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Abstract- Northern Nigeria among other regions of the country has witnessed various degrees of insecurity with its resultant effect on the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), economic fortunes of the affected communities and overall standard of living of those living within the affected states. This has made security the major concern for Nigerian government and has invested huge resources to that effect. Insecurity in the north has not only prevented development of that region but also hinders foreign investment, disrupt social activities, peaceful coexistence and has become a great threat to the growth and development of the region in particular and Nigeria in general. This paper therefore, examined the insecurity situation in the Northern Nigeria and its effects on the IDPs.

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Effects of Insecurity on the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Northern Nigeria: Prognosis and Diagnosis

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Abstract- Northern Nigeria among other regions of the country has witnessed various degrees of insecurity with its resultant effect on the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), economic fortunes of the affected communities and overall standard of living of those living within the affected states. This has made security the major concern for Nigerian government and has invested huge resources to that effect. Insecurity in the north has not only prevented development of that region but also hinders foreign investment, disrupt social activities, peaceful coexistence and has become a great threat to the growth and development of the region in particular and Nigeria in general. This paper therefore, examined the insecurity situation in the Northern Nigeria and its effects on the IDPs.

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I. Introduction

Security is a concept that is prior to the state and the state exists to promote that concept (Omoyibo and Akpomera, 2013 cited in Olabanji and Ese, 2014). Security is the prime responsibility of the state (Hobbes, 1996). The constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria specifically states that "The security and welfare of the people shall be the primary concern of the government" (FRN, 1999). It is not an exaggeration to state that the constitutional responsibility of Nigerian government to provide security for her subjects has in one way or the other failed due to the inability of government to provide a secured and safe environment for lives and properties and even that of economic activities. The alarming rate of insecurity in Northern Nigeria has increased; the crime rate and terrorist attacks in different parts of the country leaving people in the north is an unpalatable situation by rendering them homelessness.

In order to reduce the crime rate, the Federal Government of Nigeria has passed the Anti-Terrorism ACT in 2011, Installation of Computer-Based Closed Circuit Television Cameras (CCTV), in some parts of the country, enhancement of Surveillance as well as investigation of criminal related offences, heightening of physical security measures around the country aimed at deterring potential attacks, strengthening of the security agencies through the provision of security facilities and the development and broadcast of security tips in mass media (Azazi, 2011). Despite these measures and efforts, the insecurity in the north and other parts of the country has however remained unchanged and unabated. It is on the above background that this paper seeks to evaluate the effects of insecurity in Northern part of the country on the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).

II. Conceptual Clarification

a) Security

The term security according to Akin (2008), is the situation that exists as a result of establishment of measures for the protection of persons, information and property against hostile persons' influences and nations. It is the existence of condition within which people of the society can go about their normal activities without any threat to their lives and properties. Igbuzor (2011), it demands safety from chronic threats and protections from harmful disruption.

Security however, can be described as stability and continuity of livelihood, predictability of daily life (knowing what to expect), protection from crime (feeling safe), and freedom from psychological harm, safety or protection from emotional stress which results from the assurance of knowing that one is wanted, loved, accepted and protected in one's community or neighbourhood and by people around (Ibrahim and Azubuike, 2014).

The above definitions will ease our understanding when we will be discussing insecurity in Nigeria. Security is obviously a situation when someone is fully aware of his/her protection in a responsive and conducive environment.

b) Insecurity

Insecurity on the other hand is the antithesis of security. Belend (2015), defined insecurity as "the state of fear and anxiety stemming from a concrete or alleged lack of protection"; it refers to lack or inadequate freedom from danger.

Insecurity is also seemed as the state of being subject to all forms of dangers of both natural and artificial disasters with mostly resulting from human activities towards society or individuals. In the same way, Udoh (2015) sees insecurity as the state of being subject to danger or injury. The anxiety that is

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experience when one feels vulnerable, insecure and lack confidence (Ezemonye, 2011 cited in Udoh, 2015).

c) Internally Displaced Persons

These are people or groups who have been forced or obliged to flee or leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflicts, situation of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border.

III. Insecurity and the IDPs in Northern Nigeria

No doubt, Nigeria is today faced with the challenge of insecurity across the country from North to the South, East and West, the magnitude of insecurity resulting from the consistent activities of the insurgency in the north is the one that has captured the attention of foreign and domestic authorities. In Nigeria, the incidence of internal displacement occurred solely because it has ethnic, religious and political undertones. Muhammed (2012) submits that the volume and spread of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Nigeria reveals that about 1.4million displaced persons are been hosted across the country, for example, Akwa-Ibom (200,000); Cross-River (115,000); Ebonyi (80,000); Bauchi (45,000); Kebbi (50,000); Jigawa (200,000); Plateau (250,000); Taraba (250,000); Benue (480,000); Gombe (100,000); Edo (250,000); and Borno States (16,000).

It is pertinent to note that the number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) between 2013 and 2015 has increased to about 5million within and outside Nigeria. Most of these Internally Displaced Persons are from the northern region of the country. Boko Haram insurgency in the north has most times, unleashed mayhem and terrorised almost all the states in the north east of Nigeria where schools and homes were set ablaze and razed down, markets and other public places were burnt, innocent people were maimed, many students were adopted, kidnapped and were taken to unknown destinations.

Northern Nigeria consists of 19 out of 36 states clustered into 3 geo-political zones of North-West, North-East and North-Central. The region characterised years by violent, ethno-religious and political conflicts, rising violent crimes and widespread corruption resulting into internal displacement of population largely due to bad governance, socio-economic imbalances, injustice and inequalities, as well as insensitivity to the plight of their citizens. In terms of absolute poverty line by geopolitical zone, the North-East has retained the title of the poorest zone in Nigeria since 1985, with the highest incidence of poverty (ranging between 54.9% and 72.2%) followed by the North-West and North-Central (Muhammed, 2012:4).

He captured the situation as follows:

> *Recently, the North-East is reported to be the home of state with highest unemployment rate in the federation, that is, Yobe State at 60.6%, as at the end of 2011. It is the zone with highest number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) totalling 11, 360 in the 1st quarter of 2012and in 2010-2011 with highest number of forced displaced persons of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) (about 22% or 82%, North-West with 31% or 116, 207 and North-Central with highest of 42% or 162, 281 out of 377,701) due to Identity-Based Conflicts such as ethno-religious and political conflicts and violent clashes between the religious militia/armed group (Boko Haram) and government forces. Hence, within this period of coverage, the North account for 95% of IDPs in paradox of Boko Haram, an armed group that promotes sectarian violence of a different dimension that has engulfed the entire zone in the history of Nigeria, that is neither inter or intra-religious but essentially against the western educated Muslim elite and government.*

It is a paradox that such a situation should emanate from the minds of those who believe that they are asserting their religious identity, reforming Islam and restoring it to its pristine purity by maiming and killing innocent residents, destroying property and rupturing peace.

IV. Causes of Insecurity in the North

Like every other society, the causes of insecurity in the northern Nigeria which has rendered many Nigerians homeless have been identified with a number of factors as follow:

a) Lack of Institutional Incapacity as a result failure of Government

Igbuzor (2011) observed that, the state of insecurity in the Northern Nigeria is a function of government failure or could be linked to governmental failure. This is true due to the inability of government to deliver public service and provide for basic needs of the masses. The lack of basic necessities by the people of Northern Nigeria has created a pool of frustrated people who are ignited easily by any event to be violent. The assertion indicate clearly that, groups of able people who are not engage in any meaningful activities are always available for any slight opportunity where their accumulated talents can recklessly be displayed.

b) Material Inequalities and Unfairness

Disparities in the way of life of the people is one major factor responsible for the insecurity in the Northern Nigeria which has created a negative perception about the region. The problem of inequality and unfairness on the side of their leaders has raised the anger of a large number of people in that region.

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Government development policies and programmes in the region have become source of disaffection and resentment among the citizens. A large number of the Northern Nigerian population is frustrated and have lost hope, especially the youths and have emerged to express their dissatisfaction about the pervasive state of inequality (Onouha, 2011).

c) Political Violence

Nigeria is one of those countries in Africa with long history of politically-based violence. The collapse of the First Republic was precipitated by the dispute that exists among the political actors across the country. This type of violence has a greater influence on the national security with Nigeria as a ready example. The electoral politics in Nigeria right from 1960s till date have been characterised by violence ranging from political thuggery, assassinations, and arson. Politicians in Nigeria do not accommodate dialogue, negotiation and consensus. Political contest are always characterised by desperation and violent struggle for political power among politicians (Eme and Onyishi, 2011 cited in Olabanji and Ese, 2014). The misadventures have often been catastrophic leading to wanton destruction of properties, lives and other valuable resources. For instance, 2011 post election violence in the Northern part of the country rendered many Nigerians homeless across the 19 states of the zone. Security personnel were overpowered by the aggrieved groups, they took laws into their hands, innocent people were killed mercilessly and of course, insecurity became the story of the time.

d) Ethnic/Religious-Based Violence

The major cause of insecurity in the contemporary world is the ethnicity/religious violence. We have heard in some areas like Benue and Plateau States reprisal attacks by ethnic militia causing mayhem in these areas. While South-East and South-West have been compromised, the northern zone that has always shown propensity for violence conflicts did not disappoint the security watchers. Starting with the ethno-religious oriented conflicts to the Jos ethnic/ religious/political conflicts of 2008 till date, the northern region has shown that the security of persons and properties is still far from being realised (Udoh, 2015:4). The high level of insecurity in northern Nigeria today emanated from the long religious disputes between Christians and Muslims in that zone. The idea of religious supremacy among the two major religions in the country has been the source of violence in most parts of the northern Nigeria since independence.

e) Lack of Control Measures

Failure of the state to effectively control and prevent the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and their possession by militant sectarian and ethnic militia groups, among others are some of the causes of insecurity in Northern Nigeria.

V. Effects of Insecurity on IDPs and Nigeria

Insecurity in any environment constitutes threat to lives and properties, hinders economic activities, and discourages local and foreign investors, and in turn, retards human and economic development of that nation. Nigeria is in a serious danger and looking at the position insecurity has put the giant country in Africa, a situation where over 350 teachers were killed and over 270 students were kidnapped and held captive in an unknown location for ever. Considering what Iduh (2011:128) emotionally wrote:

> *"Remembering the 1967-1970 civil war experience, no doubt again Nigeria is sitting on the keg of gun-powder, a time bomb waiting to explode. A major crisis in Nigeria will produce mass refugee across Africa. It would amount to great disaster and greater burden for the United Nation and the rest of international community considering the humanitarian and logistic challenges it would pose if Nigeria should breakdown. Now, Nigeria presence is felt all over Africa. In situation of civil war, where would Nigerians go? Liberia and Sierra Lone came out of war not long ago, 1994 Rwanda genocide is still fresh, Democratic Republic of Congo is still in trouble water, and the situation in Guinea remains alarming, Nigerians are not too friendly with Cameroonians because of the October 10, 2002 ruling by International Court. Niger Republic is too poor a desert; Central African Republic is passing through turbulence times. South Sudan just got independence and has to face internal adjustment, the Uganda forces and resistance army are still struggling for supremacy, Ghana may not want us and small Togo may be too tiny for Nigerians".*

Insecurity no doubt, has retarded development in all ramifications in Nigeria and investors are scared away. The primary function of any responsible government is to provide security for lives and property and welfare of their people are taking seriously. In Nigeria today many people have been forced into self-exile because the security of their lives is not guaranteed.

There are no limits to which the effects of insecurity can go. It affects every facet of human life, the states and the nation in general. It suffices to note that between 2009 and 2015, the Federal Government, States, Local Governments, Private Organisations and individuals have spent over 3trillion naira in the course of ameliorating the effects of insecurity on the IDPs, rehabilitations and reconstructions of those properties destroyed resulting from the insecurity in Nigeria especially in the north which includes but not limited to:

- ✓ Loss of lives and properties. For instance, the tit for tat in the Jos carnage 2009-2012 and Yobe, Borno,

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Kano Kaduna, Benue States between 2010 and 2012 (Muhammed, 2012).

- ✓ Social dislocation and displacement: it was obvious that in 2014, over 140,000 people were displaced from their homes, villages, communities and states in the north. In 2015, over 70,000 Nigerians were reported to have fled the country to other neighbouring countries like Cameroon, Niger, Benin Republic, Chad, etc. It is also evidence that within Nigeria, there are about 1000 IDPs camps across the 36 states of the federation and the Federal Capital Territory with most of the IDPs from the north.
- ✓ Social tension and new patterns of settlements: Muslims moving to Muslim dominated areas while Christians on the other hand migrating to Christian dominated areas. A good example is the situation in Jos North/South of Plateau States.
- ✓ Increased cost of Governance: The situation of insecurity in Nigeria especially in the North-East has forced the government of Nigeria to deploy high volume of the nation's resources to fight Boko Haram insurgency in that part of the country with little success been recorded. For instance, in 2014 National Budget, over one trillion naira was voted for security. The relocation of the Defence Command Centre from Abuja to Maiduguri by President Muhammadu Buhari on the 29th May, 2015 is a typical example of how insecurity has forced the federal government of Nigeria into extra budgetary spending.
- ✓ Disruption of Family and communal life. This is one of the most painful effects of insecurity in the northern Nigeria. Since the insurgency started unleashing their activities, maiming, killing and burning of houses in that part of the country, a lot of people have lost their loved ones and others were forced to separate from each other. This invariably bestowed hardship on the face of many while others are still undergoing emotional and psychological trauma resulting from the act of insurgency in the north.
- ✓ During the violent conflicts or natural disaster, which forced these Internally Displaced Persons to leave, most houses and properties were destroyed, looted or burnt down. Most IDPs in Nigeria flee to neighbouring countries that are safe usually taking refuge in temporary shelter such as schools, public building and places of worship among others having been deprived of their homes and sometimes, their lives and livelihoods.
- ✓ Despite the efforts of the Nigerian government, faith-based organisations and other NGOs to address some of the basic needs of these IDPs, their vulnerability tends to be increased by barriers to accessing healthcare services, education, employment, economic activities and information for participation in the decision making affecting their lives. Hence, the government spending and responsibilities equally increased.
- ✓ Deepening of hunger and starvation, poverty and criminality in the polity.
- ✓ Dehumanization of men, women and children especially in areas where rape, child abuse and neglect are used as instrument of war.

VI. Conclusion

It is evident from the beginning of this 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.

If the level of insecurity in our country today is not scaled down or appropriate measures are not taking to avert the ugly trend of the menace of insecurity, the Nigeria's vision to become among the top 20 advanced countries in the world by 2020 may be an illusion. This paper argues that the government should change her attitudes of responses when the harm has already been done and crime committed to adopt proactive measures or approaches. Therefore, the government, civil society and individuals or business organisations alike must fight insecurity … as to create an enabling environment for all.

a) The Way Forward

- To overcome insecurity in Nigeria, 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.
- Government should accelerate the pace of creating enabling environment with relevant social, economic, and physical infrastructure for business operations and industrial growth to provide gainful employment, high level of educational facilities and medical care for the people.
- Importantly, since most problems associated with Nigerian society from independent are politically and religious motivated, the government should ensure that emoluments of the political office holders are compulsorily reduced. Their powers and influences also should be discouraged and high academic standard should be taking seriously to those that seek to hold public offices politically.

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