An Examination of the Role of International Non-Governmental Organisations (Ngos) In Protecting Victims of Insurgency: Perspective from Borno State, Nigeria

By Esther Hatsiwa Emmanuel, PhD*

Abstract

The complex nature of the administration of victims of insurgency in Borno state, their large numbers and scarce resources often results in non-governmental agencies playing prominent role in their management. The objective of the research is to appraise the role of international Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in protecting victims of insurgency particularly in Borno state Nigeria, with a view to exploring areas of collaboration between NGOs and relevant agencies. The paper is a combination of doctrinal and non-doctrinal research methods, making use of library materials, articles in journals, internet sources and commentaries. The non-doctrinal research was conducted through interviews with various NGOs in the humanitarian sector in Borno State, Nigeria. The paper identifies some of their challenges and outlined areas that need improvement, such as need for synergy among relevant humanitarian organisations. The research concludes with recommendations among which is the need for more humanitarian aid from individuals and donor agencies.

KEYWORDS: Non-governmental Organisation; Victims; Insurgency; IDPs; Borno state; Nigeria.

1. INTRODUCTION

A Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) is a legally constituted non-state organisation created by natural or legal persons. Though legally constituted, it has no legal definition,[1] in some jurisdictions they are defined as civil society organisations, or called other names such as private voluntary organisation, social movement organisation, non-state actors, etcetera. Their history dates back to antiquity, but their status derived mainly from the United Nations Organisations Charter of 1945.[2] Types of NGOs depends on the basis of their orientation, for instance an NGO can be charitable, or have a service and empowering orientation. It could also be classified based of their level of cooperation, such as community based, national or international.

[1] Anthonia O. Uzuegbunam, 'Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs), Conflict and Peace Building in Nigeria' (2013) (3) 1A *Open Journal of Philosophy* 207-212.
[2] UNO Charter 1945, Art. 71 Chapter 10 and ECOSOC Resolution 288 (x) of February 27, 1950.

The increasing incidence of gross human rights violations and resulting massive human displacement caused mainly by armed conflict in the 1990s brought the consciousness and need for protecting the victims of insurgency by international and national authorities.[3] The increase in the number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) due to internal conflict and the accompanying humanitarian engagement led to greater international awareness of the protection crisis generated by these conflicts.[4] It was projected that as many as 3 million people in northern Nigeria would not meet their basic food needs without humanitarian aid if the crisis in the region linger.[5] Victims of insurgency, who are mostly Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) have continued to survive on humanitarian aid, government assistance and donations by NGO's. Even though a significant number of displaced persons have returned to their original places of residence, attacks by Boko Haram insurgents continue, leading to continuous displacements.[6]

Prior to this time, protection of vulnerable groups such as the IDPs by international organisations was viewed as an affront to the sovereignty of a country, coupled with the fact that some states were suspicious of the external interest in what they consider a matter of domestic concern; which explains their reluctance to expose the plight of their displaced persons. By law, national

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[3] Muguruza and Amado. 'Internally Displaced Persons; A Vulnerable Group in Need of Protection' (2017) (1) *Current and Future Developments in Law,* 316.
[4] ibid p 333.
[5] Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, briefing to the Security Council on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts (Boko Haram) 30 March 2015 https://dppa.un.org/ar/30-march-2015-security-council-briefing-boko-haram-special-representative-of-secretary-general-and accessed 8 June 2024
[6] Violations and Abuses Committed by Boko Haram and the impact on human rights in the countries affected, Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, submitted to the UN General Assembly (Human Rights Council Thirtieth session) A/HRC/30/67 9 December 2015

governments bear the primary responsibility for the welfare and protection of IDPs. Where the national governments are unable or unwilling to meet their responsibilities, the international community has a role to play in promoting and reinforcing efforts to ensure assistance, protection and viable solutions for them.[7]

Some authors classify the management agencies under this head to be of three distinct categories namely Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), humanitarian agencies and religious organisations.[8] These bodies play a significant role in the response efforts towards ameliorating the plights of victims of insurgency in most regions of Nigeria especially Northern Nigeria, which has witnessed series of conflicts in recent time.[9]

The United Nations which is the world's international body saddled with the primary duty of maintaining world peace also serve as a major stakeholder in the care of victims of insurgency, who are usually refugees and IDPs. This is achieved by the establishment of various departments in the UN who are charged with different functions and responsibilities such as the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), World Health Organization (WHO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), International Rescue Committee (IRC), International Medical Corps (IMC), Food

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[7] https://www.unocha.org/es/themes/internal-displacement accessed 17 June 2024

[8] Osagioduwa Eweka and Toluwanimi Olusegun, 'Management of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa: Comparing Nigeria and Cameroon' (2016) (10) 1 *African Research Review* 193.

[9] M D Yake. *The Role of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Conflict Management in Northern Nigeria* in I O Albert, B A. Aluko and OO Ishola (eds) The security Sector and Conflict Management in Nigeria. Peace, and Conflict Studies Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan 2013

and Agriculture Organization (FAO), amongst others. NGOs invariably are a major stakeholder in the protection of victims of insurgency anywhere in the world. Their role basically is to complement that of the government as it relates to advocacy for human right protection and the provision of basic social amenities.[10]

The rise of Boko Haram in Borno state and other states of the North East region of Nigeria has resulted in massive humanitarian crisis in the country, leading to the displacement of nearly 2.5 million people in North Eastern Nigeria, and over 800,000 refugees in neighboring Cameroun, Chad and Niger.[11] Boko Haram[12] is an Islamic militant group based in North Eastern Nigeria, which calls for the use of violence to ensure a return to the true practice of Islam with the ultimate goal of establishing an Islamic State. In Hausa language, 'Boko' means education (especially western or foreign), while 'Haram' in Arabic literally means forbidden, ungodly or sinful.[13] The groups' ideology is linked to the global web of radical islamists thinking and discourse. Its tenets are derived from the mainstream radical islamist ideological narratives, to which Mohammed Yusuf (the groups' founder) was inclined. The Boko Haram ideology was based on the principle of rejecting western education,

[10] O.J. Eloho, A. O. Ogoh and Y.A. Audu, "An Appraisal of the Management of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Benue State, North Central Nigeria, 2015-2022", (2022) (3) 3 *Zamfara Journal of Politics and Development* 1-13.
[11] Figures from the United Nations High Commission on Refugees https://www.unhcr.org/nigeria-emergency.html accessed 30 November 2023 also https://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/nigeria accessed 30 November 2024
[12] Jama'atu Ahlis Sunnah Lidda'awati Wal'Jihad (People Committed for the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad)
[13] A. I. Ajayi. 'Boko Haram and Terrorism in Nigeria: Exploratory and Explanatory Notes' (2012) (1) 15 *Global Advanced Research Journal of History, Political Science and International Relation,* 103

condemning westernization and secularism, and the incompatibility of Islam with democracy.[14]

At the international level, Boko Haram has connections with some extremist groups outside Nigeria, especially with al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), and the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa and also Ansar Dine. Mohammed Yusuf considered Osama bin Laden (the founder of al-Qaeda) a role model worthy of emulation. In 2015, the leader of Boko Haram Abubakar Shekau pledged allegiance to the Islamic State.[15] Since 2009, the group has engaged in violent attacks on government institutions, religious gatherings, schools and any structure or institution perceived to have western origin. Its campaign of violence, ranging from bombings, kidnapping and mass slaughter has led to monumental humanitarian catastrophe, creating a large number of IDPs within Nigeria and refugee crisis in neighbouring Cameroun, Niger and Chad.[16]

The protection concerns in some camps for displaced persons in the country and refugee camps in neighbouring countries include; insecurity, tension among residents, and between them and host communities, factors predisposing children to child trafficking and sexual and gender-based violence.[17] Some other forms of abuses suffered by victims of insurgency

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[14] Gwadabe et al, 'Forced Displacement and the Plight of Internally Displaced Persons in North East Nigeria' [2018] (1) (1) *Humanities and Social Science Research* p 47.
[15] ibid
[16] Abdullateef Salau. "UN raises alarm over plight of Nigerian refugees in Niger" *Daily Trust Newspaper* (Abuja, 21 January 2016) <http://www.dailytrust.com.ng/news/general/un-raises-alarm-over-plight-of-nigerian-refuees-in-niger/130066.html> accessed 21 July 2024
[17] Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2016 available on http://www.unhcr.org/5943e8a34> accessed 20 July 2024

include physical abuse, sexual abuse, child abuse, emotional abuse, neglect and trauma.[18]

2. FUNCTIONAL INTERNATIONAL NGO's IN BORNO STATE, NIGERIA

Borno state plagued by the Boko Haram insurgency for over 15 years, host many humanitarian organisations. International humanitarian presence in the North East region of Nigeria has grown from a handful of NGOs and UN agencies before 2016, to around 80 operational organisations as at 2018. Their numbers keep increasing with the entry of new players into the sector as the years goes by.[19] Currently, there are about 172 NGOs as well as Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and community-based organisations providing humanitarian services in the state.[20] The work will discuss some of these organisations and the roles they play in assisting vulnerable persons in the state.

2.1 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA)[21]

This was the first coordinated humanitarian relief operations in Europe following the devastation and massive displacement of people after the Second World War. Generally, the United Nations has been relied upon by the

[18] Agboola Happiness Opeyemi. 'Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons; Nature, Types, Abuse and Health consequences; a review' December 2018 at http://www.researchgate.net/publication/329505020_refugees_and_internally_displaced_persons_nature_types_of_abuses_and_health_consequences_a_review accessed 5 July 2024

[19] Humanitarian Access Score Report North East Nigeria, 'A Survey of affected population on the coverage, operational reach and effectiveness of the Humanitarian Sector' 2019 https://www.humanitarianoutcomes.org/projects/core/North East-nigeria accessed 8 August 2024

[20] Abdulkareem Haruna, 'Borno to Monitor Budgets of 172 Registered NGO's, CSOs' *Premium Times* (Lagos 25 June, 2020) https://www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/north-east/399465-borno-to-monitor-budgets-of-172-registered-ngos-csos-official.html accessed 4 August 2024

[21] <http://www.unocha.org> accessed 8 August 2024

international community to respond to natural and man-made disasters that are beyond the capacity of national authorities. The UNOCHA is a major provider of emergency relief and long-term assistance to the displaced persons in Nigeria generally and especially Borno state in the North East.[22] The organisation is highly involved in the management of IDPs in Borno State, their assistance includes the provision of basic amenities such as; food, shelter, medical supplies and logistic support to the displaced persons. Recently, they introduced the cash working group, which coordinated the implementation of cash and voucher assistance in the North East region of Nigeria.[23]

Between July to September 2022, 38 implementing partners reported cash and voucher activities in 39 Local Government Areas of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states despite heightened insecurity and limited facilities and infrastructure in some of the locations.[24] The UNOCHA also works in close partnership with Security Council bodies, UN agencies, the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs, NGOs and UN Secretariat entities to promote the protection and assistance of IDPs.[25] By working together, humanitarian and development institutions will be able to meet immediate needs, while also developing sustainable outcomes for the internally displaced persons and the host communities.

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[22] ibid n19
[23] UNOCHA, Interview with programme manager Maiduguri, Borno State 9th August 2023.
[24] OCHA Report 27 January 2023, North-east Nigeria: Cash and Voucher Assistance (July-September 2022) https://reliefweb,int/report/nigeria/north-east-nigeria-cash-and-voucher-assistance-julyy-september-2022 accessed 14 August 2023
[25] Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination (CMCoord) Support Mission to Nigeria April 2017 Report p.3 https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/58195 accessed 3 September 2023

Lack of effective implementation of protection laws as well as lack of access to justice for Gender Based Violence (BGV) survivors are some of the challenges they face in their operations in Borno State.[26] However, the international community cannot address internal displacement through short-tern humanitarian assistance which often fosters dependence and has proven to be unsustainable, and not suited to respond to the protracted nature of many cases of internal displacement.

2.2 Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

This is a global organisation dedicated to saving lives and protecting the rights of refugees, forcibly displaced communities' etcetera. The office is providing international protection and assistance to over 20 million refugees annually as well as a growing number of internally displaced people all over the world.[27]

The UNHCR exist to protect and assist everyone who has been affected by forced displacement, this include refugees and IDPs. The UNCHR uses the cluster approach to coordinate assistance to IDPs. A cluster is when a group of agencies work together to set up and deliver an area of assistance, such as shelter, health care, camp management or protection.[28] It leads the Global Protection Cluster, co-leads the Global Shelter Cluster with international Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent societies and the Global Camp

[26] UNOCHA, Interview with programme manager Maiduguri, Borno State.
[27] See <http://www.unhcr.org> accessed 4 November 2023
[28] https://www.unhcr.org/about-unhcr/who-we-protect/internally-displaced-people accessed 4 November 2023

Coordination Camp Management Cluster (CCCM) with International Organisation for Migration (IOM).[29]

As part of the UN Country Team's response, the UNHCR has been leading the protection working group in Nigeria. Following a formal request from the Federal Government of Nigeria to the UN Country Team, and in furtherance of the inter-agency assessment mission, UNHCR carried out a multifunctional fact- finding mission in the North East region of Nigeria to explore options for strengthening its engagement in the humanitarian response to the situation.[30] After which a Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) was constituted in July 2012, chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator and comprised of all UN agencies, international and national non-governmental organisations. The team has been working in close partnership with the Federal and State government through its various agencies such as the National Emergency Management Agency NEMA and State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), assisted by the Emergency Preparedness and Response Working Group (EPRWG) etcetera in assessing and evaluating the challenges of internal displacement in Borno State Nigeria with a view to providing assistance to victims.

The organisation's activities in Borno state include camp coordination and management, providing shelter and Non-Food Items (NFI). For instance, they constructed 300 emergency shelters in Pulka in Borno State and provided Non-Food Items kits to 300 affected households following the destruction of

[29] Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination (CMCoord) Support Mission to Nigeria April 2017 Report p.3
[30] UNHCR, Emergency Response for Nigerian Situation, Supplementary Appeal September, 2022, available at https://www.unhcr.org/media/unhcr-supplementary-appeal-emergency-response-nigeria-situation-september-2022 accessed 5 August 2023

their mud bricks shelters by rains and storms.[31] Furthermore, the Organisation and its partners sensitised more than 46,000 IDPs, IDP returnees, refugee returnees and host community members across the states of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa on sexual exploitation and abuse, gender based violence, child protection, human rights and other protection issues.

The organisation also releases periodic Protection Monitoring Report in Borno state,[32] which helps with information on the security situation in the state and its humanitarian activities. They have also extended the humanitarian action by the United Nations systems to include long-term rehabilitation and development for victims where necessary. The impact of their activities will be better felt if they integrate more income generating training programmes so as to empower the IDPs to earn a living and stop the over dependency on humanitarian aid.

2.3 The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

This is the agency responsible for operational activities in natural disaster mitigation, prevention and preparedness. When emergencies and natural disasters occur, the Resident Representatives coordinate relief and rehabilitation efforts at the national level. On many occasions, the Nigerian Government calls on the organisation to help design rehabilitation programmes and to direct donor aid.[33]

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[31] North-East Nigeria Operational Update- UNHCR data portal July 2023 https://data.unhcr.org.en/documents/download/94917 accessed 6 July 2023

[32] UNHCR Situation Report, Protection Monitoring Report, UNHCR Maiduguri Sub-OFFICE, March- April 2023 https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/protection-monitoring-report-unhcr-maiduguri-sub-office-march-april-2023 accessed 16 September 2023

[33] <http://www.undp.org> accessed 10 January 2024

They also help to ensure that recovery activities are integrated with relief operations.

Humanitarian aid and development support are thus linked, bringing the earliest possible resumption of sustainable development to a troubled area. They have rehabilitation projects aimed at alleviating poverty, which is often the root cause of civil strife. To ensure that the resources provided will have the greatest possible impact, each project is carried out in consultation with local and national government officials. This community-based approach has helped provide urgent and lasting relief for hundreds of thousands of victims of war or civil upheaval. Today, many conflict-scarred communities have improved living standards; thanks to their training programmes, credit schemes and infrastructure projects.

The UNDP implemented several programmes in Borno State aimed at addressing information and coordination gaps for recovery, and humanitarian support for survival. Under one of its projects, five boreholes were drilled to supply water in Damboa, a town in southern Borno that hosted over 20,000 IDPs. The entire water network was rehabilitated and pipes extended to many other IDP Camps in Damboa Local Government Area, thereby helping the IDPs to have access to safe and portable water.[34] Furthermore, the UNDP established the "Village Savings and Loan Associations' (VSLA), as a community based social safety nets mechanism to help promote recovery and strengthen resilience of affected communities in Borno and neighboring states. Under the

[34] EU Funded Projects ends Activities in Borno State, Records Successes' https://www.undp.org/nigeria/news/eu-funded-project-ends-activities-borno-state-records-successes accessed 12 November 2023

scheme, over 4,000 association members were able to access loans to support their small businesses especially in agriculture related activities. This initiative helped reduce dependence on humanitarian assistance by the affected communities.[35]

More recently, the UNDP in collaboration with the Federal government and other partners, reconstructed the Ngarannam village in Borno state which has been destroyed by the insurgents. This is part of their regional stabilization facility initiative aimed at restoring conflict areas with essential services and facilities.[36] The Organisation works with government Ministries, Departments and Agencies, at national, regional and local levels. It also interfaces with the private sector and a range of civil society organisations, and aims to eradicate extreme poverty, reduce inequalities and protect vulnerable people, such as the IDPs.[37]

2.4 United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), originally known as the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund was created by the United Nations General Assembly on 11 December 1946, to provide emergency food and healthcare to children and mothers in countries that had been devastated by World War II. Currently, the organisation works in over 190

[35] UNDP Report November 2020, 'Reviving Livelihoods Through Village Savings and loans Association' https://www.undp.org/nigeria/news/reviving-livelihoods-through-village-savings-and -loans-association accessed 5 November 2023

[36] UNDP Report 2022 'The Government of Borno State and UNDP Reopens the Ngarannam Community in North East Nigeria' https://www.undp.org/nigeria/press-release/government-borno-state-and-undp-reopens-ngarannam-community-North East-nigeria accessed 7 November 2023

[37] Information from interview with staff of sister organisations such as the International Rescue Committee, Norwegian Refugee Council, Danish Refugee Council, etcetera in Maiduguri on 8 August 2023

countries and territories to save children's life, defend their rights and help them fulfil their potential from early childhood through adolescence.[38]

The Organisation provides nutritious treatment for displaced children as well as provide essential medical supplies to clinics across Borno state. They also train health workers to treat acute cases in remote locations as part of its emergency response mechanism.[39] A good number of health facilities in Borno state have been destroyed or are non-functional, while shortage of workers and essential drugs has also negatively affected the delivery of quality health services to pregnant women, new born babies and children. The insurgency has also contributed to disease outbreaks and worsening child malnutrition in the state.[40] A research outcome has shown that poor child health outcomes in the conflict areas of the North East Nigeria is due to disruptions in social services and increased food insecurity in an already resource poor area.[41] UNICEF supports efforts to improve maternal, neonatal and child survival and health outcomes in conflict affected communities in Borno state Nigeria.

The organisation in its series of donations in the North East region, donated essential medicines to the government, and is also supporting the implementation of the Primary Health Care Memorandum of Understanding it signed with the affected states.[42] This will afford children and pregnant women

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[38] https://www.unicef.org/ accessed 25 November 2023

[39] Toby Fricker, "Life Returns to Parts of Conflict-ridden Borno" UNICEF Report 2016 UN028424 https://www.unicef.org/stories/life-returns-parts-conflict-ridden-borno accessed 19 November 2023

[40] UNICEF supports Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health in Borno and Yobe States UNICEF Press Release 9 March 2022 https://www.unicef.org/nigeria/press-release/unicef-supports-maternal-neonatal-and-child-health-borno-and-yobe-states accessed 19 August 2023

[41] Gillian Dunn, "The Impact of the Boko Haram Insurgency in North East Nigeria on Childhood wasting: A Double-difference Study" *Conflict and Health* vol. 12, no 6, 2018, p 2.

[42] UNICEF Press Release n42

the opportunity to access primary health care facilities in their communities and receive basic medical services and essential drugs. UNICEF Nigeria among other things also provides programming for important psychosocial support to children affected by conflict who have experienced and continue to experience high levels of stress over prolong periods.[43]

The organisation is also providing access to safe drinking water and other basic amenities to families who are struggling to rebuild their lives in destroyed communities in different parts of the state. Although the Organisation has made tremendous impact in the state by reaching displaced children and their families with treatment for malnutrition, safe drinking water, healthcare, sanitation and hygiene services, child protection and education etcetera, continued insurgency, the magnitude of the needs on ground and lack of adequate funding hampers its response effort.[44]

2.5 World Health Organization (WHO)[45]

The World Health Organisation (WHO) as an agency of the United Nations contributes to the prevention of human displacement through advocacy and technical co-operation, and where such displacement occurs, it takes steps to assist national authorities to have access to health services and preventive care which are germane and essential to the reduction of hazards and vulnerability.[46] The Organisation coordinates the international response to

[43] UNICEF Nigeria Report 2019 "Psychosocial Support for Children: A Rapid needs Assessment in North-east Nigeria https://www.unicef.org/nigeria/sites/unicef.org.nigeria/files/2020=o6/UNICEF%20Nigeria%PSS%20Assessment%20report%20june%202020.pdf accessed 4 September 2023

[44] Interview with management staff of organisations rendering similar services in Maiduguri such as the Universal Humanitarian Aid Initiative, Christian Aid, Malaria Consortium, etcetera. Maiduguri, Borno State. 9 August 2023

[45] http://www.who.org accessed 5 September 2023

[46] L. Roberts, "International Refugees Council Mortality Report in Eastern DRC on Five Mortality Studies", IRC Health Unit (2000) http://www.un-who.org accessed 12 March, 2024

emergencies in the area of health. They provide expert advice on epidemiological surveillance, control of communicable diseases, public-health information and health emergency training. Emergency and Humanitarian Action's emergency relief activities include the provision of emergency drugs and supplies, fielding of emergency assessment missions and technical support. In emergency preparedness, their main objective is to strengthen the capacity of member states to reduce the adverse health consequences of emergencies.

Boko Haram insurgency disrupted services such as health care, schools, and limited access by local and international humanitarian organisations, especially to remote areas. This led to nutrition crisis as food insecurity increased and childhood illnesses exacerbated while malnutrition went untreated.[47] Most Internally Displaced Persons camps and informal settlements are overcrowded, poorly planned, lack hygiene infrastructure and have become havens for disease and infection.[48]

There was a consensus by the World Health Organisation and national authorities of member countries that, in cases of emergencies, the organisation must take the lead in rapid health assessment, epidemiological and nutritional surveillance, epidemic preparedness, essential drug management, control of sexually transmitted diseases and physical and psychological rehabilitation. Secondly, the organisation will provide guidelines

[47] Watch list on Children and Armed Conflict, 'Who will care for us?' Grave violations against children in North Eastern Nigeria, New York: Watch list on Children and Armed Conflict; 2014

[48] Catholic Relief Services Report 2020 'Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for Nigerian Camp' available at https://www.crs.org/stories/water-sanitation accessed 5 March 2024

and advice on nutritional requirement and rehabilitation. Immunization, medical relief items and reproductive health.[49]

The organisation formulated some principles in line with a community-based approach initiative to carter for IDPs and prevent the cases of spread of infection and diseases among the vulnerable population. The United Nations suggest the satisfaction of the following vital health needs of internally displaced persons which are:

a. Security;

b. Water;

c. Food;

d. Shelter and Sanitation;

e. Cloths, Blankets and essential domestic items and;

f. Preventive and curative health care.

Research has shown that the insurgency in Borno state has exacerbated the state's food and nutrition situation and helped spread infectious diseases.[50] In addition to the provision of these basic health services to IDPs in Borno state, the WHO is also instrumental to the provision of social amenities to IDPs in most crisis and emergency situations. For instance, following confirmation of the first COVID-19 case in Borno, the World Health Organisation and partners moved

[49]Mihir Bhatt, "Presentation of Partnership Meeting on Protracted Humanitarian Complex Emergencies" Geneva, June 2000 <http://www.icrc.org/eng/resource> accessed 18 October 2023

[50] Ngozi Thelma Mohammed, 'Insurgency and Human Security Challenges in Nigeria: Borno State in Perspective' (2020) (5) 1, *KIU Journal of Humanities* 196.

rapidly to assist health authorities in the state to identify, test and treat cases in order to prevent and control further outbreak of the disease.[51]

2.6 International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Nigerian Red Cross Society

The ICRC operates as an independent, impartial and neutral international organisation whose mandate stems essentially from the Geneva Conventions of 1949, their Additional Protocols, its Statutes, those of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the resolutions of the International Conferences of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.[52] The International Committee of Red Cross as an international body has the mandate of ensuring humanitarian protection and assistance to victims of war and other situations.

The upsurge of violent conflicts in most parts of the country and the resultant displacement of persons has increased the presence and influence of the ICRC in most parts of Nigeria. The Committee functions to provide basic healthcare for vulnerable persons both in IDP camps as well as in other informal settlements. The Committee collaborates with other relevant international Non-Governmental Organisations to assist and ensure the return, rehabilitation[53] and/or resettlement of persons displaced as a result of the Boko Haram conflict in Borno state.

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[51] World Health Organization Report, WHO scales up Support as Borno State Confirms COVID-19 Outbreak, 22 April 2020. https://www.afro.who.int/news/who-scales-support-borno-state-confirms-covid-19-outbreak accessed 18 October 2023

[52] https://www.icrc.org/en/who-we-are accessed 18 November 2023

[53] Nigeria: First Physical Rehabilitation Center Opens in Maiduguri 19 November 2020 https://www.icrc.org/en/document/nigeria-first-physical-rehabilitation-center-opens-maiduguri accessed 9 August 2023

Humanitarian organisations such as the Nigerian Red Cross[54] are often critical in providing emergency support at the local level to victims of disaster. Part of their mandate is to restore family links in cases of dispersed family members as a result of the attacks, they also have a platform which brings and keeps families together in the government camps during the crises period.[55] In Borno state, they are actively involved in camp management in collaboration with other stakeholders such as NEMA, SEMA, and other local and international organisations.

In Gwoza Local Government Area of Borno state, nearly 4,000 people have requested the help of the ICRC to look for their loved ones who are missing. Following the closure of some IDP Camps in Maiduguri, many displaced persons are returning to rural regions, while others are fleeing conflict-affected areas.[56] All this is putting a strain on their living condition; the ICRC have been distributing basic household items to these returnees in most of the rural regions. They also monitor respect for international humanitarian law to protect civilians in armed conflict.[57] In April 2014, following the kidnap of nearly 300 girls from the Government Secondary School, Chibok in Borno State, the ICRC and the Swiss government facilitated negotiations between the federal government and the Boko Haram sect, that led to the release of 21 girls in October 2016.

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[54] Nigerian Red Cross Society Act Cap. N130, Vol.12, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004
[55] ICRC. Interview with Protection Officer, Maiduguri, Borno State. 7th August 2023
[56] ICRC Audiovisual Archives https://avarchives.icrc.org/picture/128343 accessed 15 August 2023
[57] NSRP/NIALS Report, 'Dealing with the Past: Justice, Reconciliation and Healing in the North East of Nigeria' 2017 p 11

Just as the case is for most intervention agencies, access constraints due to the challenge of the ongoing hostilities has continued to hamper their operations in Borno State, their staff have to work even in some insecure parts of the state to help those in need.[58]

2.7 International Organization for Migration (IOM)

The IOM is a United Nations Agency that provides services and advice concerning migration to governments and migrants, including internally displaced persons, refugees and migrant workers. It supports the Federal Government of Nigeria in facilitating safe and orderly migration, which includes protecting migrants and IDPs from all forms of exploitation and addressing risk factors along the stages of mobility.[59]

In Borno state, the IOM works with communities and non-state stakeholders to ensure victims have access to the required services for recovery, while also providing socioeconomic reintegration at individual and community levels. The organisation has a good level of involvement in the management of IDPs in Borno State through the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) cluster and community leaders. They also distribute drug to meet the healthcare needs of IDPs through mobile teams spread across IDP camps in Bama, Mafa and Monguno Local Government

[58] Recently, some of their staff were abducted and later killed by the Boko Haram insurgents in Rann, Borno state see 'Red Cross Condemns killing of Aid Worker in Borno State' https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.channelstv.com/2018/09/17/red-cross-condemns-killing-of-aid-worker-in-borno/amp/ accessed 15 August 2023

[59] Laurent De Boeck IOM Nigeria Annual Report 2022 p 16. https://nigeria.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl1856/files/documents/2023-06/iom-nigeria-annual-report.pdf accessed 12 September 2023

Areas among others.[60] Furthermore, the Outpatient Therapeutic Programme (OTP) is working to treat children with severe malnutrition, by providing nutrition programmes such as the Mid Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) and the Ready to Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF).[61] The organization also raises awareness in affected areas to address negative outcomes of migration such as trafficking, gender based violence and sexual abuse.

2.8 The World Food Programme (WFP)

This agency provides relief to millions of people who are victims of disasters.[62] It is responsible for mobilizing food and funds for transport for all large-scale refugee-feeding operations managed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. World Food Programme emergency response teams supply to millions of the victims of war, ethnic conflict and political strife or flood, drought and crop failure. Such crises, especially man-made disasters, accounts for most of their engagements. Today, a chunk of their resources go to victims of conflict as they continue their famine prevention work by offering food, nutrition and cash donations across the conflict affected states in the North East Nigeria.[63] The World Food Programme is currently in partnership with the National Emergency Management Agency to achieve its mandate in Borno state.

2.9 Amnesty International

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[60] International Organization for Migration (IOM). Interview with the Head of Programmes IOM Maiduguri, Borno State. 10 August 2023

[61] ibid.

[62] http://www.wfp.org accessed 20 August 2023

[63] Humanitarian Needs Overview Nigeria https://www.humanitarianreponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/ocha_nga_humanitarian_needs_overview_feb2021_2.pdf accessed 23 August 2023

Amnesty International, is a Human Rights based International Non-Governmental Organisation with significant presence in Nigeria. Amnesty International is a global movement of more than 10 million people who take injustice, including injustice against internally displaced persons and victims of wars, seriously. The organisation, inter alia conducts independent, impartial and thorough investigations into crimes under international law and other serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by the respective parties to the armed conflicts in Nigeria.[64] The organisation also ensures that those reasonably suspected of being criminally responsible for human rights violation against internally displaced persons are brought to book.

Amnesty International achieves its objectives through their various response teams and researchers who travel to affected areas around the country to uncover individual human rights abuses and document pattern of abuses against internally displaced persons, amongst others. The organisation carries out campaigns and lobby on a wide range of issues, including those affecting the rights of internally displaced persons in Nigeria including: the ongoing attacks by Boko Haram and other extremist groups, violations committed by the military and other security forces against internally displaced persons such as use of torture, forced eviction etcetera. Amnesty International was one of the bodies that raised alarm over the planned closure

[64] https://www.amnesty.org/en/who-we-are/ accessed 3 September 2023

of IDP Camps in Maiduguri in 2021.[65] The organisation voice out its deep concern for the safety of some IDPs who were forced to return home to their various rural communities despite continued attacks by armed groups.

With the insurgency in Borno State and the resultant humanitarian crisis, a lot of international and domestic NGO's and CSO's have come to the aid of victims in Borno and other affected states, mostly helping in the area of IDP camp management and donation of food and other relief materials to the affected population. Some other organisations worthy of note the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Malaria Consortium, Plan International, Care International, American University of Nigeria (AUN), Mercy Corps and other domestic initiatives such as; Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), Borno Women Development Initiative (BOWDI), Hope and Awareness Foundation (HAAF), Rise to Inspire Africa (RIA), Allamin Foundation, etcetera.[66]

2.10 Civil Society Organisations (CSO)

In the context of the UN Guiding Principle, Civil society Organisations are non-state, not-for-profit, voluntary entities formed by people in the social

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[65] Nigeria: 'Plans to close IDP camps in Maiduguri Could endanger lives' (15 December 2021) https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/12/nigeria-plans-to-close-idp-camps-in-maiduguri-could-endanger-lives/ accessed 19 August 2023
The Amnesty International Country Director Osai Ojigho was quoted as saying "Returning displaced persons forcibly to villages that are not safe would be in violation of the Nigerian government's responsibility of protecting the right to life of civilians. Most displaced persons barely escaped from Boko Haram's campaigned of killings, abductions. Looting and torture or from the attacks, extrajudicial killings or torture in unlawful detention by the Nigerian military. They have endured years of gross human rights violations and abuses, including war crimes by the military and armed groups".

[66] Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). Interview with Programme Officers 9 August 2023 Maiduguri Borno State. Most of these organisations face the challenge of inadequate funding because their intervention has continued for many years since the insurgency. They also lamented the inaccessibility of some IDPs due to security concerns in some insecure parts of the state.

sphere that are separate from the state. CSOs represent a wide range of interest and ties; they include community-based organisations as well as non-governmental organisations.[67] The important role played by CSOs has led many to infer that non-government agencies end up providing emergency response support to government agencies. CSOs advocate for legal or policy frameworks to address gaps related to durable solutions, and make for greater accountability towards the IDPs[68] as well as assist displaced persons with skills and the creation of livelihood opportunities to enable them to start rebuilding their lives. Another notable impact of CSO's is the delivery of trainings and the development of studies on the protection and assistance of IDPs based on the Kampala Convention.[69] The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) for instance has conducted trainings and reviews on the Kampala Convention in various parts of Africa with the aim of developing key action plans for the protection of the IDPs.

They also contribute to peace building activities aimed at ensuring good relations between the displaced persons and the local communities where they intend to settle permanently, be it in their places of origin, in their places of displacement, or elsewhere in the country. Some of the activities of Civil Society Organisations in the management of vulnerable groups also include; prevention of displacement and protection against arbitrary displacement,

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[67] https://www.ungpreporting.org/glossary/civil-society-organizations-csos/ accessed 5 October 2023

[68] Adeola Romola and Phi Orchard, 'The Role of IDP Law and Policy in Fostering Responsibility and Accountability on Governments' Internal Displacement Research Programme-Research Briefing Paper UNSG High Level Panel on Internal Displacement Work-Stream 1 (Political Will) August 2020

[69] Romola Adeola, 'The Impact of the African Union Convention on the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa' (2019) 19 (2), *African Human Rights Law Journal*, 591-607.

which is an important role for civil society in monitoring situations of forcible displacement in a state. The civil society organisations could assist victims to obtain a legal remedy, including compensation to avoid arbitrary displacement. In situations of armed conflict, they also have a role in making non-state armed groups aware of their obligation to respect International Humanitarian Law including the prohibition of the displacement of civilians, unless such displacement is necessitated by the security of civilians or compelling military reasons.

CSO's also assist with information gathering, which is a basic condition for protection and assistance of IDPs, as efforts to provide adequate care and assistance to internally displaced persons must be based on accurate information about their number, showing the number of children, women and men in different age groups, in all locations such as camps, cities and rural settings. It is very important to ensure that all displaced persons are identified from the start.[70] Also, CSOs have an important role to help provide durable solutions. They specifically target their activities to contribute to durable solutions for internally displaced persons and to ensure that their rights relating to durable solutions continue to be protected.

3. THE CHALLENGES OF SYNERGISTIC RELATIONS AMONG THE RELEVANT ORGANISATIONS

[70] Article 13 (1) African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, 2009

Partnerships are forged between NGOs and ministries, national authorities of countries and other sister organizations all geared towards the provision of basic social amenities and good condition of living for victims of insurgency.[71] In providing for their needs, NGOs concentrate on victims faced with more complex challenges ranging from public health, nutrition, among other factors and intervene by expanding and extending the existing health systems, improved water supply, food, security, sanitation, education, housing and health care. Many humanitarian organisations are often critical in providing emergency support especially at the grass root levels.[72] Also, in many instances where there is insufficient information to guide protection and assistance programmes, relevant authorities have relied on information supplied by civil society organizations that have it ready-made. CSOs are usually willing collaborators with the authorities in information gathering or in the conduct of requisite needs assessment.

Despite the involvement of multiple providers, supplies are still insufficient, with long waiting periods in between deliveries. The delays affect supply rationing, results in street begging and delayed presentation and diagnosis of medical conditions of victims.[73] Lack of cooperation among relevant stakeholders is one of the major issues hampering prompt and

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[71]Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for instance in 2016 committed $1,000,000 grant as an emergency response to global health and development, public awareness and nutrition to people affected by insurgency in Maiduguri Borno State http://www.gatesfoundation.org/about/committed-grants/2016/06/opp1155426 accessed 18 March 2023

[72] Nigeria: 'Role and actions of government agencies that assist internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees, particularly women'(2009-2011) 21 June2011 Canada: Immigration and Refugee Board https://www.refworld.org/docid/4e437de12.html accessed 2 August 2024

[73] Winifred, Ekezie. "Resilience actions of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) Living in Camp-like settings: A Northern Nigerian Case study." *Journal of Migration and Health, National Library of Medicine*, May 2022 doi:10.1016/j.jmh.2022.100115.

effective response to the problems on ground. The issue of overlapping policies and institutions has become problematic for agencies responsible for managing victims of disaster in the country. This can cause overzealousness, restrictions or hindrances in the discharge of responsibilities as some of the organisations will want to outsmart the other. Such disorderliness[74] may result in an inhibited response by some institutions who would have done a better job if the response efforts were more harmonious.

The absence of proper synergy and cooperation among organisations leads to duplication of effort and causes inter agency rivalry. Hence when the need arises, the question of what has been done, what is to be done and by who arises, and by implication an important part of the work faces the risk of being left undone. This confusion also rubs off on international NGO's and humanitarian organisations on which government agency they need to collaborate with, and which agency they are to be answerable to.[75]

[74] Theresa, Akpoghome. "Internally Displaced Persons in Nigeria and the Kampala Convention." *Recht in Afrika-Law in Africa-Droit en Afrique,* vol. 18, 2015, p 71.
[75] Ejiroghene, Augustine Oghuvbu and Ugo Chuks Okolie, "View of Responsibility to Protect and the Challenges of Displaced Men in Nigeria." https://dj.univ-danubius.ro/index.php/JDSR/article/view/565/836 accessed 4 August 2023.

4. CONCLUSION

Since the beginning of insurgency in Borno state and across the Northern region in Nigeria, the government at the international, federal, state and local government levels at different periods of time employed necessary measures through the instrumentality of its agencies to prevent or control emergencies both natural and man-made. In addition, the government and Non-Governmental Organisations, religious organisations, and individual philanthropist have made various efforts to provide succor to victims of insurgency in the state, through provision of temporary camps, food, beddings, security, medical facilities, etc.[76]

Notwithstanding these efforts, the condition of victims is still very pathetic as a large percentage of them are suffering from lack of basic social amenities, food shortages, lack of portable water, unhygienic living conditions, lack of adequate educational facilities, hostility from the host communities' etcetera. Also, the condition of their health facilities is nothing to write home about,

[76] A O Hamzat., 'Challenges of the Internally displaced person and roles of the society'. College Park: M.D Center for International Development and Conflict Management (2016) 2 https://www.thenigerianvoice.com/news/113484/challeneges-of-the-internally-dispaced-persons-and-the-role.html accessed 6 October 2023

continuous sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls and a host of other problems.

It is therefore recommended that relevant agencies must be willing to take bold measures to address the problems in the state and the entire region. Furthermore, NGOs must have long term strategic plan, implementation and evaluation framework for their activities to make the needed impact on the affected population. Understandably the insurgency has gone on for so long a time and funds are depleting by the day, unavailability of resources affects every aspect of the process of protecting victims of insurgency. There is need for more humanitarian aid from local and international actors to enable the relevant NGOs carry out their mandates effectively.[77] There is also the need for better synergy among emergency management agencies and relevant NGOs, they need to work in a harmonious manner in order to achieve a more coordinated response in assisting victims of insurgency in the state.

[77] NCFRMI. Interview with a Senior Protection officer of the Commission in Abuja FCT. 11th August 2023.