

SSUES Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies, Vol. 1 (Issue 1): 223 – 229; December, 2024 ISSN: 079-2117



# AN ASSESSMENT OF THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND PROVISIONS OF THE CHILDREN OF DISPLACED PERSONS IN KEBBI, SOKOTO AND ZAMFARA STATES, NIGERIA

#### Dr. Ibrahim Muhammad Yabo

Department of Educational Management Faculty of Education Shehu Shagari University of Education Sokoto Ibrayab31@gmail.com

# Illiyasu Abubakar

Department of Primary Education Shehu Shagari College of Education Sokoto Iliyasyabo@gmail.com

#### **Abstract**

Nigeria's educational program has successfully addressed the needs of many minority populations, including the physically challenged and the girl child, through initiatives like the National Commission for Nomadic Education. However, there remain significant gaps in educational access for displaced persons, particularly in the North West regions of Kebbi, Sokoto, and Zamfara States. Educational provision as well as its accessibility is a constitutional right that must be fulfilled by all Governments. Many displaced persons especially children of school age in Kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara Sates are not in school. They are mostly with their parents or at times alone in the streets roaming about and looking for one kind of assistance or the other. This situation had many a times prone these innocent children to vulnerability of many types including child labor, sexual harassment and even kidnappings for ritual gains. Thispaper identify and discussesthe current educational provisions for the children of the displaced persons and their inadequacies in the three identified states with the view to providing actionable recommendations to improve infrastructural provision which include among others requesting governments of the affected states to provide capacity building training support to teachers for enhanced performance.

Keywords: Displaced Persons, Needs, Provision, Children, Infrastructure.

### Introduction

The need to provide education to the door step of every Nigerian citizen is a constitutional right that must be fulfilled by the Nigerian government. One of the essence of Education is to produce a more socialized person capable of utilizing the available resources within and outside the immediate environment in order to cope with the challenges of the modern economy. The National Policy on Education document spelled clearly government's commitment to ensure that Education is not only a birthright but must be brought and made accessible within affordable reach to all children, irrespective of their geographical influences like the children of displaced persons.

This is one of the major reasons why governments at the local, state, and federal levels invest huge budgetary sums in education; for no society will attain the desired

development when its citizens are illiterate. Education is crucial for social integration and economic development, as affirmed by Article 26 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Nigerian Constitution. Despite significant investments in education and the successes of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) program, displaced persons in Kebbi, Sokoto, and Zamfara States remain underserved.

The number of Displaced Persons keep rising in Northern Nigeria placing them at a continuous disadvantage with marked inaccessibility to social services to bring education to them in the communities they are found. It is important to stress here that, the process of educating the children of the displaced persons in Northern Nigeria will no doubt integrate them into their indigenous society as well serve as an impetus to mobilize them more effectively to return back to their original indigenous home where they were

formally displaced from. This research study recognized the fact that a considerable number of societies that has been displaced as a result of banditry activities in Kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara States have no access to quality education. The fact is not far from the difficult situation the displaced persons were associated with. This is evidently clear in such villages as Ribah, Dabai, in Kebbi State. Isa, Gwadabawa, Goronvo Illela. Tangaza and Government in Sokoto State While, Maru, Shinkafi, Maradun, Zurmi, Bungudu LGAs are among worst affected in Zamfara State. This study investigates the educational provisions for displaced children in these states, aiming to identify gaps and propose solutions to ensure inclusive education for all.

It is important to stress that, education is a birthright for all citizens of Nigeria, it is an indispensable asset required by all persons irrespective of race, sex, gender, and sociocultural, political, geographical or economic background. Education is therefore necessary for all categories of persons, to equip them with knowledge and skills needed to cope and compete favorably with the modern challenges and complexities of modern life. The displaced persons were deprived from enjoying modern development opportunities taking place around their environment and most especially in the area of formal education. Many children from the displaced families were found roaming around the streets of major towns in the North West of Nigeria throwing them into vulnerability of all sorts including hunger, poverty, in accessibility to good health facilities, poor sanitary/hygienic conditions and lack of access to quality Education. It is important to stress that, the essence of education, is to socialize and integrate people into societies so that they can develop and contribute to the development of those societies. It is important to note that despite significant government efforts in education, displaced persons in Kebbi, Sokoto, and Zamfara States face severe educational deprivation due to ongoing banditry and other socio-economic challenges.

Displaced person is a person that is expelled, deported, or impelled to flee from his or her country of nationality or habitual residence by the forces or consequences of war or oppression. This paper discusses the current

educational provisions and identify the unmet needs of displaced children, proposing robust solutions to integrate them into the formal education system and enhance their socioeconomic prospects.

Education for the displaced persons was introduced in Nigeria with the view of integrating all categories of displaced people, including the children of displaced persons from banditry attacks to the social lives of dominant cultures. This study aims to highlight the educational needs of displaced children in Kebbi, Sokoto, and Zamfara States, and to encourage state governments to address these needs effectively. The findings of the research will raise awareness among stakeholders and prompt them on the action to be taken to ensure inclusive education for all children. Additionally, the study will provide valuable data for further research and inform policy decisions especially the National Emergency Management Agency and the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs to make use of the findings of the study to provide a more robust educational provisions for displaced persons.

This research study, therefore, is expected to find out the educational needs of the children of displaced persons in Kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara States, with the view to tasking the governments in these States to respond to their educational needs and provision.

The findings of the research will be of significance to the displaced persons by sensitizing them to acquaint themselves with the basic skills required to support a successful life.

The findings of this research will also create awareness among all stakeholders in education so as to task them to participate actively in the provision of education to displaced persons.

Additionally, the research study will study the villages residing around major cities in the three States of Kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara and the data obtained from the research findings will assist in understanding better the problems encountered by the children of displaced persons in these States. These problems when properly assessed will bring the desired changes by generating both private partnerships government and in intervention order to enhance the

economic/political cultural and social productivity of the displaced persons in these three States in particular and Nigeria at large.

Finally, the findings of this research will also serve as a guide to the National Emergency Management Agency of the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs to ensure a more robust political will with regards to educating children of displaced persons in Nigeria.

## **Categories of Displaced Children**

Nigeria has in 2012 made provision for the protection of the General and Specific Rights of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) including rights to Protection Displacement, Rights to Protection and Assistance during Displacement, Rights to support Displaced Children, among others. This means that, internally displaced persons stands equal opportunities with every Nigerian citizen to access all fringe benefits such as Health care, right to freedom and more specifically the right to access quality Education. It is important to note that the manifestation of many forms of insecurity in Nigeria has resulted to displacement of many families across Nigeria with resultant varied social negative impact to affected communities. For example in the Southwestern region displaced communities as a result of conflicts between cults ritual groups that may be at logger heads as well as ethnic clashes resulting from land disputes and leadership tussle has led to the loss of lives, properties and even displacements of weaker groups. This made the societies became fearful as communities involved in clashes. This agrees with Nasiruetal (2023) who asserts that, in the South-south and Southeast regions, insecurity manifests in the form of oil bunkering, pipe-line vandals, kidnapping for ransom, communal clashes and armed struggles for political independence through (Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra [MASSOB].

Insecurity in the three northern regions of the country manifests mostly in the form of ethnoreligious clashes, the most prominent of which is the activities of a religious fundamentalist group popularly known as 'Boko Haram' (Western Education is forbidden).

It should be made clear here that, in Nigeria children from many groups that were

considered weak, minority or disadvantaged are not in school due to the social circumstances they are confronted with. These include the physically challenged, the bush Kambari, the migrant fishermen/nomadic pastoralists and the displaced persons.

The Federal Government of Nigeria in collaboration with the Foreign, Common wealth and Development Office (FCDO) of the UK and UNICEF had implemented the Girls' Education Program Phase 3 (GEP 3) in Kebbi, Kano, Katsina, Niger, Sokoto and Zamfara States where additional one million girls were supported to enroll and stay to learn and transit in schools. This initiative has changed the narrative and children from many indigent families have accessed, transited and graduated from school.

Education in Emergency: Providing Accessible Education to the Displaced Children in Nigeria

The most critical component in education delivery is funding. Adequate funding with good management will provide high-quality education in Nigeria. Funds for renovation of schools and institution, acquiring quality training facilities, research grants, decent teachers' salaries and welfare, etc. are the things that need to be increased, released and spent appropriately. The right to education constitutes a fundamental human right as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article (1948). This critical component must be adequately funded coupled with effective learning strategies that could provide improved learning to the displaced children These categories of children feature as a result of emergency situation of varied forms which necessitated them to be in the critical situation they are confronted with. This agrees with the strategy adopted by the UNHCR, (2024) in collaboration with aUN Refugee Agency, and the Al-Habibiyyah Islamic Society, a faith-based organization in Nigeria, where they partnered until June 2024 to galvanize support for internally displaced persons in Nigeria. They have identified among other works they did most of the displaced persons in Nigeria which currently according to them, stands at over 3.3 million people in Nigeria.

It should be recalled however in its Annual Report the UNHCR in 2024 revealed that, as at 2019, at least 13.4 million school-age

children (5-17 years old) were internally displaced due to conflict or violence. These numbers may not likely include many accounted internally displaced children mainly due to lack of reliable data. The report only considers IDPs affected by conflict or violence, while millions more displaced children due to other crises, such as climate change and environmental disasters have not been included. Education emerged as a key priority for internally displaced children and youth consulted so far by the UN High level Panel on Internal Displacement and for many internally displaced parents revealed that the success of their integration or settlement is dependent on their children's ability to access education.

It is important to stress that: The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and many other international human rights instruments are clear demonstration of effective strategy in place for ensuring education inclusion for the IDPs. Education Equality is one of the key principles underpinning the Education 2030 Agenda and SDG4.

It should be discerned here that, as displacement normally occurs during conflict or environmental disasters, provision of education must be fundamentally included in responses alongside other basic needs as it is life-saving and life-sustaining. Gbenga, G.I. (2022); suggested the implementation of certain strategies for educating displaced children as a result of emergencies as follows:

- 1. Implementation of UN guiding principle 23 stating education as aright which must be free, compulsory and accessible with training facilities for the IDPs should be carried out;
- The ministry of education should formulate policy for education in emergencies that will cater specifically for the needs of the IDPs.
- 3. Provision of special educational management skills if the children care to be fully catered for such as training teachers on: Psychosocial skills, Safe school and child protection, peace education, and conflict management education among others.

- 4. Emergency vanguards, disaster management club should be introduced to the primary and secondary school curriculum to support vulnerable families attain literacy with minimum ease.
- 5. Educational managers should be involved in disaster management planning, mostly concerning school related disasters such as student abduction, fire outbreak, rape, flood and school plant collapse.
- 6. Emergency ethics and principles should be inculcated into school activities.
- 7. Nursery rhythms, cartoons and poems on emergency signs, codes, and numbers and safety tips should be introduced and replicated in Nigerian languages; this will support the "SDGs" lifelong education target.
- 8. The impact of the media is highly necessary for any sustainable development. Thus, all forms of media platforms such as print, television and radio must all work harmoniously to ensure education for sustainable development in the IDPs camps;
- 9. Development of training modules which can be used at teacher training institutes to produce specialized teachers for education in emergencies with necessary skills. This will also involve capacity building of the teachers training institutes and development of master trainers and resource persons who can teach other teachers.
- 10. Establishment of permanent and standard IDP camps in all the state of the federation well-equipped with classrooms. the National Emergency Furthermore, (NEMA) Management Agency partnership with the Federal ministry of education should have an established department to cater for education in emergencies thus ensuring prompt and sustainable responses to the educational needs of the IDPs.
- 11. The use of blended learning a key strategy that best suits displaced children due to their peculiarity. Blended learning is a hybrid of face-to-face (F-T-F) and computer mediated form of instruction that improves instructional process especially for the children in IDP camp and Schools

which are usually over crowded with on the spot recruitment of teachers.

It should be stressed clearly here that, the need to include internally displaced children in planning and decision-making processes is a common aspect of the above stated strategies. However, most IDPs' do not have stake in some of the decisions taken on their behalf simply because they do not have representative

It is pertinent to note that, certain policies that were construed to support education for the displaced families are only generic in their form but lack specific focus to cater for more specific needs of girls or children with disabilities. Although the policies have taken care of issues like vulnerability, Age, gender and diversity aspects and haw to determine children's experience of displacement and their Particular risks and needs. They should be acknowledged and used to shape planning and implementation in a multi-faceted manner phases in a crosscutting fashion.

# Gender disparities in school enrolment

Save the Children Nigeria conducted a study in 2022 and explained that, both conflict and disaster-related displacement had a far reaching consequences to the displacement which inevitability shapes the impacts experienced by affected communities. The report revealed that, both Colombia and Nigeria, where displacement was conflictinduced, enrolment rates decreased following displacement, especially amongst girls. In Columbia, the percentage of internally displaced girls enrolled in school dropped by 9 per cent, while for boys it only dropped by 2 per cent. Similarly, In Nigeria girls' enrolment dropped by 8 percent, while boys' increased by 3 percent.

The UN Secretary General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement aims to help internally displaced persons and their children find a durable solution to their displacement, prevent new displacement crises from emerging those ensure situations and facing displacement receive effective protection and assistance. It is important to note that, if these initiatives are effectively implemented, displaced persons in Nigeria will receive quality education as well as be part of current

global technological advancement and improved sustainable economy.

# Impact of banditry for education in North-West Nigeria

Banditry had resulted to school closure posing threat to the future of many children that have no alternative access to schooling. This has crippled school enrolment with far reaching negative consequence to future development of the citizens of the affected societies. Banditry attacks have a far reaching traumatic experiences to the children either as direct victims or vulnerable witnesses as the case may be. It is important to note that, school closure has in many cases distorted school calendars putting the affected region in a continuous disadvantage. Kamai, P, etal (2024) revealed that, the socio-economic consequences of disrupted education, include limited access to learning opportunities, reduced human capital development, and a weakened social fabric. This requires urgent need for a more comprehensive security that would possibly engaged measures community vigilante services supported by a committed policy that would safeguard educational institutions and ensure the right to education for all children in the region is realistic and achievable.

The attacks on schools have led to many school closures in the North-West region of Nigeria. For example, in July 2021, Kaduna state government shutdown 13 schools after the abduction of 150 students from Bethel High School. In 2022, the Government of Zamfara state announced the closure of all schools in the state after the abduction of over 200 girls from the school in Jangebe and 75 Students from the Government Secondary School Kaya in Maradun Local Government. The governor of Kano state had also ordered the closure of ten schools located outside the state metropolis and five other health training institutions in the state. Governor of Yobe state had also, ordered the closure of all boarding schools where all the students went home except SS3students. In Katsina state after the Kankara abduction in December 2020, the Government ordered the closure of all schools. Sokoto state Government also ordered the shutdown of 16 boarding schools situated along its borders. Considering the above scenarios, it is important to note that, one of the impact of banditry on education is

turning the abandoned schools into dormitories and hide outs for criminals especially the bandits.

This has added more fears to the citizens of the affected communities as they wouldn't know specifically when the bandits will leave their area. This poses security threats to the inhabitants of the affected areas. It should be made clear however that, provision of education to the door step of every Nigerian citizen is a constitutional right that must be fulfilled by the Government of Nigeria. Therefore serious measures must be put in place to ensure attainment of this constitutional obligation

#### Recommendations

For successful implementation of effective strategies to deliver effective learning to the displaced children in Kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara, the following recommendations are eminent.

- Government in the three focused states should acquire and secure up to date data about displaced children so that effective education delivery strategies are put in place to ensure success.
- Government in the three focus states are to pay more attention on training the children with skill acquisition as a substitute to address some domestic economic challenges faced by the children as well as support them in acquiring some essential needs for their schooling such as books, writing material etc.
- State and Federal Governments in the three states are to sustain continuous capacity development training to the teachers of the displaced children with the view to providingthem with an up to date teaching strategy that would adequately address issues of children affected by displacements of various forms.
- The fact that displaced children faced several challenges, it is advisable that, teachers, adopt use of Blended Learningas an instructional strategy to cater for the needs of the children.

#### **References:**

- Adefisoye, T. (2015). An assessment of Nigeria's institutional capacity in disaster management. *Scientific Research Journal (SCIRJ)*, **III** (I): 2201-2796.
- Alimi T.L (2024): Out of School Children in Nigeria: The Struggle for Education and Solution: Edu Time, Africa.
- Bowles, S. and Gintis. Η (2011): Contradictions in the Educational Theory of Gintis Bowles. Sociological Review, 31 (3): 471 DOI:10.1111/j.1467-954X.1983.tb00904.x
- Gbenga, G.I. (2021): Managing Educational Needs OF Internally Displaced Persons for Sustainable Development in Nigeria. The Way Forward.
- Ibeh, C. Achimugu, J.A (2023): Implications of Armed Banditry for Education in the Nigeria's North-West Region. Geneva Center for Security Policy.
- Kamai, P, Bazza, B.N, Pilani, P.N, & Ekechukwu, K (2024): Educational Insecurity in Northwest Nigeria. May, 2024. *International Journal of Religion*, **5** (7): 151-164
- FCDO, UNICEF's (2022): Girls' education programme sends an additional 1.5 million girls to School in Northern Nigeria.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013): The National Policy on Education, Federal Ministry of Information, Lagos.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014): Federal Republic of Nigeria: Safe School Initiative. Defense Headquarters, Abuja, Nigeria.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2020): *National Commission for Nomadic Education.*Decree NO. 41 of 12th December 1989, Kaduna, Kade Communications.
- Michelo, J. (2013): Inequality in Public Education Threatened. DOI:

https://doi.org/10.55420/2693.9193.v2.n 2.102

Nasiru, B, Ibrahim, M.M Umar, A.D, Saadatu, M. (2023): Effects of Insecurity on Teaching Practice Program: A case Study of Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara States.

Save the Children Nigeria (2022): Annual Report: Nigeria.

UNHCR (2024): Displaced Persons in Nigeria.