

Nigeria: Security Concerns of Internally Displaced Persons Living in Non-Camp Settings in Kwara State

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Abstract: Internally displaced persons (IDPs) seek refuge in territories that are considered safer, including outside officially designated camps. This development raises security concerns for host communities, thus increasing the likelihood of conflict. This paper set out to unveil the presence of IDPs in non-camp settings (NCS) in Kwara State, examine the security implications associated with their covert existence within host communities, and evaluate the strategies put in place by the State Government to address them. The study adopted a mixed method approach, in which 200 copies of a questionnaire were distributed to local participants in selected towns, out of which 188 copies were retrieved. A snowball technique was used to identify unregistered IDPs while a purposive sampling technique was useful in the selection of key informants for interviews. The study found that the security implications of hosting IDPs were numerous: feelings of insecurity, a threat to physical and mental health, a threat to life, vulnerability to harassment; increasing

demographic imbalance, and condescending attitude of the host population among others. The study concluded that a high level of impoverishment in NCS threatens human security for both the host population and the IDPs. The study recommended that the Kwara State Government should synergize with relevant stakeholders and the local communities, to identify and profile all victims of internal displacement for an effective response to security challenges.

Keywords: Security, Internal Displacement, non-camp setting, host community, Kwara.

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Introduction

In many parts of the world, entire populations have been forcibly displaced as a result of natural disasters such as flooding, hurricanes, drought, and earthquakes, to name but a few. The number of people reported to have been internally displaced and the complexity of internal displacement crises across the world have increased tremendously in the last decade (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2018a). The African continent has fared worse on the issue of internal displacement, as more than half of the world's IDPs can be found in Africa (Crisp *et al.*, 2012; Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, 2019). In recent times, the wave of new displacement across Africa has been increasing so much that by the end of 2019, the global outlook of internal displacement showed that “1,790,000 people were internally displaced in Ethiopia; 5,668,000 people in DRC; 2,600,000 in Somalia; 246, 000 in South Sudan, 2,372,000 in Sudan and 2,743,000 in Nigeria” (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2020, p. 2). The rising trend of internal displacement of persons (IDP) brought about by armed conflicts constitutes one of the greatest human tragedies of our time.

Nigeria has a history of mass displacement that goes back to the civil war of 1967–1970. In recent times, after a return to civilian rule (1999), the most populous black nation witnessed numerous instances of internal displacement stemming from attempts at the application of Sharia law in some northern states of the Federation, recurrent ethno-religious conflicts, and the Boko Haram insurgency in the northeast. Being a relatively peaceful State in the North-Central geo-political zone, Kwara, with an estimated population of 3,192,893 as of 2016, seems to be a preferred destination for internally displaced persons given the fact that Ilorin, the State capital, has a predominantly Muslim population, and the city maintains strong cultural ties with northern Nigeria. As a result, many victims of insurgency and other violent situations in the North would move down and find refuge in host communities that share similar values, norms, and worldviews.

Statement of the Problem

According to the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA, 2021), 87 % of the IDPs in the North-West and North-Central regions of Nigeria were displaced within their state of origin. As of January 2021, 309 231 IDPs were registered in the North-Central region but available data on the number of returnees in Kwara state could not be found. However, the influx of IDPs into communities in Kwara State continues unabated given that there seems to be no end in sight to the prevalent climate of insecurity in northern Nigeria. These unregistered newcomers roam the streets without a fixed location until they eventually find shelter within a local community. As the presence of strangers continues to grow numerically, residents become apprehensive of security threats. For instance, in 2015, a shootout between suspected Boko Haram members and security personnel, in a residential area in the Ilorin metropolis, moved the State Security

Council to constitute a security committee that was charged with the responsibility of working out modalities for managing the influx of IDPs into the State (Ilorin.Info, 2015; Akinyemi, 2015). Similarly, the Hausa community in Oko Olowo/Oloje, complained to the Kwara State Police Headquarters, about the presence and persistent arrival of large numbers of IDPs in the area.

This development has raised security issues such as hooliganism and indoctrination, specifically in Oko Olowo where the Hausa Muslim population and other members of the community live together. Again, in June 2019, commercial motorcycle operators who were mainly Hausa-speaking young men (from the North embarked on a protest against extortion, which turned into a mob action that breached public peace and destroyed public property in Ilorin (Ajikobi, 2019; Ogunwale, 2019). Whether on the farm, in the market square, or among street vendors, similar cases of clashes between residents and outsiders abound, which can be attributed to the internal displacement of people stemming from the prevailing climate of insecurity in northeast Nigeria. This phenomenon has attracted the interest of many scholars concerning its causes, impact on food security, education, economic and psycho-social effects, etc. (Aderogba, 2018; Oyelude & Osuigwe, 2017). However, this study has the merits of localizing the presence of unregistered IDPs, now dispersed across different non-camp settings, to underscore some security concerns affecting local communities in Kwara State.

Conceptual Clarification

In this section, the use of some keywords is briefly clarified, such as security, internally displaced persons, non-camp setting, and host community without prejudice to the abundant literature on internal displacement. To begin with, the concept of security has been traditionally tied to the survival of states within the international system which translates into preparedness for war against potential aggression coming from enemy states (military capability). However, since the end of the Cold War, a comprehensive notion of security that includes the well-being of citizens has come to stay, being defined as human security. Consequently, state security at the borders means nothing if citizens' security within the state is at stake. As one scholar contends, "Human security is not a concern with weapons. It is a concern with human dignity. In the last analysis, it is a child who did not die, a disease that did not spread, an ethnic tension that did not explode, a dissident who was not silent, a human spirit that was not crushed" (Haq 1995, cited in Acharya, 2011, p. 481).

The phenomenon of internal displacement of people emerged in the late 1980s, following the change in the pattern of conflicts, from inter-state to intra-state, and the shift of emphasis from state actors to non-state actors as drivers of conflict (Cohen & Deng, 1998; Haynes, 2010). Since then, two types of displacement with attendant responsibilities have been considered. On the one hand, crossing international borders

makes a displaced person a refugee whose protection befalls the United Nations High Commission for Refugees as stipulated in the 1951 Convention (UNHCR 2001).

On the other hand, displacement of people within national borders is the sole responsibility of national governments to see to it that desperate citizens who forcibly move within the country in search of a safer abode receive adequate assistance. To ensure that all displacement-inducing situations are captured, this study adopts the Guiding Principles' definition of the concept of internally displaced persons as

Persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of, or to avoid the effects of armed conflicts, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights, or natural or man-made disaster, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized border (UNHCR, 1998).

All impoverished IDPs are not willing to live on hand-outs from government and charity organizations in camps. While some throng public places as professional beggars, many others hawk the streets as day laborers and peddlers with no fixed address. The concept of Non-camp settings (NCS) suggests informal locations where undocumented/unregistered IDPs can be found within the state, be it uncompleted buildings, school premises, market places to name but a few. Studies have found that more IDPs are living in non-camp settings than those who live in clearly designated camps. Those among them who choose to live outside camps either settle down with families and acquaintances or can afford to fend for themselves in rented accommodations in host communities (Beyani, 2013; Caron, 2017).

Hosting implies the capacity to offer hospitality to strangers without any strings attached. It is more manifested in a country that opens its national borders to foreigners in need of protection with little or no involvement of local populations even though the latter can, on their initiative, offer to accommodate such strangers. The concept of host community connotes a positive relationship between hosts and guests but it can be misleading because the warm sense of welcome of IDPs cannot be assumed, particularly, when dealing with mass displacement for a long period. The influx of undocumented IDPs in a given community is noticeable with a rapid increase of the population and its attendant conflict over scarce resources such as water, sanitation, housing, and job opportunities, keeping the security of lives and property at the front burner of policy-makers. The next section highlights the possible nexus between internal displacement and security concerns with a special focus on undocumented IDPs.

Literature review

Traditionally, security refers to the protection of the territorial integrity of states from aggressions (Buzan, 1991; Acharya, 2001). However, many studies adjudged the

state-centered perception of security as too narrow (Nye & Lynn-Jones, 1988; Baldwin, 1997; Acharya, 2001; Degaut, 2015). This paradigm shift has changed the focus from the state-centric notion to making citizens the center point of security and led to a series of discussions in the United Nations Organisation. The human security approach was introduced by the 1994 Report of the United Nations Human Development Programme. According to the report, the scope of human security covers seven major areas of human endeavor as follows:

1. Economic Security: assurance of basic income for people, usually from productive and remunerative work or publicly financed safety net;
2. Food Security: ensuring that people have access to food at all times;
3. Health Security: guaranteeing that all people have a minimum level of protection from diseases, intending to prevent avoidable sicknesses and deaths;
4. Environmental Security: protecting people from short-and long-term ravages of nature, man-made threats in nature, and deterioration of the natural environment;
5. Personal Security: protecting people from violence, whether from the State, external States, predatory individuals, etc.;
6. Community Security: protecting people from sectarian and ethnic violence; and from loss of cultural relationships;
7. Political Security: ensuring that people live in a society that respects basic human rights, and also people's freedom from the State's attempt to exercise undue control over ideas and information (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 1994).

Gomez and Gasper (2013) stress that human security analysis is focused on threats. To ensure human security as freedom from fear of the perceived or actual threat of harm, the underlying cause(s) of insecurity should be investigated with a view to proffering solutions to identified threats. In other words, any discussion around the forced displacement of populations must take into account immediate triggers, stages of intervention, or management of IDPs, including the voluntary return of the affected population to their former habitats.

However, undocumented IDPs are difficult to identify as they are found mainly outside government-run camps. According to the study conducted by Beyani (2013), non-camp settings refer to "a variety of settings, where IDPs live outside officially recognized camps" (p. 3). The scholar also notes that IDPs who live outside camps usually live with families or friends. They are also found in rented accommodations. Displaced persons also move into host communities to access necessary assistance to mitigate the negative effects of having to relocate from communities of origin unexpectedly. It is worth noting that host communities are territories, where displaced persons move, to avoid situations of natural or manmade disasters.

Investigating the emerging trend whereby IDPs choose to live with host families as against living in officially designated camps, one scholar concludes that under this type of arrangement, non-camp settings could take the form of “allowing the displaced family to build shelters on the host family’s property; allocating space in the house of the host family for the use of the displaced family; allowing displaced persons to occupy an out-building on the host family’s property; and allowing displaced persons to use another house owned by the host” (Caron, 2017, p. 57). Similarly, Erong (2017) studies IDPs who live with host families in the Sulemanti community, in Maiduguri, Borno State, and observes that some of them live in the houses of host families (sharing the same roof) while others construct makeshift shelters on properties released to them by their hosts.

There is an ongoing argument about security threats associated with the presence of displaced persons in the host community (Fajth *et al.*, 2019). Carillo (2009) contends that IDPs who live outside camps often live in informal settlements, where they build makeshift shelters. The study also notes that such settlements are usually located on the outskirts of cities and towns, in locations visibly lacking social amenities. This position is illustrated by the informal settlement in Suba, on the outskirts of Bogota, Colombia (Arredondo, *et al.*, 2011); the Acholi quarters on the outskirts of Kampala, Uganda (Wyrzykowski, 2010); and Kuseri settlement in Maiduguri, Borno State (Mohammed, 2017). In addition, Controneo (2017), Kirbyshire *et al.* (2017), and Fielden (2008), all agreed that IDPs who desire to live outside camps might also live in rented accommodation, or occupy uncompleted buildings, damaged buildings, and public buildings, with or without the permission of the owners or relevant authorities. They may eventually cohabit in crowded accommodations to avoid the payment of exorbitant rents while facing vulnerability risks, especially for women and young girls.

The exposure of IDPs to violence may increase their likelihood of perpetrating future violence, while the relative social and economic deprivations may increase their propensity to engage in criminal activities (Depetris-Chauvin & Santo, 2018). According to Mohammed (2017), tensions occur in host communities with poor infrastructure as a result of the pressure of the influx of IDPs. Carillo (2009) notes that the inability of IDPs to improve their livelihood over time may push some of them to adopt harmful coping strategies, including criminal acts, to have sufficient income to cover the costs of food, accommodation, etc. In the same vein, poverty, social exclusion, and lack of opportunities may make young IDPs living in non-camp settings to become vulnerable to the influence of urban criminality.

When it comes to insecurity as a result of mismanagement of the IDP crisis, a study on urban displacement in the 21st century notes that the presence of IDPs in host communities often generates suspicion and mistrust, regarding the reason why IDPs moved to such environments in the first place (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2018b). Furthermore, IDPs’ movement to urban areas is also a major contributory factor to the

“proliferation of informal settlements” (Mooney, 2005, p. 15). This was the situation in Kenya, where the steady flow of displaced rural population into Nairobi contributed significantly to the growth of Kibera, one of Kenya’s largest informal settlements (Rhabaran, as cited in Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2018b).

Many studies concur that IDPs living in non-camp settings are more than those registered in official camp settings (Beyani, 2013; Controneo, 2017; Grip, 2017; Kirbyshire *et al.*, 2017; Mohammed, 2017; Carillo, 2009). Caron (2017) observes an emerging trend whereby local families host displaced persons in their homes. This development is gaining wide acceptability: host families allow IDPs to dwell in their homes for personal reasons ranging from cultural norms about hospitality, normative expectations to help those in need, or reciprocation of assistance once received. Similarly, Erong (2017) confirms this position by concluding that IDPs’ preference for host communities is based on the significant role played by the communities in saving lives and building the resilience of displaced persons.

Controneo (2017) contends that the arrival of IDPs in host communities increases the availability of unskilled labor particularly in the informal sector, which may raise the unemployment rate, and possibly cause a drop in wages. This development could eventually change existing demographic balances (Haider, 2014). Although convincing arguments that point to a potentially negative correlation between the influx of a large displaced population and insecurity in host communities abound, a considerable body of work that portrays positive social impact cannot be overlooked. The active presence of displaced persons may improve the local economy, and ipso facto ignite beneficial social opportunities (Caron, 2017). Therefore, the resultant effects of IDPs in non-camp settings are “context-specific, and highly conditional on local policies towards displaced persons as well as cultural (dis)similarities” (Fajth *et al.*, 2019, p. 10).

Concerning the management of IDPs, the Guiding Principles state that national governments are responsible for their protection. As far as Nigeria is concerned, a multidimensional crisis has affected many states in the north-central, northeast, and northwest geopolitical zones. Long-standing conflicts between farmers and herders, indigenes and settlers couched in ethno-religious overtones, banditry in villages, and above all, repeated terrorist attacks since 2008 are among the causes of forced displacement of people that put a lot of strain on the coping strategies of residents of Kwara state in recent time. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) of 18 May 2022, between 2008 and 2021, available data indicate a record of 4.6 million internally displaced persons in Nigeria (IDMC, 2022).

Osagioduwa and Oluwakorede (2016) opine that the Federal Government of Nigeria attempted to alleviate the suffering of displaced people in the North-East geo-political zone through the establishment of institutions and programs like the National Emergency

Management Agency (NEMA), which has been domesticated at the State Government level as State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA); the National Commission for Refugees (NCFR), which was expanded into the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCRMI); the North-East Development Commission (NEDC) and the Presidential Committee on North-East Initiative (PCNI). However, Itumo and Nwefuru (2016) argue that the establishment of these institutions and programs lacks effective delivery of strategies to resolve the challenges of IDPs in Nigeria.

The provision of temporary IDP camps seems to be the most important measure that the government has taken to address the IDP problem while keeping a blind eye on the plight of the undocumented category of displaced persons. Other challenges constraining the effective management of IDPs identified by previous studies include poor funding, corruption, overlapping IDP management policies and institutions, unpreparedness, and negative attitudes of host communities, among other things (Obikaeze & Onuoha, 2017; Osagioduwa & Oluwakorede, 2016; Nasa'i, 2018). The host community often feels insecure by the presence of IDPs who may resort to anti-social behaviors, as a coping mechanism. For instance, on the 25th of March 2017, the Borno Command of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) arrested 3 IDPs for allegedly vandalizing high-tension cables belonging to the Yola Electricity Distribution Company, which supplied electricity to Konduga and Bama, in Borno State, Nigeria (Oseni, 2017).

Itumo and Nwefuru (2016) argue that IDPs have the potential to destabilize peace in the host community, given that high level of impoverishment in displacement coupled with a negative perception of IDPs by the host community can create a background for future clashes and conflict. Similarly, maltreatment of IDPs can become a grievance against which IDP communities unite. The study argues further that in protracted situations, there is a greater probability that IDPs will become involved in political violence and susceptible to militant recruitment. In the next section, the correlation between forced displacement and insecurity is guided by relevant theories.

Theoretical Framework

The Migration Theory and the Intergroup Threat Theory provide a theoretical framework for this study by way of explaining the experience of IDPs who live in non-camp settings, and the conditions under which they enter into host communities, with attendant security implications for all parties involved. On the one hand, the Migration Theory was made popular in the Laws of Migration, as developed by Ernest Ravenstein (1889) to explain population movement. The theory was re-formulated by Everette S. Lee (1966) to emphasize the push and pull factors of migration: whereas unfavorable conditions push people out of their usual place of residence, more convenient conditions pull them in the opposite direction, bearing in mind that obstacles (distance and transportation) have to be overcome before migration is completed.

The framework of push and pull factors of migration explains internal displacement in the northern geo-political zones in Nigeria, in the sense that mass displacement in these areas is, to a large extent, the outcome of incessant deadly attacks by Boko Haram members and bandits since 2008. Therefore, loss of lives, livelihoods, and the general situation of insecurity in the zone constitute the push factors that force people to leave their communities of origin for safer communities. Conversely, the relative safety of communities in other parts of the country, coupled with the likelihood of better employment opportunities “pull” them into places like Kwara state.

On the other hand, Intergroup Threat Theory propounded by Stephan, Ybarra, and Rios (2015) posits that intergroup threat is experienced when members of one group perceive that another group is in a position to harm them. The theory advances two models of threat – realistic threats, which have to do with competition over scarce resources and or physical harm; and symbolic threats, which arise from differences in culture, moral values, standards, and/or beliefs. The dangers of insecurity posed by the presence of IDPs who live in non-camp settings to host communities, the extra layer of pressure on livelihood opportunities in the informal labor market, as well as the fear of conflict, arguably align with realistic threats of the Intergroup Threat Theory. Symbolic differences are found in cultural values, languages, and traditions even though members of host communities and IDPs are Nigerians.

Discussion of findings

This empirical study adopted a mixed method of inquiry to obtain qualitative and quantitative data. It utilized the Multi-stage, Snowball, and purposive sampling techniques in determining the study population, using the Taro Yamane method: $n=N/1+N(e)$. Six Local Government Areas (LGAs), namely Moro, Patigi, Ilorin West, Ilorin South, Offa, and Irepodun with a projected population of 1,570,200 were purposively selected. Out of a study population of 200 participants, 188 copies of a questionnaire were retrieved. Exploratory data were also gathered from focus group discussions (FGDs) and semi-structured interviews. Quantitative data gathered from the fieldwork were analyzed with a descriptive statistical procedure using simple percentages and frequencies while qualitative data were analyzed using Thematic Analysis Software. The data analysis was intended to address the research questions about the identification of unregistered IDPs within a few selected host communities, the security implications associated with their unexpected presence in such communities, and the evaluation of strategies put in place by the Kwara State government to deal with the menace of insecurity. The discussion revolves around the study’s findings as follows.

1. Locating Non-camp settings in the selected Host Communities

Responding to a questionnaire, resident participants listed out different kinds of shelter arrangements for IDPs who live in non-camp settings (NCS), in host communities in Kwara State: informal settlements (78%); host families (70%); and rented accommodation (60%). Data generated from FGDs and KIIs corroborated the presence of IDPs in such informal settlements: host families, rented accommodation, and uncompleted and abandoned buildings.

It was noted that participant IDPs who live with host families were sheltered by the latter under two types of arrangement. The first is based on social connections that existed between hosts and IDPs before displacement. IDPs were emphatic that this type of arrangement was not brokered by any intermediary and that they were accepted by their hosts on the strength of their previous relationship. The second arrangement revolves around social connections within the Hausa communities where IDPs seek refuge. Under this arrangement, Hausa leaders (the Seriki or Wakili Hausa) facilitate shelter, mostly, for women and children, to reduce their vulnerabilities.

IDPs who live in uncompleted and abandoned buildings claimed that they sought and obtained the permission of the owners, through Hausa community leaders. However, it is not in all such cases that permission is obtained. For instance, a family of IDPs from Kebbi State took shelter in a dilapidated and abandoned building in Offa, Offa LGA without the permission of its owners. According to the family head, the decision to occupy the building was taken to address the challenge of sleeping in the open when it rains, as he does not have a steady source of income to pay rent. The study also found that IDPs who live in informal settlements in host communities in Kwara State are located on the outskirts of towns and villages, where they constructed makeshift shelters on parcels of land released to them by their host communities. This type of setting was found in Oloru and Iyana Momo in Moro LGA; Oko Olowo in Ilorin West LGA; and Olomi Funfun, Kere-Aje Ilota and Gbosun in Offa LGA.

2. Security Implications of IDPs in Host Communities

Quantitative data show that security concerns have the highest frequency at 81%. This is closely followed by concerns about threats to physical and mental health (73%). It is pertinent to note that perceptions of vulnerability to attacks (64%); the possibility of demographic shock (60%); concerns about competition for patronage (54%); condescending attitude of the host population (52%), and Indoctrination (33%) are latent platforms for the outbreak of conflict, which could result into a breach of public peace, and possibly secondary displacement for IDPs.

Through FGDs and KIIs, the same conclusion was reached: the presence of IDPs in NCS has security implications for host communities, as well as for the IDPs in Kwara State.

For instance, most of the IDPs enter into host communities with varying degrees of impoverishment and no visible means of livelihood. Suffice it to say, that residents feel threatened by the increasing population of the IDPs who entered their communities in the night, coupled with the absence of profiling systems. Arguably, the perceived or actual threats to the safety of lives and property of residents who participated in the study stem from their inability to identify the IDPs who live in their communities. In addition, the concerns expressed by the host population and the IDPs have clear undertones of threat to all seven major areas of Human Security.

3. Strategies used by the Kwara State government

In explaining the strategies adopted by the Kwara State Government to address IDP issues, the Secretary of the Kwara State Emergency and Relief Services Office remarked that efforts of the State Government consist of setting up and managing a camp, which could either be temporary or permanent. The Management of the Zonal Office of the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants & Internally Displaced Persons (NCRMI) described their collaborative activities with the Kwara State Government, particularly, in the area of facilitation of relief materials for victims of displacement-inducing events in the State.

The study found that the major strategy of the Kwara State Government is setting up shelters, as temporary IDP camps in situations of internal population displacement. An instance of such was in Alapa, Asa LGA, where an outbreak of violence between Pastoralists and Farmers resulted in population displacement. In addition, the State Government also responds to situations of population displacement by setting up an Emergency and Relief Committee to oversee the welfare of displaced persons. The committee is saddled with the responsibility of distributing food and other relief materials to IDPs. The submission of the Secretary of Kwara State Emergency and Relief Services Office reveals that the State Government's strategy for disaster-induced displacement is more reactive than proactive. This is particularly true in the area of setting up committees, whose responsibilities start when displacement has already occurred.

The zonal office of NCRM&I confirmed that the IDP camp in Patigi LGA was the only permanent IDP camp in Kwara State, established by the Federal Government and designated to receive people displaced by flood in the area. The camp has several blocks of rooms that shelter victims of perennial floods in the area. During displacement, the State Government in conjunction with relevant stakeholders provides relief materials for displaced persons in the camp. However, with a 10,000-capacity, the Patigi camp lacks basic amenities. Not only is it mostly vacant for about seven months a year, but its location in the Kwara North Senatorial District makes it inaccessible to IDPs from Kwara Central and South Senatorial Districts. The State Emergency and Relief Services Office acknowledged the presence of IDPs who live in non-camp settings across Kwara

State but there was no reference to government-facilitated safety net, official monitoring and evaluation systems, or any other mechanism for tracking either the locations or movement of such people for possible assistance.

Conclusion

Internal displacement of populations has attracted the attention of government and non-governmental organizations the world over in recent times and led to policy formulation and implementation. Unlike refugees whose protection befalls the United Nations High Commission for Refugees in collaboration with host countries as stipulated in the 1951 Convention, it is the sole responsibility of national governments to see to it that citizens who fall within the category of internally displaced persons (IDPs) receive adequate assistance. Irrespective of the causes of displacement (natural or violent-induced disasters), IDPs are usually registered and settled in specifically designed camps from where they ought to receive hand-outs. Following many years of insecurity in the northeast of Nigeria provoked by the Boko Haram insurgency, Kwara State in the north-central geopolitical zone has witnessed an influx of desperate citizens in search of a safer abode, away from the conflict zones. Through a questionnaire and a series of interviews, this paper has found out that there is no official settlement for the many survivors of insurgency who moved into Kwara State. The only permanent IDP camp established by the Federal Government and located at Patigi LGA is designed to attend to the victims of flooding and similar disasters within the State. Consequently, undocumented IDPs from the northeast have ended up fending for themselves in non-camp settings such as rented accommodation, uncompleted buildings, school premises, market places to name but a few. They constitute a menace to peace and security in host communities. In other words, residents feel insecure because of the increasing population of the IDPs who enter their communities at night. Their physical and mental health is threatened in the face of increasing demographic imbalance. Above all, a high level of impoverishment threatens all seven major components of human security for both IDPs and host communities. The study has also found that the Kwara State Emergency and Relief Services Office which was created 16 years ago is yet to be upgraded to a full-fledged State Emergency Management Agency. This delay constitutes a limitation to the State's capacity to manage internal displacement optimally. Given that the state of harmony (Kwara) is a preferred location for displaced persons coming from other states, the government should therefore strengthen, in collaboration with Federal agencies, the capacity of the Zonal Office of National Commission for Refugees, Migrants & Internally Displaced Persons (NCRMI) to establish an efficient profiling system for all IDPs to ensure adequate interventions according to internationally accepted best practices.

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