in the study of diverse ways of administering aids to IDPs in order to maximize or adequately protect their special needs. The author tried to convey the meaning of need as a necessary condition that has to be satisfied before the need object can be functional as human beings. It is germane to note that there is a classification of certain needs according to the author: security, identity not to avoid alienation, welfare needs for sufficiency, and the freedom need to avoid repression. To summarize the position of Johan Galtung in this regard, the hierarchies and vagaries of needs are structurally (physiologically) embedded in all humans that are ordinarily expected. Thus, these needs enable us to distinguish us from lower animals and are therefore imperative in understanding human development that can guarantee adequate protections. This theory is significantly related to this study as it harps on the differential needs of both genders. The management of the IDP should therefore understand the variegated needs of the two sexes and make them available in the camps.

Managing IDP Camps in Nigeria

Strategies for managing IDP camp refer to the approaches and actions taken by governments, humanitarian organizations, and other stakeholders to address the needs and challenges of people who have been forced to flee their homes due to conflict, natural disasters, or other crises but remain within the borders of their own country. These strategies aim to provide for the basic needs, safety, and well-being of the displaced population while facilitating their eventual return to their homes or helping them integrate into new communities if return is not immediately possible. Effective management of IDP camps requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach (Nigeria National Policy on IDP, 2012).

One of the strategies adopted by Nigeria government in the management of IDP is the establishment of camps in different location in the country to shelter the IDPs. The Federal Government, some state governments, humanitarian organizations and agencies, have established IDP camps to provide temporary shelter, food, water, and other basic necessities to those displaced by the Boko Haram conflict. These camps are often coordinated by states and local authorities in collaboration with national and international humanitarian agencies. This strategy of establishing IDP camps is critical but the camps are usually not of standard as the camps lack virtually everything that makes life worth living (Ukah, 2020). The conditions in many IDP camps in Nigeria are characterized by makeshift tents and poor shelter and this has been attributed to combination of factors, especially inadequate funding.

Another strategy for managing IDP camps by Nigerian Government is the strategy of special protection and assistance provided for women, children, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and persons living with HIV/AIDS in managing Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps is crucial for ensuring the well-being and rights of these vulnerable populations which on the policy level remains laudable. It has not been implemented. Poor implementation of the above strategy for managing IDP camps in Nigeria has led to human rights violations, including the denial of essential services, discrimination, abuse, and neglect of the targeted groups. This could result in a cycle of suffering and undermine the very purpose of establishing the Wasa IDP camp (IDMC, 2019). Similarly, the government's insufficient attention to the special needs of these groups has led to deteriorating health conditions for women in IDP, lack of access to proper medical care, and increased vulnerability to diseases. This has resulted in higher mortality rates, especially among women and children, the elderly, and those living with disabilities or illnesses like HIV/AIDS (IDMC, 2019). Inadequate support for

psychosocial well-being arising from the inability of Nigerian government to effectively implementing strategy of special protection and assistance provided for women, children, the elderly, persons with disabilities and persons living with HIV/AIDS has led to increased mental health issues, trauma, and emotional distress, particularly among women, children, and those with disabilities. This, in turn, had hindered their ability to cope with the challenges of displacement and hinder their chances of recovery and integration.

Poor implementation of the protection and assistance strategy had led to a sense of disempowerment and dependency among the affected populations. Instead of enabling them to regain control of their lives, the lack of appropriate support may perpetuate their reliance on aid. Failure of the government to effectively address the needs of these vulnerable groups has resulted in their further marginalization within Wasa IDP camps. This has led to social isolation, limited participation in camp activities, and decreased opportunities for women in the camp (Ukah, 2020). Inadequate protection measures for women by the government have exacerbated the risk of gender-based violence within the camps, including sexual exploitation, harassment, and abuse of women and girls in IDP camps. Poor implementation of the special protection and assistance strategy has long-term consequences for the affected IDPs especially women. Poor implementation of the special protection and assistance strategy for vulnerable groups in IDP camps has led to a range of negative consequences, including human rights violations, compromised health and well-being, psychosocial distress, dependency, exclusion, and long-term challenges for recovery and integration. It is essential for governments and humanitarian organizations to prioritize and effectively execute these strategies to ensure the safety, dignity, and rights of all IDP camp residents (IDMC, 2022).

The third strategy to be analyzed in this study is the strategy of the providing relief materials and assistance in line with the Sphere Minimum Standards for Humanitarian Assistance in all relevant sectors adopted by the federal government is also a good strategy at the policy level but has not been effectively implemented. If the strategy of providing relief materials and assistance in line with the Sphere Minimum Standards for Humanitarian Assistance is poorly implemented in IDP camps, it could have significant negative impacts on women in these camps. The Sphere Minimum Standards provide a set of guidelines and principles to ensure the quality and effectiveness of humanitarian response in various sectors, including water supply and sanitation, food security, shelter, health care, and protection. The Federal Government through the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs had failed to adhere to these standards- a situation that had to various adverse consequences, particularly for vulnerable groups such as women. Poor implementation of relief efforts by the Federal Government especially for women in Wassa camp has led to inadequate access to clean water, sanitation facilities, and proper healthcare. Women are facing increased risks of reproductive health issues, infections, and other health complications due to lack of hygiene and medical services.

Another strategy the federal government has in its National Policy for IDPs is the strategy of coordinated management and administration of IDP camps in the country. This strategy has also been poorly implemented in Nigeria. The ineffective implementation of coordinated management and administration of IDP camps in Nigeria had exacerbated the vulnerabilities and challenges that women already face due to displacement. It is important for the federal governments, humanitarian organizations, and the international community to work together to ensure that IDP camps are properly managed, providing a safe and supportive environment for all residents, particularly women (Ukah, 2020).

The strategy of adequately deploying the National Disaster Management Framework (NDMF) by the federal government of Nigeria through National Emergency Management Agency as part of the Comprehensive Displacement Management and Implementation Framework is a commendable strategy in the policy document of Nigeria on IDP. However, this strategy has not been well pursued due to poor funding.

The National Disaster Management Framework (NDMF) and the Comprehensive Displacement Management and Implementation Framework are inadequately implemented by the federal government of Nigeria through the National Emergency Management Agency; this failure of the government had had significant negative effects on women in IDP camps in Nigeria especially Wassa camp in Abuja. Ineffective implementation of the above strategy had resulted in a lack of attention to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of women in the camps. Women often have unique needs related to health, sanitation, hygiene, and reproductive care. Without proper

implementation, these needs may be overlooked, leading to inadequate access to essential services.

A Brief History of Wassa Internally Displaced Persons Camp

Wassa Internally Displaced Persons' camp is located about 20km from Apo village in the Federal Capital Territory (Nigeria Health Watch, 2017). It was officially established in 2014 to receive outflows of refugees arising from the protracted Boko Haram insurgency in the northeast region, particularly Borno, Yobe and Adamawa States. According to Blueprint (2021), Wassa Camp is the largest refugee camp in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), and plays host to more than 5000 refugees. It is estimated that about 70% of the camp's refugees comprises by children and young women, among who have given birth to at least 5 children before the age of 25 (Nigeria Health Watch, 2021).

The peculiarity of the demand of women in crisis situation often predisposes them to critical health challenges, most especially the fact that most IDP camps lack adequate basic health and social amenities. This is the case with women in Wassa Camp, where they face shortfalls in health facilities in the face of unplanned, unwanted and poorly spaced pregnancies. This can largely be attributed to lack of family planning services and supplies, inadequate health facilities, and ambivalence attitudes of key stakeholders to intervene in the affairs of the camp (Alagbaso, 2021). The Federal Government and Federal Capital Territory Administration have been involved in the provision of supports and other forms of interventions to the camp through their agencies: Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and a host of other Non-Governmental Organisations. Some of the NGOs that have supported the camp include Health and Smart Children Foundation, Auxano Foundation, Yudee Excel Foundation

SUMMARY OF THE METHODOLOGY

The paper utilized a mix-method of qualitative and quantitative approach; comprising both primary and secondary sources of data collection. The primary method sourced data from administering 120 questionnaires to refugees, using simple random sampling techniques to sample staff of the IDP, staff of NGOs and security agents attached to the camp. About 100 copies of filled questionnaire were returned. Furthermore, 7 Key Informant Interviews (KII) were conducted with 5 management team members of the camp and 2 security personnel attached to the camp. The secondary data were sourced from books, journal, reports from newspapers, magazine and internet sources.

MAJOR FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The first objective of this study sought to investigate the strategies put in place for the management of IDP camps in Wassa IDP Camp. These are presented below;

Table 1: Responses to Strategies for the Management of Wassa IDP Camp in Abuja

Item	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	UNDECIDED	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
National Policy on IDPs	37	43	00	09	11
Makeshift Tents As Shelters	38	49	00	05	08
Government Partnership with NGOS	37	53	00	03	07
Occasional Rationing of Food Supply	38	45	00	05	12
Provision & Access to Medical & Other Facilities	42	47	00	04	07

Provision of Security	48	46	00	04	02
Limited Coordination by Government	51	36	00	08	05
Existence of Legal Framework	42	49	00	06	03

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

The above data revealed that the following represent the strategies for the management of IDP camps; having national policy for the management of IDP camps, adopting the strategy of allowing IDPs to construct make shift tents as shelters, government over reliance on the assistance of other humanitarian organizations, occasional rationing of food supply mainly from customs seized food items in Nigeria, limited access to medical facilities and health workers on permanent basis at the camp for pregnant and nursing mothers and government developed policies and legal frameworks to address the rights and needs of IDPs. This study further revealed that these strategies mentioned above have important implications for the well-being and experiences of women in Wasa camp. For instance, it is important to note that having a national policy for the management of IDP camps is crucial for ensuring a consistent and standardized approach to provide support and protection for displaced individuals. The data obtained from the field shows that a larger number of the respondents agreed that having national policy for the management of IDP camps amount to one of the key strategies for the management of IDP camp in Nigeria. A 54 year old male informant and member of the management team in Wassa IDP Camp asserts that:

There is no doubt, Nigeria has a national policy for IDP camp management, but the poor utilization of this policy in Nigeria has led to ineffective management of these camps, characterized by a lack of coordination, insufficient resources, poor living conditions, security concerns, short-term focus, and a lack of monitoring and evaluation. Addressing these issues and fully implementing the policy can significantly improve the management of IDP camps in the country (Ayuba Philemon, 2023: Fieldwork)

Another respondent, Emmanuel Joshua who is among the management team of Wassa IDP Camp has to say about the shelter:

‘The make-shift shelters which the government allowed in Wassa IDP Camp in Abuja can be considered as one of the strategies for managing internally displaced persons (IDPs). However, the shelters may fulfill a basic need for housing; they did not adequately address the overall well-being and dignity of the IDPs. Factors such as privacy for women, sanitation, access to healthcare for women, education, and livelihood opportunities are crucial for the long-term management and rehabilitation of IDPs. The strategy of make-shift-shelter in Wassa Camp has created more problems in the long run as they IDPs are always sick due to the conditions of these make-shift shelters (Emmanuel, 2023, Fieldwork).

In the context of women, a well-defined policy can specify gender-sensitive provisions, including safety measures, access to healthcare, reproductive health services, and protection from gender-based violence. However, the poor implementation of the national policy for the management of IDP camps had adverse effects on women in Wassa camps.

Further, allowing IDPs to construct makeshift tents in Wassa camp Abuja had had both positive and negative effects. On the positive side, it had empowered women to create shelter for their families, giving them a sense of ownership and self-reliance. However, it has not been properly managed and has resulted in overcrowding, inadequate shelter, and heightened vulnerabilities, particularly for women and they have been exposed to risks such as theft, harassment, and sexual violence.

The quality and safety of these makeshift shelters need careful consideration. It was also revealed that overreliance on humanitarian organizations for assistance in Wassa camp has been counter-productive. The

strategy of the Nigerian government over relying on international humanitarian organizations has lots of implications for the availability and adequacy of services in IDP camps. In the context of women, this has impacted the accessibility of essential services like healthcare, education, and livelihood support. Relying heavily on external aid has resulted in unpredictability and inconsistency in service delivery, making it difficult for women to plan for their families' well-being.

Effects of the Management of the Wassa IDP Camp on Women

Table 2: Responses to Effects on Women of Strategies for the Management of Wassa IDP Camp

Item	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	UNDECIDED	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Food Insecurity	43	50	01	04	02
Makeshift Tents and Facilities are Comfortable and Healthy for Women	09	11	00	37	43
Harassment and Sexual Exploitation of Women	33	57	00	03	07
Maternal Mortality	37	49	00	06	08
Ineffective coordination and implementation	42	46	00	05	07

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

The second objective of this study sought to investigate the effects of the strategies on women in the camp. This study revealed that the strategies of the government are poor and in some cases have been poorly implemented; thereby worsening the situation of the women in the camp. The occasional rationing of food by the federal government in Wassa camp has led to food insecurity, which disproportionately affects women who are often responsible for the nutritional needs of their families.

This aligns with Alagbaso (2021) submission that lack of family planning services and supplies, inadequate health facilities, and ambivalence attitudes of key stakeholders to intervene in the affairs of the camp do undermine IDP management in Nigeria. The situation in Wassa Camp has made women to make difficult choices about who gets to eat and some women compromised their own nutrition to ensure their children and other family members are fed. This has long-term health consequences for women. This point corroborate World Health Organization report that mismanagement of IDPs can result in substandard sanitation facilities, which can cause health problems, particularly for pregnant women and young children (W.H.O, 2019). One of the key informants opined that:

Obviously, poorly constructed tents have indeed led to discomfort and various health issues for women in Wassa Camp. Living in uncomfortable and insecure conditions can take a toll on mental health. For women who might already be dealing with trauma from displacement, the added stress of inadequate shelter can exacerbate mental health issues.(Ramatu, 2023 Fieldwork)

Another informant further reiterated that:

The high rate of maternal mortality in Wassa IDP camps has been influenced by poor management strategies of the Camp. This camp lacks proper healthcare infrastructure and trained medical staff. This inadequacy had significantly impacted the quality of maternal healthcare available to pregnant women. Pregnant women in IDP camps are facing challenges in accessing regular prenatal check-ups, necessary medications, and skilled birth attendants due to the scarcity of resources and healthcare providers (Emmanuel, 2023)

There were also strong evidences that women were routinely harassed, assaulted and sexually exploited in the camp.

Efforts of Management of Wasa Camp to Reduce the Effects on Women

Table 3: Responses on the Efforts of Management to Reduce Effects on Women

Item	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	UNDECIDED	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Relocation of the Camp by FCT Administration	04	07	00	48	41
Federal Government’s Essential Supplies	42	49	00	03	05
Federal Government and Other stakeholders Advocating Rights of Women	44	42	00	10	04
International Organizations Provision of Essential Services	40	48	00	06	06
IDP Management organizes Schools	49	42	00	05	04

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

The third objective of this study, as shown in Table 3, sought to investigate the things being done by stakeholders in Wassa IDP Camp to alleviate the effects of poor management strategies on women. The study revealed that the management of Wassa IDP Camp in Abuja, involves various stakeholders working together to alleviate the effects of poor management strategies on vulnerable populations, particularly women. This study revealed that the stakeholder involved in the administration of the camp include the Management of the Camp, FCT Administration, (representing Federal Government), Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, International Agencies, Ministry of Women Affairs.

With respect to the relocation of the Camp, one of the respondents described it as an eviction attempt by the FCT Administration, which can spell doom for women folks and the general management of the camp. In his submission:

‘Evictions without proper relocation plans or considerations for the specific needs of women have significantly worsen their situation and further marginalize them within the camp environment. Effective camp management strategies should prioritize the protection and support of vulnerable groups, including women, by ensuring access to basic services, security, and community support.(Personal Interview, 24/11/2023, Abuja)

Discussion of Findings

The first objective of this paper sought to investigate the strategies put in place for the management of IDP camps at Wassa. The study revealed that these strategies included introducing national policy for the management of IDP camps, adopting the strategy of allowing IDPs to construct makeshift tents as shelters, government over reliance on the assistance of other humanitarian organizations, occasional rationing of food supply mainly from customs seized food items in Nigeria, limited access to medical facilities and health workers on permanent basis at the camp for pregnant and nursing mothers and government developed policies and legal frameworks to address the rights and needs of IDPs. This study further revealed that these strategies mentioned above have important implications for the well-being and experiences of women in Wassa camp. It is important to note that having a national policy for the management of IDP camps is crucial in ensuring a consistent and standardized approach to provide support and protection for displaced individuals. In the context of women, a

well-defined policy can specify gender-sensitive provisions, including safety measures, access to healthcare, reproductive health services, and protection from gender-based violence. However, the poor implementation of the national policy for the management of IDP camps had adverse effects on women in the IDP camp.

Furthermore, allowing IDPs to construct makeshift tents in Wassa camp Abuja had had both positive and negative effects. On the positive side, it had empowered women to create shelter for their families, giving them a sense of ownership and self-reliance. However, it has not been properly managed and has resulted in overcrowding, inadequate shelter, and heightened vulnerabilities, particularly for women and they have been exposed to risks such as theft, harassment, and sexual violence. The quality and safety of these makeshift shelters need careful consideration. It was also revealed that overreliance on humanitarian organizations for assistance in Wassa camp has been counter-productive. The strategy of the Nigerian government over relying on international humanitarian organizations has lots of implications for the availability and adequacy of services in IDP camps. With respect to women, it has impacted the accessibility of essential services like healthcare, education, and livelihood support. Relying heavily on external aid resulted in the unpredictability and inconsistency of service delivery, making it difficult for women to plan for their families' well-being.

The second objective of this study investigated the effect of the strategies on women folks in the camp. It revealed that the strategies of the government are poor and in some cases have been poorly implemented; thereby worsening the situation of the women in the camp. For instance the occasional rationing of food by the federal government in Wassa camp has led to food insecurity, which disproportionately affects women who are often responsible for the nutritional needs of their families. This situation in Wasa Camp has made women to make difficult choices about who gets to eat and some women compromised their own nutrition to ensure their children and other family members are fed. This has long-term health consequences for women.

The third objective concentrated on examining the extent to which interventions of stakeholders in Wassa IDP Camp address the effects of poor management strategies on women. The study revealed that the management of Wassa IDP Camp in Abuja, involves various stakeholders working together to alleviate the effects of poor management strategies on the vulnerable populations, particularly women. It showed that adequate funding by the government authorities and other stakeholders would have been one of the major things that would have alleviated the effects of camp management on women but the Government has not been able to fund IDP camp as expected. Adequate funding could have played a crucial role in alleviating the effects of camp management strategies on women in Wassa Camp. The last objective of the study identified measures stakeholders can employ to mitigate or address the concerns of women in Wassa IDP camp. It was revealed that addressing the concerns of women in Internally Displaced Persons camp like Wassa involves a multifaceted approach that requires collaboration and effort from various stakeholders. The concerns of women can be better addressed firstly by conducting thorough needs assessments to understand the specific challenges and concerns faced by women in the Wassa IDP camp. This could include issues related to safety, health, education, employment, and access to essential services. The finding from the field also revealed that actively involving women in the decision-making process through regular meetings and focus group discussions to gather their input and insights on the issues affecting them will be one of the viable ways to address the concerns of women in IDP camps in Nigeria.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, the management of internally displaced persons (IDP) camps in Wassa Camp has a profound impact on the lives of women residing within these facilities. The experiences of women in IDP camps reflect the complex challenges they face, from inadequate access to healthcare and education to limited economic opportunities. While the government and humanitarian organizations play a vital role in providing essential services and support, there is still much work to be done to improve the overall conditions within these camps and enhance the well-being of the women and their families. The study therefore makes the following recommendations:

1. Both the government and Non-governmental organizations that are stakeholders in the management of IDP camps should always conduct thorough gender-sensitive needs assessment in the camp to understand the unique challenges and vulnerabilities faced by women, such as access

to healthcare, sanitation facilities, security, and livelihood opportunities. This will help in tailoring interventions accordingly.

2. Managers and stakeholders in IDP camps should encourage the active participation of women in camp decision-making processes and governance. This will give them a voice in shaping the policies and services that affect their lives.
3. Both the government and international humanitarian organizations should ensure that the camp provides secure and separate sleeping and sanitation facilities for women. Lighting and security measures should be in place to reduce the risk of gender-based violence. Women and girls should be actively involved in the design and monitoring of these facilities.
4. The IDP Camp management should promote income-generating opportunities within the camp, such as small-scale agriculture, handicrafts, and vocational training, to enable women to become self-reliant and economically independent.
5. Stakeholders in the management of IDP Camps should establish counseling and psychosocial support services that address the trauma and mental health needs of women and children who have experienced displacement and conflict-related violence.
6. Nigerian Government through its agencies in the management internally displaced persons should collaborate with local and international organizations, NGOs, and UN agencies to leverage their expertise and resources in addressing the unique challenges faced by women in the camp.
7. Stakeholders in the management of IDP Camps should provide comprehensive healthcare services that include reproductive health care, maternal and child health, and access to contraceptives. These services should be easily accessible and provided in a culturally sensitive manner.

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