



INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE TO INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS NEEDS IN BORNO STATE, NIGERIA

Oluwatobiloba Odedairo

Department of Peace, Security, and Humanitarian Studies

University of Ibadan

Odedairotobiloba@gmail.com

Abstract

In Borno State, the Boko Haram/ ISWAP insurgency led to the massive displacement of persons who subsequently migrated to urban areas in search of safety and livelihoods. This influx resulted in social tensions within host communities due to inadequate infrastructure to cater for the needs of displaced persons, thus necessitating humanitarian response from international humanitarian organisations like the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). This study examined the various interventions of the ICRC to address the basic needs of internally displaced persons in Borno State. A.H. Maslow's Human Needs Theory and Everett Lee's Push and Pull Theory of Migration served as frameworks, while the research adopted the case study design. Primary data were collected through participant observation, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), and In-Depth Interviews (IDIs), while secondary data were obtained from United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) reports, International Organisation for Migration (IOM) periodicals, newspapers and ICRC archives. The migration of millions of displaced persons seeking refuge into urban areas strained infrastructure, intensified insecurity and created socio-economic challenges within host communities in Borno State. Humanitarian responses, led by both national agencies and international organisations, have focused on providing immediate relief to meet the basic needs of those affected; however, minimal efforts have been implemented to further mitigate the adverse effects of the insurgency on internally displaced persons to foster long-term recovery. This

study highlights the need for a comprehensive approach that integrates conflict resolution and economic support to address the needs of displaced persons in Borno State. By fostering collaboration among government agencies, non-governmental organisations, and affected communities, Borno State can develop more effective strategies to mitigate the impacts of internal displacement, build resilience of the affected population and enhance post-conflict recovery.

Keywords: Humanitarian Response, Insurgency, Internal Displacement, Migration

RÉPONSE HUMANITAIRE DU COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX-ROUGE AUX BESOINS DES PERSONNES DÉPLACÉES INTERNES DANS L'ÉTAT DE BORNO, NIGÉRIA

Résumé

Dans l'État de Borno, l'insurrection menée par Boko Haram et l'État islamique en Afrique de l'Ouest (ISWAP) a entraîné le déplacement massif de populations qui ont migré vers les zones urbaines à la recherche de sécurité et de moyens de survivre. Cet afflux a généré des tensions sociales au sein des communautés hôtes en raison de l'insuffisance des infrastructures pour répondre aux besoins des personnes déplacées, rendant ainsi nécessaire l'intervention d'organisations humanitaires internationales telles que le Comité international de la Croix-Rouge (CICR). Cette étude examine les différentes interventions du CICR visant à répondre aux besoins fondamentaux des personnes déplacées internes dans l'État de Borno. La théorie des besoins humains d'A.H. Maslow et la théorie des facteurs de répulsion et d'attraction d'Everett Lee ont été adoptés. Les données primaires ont été recueillies par observation participante, discussions de groupe (FGD), entretiens avec des informateurs clés et entretiens approfondis. Les données secondaires proviennent des rapports du Bureau des Nations Unies pour la coordination des affaires humanitaires, des publications de l'Organisation internationale pour les migrations (OIM), des journaux et des archives du CICR. La migration de millions de personnes déplacées vers les centres urbains a exercé une forte pression sur les infrastructures, accru l'insécurité et généré des défis socio-économiques pour les communautés hôtes dans l'État de Borno. Bien que les réponses humanitaires, dirigées par des agences nationales et des organisations internationales, aient permis de fournir une

aide immédiate pour satisfaire les besoins essentiels des populations affectées, les efforts visant à atténuer les effets à long terme de l'insurrection sur les personnes déplacées restent limités. Cette étude souligne la nécessité d'une approche globale intégrant la résolution des conflits et l'appui économique afin de répondre durablement aux besoins des personnes déplacées dans l'État de Borno. En favorisant la collaboration entre les agences gouvernementales, les organisations non gouvernementales et les communautés concernées, l'État de Borno pourrait élaborer des stratégies plus efficaces pour atténuer les impacts du déplacement interne, renforcer la résilience des populations touchées et améliorer la reconstruction post-conflit.

Mots-clés : Réponse humanitaire, insurrection, déplacement interne, migration

INTRODUCTION

Globally, internal displacement due to terrorism¹ has given rise to growing concerns. Internal displacement refers to the forced movement of people within their own country, as opposed to crossing international borders, as seen in the case of refugees. This phenomenon is driven by a variety of factors, including armed conflict, violence, human rights violations, natural disasters, and development projects.²

The north-east region of Nigeria has been grappling with the aftereffects of the protracted armed conflict caused by the *Boko Haram* and ISWAP armed groups, and this has resulted in the forced displacement of thousands of civilians. This internal displacement has had far-reaching consequences, not only for the affected persons and communities but also for the urban centres that have become the primary destinations for these displaced populations as they migrate from the unsafe areas to the city centres. According to the International Organisation for Migration, a total of 2,388,703 IDPs from 487,978 households and 2,110,039 returnees from 346,166 households were recorded in north-east Nigeria as of February 2023. This affected population included 834,836 IDPs living in camps and informal settlements, and 1,553,867 IDPs in host communities³.

The influx of IDPs into the urban areas such as Maiduguri and Jere LGAs also exacerbated existing socio-economic and political tensions within these cities as the increased competition for housing, employment, and social services, contributed to the emergence of new security threats such as increased crime rates, gang violence, and the potential for radicalisation. These security challenges further

¹ United Nations General Assembly Sixth Committee (Legal). "Measures to eliminate international terrorism." (November, 2019) accessed October 1, 2024, https://www.un.org/en/ga/sixth/74/int_terrorism.shtml

² United Nations Security Council. "Resolution 1373 (On Threats to International Peace and Security Caused by Terrorist Acts)." International Legal Materials 40, no. 5 (September 2001): 1278–80. accessed June 18, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020782900020866>

³ International Organisation for Migration (IOM). "Displacement Tracking Matrix, Nigeria - North East Displacement Report 12" (December 2023), accessed July, 2024, <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/nigeria-north-central-and-north-west-displacement-report-12-december2023>

destabilised the urban centres and undermined the overall sense of safety and security for the residents.

The impact of terrorism on internal displacement in north-east Nigeria exacerbated the region's humanitarian crisis, with significant implications for the well-being and long-term recovery of those displaced and their communities, thereby necessitating the intervention of humanitarian organisations like the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The limited capacity of local authorities and the strain on already scarce resources available to the affected population made it challenging for the Borno State government to address the needs of the displaced population without the intervention of international humanitarian organisations. The dispersed nature of IDP populations and the security threats within IDP camps and host communities also complicated efforts made by humanitarian organisations to reach and assist those displaced by *Boko Haram's* violence¹⁶. The disruption of livelihoods and the poor living conditions in IDP camps increased the vulnerability of displaced persons, especially youths, to radicalisation and recruitment by *Boko Haram* and ISWAP¹⁷.

The ICRC has a mandate to provide protection and assistance to victims of armed conflicts globally. Due to this mandate, it is one of the State-approved humanitarian organisations allowed to provide humanitarian assistance in Borno State despite the government's ban of many others due to various misconduct and non-compliance to the governing laws in the State¹⁸. It is also the only humanitarian organisation whose assistance is not tied to government or donors' ideologies or influences as donations given to the ICRC are required to be voluntary and left to

¹⁶ United Nations High Commissioner For Refugees. Nigeria Situation: Responding to the Needs of IDPs and Nigerian Refugees in the Region. New York: UNHCR, 2022.

¹⁷ Aro, O. I. "Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria: Its Implication and Way Forward Toward Avoidance Of Future insurgency." International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications, 3(11), 1-8, 2013.

¹⁸ Olafusi, Eburnoluwa. 'We Want Them to Be Self Reliant' - Borno Bans NGOs from Giving Food to Resettled Communities. (December 2021) accessed June 2024, <https://www.thecable.ng/we-wanthem-to-be-self-reliant-borno-bans-ngos-from-giving-food-to-resettled-communities>

be used at its discretion, the other humanitarian organisations mostly provide aid in line with the

dictates of the donors funding them. This, therefore, makes them the most suitable humanitarian organisation for this study.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this study is to interrogate the extent to which the humanitarian assistance of the ICRC has helped Internally Displaced Persons meet their needs for post-conflict recovery In Borno State, Nigeria.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research adopted the case study design with Jere and Maiduguri local government areas being the focus for data collection in the study area, Borno State. This is because they are among the LGAs with the largest number of humanitarian crises and those most impacted by the *Boko Haram* and ISWAP insurgency. The research population consists of those persons who became internally displaced because of the *Boko Haram* and ISWAP insurgency in Borno State and are living in IDP camps and host communities within Maiduguri and Jere LGAs. Borno State has a population of 6.2 million, with 1.8 million internally displaced people who require humanitarian aid¹⁹.

Maiduguri LGA is home to 870,000 people²⁰, while Jere LGA has a total of 306,400 residents²¹. Community leaders, ICRC beneficiaries, ICRC officials, and support staff, community members, military personnel and government officials from Borno State government

¹⁹ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Nigeria Situation: Responding to the Needs of IDPs and Nigerian Refugees in the Region. New York: UNHCR, 2022.

²⁰ Macro Trends. Maiduguri, "Nigeria Metro Area Population 1950-2024." 2024, accessed July 21, 2024 www.macrotrends.net

²¹ City Population. "Borno State, Nigeria - Population Statistics, Charts, Map and Location." (2024), accessed July 16, https://www.citypopulation.de/en/nigeria/admin/NGA008_borno/

agencies who were involved in projects and programmes jointly carried out with the ICRC were the target population.

Primary data were collected through participant observation, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), and In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) while the secondary data were obtained from

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) reports, periodicals, newspapers, ICRC archives, and website publications.

Informed oral consent was given by participants interviewed in this study following a detailed explanation of what the study is about and the aim of the research, while ensuring confidentiality and the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

RESULTS

Push-Pull Theory of Migration

Everett Lee in 1966²² proposed a theory on migration where he identified push and pull factors in migration that demographers use to analyse human migration from former areas to new host locations. In his argument, Lee delineates factors causing migrations into two groups: push and pull. Push factors are circumstances that are hostile to the home area that people live in that forces them to migrate while pull factors are conditions that attract outsiders or migrants to another host area. The push factors that make people leave their locations include lack of jobs or opportunities, famine or drought, fear of persecution, poor health care, loss of wealth, natural disasters among many other unfavourable situations. Pull factors include job prospects, better living conditions, better medical care, and security.

The push and pull theory provides a foundational lens for examining migration patterns. By analysing the factors that compel individuals to leave their homes and those that attract them to new locations, we can

²² Everett, Lewis. "A Theory of Migration." *Demography*. New York : Population Association of America (PAA). Vol. 3(1), 47-57, 1966.

better understand the complexities of global migration trends. Using the push and pull theory to analyse the rationale behind internal displacement in Borno State, the *Boko Haram* armed conflict is the primary driver of the internal displacement being experienced there. Insecurity as an after-effect of the insurgency led to the loss of safety and livelihoods of the affected populations, prompting them to move from their communities towards the city centre, which they perceive to be safe due to the presence of security forces there. This security

presence made them drawn to areas perceived as safe and free from conflict, the availability of food, water, and shelter likewise the close proximity to aid organisations also influenced the decision of those displaced to go to Maiduguri and Jere LGAs.

The humanitarian response to internal displacement involves addressing both the needs of displaced individuals and the factors influencing their movement. The ICRC assisted these displaced populations to build their resilience and provide relief aid to mitigate the adverse effects of their conditions in the IDP camps and host communities. These efforts helped stabilise affected persons and communities to prevent further displacement.

Human Needs Theory

Abraham Maslow's 1943 Human Needs Theory²³ posits that certain fundamental needs must be met for individuals to thrive. These needs include physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualisation needs. When these needs are unmet, conflict and subsequent displacement can occur. The inability of those affected by the *Boko Haram* insurgency to meet their physiological need for food, clean water, and shelter due to insecurity forced them to migrate from their communities and seek these essentials elsewhere. Lack of fulfilment of safety needs due to insecurity from violence, persecution by the armed groups and environmental hazards drove many residents to find safer environments. Moreover, because displacement disrupts community bonds and social networks, those affected were left with no choice but

²³ Maslow, A. H. "A Theory of Human Motivation." *Psychological Review* 50, no. 4 (July 1943): 370–96, accessed July 2024. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0054346>.

to move to areas where they can rebuild these connections and meet their social needs, which also helps them regain their self-worth.

Humanitarian assistance from the ICRC helped those internally displaced within the state to address these unmet needs to stabilise and facilitate recovery. Physiological support through the provision of essential needs like food, water, and temporary shelter to meet the

immediate needs of displaced individuals was provided¹². Furthermore, livelihood support through programmes that provide skills training and job opportunities to help restore dignity and selfsufficiency were met by the ICRC.

Using the Human Needs Theory to analyse internal displacement and humanitarian response provides a lens which helps identify the core needs driving displacement and guides effective interventions. Effective humanitarian responses require a holistic approach that goes beyond immediate survival to encompass security, community, selfesteem, and personal growth.

DISCUSSION

ICRC's Response to the Needs of Internally Displaced Persons in Borno State

Urban environments provide terrorist groups with a large, anonymous population to blend into and carry out attacks¹³. The cities also offer a concentration of high-profile targets, such as government buildings, transportation hubs, and commercial centres, while also providing better access to resources, weapons, and transportation for terrorist operations¹⁴. Attacks in urban areas can have a significant psychological impact on the local population and generate widespread fear and media attention.

The IOM lists armed banditry and kidnapping as the reason for displacement by 44 percent of the IDPs in north-east Nigeria.

Communal clashes followed armed banditry and kidnappings, reported as the reason for displacement by 27 percent of IDPs and attacks from herdsmen, reported by 19 percent of IDPs¹⁵.

¹² Blanchard, Lauren Ploch. "Nigeria's Boko Haram: Frequently Asked Questions." Congressional Research Service, (20 May 2014), accessed August, 20 2024, <https://www.refworld.org/reference/countryrep/uscrs/2014/en/99695>

¹³ Hoffman, Bruce. "Inside Terrorism." New York: Columbia University Press, 2006.

¹⁴ Hesterman, John. "Soft Target Hardening, Protecting People from Attack." England: Routledge, 2018.

¹⁵ International Organisation for Migration (IOM). "Displacement Tracking Matrix, Nigeria - North East Displacement Report 12" (December 2023), accessed July, 2024, <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/nigeria-north-central-and-north-west-displacement-report-12-december-2023>

The ICRC responded to the humanitarian needs of affected populations in Borno State in fulfilment of its mandate to provide relief aid and protection for victims of armed conflicts globally. This response, which is done through its interventions and in collaboration with development actors in the State, has contributed directly to the post-conflict recovery of IDPs. These initiatives include:

Promotion of Respect for International Humanitarian Law

The ICRC, in collaboration with the Nigerian Army, regularly trains military officers on respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and proper conduct during hostilities, especially about the protection of civilians and vulnerable groups wherever such may be taking place. It partners with the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), various local vigilante groups and the Nigerian Police Counter Terrorism Squad (CRACK) to train their personnel and members on IHL, humanitarian principles, International Human Rights Law (IHRL), proper conduct during hostilities, safety of civilians and protected sites²⁴. It also works with various educational institutions to educate students on IHL and its applications in conflict situations. The armed groups, on their part, while not physically reached, are educated through various information channels where these guidelines are disseminated to remind them of what their responsibilities should be even during conflict.

²⁴ Olojo, Akinola. "Nigeria's Troubled North: Interrogating the Drivers of Public Support for Boko Haram." Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism Studies, 2013. <https://doi.org/10.19165/2013.1.07> ¹⁷ Nacos, Brigitte. Terrorism and Counter-terrorism. New York: Routledge, 2019.

Furthermore, the ICRC partners with organisations such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and UNICEF to initiate projects and programmes targeted at young people who were once recruited into the *Boko Haram* and ISWAP militia, likewise children who stand the risk of being lured by the latter to protect them from crimes. This is one way the ICRC contributes to the Borno State government's efforts at Demobilisation, Disarmament, and Reintegration of child combatants¹⁷. By educating all the parties in the armed conflict, the ICRC believes that they will understand what their roles and limits of actions are and there will be fewer civilian casualties, humanitarian and development problems, unrest and every

other negative factor that can contribute to lack of peace when safety needs are not fulfilled in a person.

The former ICRC Head of Delegation in Nigeria, Eloi Fillion, succinctly captures the importance of promoting respect for IHL²⁵:

The best way to counter the long-term impact of protracted armed conflicts, violence and hatred, which can affect whole generations, is to prevent violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law. At the heart of IHL lies the protection of civilians, of detainees, of the wounded and sick, and others not participating in hostilities. It is this shared humanity that gives IHL its relevance, its legitimacy, and its universal sense. Use your power to ensure that war has limits – every day, in every armed conflict, and for everyone – because wars without limits are wars without end.

Mine Action/Weapon Contamination Safety

The ICRC collaborates with development and peace actors to play a vital role in addressing the threats posed by landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) in the affected communities, thereby contributing to the need of IDPs for a peaceful living. The ICRC, in

²⁵ International Committee of the Red Cross. "The Role of the ICRC in Preventing Armed Conflict: its Possibilities and Limitations." IRR. No. 844. 923-946. Geneva: ICRC 2001.

collaboration with the Borno State Ministry of Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (MRRR), along with the Nigerian Military, supports and conducts mine clearance operations to remove landmines and ERW from affected areas in the State to enable those displaced from their communities to return safely without further threat to life. Trained de-mining teams locate, identify, and safely remove these hazardous devices, reducing the risk of accidental explosions and allowing communities to reclaim and utilise their land for agricultural, housing, and other useful purposes. Mine clearance not only saved lives, but also restored freedom of movement and

facilitated the return of the erstwhile displaced population, thereby fulfilling their safety needs²⁶.

The ICRC further places great emphasis on risk education by raising awareness about the dangers of landmines and ERW. Through community-based programmes like weapon contamination safety, the ICRC educates the affected population, especially children, on how to recognise and avoid these hazards. Risk education sessions provide information on safe behaviours, such as staying on well-travelled paths, not touching or tampering with suspicious objects, and reporting any findings to the appropriate authorities. This knowledge helps to minimise the risks of accidents and injuries.

The impact of landmines and ERW goes beyond physical injuries as they often disrupt livelihoods, impede access to essential services, and hinder economic development. Thus, the ICRC supports socioeconomic rehabilitation programmes that aim to mitigate these effects. These include vocational training and income-generating assistance to help affected persons regain their economic independence. With the clearing of landmines and ERW and providing risk education, the ICRC contributes to saving lives, preventing injuries, and reducing the long-term socio-economic impact of these deadly devices. These efforts help to restore safety, livelihoods, and

²⁶ Maslow, A. H. "A Theory of Human Motivation." *Psychological Review* 50, no. 4 (July 1943): 370–96, accessed July 2024. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0054346>.

promote the overall well-being and peace in these affected communities.

Rehabilitation of Hajj Camp

The death of the Boko Haram leader, Abubakar Shekau, forced many of the armed group members to surrender to the Nigerian government, especially as the ISWAP group began attacking them in the forest. This led to the Nigerian government instituting, in partnership with the Borno State government, the disarmament, demobilisation and deradicalisation process of the surrendered belligerents, coupled with their rehabilitation, reconciliation and reintegration into the society. The Hajj camp in Maiduguri is one of the three IDP camps which shelter about 14,000 persons, consisting of 6900 ex-combatants and their families. Since July 2021, a total of 82,237 Boko Haram fighters

and their families have surrendered to the government; of the total number of surrendered persons, 16,577 were active male fighters, 24,499 are women, and 41,161 are children²⁷.

In recent times, there were constant protests by these surrendered fighters, registering their displeasure over government neglect and absence of basic needs such as food, medicine and welfare amenities. These protests have often led to unrest within their communities and pose a threat to the safety of other surrounding communities, as they usually block the major roads and destroy infrastructure on sight.

At Hajj Camp, the ICRC, in collaboration with the NRCS and the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development, has been involved in giving basic education and skill acquisition programmes in a bid to keep them engaged, useful and valued. Also, the ICRC helps the residents of this IDP camp reestablish and restore family links with their loved ones and create opportunities for children who were born in the enclave of the Boko Haram and ISWAP armed groups to reintegrate into their new society. In 2023, the ICRC did a rehabilitation of dilapidated infrastructures in the camp and

²⁷ Nabordo, Alabira. "Ex-Boko Haram Members Storm Maiduguri, Protest Hunger, Poor Welfare. (August 2023) accessed January 4, 2024, <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/nnortheast/616867-ex-boko-haram-members-storm-maiduguri-protest-hunger-poor-welfare.html>

provided support for the camp clinic headed by Dr Mohammed Salio, especially with regard to pregnant women and children.

During the visit of the Secretary General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres, in 2023, he affirmed the peace that is now present within these communities. In his words:

...This is not the Borno I found today. I found a Borno of hope, a Borno with a future. I am very impressed with the policies put in place here recognising that you don't fight terrorism by military means alone but by addressing the root cause of terrorism.

These humanitarian assistance have contributed to the peace in this camp and also within the Bulumkutu community that hosts them²⁸.

Nutritional Awareness on Infants and Young Child Feeding (IYCF)

The protracted nature of the armed conflict, coupled with challenges of climate change, exacerbated food insecurity in Borno State, worsening the plight of internally displaced populations who already face the problem of food shortages due to unaffordability. The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification ²⁹, projected that nearly six million children across north-east and north-west Nigeria will have experienced acute malnutrition by April 2023. With this in mind, the ICRC launched a pilot project to combat this problem with *tom brown*, a nutritious porridge for weaning babies, using locally available food products such as guinea corn, maize, millet, sorghum, soybeans, moringa powder and groundnut. The Young Child Feeding initiative was implemented by the ICRC in partnership with the Borno State Ministry of Health in 2023 as a response to the growing crises of malnutrition within the State. Maiduguri and Jere in Borno State were

²⁸ Andrew, R. "Humanitarian Assistance and Conflict Management: The View From The NonGovernmental Sector." International Affairs Vol. 77, Issue 4, pp 957–966, 2001.

²⁹ Integrated Food Security Phase Classification. "IPC Country Analysis | IPC - Integrated Food Security Phase Classification." 2023 accessed November 18, 2023. <https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipccountry-analysis/en/?country=NGA>.

some of the pilot areas where this initiative was first tested as a response to the problem.

Through various trainings and collaborations with nursing mothers in community groups, the ICRC provided education on how malnutrition among children can be tackled while encouraging the community to take the lead in the fight. The assistance involves training mothers in IDP camps, host and resettled communities on Community Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) using Family Middle-Upper Arm Circumference Approach, Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) and Primary Health Care (PHC) for children and pregnant women living with malnutrition. The success achieved with this assistance has made the Borno State Ministry of Health continue to adopt the ICRC approach in tackling malnutrition among internally displaced populations in the State. As of November

2023, over 10,488 children under five afflicted by malnutrition received nutrition treatment.

This intervention provided caregivers, healthcare providers, and participating mothers the opportunity to acquire improved knowledge and understanding of appropriate infant and young child feeding practices. Participating mothers continue to adopt recommended feeding practices, such as exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months, appropriate introduction of complementary foods, and responsive feeding techniques for their children. Mothers have become more knowledgeable about what signs of malnutrition to look out for in their children and how to tackle it before it leads to chronic illness or death. Through *tom brown*, there is access to a continuous, locally available and affordable food source among indigent and internally displaced mothers.

Physical Rehabilitation Programme (PRP)

On November 19, 2020, the ICRC inaugurated a comprehensive Physical Rehabilitation Centre (PRC) at the University of Maiduguri Teaching and Referral Hospital (UMTH), the first of its kind in Borno State. The PRC is run by UMTH staff with support from the ICRC. The

primary beneficiaries (known as service users) of this centre are people with mobility impairments and physical disabilities, especially those related to the armed conflict in the state.

The 18-bed dormitory centre, which helps the beneficiaries of the programme, address their needs for safety and love and belonging, works in collaboration with the ICRC Clinic at the Borno State Specialist Hospital, ICRC Mobile Surgical Team (MST), ICRC supported Primary Health Centres (PHCs), and the National Orthopaedic Hospital (NOHD), to provide victims of armed conflicts assistance ranging from physiotherapy, prosthesis, Orthoses for upper and lower limbs (legs and arms) to customised wheelchair fittings, walking aids, and mental health psycho-social support. The Centre provided accommodation to the beneficiaries of this assistance for the sum of two hundred naira and four hundred naira per meal while services are free for victims of the *Boko Haram* / ISWAP armed conflict who are mostly internally displaced.

Since physical rehabilitation is often not enough because people with disabilities need some measure of social and economic empowerment to overcome the trauma-related adversities, the ICRC supported beneficiaries of the assistance who met the required criteria to set up businesses to earn a livelihood, train them in vocational skills and financial management to build their resilience.

Comprehensive assessments and evaluations of armed conflict victims were conducted to determine their specific rehabilitation needs, including physical impairments, functional limitations, and prosthetic or orthotic requirements. Designing, fitting, and provision of prosthetic limbs, orthotic devices, and assistive devices for persons who have lost limbs or have orthopaedic impairments were done. This involved measurement, customisation, and continuous adjustments to ensure proper fit and functionality.

Individual physical therapy sessions were carried out to improve strength, mobility, and functional abilities. These included exercises, manual therapy, gait training, and other therapeutic techniques. Beneficiaries were also assisted in the rehabilitation efforts in their communities through vocational training and promotion of social

inclusion. The physical rehabilitation assistance contributed to the long-term resilience of affected individuals and their families, enabling them to adapt, cope, and thrive despite the challenges posed by their injuries and the after-effects of the armed conflict.

Implementation of the ICRC Widow's Project

The *Boko Haram* armed conflict left thousands of women widowed as their husbands were either killed or abducted to fight for the armed group. Having no formal education or a means of livelihood to sustain their children, many widows soon turned to begging in the streets of Borno State. Inaugurated in Maiduguri, the Widows Food Project was an assistance rendered by the ICRC in collaboration with the Borno State Muslim Widows Association, where grants were disbursed to enable them to establish businesses and become independent. This partnership enabled over ten thousand registered widows of the association to buy food, reduce dependence on debts, regain their dignity and become self-sustained. Periodically, they also received monthly rations of food supplies for a specified period of months.

Inputs in this project include food items, cash grants, equipment to set up businesses, and vocational training costs. Activities involved a needs assessment, which was conducted to identify widows who required assistance. ICRC staff, NRCS volunteers, and partners like the Borno State Widows Association were involved in the project implementation. 10,000 widows were registered to receive food and cash that would enable them to provide the necessities for their families. They also received support for micro-economic initiatives, with each widow receiving the sum of 40,000 naira grant to buy materials they needed to establish their businesses. Through economic empowerment and capacity building, empowered widows in Maiduguri and Jere LGAs have a sustainable means of livelihood with the acquired skills that help them generate income and become independent. They are also better equipped to cope with the challenges of living in conflict environments through increased resilience.

CONCLUSION

Internal displacement and intra-state migration of internally displaced persons within Borno State, driven primarily by the *Boko Haram*/ISWAP armed conflict, have resulted in complex humanitarian challenges. The disruption of essential services and safety forced many to flee their homes, seeking refuge and stability in the city centres of Maiduguri and Jere. Humanitarian responses by the ICRC have focused on addressing the needs of internally displaced populations, such as food, shelter, healthcare and protection, while also providing avenues for them to recover from the after-effects of the armed conflict. These efforts continue to help internally displaced persons in Borno State meet their human needs and rebuild their lives, thus highlighting the fact that when interventions by humanitarian organisations are properly planned and deployed, internally displaced persons are better able to achieve quick post-conflict recovery for themselves and their communities, which will further promote lasting peace in places affected by conflict.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To effectively address the needs of internally displaced persons in Borno State and corroborate the efforts of humanitarian organisations like the ICRC, this study recommends the following:

- enhanced security measures should be implemented to strengthen local and regional security to protect communities and enable displaced individuals to return safely to their homes.
- an integrated humanitarian assistance in which the government, NGOs, and international donor agencies coordinate efforts to ensure comprehensive support, including livelihoods support, healthcare, education, and developmental projects given to those displaced.
- strengthening of community resilience, which can be achieved through investments in infrastructure and community development to enhance resilience against future displacement triggers, such as conflict or natural disasters.
- facilitation of dialogue and peace-making between conflicting parties to address underlying issues and promote lasting peace in the region.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflict of interest.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Andrew, R. “*Humanitarian Assistance and Conflict Management: The View from the Non-Governmental Sector.*” *International Affairs* Vol. 77, Issue 4, 957–966, 2001.

Aro, O. I. “*Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria: Its Implication and Way Forward Toward Avoidance of Future insurgency.*” *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, 3(11), 1-8, 2013.

Blanchard, Lauren Ploch. “*Nigeria's Boko Haram: Frequently Asked Questions.*” Congressional Research Service, (20 May, 2014), accessed August, 20 2024, <https://www.refworld.org/reference/countryrep/uscrs/2014/en/99695>

City Population. “*Borno State, Nigeria-Population Statistics, Charts, Map and Location.*” (2024), accessed July, 16, https://www.citypopulation.de/en/nigeria/admin/NGA008_borno/

Everett, Lewis. “A Theory of Migration.” *Demography*. New York: Population Association of America (PAA). Vol. 3(1), 47-57, 1966.

Hesterman, John. “Soft Target Hardening, Protecting People from Attack.” England: Routledge, 2018.

Hoffman, Bruce. “*Inside Terrorism.*” New York: Columbia University Press, 2006.

International Committee of the Red Cross. “The Role of the ICRC in Preventing Armed Conflict: its Possibilities and Limitations.” *IRRC*. No. 844. 923-946. Geneva: ICRC, 2001.

International Organisation for Migration (IOM). “*Displacement Tracking Matrix, Nigeria - North East Displacement Report 12*” (December 2023), accessed July, 2024, <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/nigeria-north-central-and-northwest-displacement-report-12-december-2023>

Integrated Food Security Phase Classification. “*IPC Country Analysis / IPC - Integrated Food Security Phase Classification*.” 2023 accessed November 18, 2023. <https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-countryanalysis/en/?country=NGA>.

Macro Trends. Maiduguri, “*Nigeria Metro Area Population 1950-2024*.” 2024, accessed July 21, 2024 www.macrotrends.net

Maslow, A. H. “A Theory of Human Motivation.” *Psychological Review* 50, no. 4 (July 1943): 370–96, accessed July 2024. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0054346>.

Nacos, Brigitte . *Terrorism and Counter-terrorism* . New York: Routledge, 2019.

Nabordo, Alabira. “Ex-Boko Haram Members Storm Maiduguri, Protest Hunger, Poor Welfare. (August 2023) accessed January 4, 2024, <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/nnortheast/616867-ex-boko-haram-members-storm-maiduguri-protest-hunger-poor-welfare.html>

Olafusi, Ebunoluwa. ‘We Want Them to Be Self Reliant’ - Borno Bans NGOs from Giving Food to Resettled Communities. (December 2021) accessed June 2024,

<https://www.thecable.ng/we-want-them-to-be-self-reliantborn-bans-ngos-from-giving-food-to-resettled-communities>

Olojo, Akinola. "Nigeria's Troubled North: Interrogating the Drivers of Public Support for Boko Haram." *Terrorism and CounterTerrorism Studies*, 2013.
<https://doi.org/10.19165/2013.1.07>

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Nigeria Situation: Responding to the Needs of IDPs and Nigerian Refugees in the Region*. New York: UNHCR, 2022.

United Nations General Assembly Sixth Committee (Legal). "*Measures to eliminate international terrorism*." (November 2019) accessed October 1, 2024,
https://www.un.org/en/ga/sixth/74/int_terrorism.shtml

United Nations Security Council. "Resolution 1373 (On Threats to International Peace and Security Caused by Terrorist Acts)." *International Legal Materials* 40, no. 5 (September 2001): 1278–80. accessed June 18,
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020782900020866>

<https://www.thecable.ng/we-want-them-to-be-self->

LMGS-NOUN