

SOCIAL PROTECTION AS A RESPONSE MEASURE IN ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES OF MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY FACING THE INTERNALLY DISPLACE PERSONS (IDPS) IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Social protection is a broad term that covers all measures providing contributory and non-contributory benefits, whether in cash or in kind, to secure protection meant to prevent poverty and vulnerability throughout the life cycle and in relation to key identifiable social risks. while IDPs are persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border and consequent upon that faces many challenges of life such as human rights abuses, lack of access to health care services and education, difficulty

Introduction

Social Protection is often used interchangeably as welfare, social security, safety nets or social insurance mechanism. While these terms might be part of the social protection, none of them standing alone can be said to mean social protection. Social protection can be viewed broadly a all public and private initiatives that provide income or consumption transfers to the poor, protect the vulnerable against destitution, and enhance the social status and rights of the marginalised; with the overall objective of reducing the economic and

in accessing legitimate means of livelihood, discrimination, documentation and identity issues, lack of protective shelter and negligence by government. This paper therefore, using National Social protection and National Internally Displace Policies and semi structured interview, reviews the roles of social protection in addressing the multidimensional poverty experienced by the IDPs in Nigeria and proper suggestions on the way forward such as enrolling them into States and National social register and socio-economic survey, which will made the IDPs data readily available for the government, International and National donors who wish to intervene and offers a pragmatic support to overcome some socio-economic vulnerabilities associated with forced displacement.

Keywords: Multidimensional Poverty, Social Protection, Internally Displaced Persons, Nigeria.

Social vulnerability of the poor and marginalised groups (Devereux & Sabates-Wheeler, 2004)

Social protection is part of the wider strategy to fulfilling the United Nation Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The commitment of the SDGs to social protection is reflected in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Countries are called on, for example, to implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including national floors. Most prominently, SDG 1.3 calls upon countries to implement nationally appropriate social protection systems for all, including floors for reducing and preventing poverty. Similarly of particular reference goals are: to end extreme poverty (Goal 1), Zero hunger and food security (Goal 2); Ensure healthy life and wellbeing (Goal 3); ensure inclusive and quality education (Goal 4) and improved access to clean energy (Goal 7).

Social protection is, therefore, concerned with preventing, managing, and overcoming situations that adversely affect people's wellbeing. It consists of policies and programmes designed to reduce poverty and vulnerability. Such policies promote efficient labour markets and reduce people's exposure to shocks. They enhance people's capacity to manage economic and social risks, including unemployment, exclusion, sickness, disability, maternal and child care, old age challenges and emergencies such as flood and violent conflicts. Such interventions may be carried out by the state, non-governmental actors, the

private sector, or through informal individual or community initiatives (Friedrich. 2018)

However, the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are citizens or long-term residents of a country who have been forced from their place of habitation due to armed conflict or natural disasters but who still remain within the state of displacement. People displaced by armed conflict situations are usually subject to increased vulnerability such as high risk of physical attack, sexual violence, abduction, deprivation from adequate and decent shelter, food and health services, unemployment, lack of access to education, in short multidimensional poverty (IDMC, 2020).

According to National Policy on Displaced person (2021), while there is a visibly large number of IDPs in Nigeria scattered across various States of the federation arising from a multiplicity of causes, there is no reliable database for a comprehensive profile of IDPs in Nigeria. The 34th round of the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) undertaken by International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2021) and National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA, 2021), estimates that there are 2.144,135 million Displaced Persons in six States of the North East Nigeria, with 1.7m of them in Adamawa, Borno, Yobe and Zamfara States as of January 2017. Most of the IDPs were displaced between 2014 and 2015 (68.7%) with 21.5% displaced between 2016 and 2021. The DTM figures also show that 362, 834 of the IDPs are children below 18 years whilst number of female adult IDPs stood at 71,634 and male adult IDPs summed up to 59,650 Internal displacement has overtime, exposed victims to many challenges of life (UNHCR, 2019). Having recognized that in Nigeria and elsewhere in the world, IDPs are amongst the most vulnerable populations, the Federal Government of Nigeria signed and approved the ratification of the African Union (Kampala Convention) for the Protection and Assistance of IDPs in Africa. Similarly, in recent years, the government of Nigeria and its development partners have sought to develop social protection instruments as a mechanism to tackle high rates of poverty and vulnerability in the country and to support progress in both the economic and the social spheres of the country (HagenZanker & Holmes, 2012). However, despite all the ratifications and the commitment on side of the government the challenges of the IDPs individually and collectively in their various camps and centres is still life threatening. It is against this background that this paper attempted to explore the expected roles and impact of social

protection programmes as a response measure in addressing the challenges of multidimensional poverty devastating the IDPs in Nigeria.

The Research Problem

IDPs in Nigeria have overtime been exposed to many challenges of life (IDMC, 2020 & UNHCR, 2019). Most of these challenges according to constitution of Nigeria and other International laws and internal guiding principles, are supposed to be taken care of by the government and other National and International donor institutions and organizations. However, many are still confronting the IDPs in their various camps of residents. As a result of these persistent challenges, this paper explores the expected roles of social protection in addressing some of these challenges confronting the IDPs in Nigeria.

Objectives of the paper,

Against the above research problem the objective of the paper is to review the Social protection functions for addressing the plight of IDPs in Nigeria, and portrays how government can integrates IDPs into National and States social register and socio-economic surveys in order to assist in the formation of IDPs data for easy mining and intervention by the government and private donors

Conceptual framework on Social protection

According to National Social Protection Policy (2016), social protection is a mix of policies and programmes designed for individuals and households throughout the life cycle to prevent and reduce poverty and socio-economic shocks by promoting and enhancing livelihoods and a life of dignity.

Functions of Social Protection: Social protection systems help poor and vulnerable people cope with crises and shocks, find jobs, invest in the health and education of their children, and protect the aging population

The functions of social protection as provided by World Bank 2015, UNDP 2016, and ILO 2017 are:

1. Social protection contributes to human dignity, equity and social justice.
2. It is equally important for political inclusion, empowerment and the more stable development of democratic institutions under the rule of law
3. It functions to cushion the impact of economic crisis among vulnerable populations. It serves as a macroeconomic stabiliser by increasing demand, creating multiplier effects and by enabling people to better overcome

- poverty and social exclusion -paying particular attention to vulnerable groups - protecting and empowering people across the life cycle.
4. It provides basic income security through social transfers such as pensions for the elderly and persons with disabilities, child benefits, income support benefits and/or employment guarantees and services for the unemployed and working poor.
 5. It provides universal access to essential affordable social services in health, water and sanitation, education, food security, housing among others. Social protection benefits improve access to labour markets and direct benefits to those who otherwise would be excluded from only paid worker based measures.
 6. Social protection and labour policies contribute to sustainable, inclusive growth.
 7. Social protection programmes have proven an important aspect of developing countries' efforts to fight poverty and hunger. Hence, social protection has the potential to contribute significantly to long-term sustainable development
 8. Social protection also contributes significantly to economic growth in two main ways. First, by improving access to health care, education and income, it tends to unlock the full productive potential of a country, increase labour market participation and entrepreneurial activity. Second, it acts as a stabiliser in times of economic crisis by helping to maintain a minimum level of purchasing power and therefore, prevents demand from dropping sharply. It helps to maintain household consumption such that people are enabled to overcome the risk of poverty and social exclusion.
 9. Social protection also risk behaviours related to HIV, teen pregnancy, crime, among others – thereby sustaining human capital.
 10. Social protection has been identified as having the potential to support environmental sustainability by strengthening the capacity against natural disasters.

Components of Social Protection

There are three major components of social protection as identified by (Friedrich, 2018) as follows:

- (1) Social Insurance aims at assisting people to deal with issues of vulnerabilities linked to old age, such as loss of income due to retirement,

illness or disability. Examples are the Contributory Pensions Scheme (CPS), the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) – based on insurance principles.

- (2) Social Assistance refers mainly to non-contributory programmes, such as child support grants, school feeding programmes, public works programmes including Cash-For Work Or Food-For-Work, Cash Transfers, Emergency Reliefs and non-contributory pensions for the elderly. It mainly targets the poor and most vulnerable groups. The home-grown school feeding programme of the Federal Government, old age grants in some states of the Federation are examples of social assistance. The underlying reasoning is that discrimination or implementation of policies that lack inclusion can lead to the poverty of its victims.
- (3) Labour Market Programmes reflect the regulation of the labour market - working hours and wages such as the National Minimum Wage Act, safety in the workplace exemplified by the Employee Compensation Act, 2010 and anti-discrimination laws such as HIV and AIDS (Anti-discrimination Act), public works programmes, skill training, micro-financing among others.

Table 1: Components of social protection

Component	Objectives	Activities
Social Assistance	Reducing Poverty and Inequality	Cash transfer; in-kind transfer such as school feeding program; Public work; Targeted subsidies; Social services etc.
Social Insurance	Protecting People and ensuring adequate living standard in the face of shock and live changing	Insurance for: Unemployment; Old age (loss of bread winner); Health; Maternity; Disability; work accident etc.
Labour Market Programs	Improving opportunities through enabling better employment, work and livelihood diversification	Training and development; re-skilling; wage subsidies; Early retirement incentives etc.

Source Author's review from ILO 2017

Constitutional and International Agreements on Social Protection

The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) under the Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy, Chapter 2 (Sections 16 & 17) provides the basis for the provision of social protection in the country. The basic principles include the State's obligations to:

1. Secure the maximum welfare, freedom and happiness of every citizen on the basis of social justice and equality of status and opportunity;
2. Provide suitable and adequate shelter, suitable and adequate food, reasonable national minimum living wage, old age care and pensions, and unemployment, sick benefits and welfare of the disabled;
3. Ensure that all citizens have the opportunity for securing adequate means of livelihood as well as adequate opportunity to secure suitable employment; and ensure that provision is made for public assistance in deserving cases or other conditions of need

International Agreements and Conventions on social protection to which Nigeria is signatory to include:

1. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights which enshrines right to social security (1948);
2. The African Charter on Human and People's Rights and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child which advance social protection with the human rights approach (1981)
3. The Convention on the Rights of the Child which specifically emphasises children's rights to social protection (1989);
4. The UN Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (1995);
5. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and its successor, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with its commitment to poverty reduction;
6. The African Union (AU) Livingstone Transformative Agenda (2006) which incorporates the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
7. ILO Convention 102 which sets minimum standard on social security. This policy considers social protection as both a right and an empowerment instrument, and therefore, provides the framework for all the stakeholders to work together to fulfil the fundamental rights of citizens as endorsed nationally and globally; and
8. ILO Conference on Social Protection Floor Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202) which recommended that member states establish and maintain

social protection floors as a fundamental element of their national social security system.

Multidimensional poverty in Nigeria

Home to over 200 million people, Nigeria is the most populous country on the African continent and the seventh largest in the world. The United Nations forecasts that the population will double by 2050, making it the third largest country in the world (UNDESA, 2019). Given Nigeria's size and growth potential, the pressure to safeguard and improve the lives and livelihood of its citizens is not only significant but indispensable'

According to Brück & Kebede (2013) multidimensional poverty as against the normal poverty which is mainly based on money metric, seeks to understand poverty beyond monetary deprivations and allows measuring poverty using different variables. Poverty itself manifested in different dimensions as such should be examined accordingly. For instance, assessing poverty through access to education, basic infrastructure and other tangible assets could be a more reasonable method that could also capture long-term poverty.

However, Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) creates a more comprehensive picture of poverty. It reveals who is poor and how they are poor by focusing on a range of different disadvantages that poor people experience. These disadvantages move beyond looking solely at a lack of money by focusing on people's life circumstances, their living conditions, and their capabilities. Importantly, a multidimensional measure of poverty recognises that a person who is poor can suffer multiple disadvantages at the same time – for example, they may have poor health or malnutrition, a lack of clean water or electricity, poor quality of work or little schooling (NMDPI, 2022). An MPI reflects the overlapping disadvantages that affect poor people, illuminating which disadvantages cluster together in some areas and for specific sub-groups, so policies can address them effectively

According to the Nigeria MPIS (2022) presented in table 2, 62.9% of people in Nigeria just fewer than 133 million people are multidimensional poor, suggesting that they experience deprivations in more than one dimension, or in at least 26% of weighted indicators. The average deprivation score among poor people, which shows the intensity of poverty, is 40.9%. The Nigeria MPI (2022) is 0.257, showing that poor people in Nigeria experience just over one-quarter of all possible deprivations

Table 2: Multidimensional Poverty in Nigeria

Poverty cut-off (K)	Index	Value
K Value = 26%	MPI	0.257
	Incidence (H %)	62.9
	Intensity (A %)	40.9
	No. of poor people in (million)	132.92

Source: Multidimensional poverty Index Survey 2021/2022

National Policy on Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

The following content was retrieved from the publication of National Policy on Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) policy in Nigeria (2013) prepared by National Commission on Refugees (NCR) in collaboration with Ministry of Special Duties and Inter-Governmental Affairs

Policy Framework: This policy provides a framework for national responsibility towards prevention and protecting citizens and, in some cases, non-citizens, from incidences of arbitrary and other forms of internal displacement, meets their assistance and protection needs during displacement, and ensure their rehabilitation, return, re-integration and resettlement after displacement. The policy spells out principles guiding humanitarian assistance and implementation of durable solutions in situations of internal displacement in Nigeria.

Policy Goal and Objectives: The overall goal of this policy is to strengthen institutional mechanisms and framework for the realisation of the rights, dignity and wellbeing of vulnerable populations through the prevention of the root causes, mitigation of the impact and achievement of durable solutions to internal displacement in Nigeria. This policy therefore seeks to achieve the following specific objectives:

- a. Ensure the establishment of a comprehensive and gender responsive framework for national responsibility, coordination and collaboration with respect to protection, assistance and other humanitarian interventions related to internal displacement in Nigeria.
- b. Provide for the respective obligations, responsibilities and roles of various agencies and institutions of government and non-state actors including communities, civil society organizations, armed groups, international humanitarian and development partners or any other relevant actors with

respect to the prevention of internal displacement , protection of, and assistance to internally displaced persons in Nigeria;

c. Promote the fundamental human rights of all internally displaced persons in Nigeria and ensure their maximum access to protection and assistance without any form of discrimination whatsoever;

d. Accentuate the commitment of the Government of Nigeria to the obligations of state parties under various international treaties, conventions and protocols relating to humanitarian law and human rights protection in situations of emergencies and internal displacement, with special attention to the Kampala Convention; and

e. Ensure accountability of state and non-state actors including individuals, armed groups, multinationals and other actors whose actions or in-actions directly or indirectly result in arbitrary displacement of vulnerable populations in Nigeria

Rights of IDPs:

(a) All rights contained in the Constitution of Nigeria statutes and domesticated sub-regional, regional and international human rights and humanitarian instruments which all citizens of Nigeria are entitled to shall be applicable to all internally displaced persons in Nigeria.

(b) All IDPs have the right to enjoy in full equality, the same rights and freedoms under both international and domestic law as do all other citizens and persons in Nigeria. However, non-citizens may not be eligible to vote and be voted for in local elections unless the law expressly entitles them to.

(c) IDPs shall have: The right to seek safety in another part of the country; The right to leave their country; The right to seek asylum in another country; The right to be protected against forcible return to or resettlement in any place where their life, safety, liberty and/or health would be at risk.

(d) IDPs have a right to request and receive protection and assistance from the state and local authorities and shall not be punished or persecuted for making such a request.

(e) Vulnerable IDPs shall have a right to receive protection and assistance required by their condition or special needs. Such vulnerable IDPs shall include children accompanied, unaccompanied and orphans, women including nursing and expectant mothers and female heads of households, persons with disabilities, and the elderly.

Obligations of IDPs: Like all citizens, IDPs have an obligation to be law abiding citizens. IDPs shall take responsibility for the commission of individual and group crimes during the events leading to displacement and thereafter. Specifically, IDPs shall be responsible for the following:

- a. Individual criminal responsibility under national and international law;
- b. Individual criminal responsibility for genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity;
- c. Individual and group crimes of a very serious nature as defined under national and state laws;
- d. Respect the culture and norms of host communities
- e. Abide by rules and regulations in collective settlements

Challenges of the Internally Displaced Persons in Nigeria

According to IDMC (2020) cited by Onuh (2022) the internally displaced persons in various centres are face with many challenges which include but not limited to the following:

1. Protection risks: Internally Displaced persons (IDPs) often face protection risks having lost their homes and means of livelihood. Majority of IDPs are camped in open places with tents serving as houses.
2. Legal and Documentation problem: Although it is the responsibility of the state to provide for and protect the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), many IDPs are not officially recognized by the states and so, the states do not take up the responsibility. IDPs are often left to their fate and sometimes fall at the mercy of individual donors and humanitarian organizations, Tull (2019)
3. Poor access to education: IDMC (2020) acknowledged that Internally Displaced Persons of school age experience difficulty enrolling due to identity issues, distance, financial constraints. In her address to mark its 20th anniversary, IDMC (2020) identified access to quality education as one of the greatest challenges facing Internally Displaced Persons.
4. Human rights violation: This is a major issue for IDPs in Nigeria. The rights to education, movement, choice, employment etc. are often abused. Reporting such abuses is another challenge as there are rarely avenues for such (Akuto, 2017)
5. Trauma: it also constitutes a major challenge for the Internally Displaced Persons. IDMC (2020) acknowledged trauma as one of the most

challenging experiences the IDPs have to live with, more so that counselling efforts are minimal.

6. Food insecurity: Access to quality food is a challenge for the IDPs. Although the government is charged with caring for the displaced persons, reports from IDMC (2021) indicated that IDPs in Nigeria survive more on donations from Non-Governmental Organizations and individuals which are barely enough at a time for the entire families in camps, and no longer come handy.
7. Decent shelter: The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (2020), had maintained that affording decent shelter is a major challenge for IDPs in Nigeria.
8. Access to health care services: Displaced persons in Nigeria often face many health challenges. Poor diet, environmental pollution, exposure to harsh weather conditions may contribute to the health challenges of internally displaced persons. Abbani (2021) had maintained that internally displaced women and children suffer more health challenges than any special population.

Integrating IDPs into National and States social register

The Social Register is a comprehensive database of poor and vulnerable households (PVHHs) containing information about the socio-economic status of each household and their respective communities. It plays a crucial role in identifying potential beneficiaries of policies and social programs aimed at addressing poverty and vulnerability. It serves as a valuable tool for planning such policies and programs. It is equally a source for mining data for national and global donor agencies and non-governmental organizations (NASSCO, 2018)

In Nigeria we have National and State social registers, while National Social Register (NSR) is a tool to identify and register the poor and vulnerable and their socio-economic profile to inform pro-poor policies and manage social programs in an integrated way in Nigeria as a country. The social register should be updated periodically to ensure the reliability of the data. The database will provide the necessary information for ensuring that resources go to the intended beneficiaries (NSPP, 2021)

The NSR is an information system that supports the outreach, intake, registration, and determination of potential eligibility for one or more social programs. It provide gateway for people to register and be considered for potential inclusion

in social programs, it contains information on all registrants whether or not they are deemed eligible for, or enrolled in, select social programs; and supports registration and determination of potential eligibility for social programs. However, the state social register (SSR) is the database of poor and vulnerable households (PVHHs) containing the information about the socio-economic status of each household and their respective communities in a particular state (NSPP, 2021)

This data emerged out of the "bottom-up- approach" strategy of "Community Based Targeting (CBT)". The CBT approach is a process through which communities identify, validate and select specific members of the community as potential beneficiaries for targeted interventions. It emerged as a result of the total absence of comprehensive and quality data on households/individuals' welfare, thus limiting the error of inclusion and exclusion through a broad and thorough participation of all segments of the community.

Shock-responsive social protection is focusing on risks and shocks that affect a large proportion of the population simultaneously (covariate shocks). It encompasses the adaptation of routine social protection programmes and systems to cope with changes in context and demand following large-scale shocks such as massive migration of people as a result of arm conflict, flooding, desertification which led to the emergence of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). This can only be done through holistic and comprehensive capturing of relevant information of IDPs from different camps across the country with a view to integrate them into states social registers and subsequently the National social register

Qualitative and robust data on IDPs can improve the ability of social protection systems to identify and address their needs. Different risks, shocks and vulnerability such as food insecurity, lack of access to education and health services, poor shelter, lack of good drinking water and sanitation etc. are all common features in IDPs' camps all of which culminate in defining the multidimensional poverty in the IDPs centres in Nigeria. The data can be used by the government in formulating social security programmes for the IDPs, similarly, the Local and International Donors willing to support the cause of IDPs may only contact the relevant authorities so as to mine as much as possible from the databank.

Social protection functions for addressing the plight of IDPs in Nigeria

From the key policy measures and objectives of social protection programme as elaborated by the National Social Protection Policy (NSPP, 2021), the following social protection functions could address the daunting challenges of the IDPs in Nigeria if adequately implemented

1. Reducing poverty and vulnerability to IDPs by increasing their incomes, food consumption and nutrition through social cash transfer and cash for work schemes
2. Supporting Education and schooling of the children of IDPs in their camps by providing learning materials, uniforms, Free school meals to all pupils in public primary schools.
3. Provide free health care services for pregnant women, lactating mothers, children under-5, the aged (people over 65 years old) and people living with disabilities in the IDPs' camps
4. To promote the welfare and healthy development of the IDPs by providing health services, psychosocial support, and counselling to survivors of violence against persons, child labour, child abuse, child rape, and human trafficking in the IDPs' camp
5. Provide decent and affordable homes for the IDPs, living in overcrowded and unhealthy conditions in their camps.
6. To enhance the income, sustainable livelihood and employability of the IDPs through Labour based cash transfer and Public Works Programmes and skills acquisition training

Conclusion and policy suggestions

From the foregoing discussions it is clear that, given the numerous roles of social protection programme such as reducing poverty and vulnerability, Supporting Education and schooling, providing free health care services, decent and affordable accommodation and providing psycho-social support, and counselling etc, we concluded that, efficient and effective social protection can reasonably responded to many multidimensional problems associated with extreme poverty, lack of educational and health care facilities and decent accommodation and poor sanitary condition in the IDPs Camps and Centres in the country.

Suggestion on the way forward

1. A national policy and legal framework with explicit rights for IDPs to social protection and work coupled with the actual ability to access benefits should be pursued at all level of the government

2. International, National and Sub-National financing shall be made available to facilitate the inclusion of IDPs and host communities in government social protection programmes
3. The Inclusion of IDPs in the government data systems (e.g., National and State social registers and socio-economic surveys). This will made the IDPs data readily available for International and National donors who wish intervene
4. Provide easy and simple avenues for IDPs to meet social protection eligibility criteria, e.g., having ID documents to access any available intervention
5. Provide sufficient operational and staffing capacity of government agencies responsible for managing social protection at National and sub-national levels for efficient and effective service delivery.

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