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**AN EVALUATION OF THE RESETTLEMENT  
PROGRAMS OF BAKASSI PENINSULA DISPLACED  
PERSONS: 2006 – 2016**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This study evaluated the impact of the resettlement programs on the displaced persons of Bakassi Peninsula in Nigeria from 2006-2016. A Multiple method of data collection and sources which include questionnaire, interviews, observation in a quantitative and qualitative nature was adopted for this study. Correlation coefficient analysis was performed using SPSS 20.0 version. Result shows a significant positive impact of the resettlement programs on the life of the displaced persons. The programs effectively tackled some of the displaced persons problems at ( $R^2= 0.936$ ,  $n=400$ ,  $p=0.0005$ ). The results show that the resettlement programs achieved about 41% success in permanent resettlement. Housing was found as the most significant need of the displaced persons (80%) whereas funding was the most significant challenge to the humanitarian/resettlement organizations. These findings suggest that the government and responsible agencies should adopt a more sustainable approach in order to achieve a 100% permanent resettlement.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Displacement, Resettlement, Humanitarian Organizations, Housing, Funding.*

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The unwanted displacement of people from their natural homes has become an issue of global concern. This ugly scenario is mostly caused by both natural and anthropogenic incidents (Jacobsen1996). The natural incidents largely include earthquakes and

other natural disasters beyond human control whereas the anthropogenic incidents include ethnic crisis, political differences, religious insurgency and resource control struggles. In recent years, several nations such as Yemen, Vietnam, South Sudan, Syria, Somalia, Rwanda and Nigeria have witnessed high level of

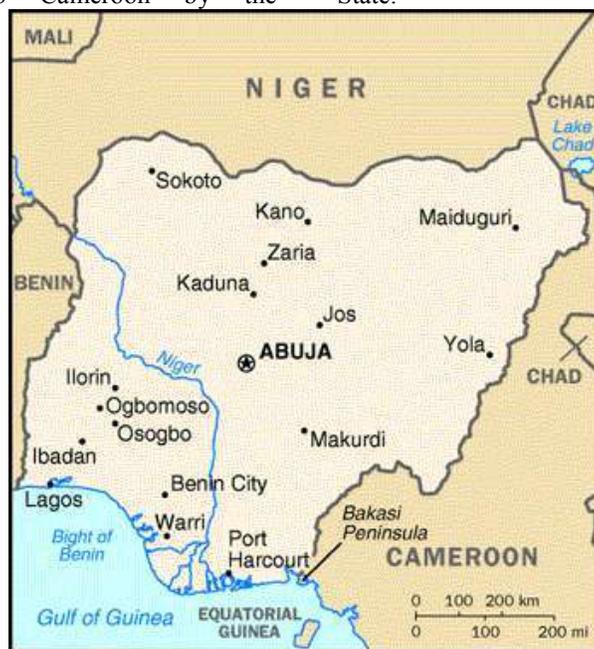
human displacement largely caused by anthropogenic incidents. The implication of these incidents is forced displacement of persons (Krill 2001).

In Nigeria, several ethnic crisis and religious insurgency have displaced thousands of people from their natural homes across the geo-political zones. In the North, religious insurgency in some States has displaced thousands of citizens from their ancestral homes. Most of these internally displaced people (IDP) now live in government secured places. In the South, resource control struggle in the entire Niger Delta region has caused the displacement of thousands of Nigerians especially in Bakassi Peninsular.

Bakassi Peninsula, a rich natural resource border town between Nigeria and Cameroon was contentiously awarded to Cameroon by the

international court of Justice (ICJ) on the 10<sup>th</sup> of October 2002 (Agba 2010). Bakassi Peninsular is situated in the gulf of Guinea and formally in Bakassi Local Government Area of Cross River State in Nigeria as shown in Figure 1.

A series of tripartite meeting between the United Nations, Nigerian and Cameroon representatives resulted to the first withdrawal of people from the area on August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006 whereas the ceremonial handover to Cameroon was done on August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2006, later known as the “Green Tree Agreement” and signed by the two countries (Agba, 2010). About 12,941 Bakassi Peninsula inhabitants were originally displaced and camped in Akwalkot Eyo Edem in Apkpabuyo Local Government Area of Cross River State.



**Fig. 1: Map of Nigeria showing Bakassi Peninsular**

The internally displaced persons (IDPs) at Bakassi Peninsular and other regions are faced with numerous challenges which affect their livelihood. Some of these problems include ineffective humanitarian program implementation, poor documentation, poor housing conditions, unpaid subsidies, insufficient food, insecurity and inadequate data (Salama et al., 2001). It is therefore the responsibility of the Nigerian government as well as national and international Humanitarian organizations to intervene through programs that will adequately re-integrate the IDPs back to the society. A good resettlement plan should embody government responsibility on IDPs rights, protection of host population or community interest, and environment protection. (Cernea, 2000)

The objective of this study is therefore to evaluate the progress of the resettlement programs for

the internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Bakassi Peninsular between 2006-2016 and identify those factors that significantly influence the program and the significant need of the IDPs.

## 2.0 METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Population of the study area

The Bakassi Peninsular IDPs total population was estimated at 12,941 (SEMA, 2016). From this number, a sample size of the population was determined using the Taro Yamane formula for sample selection from large population size.

### 2.2 Sampling technique

A combination of systematic random and purposive sampling technique was used for this study. A sample size of 400 persons was drawn using the Taro Yamane formula represented below:

Taro Yamane formula for determining sample size:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2} \tag{1}$$

Where:

n is sample population, N is total population, e is level of precision (0.05), Yamane (1967:886)

**2.3 Source of data and collection**

Primary and secondary data sources were qualitatively and quantitatively utilized in this study. Survey questionnaires were administered on a sample population. Desk review of resettlement policy-related documents, desk review of document related to resettlement implementation and impact, key informant interview and interview with IDPs were carried out to generate data for this study.

**2.4 Data analysis**

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0 was used for the statistical analyses. Correlation analysis was used in testing the hypothesis in which the variables were coded. Coding

of variables in quantitative research is very critical for better interpretation of results. The questions and responses were coded and entered in the computer using Microsoft Excel software.

**2.5 Validity/reliability of instrument**

Validity measures the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences which are based on the research results. Content validity in this research design was assured by careful choice of indicators which informed the construction of the questionnaires. Expert guidance from professionals in the field was used to design questionnaire. This helped in improving the content validity of the instrument. Pearson product moment was used to test the reliability of the instrument and a correlation coefficient of 0.8 was established indicating that the instrument were reliable.

**3.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

**3.1 Origins of displaced persons**

IDPs from Bakassi Peninsular randomly originated from five states which are Cross River, Bayelsa, Rivers, Akwa Ibom and Delta States. The number of IDPs from these states is summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1: Number of IDPs by State in Bakassi Peninsula**

S/N	States	Total displaced person	Family heads
1	Cross River	4085	1502
4	Bayelsa	2761	848
2	Rivers	2572	969
3	Akwa Ibom	1847	1502
	Delta	1627	485

Table 1 shows the sequence of the number of IDPs in Bakassi Peninsula. Cross River, Bayelsa, Rivers, Akwa Ibom and Delta has number of IDPs in descending order. Cross River understandably has the highest IDPs due to the proximity of Bakassi Peninsula to the State.

**3.2 Displaced persons permanently resettled**

A total of 4690 IDPs were resettled in 2008 by sending them back to their state of origin. In 2009, a total of 352 returnees from these mentioned states were allocated housing unit by government officials as a permanent resettlement package. A total of 2510 IDPs are still yet to be permanently resettled in one form or the other including the people left from the 2009 housing unit resettlement and the 2013 group of IDPs who expects any form of permanent resettlement package. Within these three years (2008, 2009 and 2013), about 1399 families of the 4261 displaced families were permanently resettled, constituting about 41% resettlement rate.

**3.3 Socio-economic data of respondents**

A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed. Out of the 400 respondents, 278 (70%) respondents were female whereas 122 (30%) respondents were male. Investigations into respondents education shows that primary education has the highest (52%) number of respondents followed by informal education (30%) and secondary education (16%), respectively. In terms of respondent's occupation, 50% respondents were farmers, 14% were traders, 6% were students whereas 30% has no recognizable occupation. In terms of religion, 89% of the respondents were Christians whereas 11% were traditional practitioners. In terms of the respondents' state of origin, 30% were from Cross River State, 20% from Rivers State, 18% from Bayelsa State, 16% from Akwa Ibom State and 16% from Delta State, respectively. In terms of respondent's age, 38% were between 31-40 years, 27% were between 21-30 years, 20% were between 50 years and above, 9% were between 10-20 years and 4% were between 41-50 years old, respectively. In terms of income distribution of respondents, 53% of respondents have no source of income whereas 48% earned about 1000-5000 Naira/month. In terms of

family size, 53% of respondents have a family size of 4-6 persons, 47% have a family size of 7 persons and above whereas 0.5% has a family size of 2 persons, respectively.

### 3.4 Respondents' challenges

Several challenges were identified by humanitarian organizations during the resettlement program. These challenges in their order of importance include funding, difficult terrain to farmland, government bureaucracy and problem from host community. In terms of drinking water, 98% of respondents obtain their drinking water from the stream whereas 2% obtain water from boreholes. In terms of feeding, 51% of respondents eat once/day, 2% eat twice/day whereas 47% claim they don't eat at all some days. In terms of source of food, 96% of respondents provide their food, 3% receive food from government sometimes, 1% claim aid agencies/NGO provide their food whereas 0.5% claim aid agencies provide their food sometimes. In terms of children education, 64% of respondents said their children study within the host community whereas 36% of respondent's children are not schooling. In terms of healthcare, 75% of respondents claim they don't have any healthcare facility and treatment whereas 25% uses traditional medicine. In terms of farmland, 86% of respondents farm on rented land from host community facilitated by NGOs whereas 14% of respondents do not have a farmland. In terms of respondents trading skills, about 75% buy and sale their products within the host community whereas 25% have nothing to sale or buy. In terms of harassment experienced by respondents, 68% did not experience any form of harassment, 14% experience thievery, 10% experienced community intimidation whereas 8% experienced sexual violence.

### 3.5 Respondent's perception of the resettlement program

The distribution of resettlement program benefits shows that 55% of respondents have benefited

in at least one of the programs, 27% have benefited in one program while 18% haven't benefited from any program. In terms of respondent's current need, 81% needs house, 7% need business and trade skill, 5% need education, 3% need farmland and healthcare whereas 2% need domestic items. In terms of program effectiveness according to respondent's perception, 83% says barely effective, 12% say ineffective, 3% thinks it is effective whereas only 2% thinks it is very effective. In terms of positive impact of humanitarian program on displaced persons, 80% of respondents say positive, 13% strongly disagreed on the positive impact, 4% agreed on the positive impact whereas 3% strongly agree on the positive impact of the programs.

## DISCUSSION

A total of 4690, 6251 and 2000 displaced persons were withdrawn from Bakassi Peninsula in 2008, 2009 and 2013, respectively. A total of 1750 families have been permanently resettled out of the 4261 families that were originally displaced.

This study found out through field survey that some of the houses allocated to the IDPs were confiscated from them by some unidentified people from the community who claim to be "militants". This action was attributed to the inability of the government to pay compensation for land to the host communities. This is a source of secondary displacement and government must take responsibility for such a grave failure.

The living condition of IDPs who are yet to be resettled at their respective camps is pathetic and sordid. About 71% of the IDPs yet to be permanently resettled still live in the IDP camps which are mainly classroom halls. IDPs are allocated corners within the hall which serve as both room and kitchen for them as shown in Figure 2. This kind of arrangement can be deleterious to health and pose significant health and environmental challenge as well as other social vices. About 22% of the IDPs yet to be permanently resettled were squatting with people within the community.



**Figure 2: Pictures showing IDPs place of living**

Location: Akwa Ikot Eyo Edem, Akpaboyu, cross river state; (Source: field survey, 2016)

The major source of drinking water for IDPs was the streams. About 98% of the IDPs obtain their drinking water from the stream whereas about 2% obtain their drinking water from boreholes. Due to poor environmental awareness, streams serve as dumpsites for waste for most communities. Drinking untreated water from the streams could be dangerous for the IDPs.

The stream from where the IDPs obtain their drinking water is nearly polluted as shown in Figure 3. This can have significant negative effect on their health. Government must make urgent and concerted effort to provide the IDPs with potable water by drilling boreholes in the IDP camps.



**Figure 3: Pictures showing polluted source of drinking water**

Location: Akwa Ikot Eyo Edem, Akpaboyu, cross river state; (Source: field survey, 2016)

Food is essential for all living organisms and is required thrice/day. However, majority (51%) of the IDPs could only feed once/day, a situation that is saddening. About 47% of IDPs claim they don't eat at all each day. This has been attributed to the fact that about 97% of the IDPs provide food for themselves with almost little or no income. The situation is worrisome and calls for immediate response from the government authorities to improve food provision and skill acquisition to enable the IDPs become self-sufficient in the future.

This study also found that the health of the IDPs was not given the attention it deserves. There was no medical or health facility found within and around the host community. Majority (75%) of the IDPs have no means of medical treatment while about 29% rely on traditional treatment as a way to overcome illness. The IDPs have been exposed to dangerous and harsh health conditions and require urgent and immediate effort from the government to provide free and affordable healthcare within the IDP camps and host communities.

Little have been done by the government to improve the income level of the IDPs as majority of

them (53%) are still jobless whereas about 48% earn as little as 1000-5000 Naira/month. While this is below the United Nations (UN) poverty level of \$1/day, it is also well below the monthly income (100,000 Naira/month) of the IDPs who were traditional fishermen prior to their displacement. Government should provide empowerment programs for the IDPs to learn various trades and acquire skills necessary to improve their lives and make more earnings since they are no longer in their traditional fishing business.

The success of the resettlement programs anchors on the availability of fund. International humanitarian organizations recognize funding as the most important factor that influences the resettlement program. It is no doubt that without fund, the resettlement program will fail. Therefore, all hands must be on deck to ensure that adequate fund is provided for the resettlement program in order to re-integrate the IDPs into the society.

### 3.6 Statistical analyses

The data obtained in this study was further subjected to statistical analysis using SPSS 20.0 version. This was to determine whether there was positive significance impact of the resettlement programs on the displaced persons as well as how effective the program implementation has been tackling the displaced persons problems. Result reveals that Pearson correlation coefficient ( $R^2$ ) was 0.936, and that is statistically significant ( $p < 0.005$ ). This implies that, there was a strong, positive impact correlation of the resettlement programs on the people and that, the program implementation has been significantly effective in tackling some of the displaced persons problems which was statistically significant ( $R^2 = 0.936$ ,  $n = 400$ ,  $p = 0.0005$ ). There was also a significant prove of reliability at 0.965, confirming the statistical test validity.

### 4.0 CONCLUSION

This study investigated the progress of the resettlement program of the IDPs in Bakassi Peninsula and found the challenges militating against the progress of the program. It also found the challenges and immediate need of the IDPs. This study therefore concluded that when multifaceted dimensions of vulnerability are reviewed in conjunction, it is hard to escape the conclusion that the region's DPs are a group deserving continued significant attention from government and donors. This also includes periodic evaluation and update of IDPs condition. In view of the deplorable condition of life of the displaced persons which has been demonstrated by organization like United Nation High Commission for Refugee (UNHCR), it is therefore the duty of government and humanitarian agencies to adopt and strictly implement resettlement and reintegration programs for the affected people.

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