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NIGERIA:

Unresolved conflicts cause ongoing displacement

A profile of the internal displacement situation

12 December, 2008

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Through its work, the Centre contributes to improving national and international capacities to protect and assist the millions of people around the globe who have been displaced within their own country as a result of conflicts or human rights violations.

At the request of the United Nations, the Geneva-based Centre runs an online database providing comprehensive information and analysis on internal displacement in some 50 countries.

Based on its monitoring and data collection activities, the Centre advocates for durable solutions to the plight of the internally displaced in line with international standards.

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OVERVIEW

Unresolved conflicts cause ongoing displacement

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With a complex range of ethnic, religious and linguistic groups competing for access to resources, outbreaks of violence leading to significant situations of short-term internal displacement are frequent in Nigeria. Many internally displaced people (IDPs) seek refuge with family and friends while waiting for the violence to subside so they can return to their homes. Complex displacement patterns and the lack of any comprehensive and reliable survey make agreeing on IDP numbers almost impossible. In the absence of accurate statistics, IDP needs often go undetected and the response is often ad-hoc and insufficient.

Inter-communal conflicts and clashes between the army and militia members in the Niger Delta continued to be the main direct causes of displacement in 2008. While violence has often broken out along religious or ethnic lines, poverty and unequal access to power and resources (including land and oil wealth) lie behind these conflicts.

The implementation of an International Court of Justice ruling giving control over the Bakassi peninsula to Cameroon created an unexpected wave of displacement into the neighbouring states of Cross River and Akwa Ibom. Fearing persecution by Cameroonian security services, thousands of Bakassi residents found refuge in makeshift camps or with host families, often in precarious conditions. Similarly, in one of the worst example of communal violence in the country in years, at the end of 2008 people fled the city of Jos, in Plateau State, to find refuge in local churches, mosques and army or police barracks.

More than a year after the new administration was sworn in, persistent challenges remain. Failure to provide good governance and economic and social development across the country will continue to fuel instability. The new UN Development Assistance Framework for 2009-2012 will only provide an effective framework for addressing recurring displacement if agencies achieve effective coordination and if there is national political will to support them.

Background and causes of displacement

The causes of conflict and generalised violence in Nigeria have long been debated. Scholars describe the systematic and overlapping patterns of inequality in the country as “breeding grounds” for conflict (O. Okpeh, 2008; CRISE, June 2007). Indeed, since the end of military rule in 1999 and the return to democracy, Nigeria has witnessed recurrent outbreaks of violence. As a result, the country is faced with the ongoing challenge of responding to a fluctuating but always sizeable internally displaced population.

For decades now, Nigeria has been trying to resolve its “national question”, in an attempt to bring together its extremely complex web of ethnic, linguistic and religious identities. With an estimated population of 140 million people and between 250 and 400 ethnic groups, Nigeria is Africa’s most populous nation and one of its most diverse. The Hausa-Fulani, the Yoruba and the Igbo account for almost half of the country’s population, and many smaller groups tend to cluster around these three, creating a tripolar ethnic structure around which competition strategies intensify (CRISE Working Paper 44, March 2007). A religious divide separates the mainly-Muslim north and the

richer and more powerful mainly-Christian south. A history of predominantly military rule has left the country with little political dialogue between state and civil society (U. Idemudia and U. Ite, September 2006) and endemic corruption. Almost a decade after the return to democracy, transparent management behaviour and equitable resource distribution are still rare and the legitimacy of the state is still questioned (HRW, October 2007). Nigeria is ranked alongside conflict countries as the 18th worst of 177 countries on the Failed States Index for 2008 (The Fund for Peace, 2008).

The turning point in Nigeria's fall into internal conflict is identified by some analysts as the 1987 Kafanchan-Kaduna riots, from which old tensions between Muslim Hausa-Fulani and non-Muslim communities gradually spread throughout the north and the "Middle Belt" of the country (CRISE, January 2005). While some of these conflicts may appear to be caused by a single factor such as religion or ethnicity, the reality is usually more complex. The introduction in recent years of Islamic Sharia law in 12 of Nigeria's 36 states has caused additional tensions, but clashes between Muslim and Christian groups have usually been caused by other factors, such as pressure on land or unequal access to social services. The same dynamic has often been observed with regard to "ethnic conflicts". Ethnic identity and mobilisation play a prominent role in the political landscape, and impact frequently on political stability, but they are mostly created to access spoils of a different nature.

Numbers and patterns of displacement

There are no reliable statistics on internally displaced people (IDPs) in Nigeria and no general agreement on their actual numbers in the absence of any comprehensive survey. The figures available are generally only estimates provided by government and non-governmental agencies. According to Moremi Soyinka-Onijala, former Special Assistant to the Nigerian President on Migration and Humanitarian Affairs, estimates on the number of IDPs in Nigeria have varied from 500,000 to millions (Brookings, June 2006, p.8). In an interview with a local newspaper, the Federal Commissioner for Refugees recently estimated that around half a million people had been displaced between 1999 and 2005, when communal clashes peaked (This Day News, 17 April 2008). The figure would of course increase if more recent situations such as those described below were taken into account. Additionally, regions affected by armed violence have regularly experienced floods, further complicating displacement and return patterns and the attempts to distinguish between conflict and non-conflict IDPs (IRIN, 30 August 2007; Reuters, 7 August 2007; Action Aid International, August 2007).

The vast majority of displaced people in Nigeria seek refuge with family, friends or host communities in areas where their ethnic or religious group is in the majority (G.D. Je'adayibe, 2008). Many appear to return to their homes or resettle near their home areas soon after the violence which forced them to leave has subsided, but an unknown number also resettle in other areas of the country. This was particularly the case for those displaced during ethno-religious crises in central Nigeria between 2000 and 2002. The houses of the displaced were in fact pulled to the ground, indicating that IDPs were not welcome to return (G.D. Je'adayibe, 2008, p.170).

There are no official IDP camps of a long-lasting nature in the country. Where camps for IDPs have been established, as for example following the 2004 violence in Plateau State, their residents have tended to integrate into the local community, join relatives in other states, or return to their villages to try and salvage what they can of their homes.

Others have sought shelter in major towns or along major transport arteries, where it has been difficult to distinguish between people forced to flee by violence and those moving for economic reasons (UNOWA, October 2007, p.31). When IDPs have found refuge in urban areas, their right to adequate housing has suffered from persistent institutional policies of forced evictions, which have led to new patterns of intra-urban displacement. The Centre on Housing Rights and

Evictions estimated in 2008 that over two million people had been forcibly evicted since 2000 in cities like Lagos, Port Harcourt and Abuja (COHRE, May 2008, p.7). In Abuja, residents of informal settlements were evicted as part of the implementation of the Abuja Master Plan, a planning framework drawn up to make the new federal capital more orderly than its predecessor Lagos (Reuters, 23 July 2008; IRIN, 23 November 2007). Residents who arrived after the establishment of the Federal Capital Territory in 1991, also referred to as non-indigenes or settlers, have generally been the target of such demolitions, which have often been carried out with violence by heavily-armed security agents (COHRE, May 2008, p.11).

Recent and ongoing displacement situations

Perhaps the most significant cause of communal violence in Nigeria has been the entrenched division throughout the country between people considered indigenous to an area, and those regarded as settlers. Indigenous groups have routinely prevented settlers from owning land or businesses, or accessing jobs and education, inevitably causing tensions. One of the most recent outbreaks of violence resulting from these tensions occurred in June 2008, when fighting over a protracted land dispute between people considered as indigenous and settlers in Ebonyi state reportedly forced thousands of people to flee to the state capital (Reuters, 5 July 2008). These clashes, on this occasion sparked by disagreements over the control of a local market, began when the Ezza community moved to the area in the late 1950s and started competing for access to land with the local Ezillo community (BBC, 3 October 2008). Traditionally, migrant communities have limited rights to land in Nigeria, even years after their arrival, and indigenous communities at times refer to court rulings going back to colonial times to substantiate their claims over land (Vanguard, 7 September 2008).

Violence leading to displacement also tends to be sparked by religious tensions. Clashes between Muslim and Christian communities in the city of Bauchi in December 2007 led to the displacement of a reported 3,000 people (IRIN, 13 December 2007). Fighting began following a dispute over the construction of a mosque in a mixed Muslim-Christian neighbourhood. In another northern city, Sokoto, tensions between Shi'ites and Sunnis have long been simmering. Following the assassination of a Sunni cleric in July 2007, Shi'ites quarters were razed to the ground, forcing many of the residents to flee (Reuters, 20 March 2008). As of beginning of 2008, many had yet to return.

The Bakassi peninsula

The oil-rich Bakassi peninsula had been the object of a dispute between Cameroon and Nigeria since independence until the International Court of Justice awarded the control over the peninsula to Cameroon in 2002. Although the majority of the population living on the peninsula consider themselves Nigerian, Nigeria ceded the peninsula on 14 August 2008. Although residents could acquire full Cameroonian citizenship or opt for resident alien status (IRIN, 13 November 2007), thousands of them fled following the hand-over to the neighbouring Nigerian states of Cross River and Akwa Ibom, fearing persecution by Cameroonian security services given previous incidents. As of September 2008, some 76,000 people had registered at 12 sites in the two states (IRIN, 25 September 2008).

Both the Nigerian government (specifically, a technical committee chaired by the Minister of Special Duties and administered by the Federal Commissioner for Refugees) and the Nigerian Red Cross had formulated contingency plans for the return of Bakassi residents ahead of the hand-over date. A site in Cross River State was identified for the creation of New Bakassi (IRIN, 13 November 2007) and the government had allocated \$17 million to the state authorities to build a permanent settlement for the returnees (IRIN, 25 September 2008). However, more people than expected moved into not only Cross River State but also Akwa Ibom State, where no contingency plans had been put into place (Vanguard, 28 August 2008). People found refuge in

camps or residential areas in the interior or along coastal areas to guarantee their traditional livelihoods, while others integrated into local communities. Four main camps were set up in Akwa Ibom State, where some 2,500 former Bakassi residents have been housed in empty homes or abandoned schools, mostly without running water (IFRC, 10 November 2008).

Displacement and oil production

In the Niger Delta region, displacement has been closely linked to oil production. While the region has been volatile for many years, with impoverished local communities accusing successive governments as well as oil companies of depriving them of their fair share of revenues (ICG, 18 September 2008), tensions have escalated dramatically since early 2006. Armed militias have used increasingly violent means to gain greater control of oil wealth and criminal rackets, clashing with the Nigerian army, kidnapping numerous foreign workers and destroying installations to reduce the country's oil output by one fifth (IRIN, 17 November 2008; Reuters, 10 July 2008). In September 2008, in some of the heaviest clashes in the region between the military and members of the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), civilians were caught in the crossfire and two villages were allegedly razed to the ground forcing up to 20,000 people to flee (IRIN, 19 September 2008). Violence between local militia groups and security forces, as well as inter-militia fighting and widespread destruction of property, has frequently forced people to flee their homes (VOA, 3 August 2008; Reuters, 30 July 2008; Mail and Guardian, 20 July 2008). Oil-related environmental problems in the area have also been linked to increased population movements (JSDA, 2008).

Scholars have advanced different analyses to explain the risk of oil-related conflict in Nigeria (CRISE, June 2007). One analysis links the likelihood of conflict to factors such as excessive government dependence on oil revenues, an institutionally unstable revenue allocation system and weak political institutional arrangements. A parallel reading finds reason for conflict in the lack of enforcement and the "marriage of interests" between the Nigerian state and oil companies, which can lead to the repression of oil communities in case of disputes. In any case, factors like lack of good governance, lack of social and economic development and increased militarisation continue to fuel instability in the area (USIP, June 2008; Reuters, 8 October 2008; The Economist, 18 September 2008). Despite its oil wealth (Nigeria is Africa's leading oil producer, and the seventh largest in the world), at least two thirds of Nigerians live on less than \$1 per day. The cause of the conflict "rests squarely on oil revenue allocation" and on the sense of relative deprivation that this induces among the huge pools of destitute and frustrated youth (U. Idemudia and U. Ite, September 2006). Many analysts believe that this sense of deprivation is used by politicians, particularly those linked to the former military regime, to create social divisions and violence. Despite promises to address the root causes of the conflict in the Niger Delta, the administration of President Yar'Adua has so far failed to engage the parties involved in fruitful dialogue (Reuters, 12 June 2008).

Displacement due to electoral violence

Pre and post-electoral violence leads frequently to short-term displacement in Nigeria. The April 2007 general elections generated violence in certain parts of the country (CEHRD, May 2007), and, although no situations of widespread internal displacement were recorded, the Nigerian Red Cross reported that violence in Ihima local government area of Kogi State, Ukwale local government area of Delta State, and Asakio local government area of Nasarawa State caused the displacement of around 4,500 people. The IDPs temporarily found shelter in public buildings. Where violent incidents occurred, and people were displaced because of the destruction of their homes, they mostly found shelter with their relatives (NRCS, August 2007). In Port Harcourt, inter-militia fighting because of rivalries between politicians forced residents to relocate to other areas of the town deemed safer (IRIN, 20 August 2007; Reuters, 16 August 2007). Displacement

was also recorded ahead of the elections, in particular in the Kano area, as people left their homes fearing upcoming violence (IRIN, 28 March 2007).

A recent study of the 2007 polls shows that the incumbent party preferred ballot fraud and vote buying while other parties used violence to improve their results (CSAE, June 2008). After the 2007 elections, violent power struggles between armed groups, used by politicians for voter intimidation, arose as many local observers had predicted (HRW, 26 March 2008), causing particular chaos and destruction in Rivers State.

Electoral violence has also featured in local elections (Reuters, 7 November 2008; IRIN, 3 April 2008). Disputed results in Plateau State elections, for example, led at the end of November 2008 to some of the worst inter-communal unrest in the country for years. In the state capital Jos, some 7,000 people were reportedly displaced by clashes that were described as being between Christians and Muslims (BBC, 1 December 2008). However, tensions between the two groups primarily reflect resentment between the indigenous (Christian) minority and settlers from the Hausa-speaking Muslim north (Reuters, 30 November 2008). IDPs from both faiths reportedly found refuge together in makeshift camps around Jos.

CAUSES AND BACKGROUND

General background on displacement in Nigeria

Local power structures and social crisis nurture violence and displacement, 2004-2008

- During transition phases from authoritarian rule to democracy, like in Nigeria, social tensions are more likely to escalate into violence because of the changes in power relations and power structures
- Additionally, the specific tripodal ethnic structure (with the Hausa, Yoruba and the Igbo constituting the three major groups) in Nigeria is particularly unstable and often conflictual
- The interplay between the tripodal structure and communal identities has been aggravated over time by systematic patterns of inequalities
- In particular, in the Niger Delta, repeated patterns of inequality has created a social crisis capable of nurturing violence and displacement

CRISE, February 2008, p. 6:

"Indonesia and Nigeria have both experienced an upsurge in violent communal conflict in certain parts of both countries, particularly in the period following the end of authoritarian rule. This is not because democracy inherently generates conflicts. On the contrary, cross-country evidence has shown that democracies are less likely to experience civil war and communal violence than authoritarian states (Hegre *et al* 2001). Rather it is in democratising countries – i.e., states in transition such as Indonesia and Nigeria – that social tensions are more likely to escalate into violence (Gurr 2000; idem 2001), because democratisation is often associated with changes in power relations and structures and democratic solutions to change are not yet fully accepted (Ake 2000). When democratisation is implemented simultaneously with decentralisation – as in Nigeria and Indonesia – the resulting changes in power relations at the local level have the potential to trigger ethnic and communal violence in the locality, but at the same time may alleviate national tensions."

CRISE, June 2007, pp.3-4:

"The numerically – and politically – majority ethnic groups are the composite Hausa-Fulani of the north, the Yoruba of the southwest, and the Igbo of the southeast. The three majority ethnic groups constituted 57.8% of the national population in the 1963 census. [...] The numerical and hegemonic strength of these three ethnic groups within the Nigerian federation has meant that Nigeria has a tripodal ethnic structure, with each of the three majority ethnic groups constituting a pole in the competition for political and economic resources. The ethnic minorities are forced to form a bewildering array of alliances around each of the three dominant ethnicities. Tripodal ethnic structures are inherently unstable, especially compared to countries like Tanzania which has a fragmented ethnic structure. [...] By contrast, ethnic politics in tripodal Nigeria is often conflictual as each of the three hegemonic groups tries to build up sufficient alliances to ensure its preponderance in government, or to prevent its being marginalised by competing alliance."

The interplay between this tripodal ethnic structure on the one hand, and administrative divisions and communal identities on the other, has led to eight major cleavages in Nigerian political life (Mustapha 1986), the most important of which are: the cleavages between the three majority

groups; between the three majority ethnic groups on the one hand and the 350-odd minority ethnic groups on the other; between the north and south⁴; between the 36 states of the federation and the six zones – three in the north and three in the south – into which they are grouped; and finally, between different religious affiliations. Some of these cleavages overlap: for example, the southeast zone overlaps with Igbo ethnicity and Christian religious affiliation, while the northcentral overlaps with northern ethnic minorities.

The ethnic, regional, and religious cleavages in Nigerian society are made more problematic by systematic and overlapping patterns of inequalities that correspond to the cleavages. These inequalities are caused by a complex range of factors, including history, geography, cultural orientation, religious affiliation, natural resource endowments, current government policies, and past colonial policies."

In particular, in the Niger Delta

Daily Trust, 6 August 2007:

"Prior to the discovery of massive oil reserves in the 1960s, the North and SouthWest were the richest geographical zones in Nigeria. Over the years, the South-West has been able to sustain relative growth and poverty reduction through massive human capital and infrastructural development. The North has not been so fortunate. This is partly because majority of the states in the North operate with the simple belief that resources are meant for distribution and not as a source of building economic and social capital.

This mindset has invariably cost a number of non-oil-producing states in the country the chance to grow and remove people from poverty and misery. The article aims to show (using data across the country) that reliance on the fortunes of the Niger Delta is a weak foundation for achieving development. With renewed focus and strategy, non-oil-producing states can thrive and develop amidst prevailing social and economic challenges. There is no gainsaying that spread of economic opportunities across the country remains the only chance for Nigeria to enjoy sustained development and peaceful coexistence."

IRIN, 24 July 2007:

"A study in 2004 commissioned by Royal Dutch Shell, the biggest oil multinational in Nigeria, estimated 1,000 people, mostly youths, were dying every year in violence between rival militia groups in the Niger Delta.

More up-to-date figures are not available but violence in the region has worsened: It is dominated by hostage-taking targeting foreign oil workers who are usually released in exchange for a ransom, but has also sparked turf wars between rival gangs.

Worst violence since 2004 :

At least 20 people were shot dead on 1 July as rival gunmen went on the rampage in different parts of the city's Diobu District. Many of the victims were innocent bystanders and included a 10-year-old girl who was helping her mother roast corn by a street corner, a pregnant woman hit by a stray bullet inside a church and three men shot dead while drinking at an open air bar.

This year has also seen the worst violence in the city since the first upsurge of militia violence in 2004, including two audacious attacks on police stations in which more than a dozen people were killed, including 10 policemen. In one of the attacks on the city's police headquarters, assailants freed Soboma George, head of a notorious militia known as the Outlaws, (who had been detained by the police following a traffic offence) and 124 other prisoners.

Politicians armed gangs?

The year 2004 had provided the tipping point for worsening violence in the region. In June that year a funeral procession led by the delta's best known militia leader, Mujahid Dokubo-Asari, for the burial of his father, was attacked by a rival gang. While Dokubo-Asari escaped unhurt, more than a dozen people were killed. Scores were killed in subsequent gang violence in the city later that year.

[...]

"What we are witnessing are some of the worst manifestations of a social crisis that has been festering in the delta and the country as a whole in the past three decades," said Pius Waritimi, a sculptor and art teacher who runs a government-backed skills training scheme for youths in Port Harcourt.

With most families in the grip of abject poverty, and deep-rooted corruption and mismanagement in government frustrating social development, most youths without education and skills have become cheap recruitment targets for the militias and gangs, said Waritimi."

See also ISN Security Watch's "[New hopes for peace in Niger Delta](#)" (19 July 2007)



Displacement related to inter-ethnic violence

Ethnic violence increased sharply since 1999, often fuelled by the emergence of militant ethnic groups

- Nigeria accounts for one-quarter of West Africa's population and has 250 ethnic groups
- The introduction of democracy was followed by more open conflicts and the emergence of increasingly militant groups (1999)
- The Nigerian Constitution mandates proportional ethnic representation, but inter-ethnic tensions prevail

US DOS, August 2000:

"The most populous country in Africa, Nigeria accounts for one-quarter of West Africa's people. Although less than 25% of Nigerians are urban dwellers, at least 24 cities have populations of more than 100,000. The variety of customs, languages, and traditions among Nigeria's 250 ethnic groups gives the country a rich diversity. The dominant ethnic group in the northern two-thirds of the country is the Hausa-Fulani, most of whom are Muslim. Other major ethnic groups of the north are the Nupe, Tiv, and Kanuri. The Yoruba people are predominant in the southwest. About half of the Yorubas are Christian and half Muslim. The predominantly Catholic Igbo are the largest ethnic group in the southeast, with the Efik, Ibibio, and Ijaw (the country's fourth-largest ethnic group) comprising a substantial segment of the population in that area as well. Persons of different language backgrounds most commonly communicate in English, although knowledge of two or more Nigerian languages is widespread. Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo are the most widely used."

US DOS, February 2001, sect.5:

"Since Olusegun Obasanjo was sworn in as president in May 1999, communal conflicts have increased in Nigeria in number and intensity, causing hundreds of deaths and displacing thousands.

The most common explanation provided to IRIN by analysts in Lagos and Port Harcourt is that the introduction of democracy has acted like the release of a pressure valve, enabling people to vent their pent-up anger and express themselves more freely.

"The Constitution prohibits ethnic discrimination by the Government. In addition the Constitution mandates that the composition of the federal, state, and local governments and their agencies, as well as the conduct of their affairs, reflect the diverse character of the country in order to promote national unity and loyalty. This provision was designed as a safeguard against domination of the Government by persons from a few states or ethnic and sectional groups. These provisions were included in response to previous domination of the Government and the armed forces by northerners and Muslims. The Government of Olusegun Obasanjo was an example of this diversity. Obasanjo is a Yoruba from the southwest, the Vice President is a northerner, and the Senate President is an Igbo. The Government also attempted to balance key positions and deputy positions among the different regions and ethnic groups. For example, the Minister of Defense is from one of the middle-belt states, while his deputy is a southwestern Yoruba. The Senate used its oversight role to reject many of Obasanjo's ambassadorial appointments and insisted on three nominees from each state for each appointment. The political parties also engaged in "zoning," the practice of rotating positions within the party among the different regions and ethnicities to ensure that each region and ethnicity is given adequate representation. Nonetheless, claims of marginalization by members of southern minority groups and Igbos continued. The ethnic groups of the Niger Delta, in particular, continued their calls for high-level representation on petroleum issues and within the security forces. Northern Muslims, who lost previously held positions within the military hierarchy, accused the Obasanjo Government of favoring southerners. Traditional linkages continued to impose considerable pressure on individual government officials to favor their own ethnic groups for important positions and patronage."

IRIN, 5 January 2000:

"One of the factors fuelling communal violence has been the emergence of increasingly militant groups such as the Oodua People's Congress (OPC), a pro-Yoruba organisation, Ijaw youth groups in the Niger Delta (although the Ijaw Youth Council says it espouses non-violence) and the Arewa People's Congress (APC), formed to protect the interests of the Hausa-Fulani in the north. Clashes in November 1999 between Hausas and Yoruba at a market in Ketu District in Lagos resulted in at least 30 casualties. The disturbances were blamed on the OPC, which denied that it was involved."

Background on the hostility between the Yorubas of the West and the Hausa-Fulani of the Muslim North

- O'odua People's Congress (OPC) emerged in 1994 as an organization active in the southwest of Nigeria to protect the interests of the Yoruba ethnic group
- The Yoruba allegedly perceive the civil service, the military, the diplomatic service and educational establishments dominated by Northerners
- ...while northerners see the south controls commercial activities in the economy, banking and the financial sector

EPCPT October 1999:

'Nigeria: The Transition to Democracy and the South-Western Opposition'

"The British colonial administration of the 350 ethnic groups making up Nigeria comprised two separate phases. In the mid-nineteenth century the Protectorate and Colony of Southern Nigeria was established. This was followed by the Protectorate and Colony of Northern Nigeria which was declared in 1900. The British amalgamated the two regions in 1914. In 1947, a colonial constitution split Nigeria into three unequal political regions: north, west and east. The north, dominated by the Hausa-Fulani, was larger and more populous than the other two regions. There is a very significant minority population in the north. The west was, and still is, dominated by the Yoruba, while the Ibos were the largest group in the east. These three regions have now been balkanised into Nigeria's present thirty six-state federal structure. In

spite of this departmentalisation, north-south divisions have remained alive in Nigerian politics [...]

The [North-South] conflict is a relatively recent development which intensified following the cancellation of the results of the June 12, 1993 elections by the Nigerian military rulers. The Yoruba saw the cancellation of the elections, which were won by a Yoruban, as the climax of a series of injustices perpetrated by the northern power elite. [...]

Since Nigeria's political independence in 1960, most of its leaders have come from the predominantly Muslim north of the country. In the early 1960s, fears of political marginalisation caused the Eastern Region to attempt to secede from the Nigerian federation. These fears were resurrected during the Sani Abacha era. The south, of which the south-west is only a part, has complained about marginalisation and the prolonged control of political power by the northern power elite. The northern ruling elite is believed to have benefited from all the regimes, military and civilian alike, to the detriment of the south. The clamour for a power-shift to the south became more insistent in June 1993, following the convincing victory of chief Moshood Abiola at the presidential polls. With Abiola's victory, the south seemed to have achieved its call for a power-shift in its favour. The nullification of these elections led to sustained and organised protest and opposition. The most articulate opposition to this prolonged northern domination came from the Yorubas of the south-west, especially after June 1993.

[...]

The north has, over the years, been accused of conniving to permanently control the nation's governance, to the exclusion of others of southern extraction. The Yoruba allege that the north dominates the civil service, the military, the diplomatic service and educational establishments.

[...]

In summary, the south-west believes that successive governments in Nigeria have only pursued one goal - primacy of the north - which serves as a generic canopy for other interests.

[...]

If the south-west feels marginalised, so does the north. There is a wide spread belief in the north that the south controls commercial activities in the economy, banking and the financial sector, education, the public service, etc. The north had held on to political power in part, to secure itself from complete marginalisation. Spokesmen for the northern power elite have repeatedly made it clear that the north is marginalised economically, educationally, and in all the facets of the public service. Northerners generally perceive leaders of the south-west and their demands as a selfish, and pursuing an ethnic agenda. Indeed, there is very little respect for the position of the south-west among the average northerners, since it is seen as an ethnic position.

[...]

The cancellation of the June 1993 election marked a turning point in the history of the face-off between the north and south. In Lagos, which is the nerve-centre of the south, the announcement was followed by rioting which led to a massive loss of life and the mass destruction of property.

Renewing their struggle, the Yoruba forged links with several organisations to help realise their aims. Affiliated ethnic organisations came to the fore in this process. Prominent among the organisations formed during the Abacha regime were NADECO, Afenifere and the Odudua Peoples' Congress (OPC). [...]

These organisations, led by notable Yoruba leaders, formed themselves into an opposition, supposedly to free the country from what was believed to be the clutches of the northern power elite.

[...]

This remained the situation until the deaths of general Abacha and chief Moshood Abiola. Chief Abiola's death was treated by leaders of the south-west as murder perpetrated by the state. Abiola's death re-ignited the clamour for a government of national unity, restructuring, a power-shift, and a true federal constitution fashioned through a sovereign national conference.

The renewed calls intensified, and took a violent turn with the establishment of another Yoruba platform called the Oduduwa Peoples' Congress. The congress, which is a Yoruba socio-cultural organisation led by youths, resorted to the use of direct confrontation with military and police forces. This groups which is strong in Lagos and other parts of the south-west, has clashed with the state forces on several occasions. The group benefited from recruits earlier displaced by the crisis of structural adjustment and its accompanying poverty. These clashes resulted in the destruction of lives and property. On some occasions the Oduduwa Peoples' Congress adopted violation of law and order and instigation of the civil society against the government in carrying out their activities.

[...]

In May 1999, chief Olusegun Obasanjo, a former military leader of Nigeria was sworn in as the elected civilian president of Nigeria. Even though he is a Yoruba from the south-west, he was not a favourite candidate of the south-west. As such, he gained his winning votes outside the region. With Obasanjo's electoral victory, a power-shift has been achieved, even if by default, meeting one of the principal demands of the Yoruba south-west.

[...]

However Obasanjo's government has encountered a number of problems in its first two months in office. Aside from numerous scandals concerning elected officials, various parts of the country have been plagued by community conflicts. One of the most dramatic is the conflict between the Hausa settlers and the indigenous Yoruba in the south-western town of Sagamu. What apparently started as a fight about a Yoruba traditional festival, expanded into interethnic violence that also spread to the northern city of Kano. In the following days hundreds of people were killed in the two towns."

More background on the O'odua People's Congress (OPC)

HRW February 2003, pp. 20, 22

"Nigeria has witnessed an increase in the activities of ethnic and regional militia, vigilantes, and other armed groups in the last few years. One of the better-known of these groups is the O'odua People's Congress (OPC), an organization active in the southwest of Nigeria which campaigns to protect the interests of the Yoruba ethnic group and seeks autonomy for the Yoruba people. The OPC is a complex organization, which has taken on several different roles as it has adapted to the changing political and security environment in Nigeria. One of several Yoruba self-determination groups, it was established in 1994 with the aim of overcoming what it alleged was the political marginalization of the Yoruba. It has since evolved in several different directions. Its activities have ranged from political agitation for Yoruba autonomy and promotion of Yoruba culture to violent confrontation with members of other ethnic groups, and, more recently, vigilantism and crime-fighting. In its two main spheres of activity—ethnic militancy and vigilantism—the OPC has been responsible for numerous human rights abuses and acts of violence, and its members have killed or injured hundreds of unarmed civilians. However, OPC members have been victims as well as perpetrators of human rights abuses. Hundreds of real or suspected OPC members have been killed by the police; many others have been arbitrarily arrested, tortured, and detained without trial for extended periods.

The most widespread killings by the OPC took place in the context of clashes between Yoruba and other ethnic groups, which reached a peak during 2000; however, violence and human rights abuses continued in 2001 and 2002. There have also been numerous individual cases in which OPC members have killed or injured people, in the course of their vigilante work and in attempts to extort money. The OPC's activities have led them into direct confrontation with the police: there have been repeated, violent clashes between the two, with casualties on both sides. OPC members have attacked police stations on many occasions, and have killed and injured several policemen."

Summary of main conflicts and its causes in Nasarawa, Benue, Taraba and Plateau States (June 2002)

- Nasarawa State's clashes related to a mix of ethnic, economic and land issues..
- Benue State also faces clashes, of an ethnic, political or economic nature or having to do with the indigene/settler issue
- The conflict in Taraba State mainly involves the Tiv, Jukun and Fulani ethnic groups and revolves around political, land, demographical or indigene/settler issues
- The clashes in Plateau State are mainly related to the indigene/settler issue reinforced by religious tensions

UNOCHA, 18 June 2002:

"NASARAWA STATE

[...]

Conflicting parties within state

Bassa and Ibiri in Toto (about 50km from Keffi). This is one of the oldest crises in Nasarawa state. The main ethnic groups are the Ibiri (majority) and the Bassa. There is a small population of Tiv, who tend to side with the Bassa. The main cause of the Ibiri and Bassa clashes in Toto is their inability to live together.

Tiv and Bassa. In 2001, the killing of an Ibiri Paramount Chief reportedly by the Tivs triggered a crisis in the area, causing the resettled Bassa's to flee once again. The Bassa were seen as allies of the Tivs, who were accused of the death of the Paramount Chief.

Tiv and Hausa-speaking Azaras. June 2001.

Communal clashes over fishpond. Jan 2002.

Causes of tension/conflict

Ethnic

Land disputes

Economic - lack of employment opportunities for youth results in their recruitment into militia groups.

[...]

BENUE STATE

[...]

Conflicting parties within Benue State

Tiv and Jukun/military

Tiv and Idomos

Benue State is seen more as a receiving state for displaced persons from other states, rather than a state that has caused substantial numbers of displaced persons. The Tivs are the predominant ethnic group in Benue State. The majority of the Tiv population is Christian with a

very small percentage of Muslims. Although the state has experienced some minor conflicts within the Tiv population, it had not seen any major conflict between the Tivs and other ethnic groups living in the state until the Tiv/Jukun clashes and subsequent military attack in 2001. The last major conflict was between the Tivs and the Idomos in the 1970s.

Causes of tension/conflict

Ethnic

Indigene/settler issue

Political

Economical

One of the main causes of the clashes between Tivs and other ethnic groups is the indigene/settler issue. The Tivs are seen as settlers and therefore are deprived of many rights given to indigenous groups, i.e. discrimination in education, economic opportunities, political representation, etc. The Tivs are, therefore, fighting for equal rights which they believe they are entitled to as indigenes of the state.

Other causes of the clashes are fear of political and economic domination by the Tivs. The Tiv ethnic group are substantive farmers and are rapidly increasing in population. This is seen as a threat to other ethnic groups as they fear political domination by the Tivs. Also, due to their strength in the farming sector, the Tivs are seen to be more economically productive than other groups and, hence, are economically more powerful. This also is seen as a threat. (It has been noticed that in states/communities where Tivs have been forced to leave, there has been a negative impact on the local economy due to the reduced agricultural production).

The lack of employment opportunities for youth often results in the recruitment of youth into fighting militia groups.

[...]

TARABA STATE

[...]

Conflicting parties within the state

Tiv/Jukun - In 1991/2 there was serious conflict between Tiv and Jukun. Militia groups, comprising mainly youth as young as 14/15 years, set up checkpoints along road, stopping vehicles and killing ethnic lines. Both Tiv and Jukun communities were attacked and houses destroyed causing people to flee. There were further clashes in Oct 2001 and January 2002.

Tiv/Jukun and Fulani

Mambilla/Fulani - In 1997/8, the Fulanis brought in mercenaries from Niger and Chad to assist them in fighting against indigenous groups, causing displacement of the indigenous groups within and outside the state.

Jukun-Chamba/Kuteb - Conflict between these groups has been going on for years, although there has been no large scale fighting since 1999. There have two contributing factors to the more recent clashes. First, a paramount chief (Kuteb) was killed prompting retaliation from the Kuteb. Second, there is an ongoing dispute over the boundary of a new LGA area created within the state in 1999. The original LGA was Takum, where the Jukun-Chamba held the political majority (previously Kuteb). The new LGA created, Ussa, comprises mainly Kuteb communities. However, there are significant numbers of Kuteb in three communities about 5km from Takum, which have been told to join the Ussa LGA. These communities have refused to join the Ussa LGA as the Takum LGA is much closer. Consequently, these communities have not been registered and they have no voting rights. This issue is currently being addressed by the Federal Government.

Causes of tension/conflict

Political

disputes over land; and
fear of political domination by the Tiv ethnic group due to their rapid population growth.
indigene/settler issue

Tiv/Jukun/Fulani - land issue. The Jukuns say that the Tivs are settlers.
Mambilla/Fulani - land issue
Fulani/Indigenous groups - land issue
Jukun-Chamba/Kuteb - boundary dispute & killing of paramount chief

There is high unemployment, particularly among the youth in Taraba, making them easy targets for recruitment into militia groups. Skills training and job creation opportunities would help to reduce this problem to some extent.

[...]

PLATEAU STATE

[...]

Conflicts within the state

Hausa-Fulani and other ethnic groups

Violent clashes erupted between the Muslims (mainly Hausa-Fulanis) and the Christians in Oct 2001 and again in Jan and May 2002. As a result, there is presently an 11pm to 6am curfew and army patrols on the streets of Jos. During the clashes, buildings and vehicles were burnt, people were killed and thousands fled both within the state and to neighboring states, including Benue, Kano and Kaduna. It was alleged that the Chief of Police at that time ordered police officers to protect a mosque. He also allegedly changed the command (to Muslim commanders) of some police satellite stations prior to the clashes. These allegations have not been confirmed, however, the Chief of Police has since been changed. During the fighting, it was alleged that the Hausa-Fulanis sought assistance from fellow Hausa-Fulanis in Bauchi State, who came in military uniform to fight with the Muslims. Subsequently, the Government of Bauchi State was accused of involvement in the clashes.

Causes of tension/conflict

Political

Economic

Indigene/settler issue

Religion

The main causes are primarily economic, political and related to the issue of indigeneity. A secondary cause is religion, which is often used to incite people to action.

The Christian population maintain that they are indigenous to Plateau State and that the Hausa-Fulanis came to Plateau State to work in the mines. The Hausa-Fulani see themselves as indigenous to Plateau State and the majority do not have any extended family ties in neighboring states. Over the years, the Hausa-Fulanis have become the most economically productive group and have also increased in population. Consequently, they are now seeking more political representation.

Efforts to introduce Sharia Law in Plateau State have also caused conflict between the Muslims and Christians. The introduction of Sharia law is seen as an infringement on the right to freedom of religion and will, therefore, not be accepted by the Christian segment of the population.

Potential for future conflict

From limited discussions, it appears that the Christian population do not want the Hausa-Fulanis in government. It is, therefore, likely that there may be increased tension and possible conflict

around the forthcoming elections, especially in areas where the Hausa-Fulanis are in the majority.” (UN OCHA 18 June 2002)

More details about the conflict and displacement in Nassarawa (2002)

- Crisis in Nassarawa rooted in fears of political domination by Tivs that are considered settlers by other ethnic groups (e.g. Hausa)
- Reports on raids on Tiv villages already in February 2001
- Claimed that the Nassarawa state government did not respond to the simmering conflict

OMCT, 2002, pp. 147-148, 160-161:

"The cause of the crisis in Nassarawa is apparently rooted in fears of political domination and marginalisation. The settler-indigene factor comes in where ethnic groups within the state suggest that the Tiv are settlers in Nassarawa and as such should curb their political ambition. When the administration of Alhaji Abdullahi Adamu appointed two Tiv persons, one as Special Advisor to the state government and the other as Permanent Secretary in the public service of the state, the administration was accused in some quarters of favouring Tivs. The Tiv claim that as early as March 10, 2001 the Tiv Youth Organisation of Nassarawa State addressed a letter to the state government calling its attention to the incessant terror inflicted on the Tivs living in Azara and Awe Chiefdoms, home to the assassinated Alhaji Musa Ibrahim, *Sarkin Azara* (the traditional Prime-Minister of the Azara Chiefdom). Before this, displaced persons from Nassarawa say that on February 4, 2001, Tiv villages around Agyaragu in Obi Local Government Area were raided and 11 persons killed, homes and property burnt and looted. Government's attention was drawn to this but no response was forthcoming or any arrest made. By March 27, the wildfire of ethnic conflict spread to communities in Kundum, Quanpam LGA of Plateau State and quickly spread into Awe LGA sweeping across Wuse, Akin, Tangwa, and the entire Azara chiefdom. The Tiv insist that in spite of several distress calls, the Nassarawa state government simply stood by and ignored the complaints.

[...]

Displaced persons are one of the saddest legacies of inter-ethnic conflict between the Tiv and Jukun and the recent military campaign in the Benue. As at August 2001 the Tiv-Hausa violence in Nassarawa State had bred over 100,000 displaced persons scattered across camps in Benue State. The numbers apparently overwhelm the National Commission for Refugees. It is impossible to assemble credible statistics on displaced persons fleeing the Benue/Taraba violence and the Army reprisals. The entire population of displaced persons is spread across camps in Benue State, including Agasha, Daudu, Yelwata, Ukpian, Udei, Torkura, Kyato, Jootar, Chito and Kaseyo camps.

[...]

Most of the displaced persons trekked to the camps through the bush. They had to find refuge in the absence of immediate postconflict assistance. Most victims have never heard of the National Emergency Relief Agency. Mbawan Shizun did the trek from Dooshima. Suwa Vurun walked from Gassol in Taraba with her family of 10. Suwa's husband died escaping the Killing because they had no aid to lift him. He was old. Persons she identifies as Jukun attackers burned the family house immediately after they set off. After 3 weeks in the bush she reached Agasha with surviving members of her family."

Background to the Tiv-Jukun conflict, 1940-2003

- The "Middle Belt" between Nigeria's north and south, comprises the Tiv, Jukun and numerous minority ethnic groups and communities
- The violence between the Tiv and Jukun, coexisting in Benue and Taraba States has numerous causes, affecting populations of both ethnic groups in neighbouring Adamawa, Plateau and Nassarawa States
- The Jukuns are in majority in Taraba and the Tivs in majority in Benue
- Violence relates to disputes over land, traditional rulership, political authority, and fears of domination and marginalisation
- The dichotomy between "settlers" and "indigenes" is a main root cause behind the conflicts

OMCT, 2002, pp. 132-133:

"The Hausa-Fulani in the north, the Yoruba in the southwest and the Igbo in the southeast dominate Nigeria's national scene. However, the broad characterisation of a Muslim Hausa-speaking north, and a Christian south made up of two dominant ethnic groups-the Yoruba and Igbo is a vast oversimplification. Over centuries people have moved around what is now modern Nigeria. The Middle Belt, which runs west to east between and separating Nigeria's north and south, comprises the Tiv, Jukun and numerous minority ethnic groups and communities. Apart from being the food basket of the country, this region also has the largest concentration of officers and men of the Nigerian Armed Forces. Over the years, traditional warriors from the Chamba, Alago, Mumuye, Egon, Fulani and other minority ethnic groups in the region have been drawn into violence against one another, but none on so brutal and protracted a scale as that between the Tiv and Jukun. [...] The violence between the Tiv and Jukun, coexisting in Benue and Taraba States has numerous causes, affecting populations of both ethnic groups in neighbouring Adamawa, Plateau and Nassarawa States. The violence relates to disputes over land, traditional rulership, political authority, and fears of domination and marginalisation. Central to the violence, however, is the constitutional issue of citizenship rights encapsulated in the explosive dichotomy between "settlers" and "indigenes". There is competition for access to resources between those that consider themselves "indigenes" (the Jukun) and those that are considered as more recent "settlers" (the Tiv). The Middle Belt happens to be one of the last parts of Nigeria to be brought under central governmental control, and one of the last to be offered modern education and public services. This has made the struggle for access to resources, be it access to farmland, electricity, employment or political power, fierce in the extreme. Despite the country's vast oil wealth, the narrowing of economic opportunity has produced a frustrated and angry underclass of unemployed youths. It is to this disempowered group that politicians look for support, with disastrous consequences in the region as in other parts of Nigeria."

HRW, April 2002:

"The conflict in the Taraba-Benue area, which has been going on for decades, is principally between the Tivs, on the one hand, and the Jukuns, on the other; in recent years, the Jukuns have formed a close alliance with the Fulanis. The Jukuns form the majority in Taraba, while the Tivs form the majority in Benue. There are also sizeable Tiv minorities in Taraba, Nasarawa and Plateau states, and a small Jukun minority in Benue. The conflict in Taraba between Tivs and Jukuns has tended to center around competition for land, as well as control over economic resources and political power. Political battles have been especially intense around the control of Wukari, the traditional Jukun center in Taraba State. There have been disputes over the siting of the boundary between Benue and Taraba states, respect (or disrespect) for boundary demarcations, and political control of the border towns and villages. In broad terms, the Jukuns claim to be the original inhabitants of Taraba State, or "indigenes," and consider the Tivs as settlers. The Tivs reject this view, on the basis that they too have been living there for several generations and therefore have equal rights; they complain of being marginalized and excluded in

Taraba. Likewise, the Jukun minority in Benue also complain of marginalization, lack of employment opportunities, and insecurity.

There has been periodic fighting between these groups since the late 1950s, with sporadic outbreaks in 1964, 1976, and again in 1990-1992. Over the years, the communities have found increasing difficulty in living together peaceably. Benue is often referred to as the Tiv state, and Taraba as that of the Jukuns. Political polarisation has gradually turned into physical segregation too: as violence has intensified in Taraba, an increasing number of Tivs have fled into Benue. Tivs have complained of persecution in Taraba and talk of a deliberate campaign of "ethnic cleansing," primarily by the Jukuns, allied with the Fulanis, and now additionally backed up by the military. They have claimed that these operations are deliberately timed to ensure that the Jukuns have the political advantage in Taraba in the run-up to elections scheduled in 2003. In addition, the rivalries between Tivs and Jukuns have always had the potential to escalate into an even more serious conflict at the national level, as both groups are well represented in the national army."

IRIN, 24 October 2001:

"Many analysts link the current bloodletting in central Nigeria to political problems dating to the colonial era. During this period the British delegated powers over this vast region inhabited by many ethnic minorities to its ally, the Hausa-Fulani Muslim caliphate that held sway in many parts of northern Nigeria. The Tivs were one of non-Muslim minorities who vehemently opposed Hausa-Fulani influence, resulting in a major eruption of violence in the early 1960s that required military intervention to contain. While the Tivs preferred political alliances with southern political parties, the Jukuns teamed up with the Northern Peoples' Congress, controlled by the Muslim feudal oligarchs of the north. Violent eruptions between the two groups were recorded in 1959, 1964, 1976 and 1991-92."

EPCPT, October 1999, 'Nigeria: The Tiv-Jukun Conflict in Wukari, Taraba State':

"The political dimensions of the conflict are two-fold: traditional and modern. The former concerned control of the local government council and political appointments and other resources. The latter centred around the Jukun's refusal to include any Tiv person on the Wukari Traditional Council, where decisions are made that affect them.

Land is another issue which is frequently named as a cause of the conflict. However, while land is frequently mentioned, it is in reality only a vent for political and other forms of conflict. Although it is often said that the Tiv are encroaching on the farmlands owned by the Jukun, it turned out that the real issue is that the Tiv do not follow the traditional laws of land administration, which require them to obtain permission from the village head, ward head, district head and paramount ruler before starting to farm on a piece of land. Instead the Tiv would not accept that they are settlers and did not recognise the Jukun as the original indigenes. [...]

Another factor in the conflict is the high population growth of the Tiv, which creates a need for more and more farmland. The Tiv also often invite relatives from neighbouring Benue State, which increases the demand for land, as well as the numerical strength of the Tiv. The Jukun feel that their culture, of which they are extremely proud, is being undermined by this influx of Tiv and have embarked upon a 'rejukunisation' process.

These various causes led to an extremely violent confrontation between the Tiv and the Jukun in 1990-92. No one, including the government or the groups involved, can give exact figures of casualties. However there was massive burning of houses, business premises, and schools, accompanied by looting of property."

Displacement related to ethno-religious conflicts

Displacement related to religious conflicts occurs mainly in the north, 1999-2003

- Displacement is caused by religious conflicts between Christians and Muslims in the north, which also take on an ethnic character
- Constitutionally, there is freedom of religion, however, the government restricted this in certain respects with regard to the implementation of Shari'a law by some northern states
- In October 1999, Zamfara state instituted Islamic Shari'a law in its entirety, after which other states followed

IRIN, 22 November 2001, 'Nigeria: Focus on tension between communities in Kaduna State'

"In 1804, Fulani nomads, who had migrated from the Fouta Djallon area of Guinea and had become late converts to Islam, decided to launch a 'jihad' or Islamic war to expand the religion among the Hausa states.[...]

Having defeated the Hausa, the Fulani learnt their language and intermarried with their ruling classes. Soon the two groups fused to become virtually one indistinct ethnic group under the rule of the Sokoto caliphate.[...]

But when the British arrived to colonise Nigeria, they forged an alliance with the Sokoto caliphate in pursuit of the indirect rule system. [...] It was then that the caliphate extended influence over even non-Muslim areas, to the chagrin of the ethnic minorities of northern Nigeria.

'Even with the attainment of independence, most of them have not been able to throw off the yoke of caliphate domination bequeathed by the colonialists,' Chike Ezemo, of the social sciences faculty, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, told IRIN. 'This has been a constant source of tension and suspicion between the Muslim and non-Muslim communities in much of northern Nigeria.'

The other source of conflict in Kaduna is growing pressure on land as a result of migration. The Hausa-Fulani, who are mainly migrant traders, have established sizable communities among the ethnic minority groups in the state. And in recent decades the rate of southward migration has been accelerated by the advance of the Sahara Desert. Many Hausa-Fulani farmers are therefore seeking land for agriculture."

"This type of displacement-generating conflict occurs mainly in the north of the country between Muslims and Christians. Since the north is predominantly Muslim, their Christian adversaries tend to belong to other ethnic groups, usually from the south of the country. The result is that these conflicts, though primarily religious, also take on an ethnic character. In recent times, there have been major religious conflicts in Kano, Bauchi, Yola, Kaduna and other cities in the north. Sometimes, radical Muslim sects like the Maitatsine group initiate these conflicts, targeting both Christians and more liberal Muslim sects. There is little doubt that the worsening social security situation in Nigeria is leading more and more people into revivalist and millennialist sects in both the Muslim and Christian religions. They are not only ultra conservative in approach but accept holy wars as divinely ordained." (Ibeanu 1998, p.50)

Background on the application of Sharia law by some states in the north of Nigeria (1999)

US DOS, February 2001, sect.2c

"The Constitution provides for freedom of religion, including freedom to change one's religion or belief, and freedom to manifest and propagate one's religion or belief in worship, teaching, practice, and observance; however, the Government restricted these rights in practice in certain respects. The status of respect for religious freedom deteriorated during the year due to the implementation of an expanded version of Shari'a law in several northern states, which challenged constitutional protections for religious freedom and sparked interreligious violence.

The Constitution prohibits state and local governments from adopting an official religion; however, it also provides that states may elect to use Islamic (Shari'a) customary law and courts. About half of the population is Muslim, about 40 percent Christian, and about 10 percent practice traditional indigenous religion or no religion. Since independence, the jurisdiction of Shari'a courts has been limited to family or personal law cases involving Muslims, or to civil disputes between Muslims and non-Muslims who consent to the courts' jurisdiction. However, the Constitution states that a Shari'a court of appeal may exercise "such other jurisdiction as may be conferred upon it by the law of the State." Some states have interpreted this language as granting them the right to expand the jurisdiction of existing Shari'a courts to include criminal matters. Several Christians have alleged that [...] Islam has been adopted as the de facto state religion of several northern states. [...]

[...]
In October 1999, the governor of Zamfara state signed into law two bills aimed at instituting Islamic Shari'a law in his state. Implementation of the law began on January 22. Zamfara's law adopted traditional Shari'a in its entirety, with the exception that apostasy was not criminalized. Following Zamfara's lead, several northern states began to implement varying forms of expanded Shari'a; by year's end 9 states had adopted variations of Shari'a law - Sokoto, Niger, Kano, Kebbi, Jigawa, Yobe, Zamfara, Katsina, and Kaduna states.

[...]
As the result of nationwide violence in February and March [2000] related to the expansion of Shari'a laws [...], several northern state governments banned open air preaching and public religious processions. [...]

On February 29 [2000], in response to the nationwide violence, President Obasanjo convened a meeting of the Nigerian Council of State [...]. The result of the meeting was an agreement that northern governors would halt initiatives to expand Shari'a laws and return to the northern Nigerian Penal Code; however, a few states continued to expand their Shari'a laws. [...]."

Major displacement as religious violence breaks out in Kaduna State - February 2000, July 2001 and November 2002

- Several thousands temporary displaced by religious riots in Kaduna in November 2002
- Physical segregation of the city increased after these riots, leaving the population deeply polarised
- Conflict has made Christians originally from southern Nigeria leave Kaduna and return to their home regions in the South
- Ethnic/religious violence caused renewed displacement in July 2001
- In 2000 over 63,000 people were displaced within Kaduna and its surroundings
- Clashes followed the introduction of Sharia law in 1999, but tensions go back as far as the British rule, and have an ethnic, agricultural, and political dimension as well

Displacement in 2002

IRIN, 28 November 2002:

"More than 30,000 people were displaced during four days of religious riots in the northern Nigerian city of Kaduna, the Nigerian Red Cross said on Thursday [28 November 2002].

Red Cross spokesman Patrick Bawa said more than 1,000 people were injured while over 200 died in the clashes between Christians and Muslims.

The violence had erupted last week after Muslim militants protested against a 16 November article in the Thisday daily dismissing their opposition to the Miss World contest which was due to be held in Nigeria. The writer, Isioma Daniel, suggested that the Prophet Mohammed would have approved of the beauty pageant and may even have chosen one of the contestants for a wife.

"More than 7,000 families were displaced in the violence, and if you multiply the number by an average of five people a family you get more than 30,000," Bawa told IRIN.

The Nigerian security forces brought the situation in Kaduna under control on Sunday, although tension was still high in the city. Bawa said some of those who had fled their homes had started going back. The Red Cross, he said, planned to conduct a fresh needs assessment in the city to determine the numbers yet to return and their current plight.

Humanitarian workers in Kaduna said many of the displaced remained in the police and military barracks where they had taken refuge, afraid of renewed violence if they went home. Thousands of residents, especially Christians from southern Nigeria, were leaving the city and returning to their home regions, they said."

HRW, July 2003:

"The 2000 violence also caused large-scale population displacement, leading to a sharp segregation of communities in some areas. By 2002, residents were describing particular areas of Kaduna town as '100 per cent Christian' or '100 per cent Muslim.' This was largely as a result of the 2000 events, and to a lesser extent the clashes of previous years. Christians and Muslims increasingly moved to areas which were dominated by people of their own faith in the hope of finding safety there; many of them did not return to their original areas of residence. Following the 2002 violence, this physical segregation of parts of the city appears to have increased — an indication of deepening polarization in what was once a genuinely mixed population. Many of the people interviewed by Human Rights Watch in December 2002 explained that they had moved homes not because they did not want to live with members of other faiths, but that it was a 'survival tactic': they expected to be safer surrounded by their own community in the event of any future resurgence of violence."

Displacement in 2001**ICRC, 5 July 2001:**

"On Saturday [30 June 2001], in Kaduna (central Nigeria), yet more families were displaced by ethnic strife. The Nigerian Red Cross and the ICRC have since carried out non-food distributions for around 1,000 people with no means of subsistence."

Displacement in 2000**IRIN-WA, 3 March 2000:**

"Fighting in the northern city of Kaduna began on 21 February [2000] following a march organised by the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) to protest the proposed introduction of Islamic law

in the state of Kaduna. The clashes in the state capital, in which at least 400 were killed, created fear between people who formerly lived as neighbours."

IRIN-WA, 10 March 2000:

"The approach of the Muslim Festival of Eid ul Kebir, to be celebrated next week, has created fears of fresh communal violence in Nigeria following clashes between Muslims and Christians in which nearly 1,000 people are reported to have died in the past two weeks.

Christians and non-indigenes have been fleeing the northern city of Kano while Muslims have been pouring out of Port Harcourt in the southeast, AFP reported.

The movement has been sparked by fears of a resumption of the incidents in the northern town of Kaduna, where Muslims killed about 400 people, mainly Christians, and the retaliatory killing of a similar number of Muslims in the southern state of Abia. The clashes were related to the proposed introduction of Islamic law in northern states."

OMCT, 26 August 2002, pp. 96, 97-98:

"When Kaduna state announced plans to implement Shari'a law, the large Christian minority in the state protested on February 21 [2000], leading to several days of violent confrontations. Estimates of the number of persons killed range from 1,000 to 1,500; many churches and mosques were burned. Many Christians in the north, fearing continued violence, returned to their historic homelands in the southeast.

On February 28, when the bodies of the victims from the Kaduna violence were returned home to the southeast, reciprocal violence erupted in Aba, Abia state, and, to a lesser extent, in the neighboring towns of Owerri, Imo state, and Onitsha, Anambra state. This violence was characterized by attacks on the minority Muslim Hausas by the majority Igbos. Estimates of the number of persons killed range from 400 to 500. Many of the Hausas were victimized due to their ethnic identity rather than their religious beliefs." (US DOS February 2001, sect.4)

"On Wednesday 23 March 2000, the crisis spilled over to outlying LGAs, particularly Kachia and Birnin Gwari. In Kachia LGA, Muslims were attacked. Their residential houses, shops, clinics, courts, filling stations and the market were destroyed. It later spread to neighbouring villages like Sakainu, Katul, Adadgai, Slowai, and Gumel. At the end of the crisis about 350 residential houses were destroyed in Kachia LGA alone, displacing about 25,000 people. Hundreds of people were killed. Many of those displaced trooped to NASA Army Barracks for safety. In Birnin Gwari, Mararaban Jos, Gadan Gaya etc. Christians were attacked. Their properties were destroyed and many of them were either killed or displaced. Several Churches and residential houses were also destroyed.

[...]

Over 63,000 people were displaced within Kaduna and its surroundings. This excludes thousands of others that fled to their places of origin or fled to live with relatives elsewhere. It is estimated that up to 75% of those displaced were women and children. More than twenty refugee camps were opened in military barracks, Police barracks, private residences, schools and churches. Individual as well as corporate properties were destroyed."

More background on the religious clashes in Kaduna State:

IRIN, 22 November 2001:

"Reputed for decades to be the melting pot of Nigeria's cultures, the northern state of Kaduna has witnessed some of the most violent confrontations between different ethnic and religious groups since President Olusegun Obasanjo was elected in 1999.

[...]

Trouble started brewing in 1999 when a number of overwhelmingly Muslim northern states, including Kaduna, constitutionally adopted the controversial Islamic legal code or Sharia.

Under Sharia law, drinking of alcohol is punishable by flogging, stealing attracts amputation of limbs, while adulterers can be stoned to death. As Sharia rapidly caught on, it was obvious it would create trouble in Kaduna whose population, like Nigeria's, is almost half muslim and half non-Muslim. Each of the groups would seek to assert perceived rights or lay claim to demands long suppressed by military repression.

In a number of ways Kaduna is a miniature of Nigeria, a federation of 36 states. Not only is it made up of a multiplicity of ethnic groups, it also has a culturally distinct north that is predominantly Muslim and a south that is mainly Christian.

[...]

While Muslims in Kaduna embraced the religious code, counter-protests by Christians soon resulted in ethnic and religious violence, which first engulfed the state capital of Kaduna with its two million people. When the first two bouts cleared - the first in February and the second in May 2000, more than 2,000 people had been killed. Scores of houses and other property had also been destroyed.

[...]

'Sharia served as a catalyst to alert the non-Muslim ethnic minorities of the need to resist and fight perceived domination by Hausa-Fulani Muslims,' Samson Bako, a Kaduna-based human rights activist, told IRIN.

[...]

The other source of conflict in Kaduna is growing pressure on land as a result of migration. The Hausa-Fulani, who are mainly migrant traders, have established sizable communities among the ethnic minority groups in the state. And in recent decades the rate of southward migration has been accelerated by the advance of the Sahara Desert. Many Hausa-Fulani farmers are therefore seeking land for agriculture.

According to Bako, the Hausa-Fulani - being richer and having a more advanced system of social organisation with links to the emirate system- are often appointed to head chiefdoms or districts among the people where they have settled. "Attempts to exercise this power often leads to confrontation as resentful local people resist them," he said.

[...]

Since the 2000 riots, Kaduna State governor, Ahmed Makarfi, has initiated reforms to reduce ethnic and religious tensions, including introduction of a modified version of Sharia, to try and accommodate feelings of both religious communities. Under the system which became operational on 2 November, the Muslim legal code will only apply in predominantly Muslim areas while canon or customary law will rule in areas inhabited by Christians and non-Muslims.

Makarfi has also created new chiefdoms and districts for the non-Muslim ethnic minorities of the state. He also changed the line of authority, making the chiefs answerable not to the Zaria Emirate Council, but to the state government."

Kano: displacement after imposition of Sharia law, June 2000, and after religious violence following US action in Afghanistan, September-October 2001

- There was an exodus of Christians and southerners from Kano State prior to the official introduction of Sharia law in June 2000
- US air strikes against Afghanistan resulted in clashes in Kano between Muslims and Christians, which caused the displacement of thousands of people (September-October 2001)

- There were fears of reprisal attacks against northern Muslims living in southern Nigeria

IRIN, 19 June 2000:

"An exodus of Christians and southerners from the northern state of Kano prior to the official introduction of Sharia law there on Wednesday has begun, 'The Post Express' newspaper reported on Saturday.

Residents, fearing that the launching of Islamic law in the state could precipitate killings, decided to relocate to other parts of Nigeria, the daily said. However, a Kano state official denied on Sunday that Christians and southerners were leaving.

[...]

In February, hundreds of people were killed or injured, private and public buildings destroyed when Christians demonstrated against [sic!] the introduction of Sharia in the northern city of Kaduna, some 200 km southwest of Kano.

Kano and Kaduna have large Christian populations, unlike the states of Zamfara and Sokoto which adopted the Islamic code earlier this year."

US air raids against Afghanistan provoked religious violence (September-October 2001)

IRIN, 15 October 2001:

"Heavily armed troops were maintaining an uneasy calm in Nigeria's northern city of Kano on Monday after protests by Muslims against U.S. air strikes against Afghanistan resulted in two days of clashes with Christians in which scores died, residents said.

Thousands of protesters had poured onto the streets from mosques after Friday prayers in northern Nigeria's biggest city, denouncing U.S. air raids on Afghanistan and bearing portraits of Saudi dissident, Osama bin Laden, suspected of being behind the 11 September terrorist attacks on New York and Washington.

The march remained peaceful until a scuffle with a group of Christians resulted in widespread violence. Burnt cars littered the streets on Monday and several burnt buildings were still smouldering. Worst hit by the violence was the Sabon Gari quarters inhabited mostly by Christians and non-Muslims.

(...)

Thousands of residents who fled their homes are taking refuge at police stations and military barracks. Many more, especially southerners, are fleeing the city in droves.

This has raised fears of imminent reprisal attacks on northern Muslims living in southern Nigeria as has been the pattern with the country's recent cycle of religious and communal violence."

Ethno-religious violence between Hausa-Fulanis and other ethnic groups in Plateau State displaces thousands, September 2001- 2002

- Major displacement caused by the September 2001 clashes between the Hausa-Fulanis (mostly Muslims) and "indigenes" groups (mostly Christians) in the State capital Jos
- Tensions rooted in disputes between one side seen as "indigenes" and the other as "settlers"
- After five days of fighting the Red Cross put the total number of displaced in Plateau State at some 60,000

- Although calm returned to Jos, violence spread to other parts of Plateau State such as Langtang, Kuru and Pankshin districts
- New displacement during 2002 because of retaliatory attacks and bandit raids apparently involving Fulani herdsmen and elements from neighbouring Niger and Chad

HRW, April 2003, p.23:

"The concept of "indigene" in Nigeria refers to persons or ethnic groups that are purportedly native to a certain area; "indigene certificates" issued by a person's supposed "home" state must sometimes be presented in order to receive certain jobs or benefits through the state. The "indigene/settler" distinction has caused a great deal of hostility in Jos and other areas of Nigeria. Particularly for many Hausa/Fulanis who have been in Plateau State for generations, it is the only home they know and they resent being viewed as outsiders. At the same time, "indigenes" in Jos accuse the Hausa/Fulanis of attempting to take over areas of the city for themselves and to exclude the "indigenes" from economic or political activity. Disputes between "indigenes" and "settlers" had set off days of rioting in Jos in September 2001 that engulfed the city and killed up to a thousand people."

HRW, 18 December 2001:

"Unlike other parts of Nigeria, which have experienced inter-communal violence with tragic regularity, Jos, until September 2001, had always been viewed as a peaceful city. To many Nigerians, the Plateau State motto of 'Home of Peace and Tourism' was more than an empty slogan. Indeed, many people fleeing conflicts in their own areas had sought protection and safety in Jos; some had even settled there. Some observers believe that this regular influx of populations from neighboring states may have ended up destabilizing the tranquility of Jos. People fleeing in 2000 and 2001 from clashes in Kaduna, Bauchi, Taraba, and Nasarawa states may have inadvertently contributed to creating an atmosphere of fear among inhabitants of Plateau State by testifying to the atrocities they had left behind, some of which were still continuing. The increase in the population in Jos, in particular, also created an increase in economic pressures, leading in turn to the scarcity of some goods and increase in prices. Resources became stretched, and tensions began to rise.

[...]

The specific incident that sparked off the violence occurred outside a mosque in the area of Jos known as Congo Russia. On Friday, September 7, a young Christian woman tried to cross the road through a congregation of Muslims outside the mosque. She was asked to wait until prayers had finished or to choose another route, but she refused and an argument developed between her and some members of the congregation. Within minutes, the argument had unleashed a violent battle between groups of Christians who appeared at the scene and Muslims who had been praying at the mosque or who happened to be in the neighborhood.

[...]

From that moment onwards, the fighting spread uncontrollably. According to testimonies from different parts of the town, the violence raged from Friday, September 7 to Monday, September 10. After a brief lull, it flared up again on Wednesday, September 12, with further killings and destruction. By Thursday, September 13, when the fighting ceased, hundreds of people had been killed, many others were missing, and thousands of homes, buildings, and other property had been destroyed."

IRIN-WA, 12 September 2001:

"Ethnic and religious violence spread to other parts of Plateau State in Nigeria as calm returned to the state capital, Jos, after four days of fighting between Muslims and Christians, humanitarian workers said.

'As at yesterday, the situation in Jos was getting back to normal but new crisis areas erupted again,' Patrick Bawa, spokesman of the Nigerian Red Cross, told IRIN on Tuesday. Other areas that experienced fresh fighting, he said, included Langtang, Kuru and Pankshin districts.'

[...]

The Red Cross said, also on Tuesday, that '60,000 people have been displaced so far' in Plateau State alone."

Retaliatory attacks during 2002 continued to displace people:

IRIN-WA, 4 January 2002:

"An armed attack by a militia group, during which 17 people died and several others were wounded, led this week to the displacement of some 3,000 residents of a village near Jos, capital of central Nigeria's Plateau State, state police told IRIN on Wednesday. The assailants are believed to be Muslim Hausa-Fulani who attacked Dagwom Tutu village, Vwang district, in retaliation for casualties suffered by Muslims during violent confrontations with local Christians in September 2001, Governor Joshua Dariye said. Those displaced were reported to be mainly Hausa-Fulanis who fled to Jos fearing reprisals for the attack."

IRIN, 12 August 2002:

"Intermittent communal clashes have rocked Plateau State since September 2001, when ethnic and religious clashes between Muslims and Christians in Jos, resulting in the loss of over 1,000 lives. Since the beginning of the year several clashes have occurred in parts of the state, in which mainly local Christians have engaged Muslim Hausa-speakers whose origins are further in the north of the country. Scores of people have died and thousands have been displaced."

Several reports after mid-2002 about bandit raids apparently involving Fulani herdsmen and elements from neighbouring Niger and Chad:

IRIN, 29 July 2002:

"At least 15 people died [23 and 24 July 2002] when an armed group launched an attack on policemen deployed to trouble spots in Nigeria's central Plateau State, police sources said on Saturday.

[...]

The motive of the attackers was not immediately clear, but in recent years there have been many reports of former rebels from Niger and Chad crossing into Nigeria and Cameroon to engage in banditry.

Last week's incident adds a new dimension to intermittent communal unrest that has rocked Plateau State since September 2001, when fighting between Muslims and Christians in the capital, Jos, resulted in the loss of over 1,000 lives. Clashes that have occurred this year in parts of the state have pitted indigenous people, most of them Christian, against more recent Muslim settlers from farther north. This is the first reported incident involving foreign elements."

IRIN, 25 October 2002:

"Scores of people have died in central Nigeria's Plateau State in a series of raids by bandits and clashes between farmers and herders, residents and officials said.

In the latest incident, on Tuesday night, a group of gunmen identified by locals as Fulani herdsmen attacked the farming village of Maza, north of the Plateau capital, Jos. At least eight people were killed in the ensuing fighting.

Plateau State Governor Joshua Dariye confirmed the incident in a broadcast on Wednesday and appealed for calm. "I want to assure you that this situation is under control as security agents have taken total control," he told residents.

Reports from the Shendam and Langtang districts said more than 35 people were killed in raids on several villages by armed bandits thought to include Fulani herdsmen and bandits from Nigeria's northern neighbours, Niger and Chad, who have been operating in the region in recent years.

"The attacks have been persistent in the past two weeks and many people have died who remain unaccounted for," Isaac Dabup, a Langtang resident, told IRIN.

Plateau State has often experienced violent attacks on remote village communities since September last year when clashes between Muslims and Christians erupted in Jos, resulting in the death of more than 1,000 people.

While the state is predominantly Christian, large communities of Muslim Hausa-speakers, including Fulani herders, reside there. Local people said aggrieved Fulani herdsmen who lost relatives and their cattle herds in the 2001 violence had since been launching reprisal raids on isolated local communities."

See also: [*Background on the opposition between the Yoruba's of the West and the Hausa-Fulani of the Muslim North*](#)

For an elaborate report on the background, the incidents of violence, the role of the security forces, the impact of the Jos crisis on other areas, as well as the response of the government, see the HRW report "Jos: A city torn apart", accessible through the internet link mentioned below.

Renewed violence in Plateau State causes major displacement, state of emergency declared in May 2004

- In February 2004 the Red Cross reported at least 2,500 people fled violence between Muslims and Christians in Plateau State and sought refuge in neighbouring Bauchi State
- Among the victims were 48 Christians killed by Muslim Fulanis in the town of Yelwa after they had taken refuge in a church
- In response, Christian Taroks launched a "devastating" attack on Muslim Fulanis in Yelwa at the beginning of May, killing several hundred and displacing thousands
- The conflict was essentially over land and cattle - not over religion
- President Obasanjo responded by declaring a state of emergency in Plateau

IRIN, 4 March 2004:

"At least 2,500 people have fled Plateau State in central Nigeria following a fortnight of violence between Muslims and Christians that has left 62 dead and more injured, the Red Cross said on Thursday.

Patrick Bawa, a spokesman for the Red Cross in Nigeria, told IRIN that his organisation had registered 2,500 displaced people in neighbouring Bauchi State by Wednesday afternoon and more were still arriving.

[...]

Around 100 of the arrivals were injured and in need of treatment. The Red Cross provided first aid, and 16 people with severe injuries were sent to hospital, he added.

While troops and policemen have restored calm in most of the affected areas, people were continuing to flee the districts "because they're not too sure of their security," Bawa said.

Police said the latest outbreak of religious clashes in the Shendam and Langtang districts of Plateau State had claimed at least 62 lives over the past two weeks.

The victims include 48 people who were killed last week during a Muslim raid on the town of Yelwa on 24 February. Most were killed as they sought refuge in a church compound.

The bloodletting appeared to be in reprisal for a Christian attack on a nearby Muslim village in which 10 people were killed.

Four policemen have so far died in the fighting which has involved automatic rifles as well as bows and arrows."

HRW, 11 May 2004:

"Armed members of the predominantly Christian Tarok ethnic group on May 2 attacked the town of Yelwa, in the southern part of Plateau State, apparently in reprisal for earlier attacks against Taroks by members of the predominantly Muslim Fulani ethnic group. Local sources described the attack on Yelwa, where the majority of the population is Fulani, as devastating.

Several hundred people were killed according to credible accounts based on the testimonies of local residents, although an accurate death toll is not yet available. The perpetrators used fire arms and machetes, and the victims were buried in several mass graves. There was also widespread destruction in the town. Thousands of inhabitants of Yelwa have been displaced, and the area has become extremely polarized."

BBC, 5 May 2004:

"Mutilated and charred corpses were still lying on the main street of the remote market town on Tuesday, reports a Reuters correspondent in the town.

Almost every house lining the main street of Yelwa was burned and some were still smouldering. A mosque was also destroyed, Reuters reports.

Thousands of Muslims lined the roadside chanting religious slogans and vowing revenge on the attackers.

'Allah will avenge us. The pagans have killed our people,' said one man.

In Christian villages near Yelwa, hundreds of youths were sitting on the roadside, apparently awaiting further violence, Reuters says.

[...]

House-to-house

Eyewitnesses told the BBC that several thousand men from four predominantly Christian ethnic groups surrounded Yelwa on Sunday.

Some of the men wore uniforms, while others were stripped to the waist and painted black.

They carried what a crowd of townspeople described as sophisticated weapons. Then they went from house to house killing whoever they could find.

Fighting for land

Justice Orire, secretary general of the Nigerian Muslim umbrella organisation Jama'atu Nasril Islam, asked where the Christian militia had got machine guns from, if they had not had outside backing.

He said Muslims from Yelwa reported that their cattle were being taken, or prevented from grazing, and they felt there was an attempt to get them to leave the area, even before this week's events.

In February, 48 Christians were killed by armed Muslim Fulanis in Yelwa after they had taken refuge in a church.

Muslim Fulani cattle herders and Christian Tarok farmers have been clashing in central Nigeria for more than two months.

They are fighting mainly over land and cattle. Thousands of people are reported to have fled the fighting."

BBC, 19 May 2004:

"Both houses of Nigeria's parliament have approved the state of emergency in the central state of Plateau declared by President Olusegun Obasanjo.

The president ordered the measure to control continuing violence between the state's Muslims and Christians.

Several opposition politicians have already condemned the move as undemocratic.

President Obasanjo said serious action was needed to deal with a situation that he called 'near mutual-genocide'.

Earlier the newly appointed governor of Plateau, Chris Ali, made a call for peace in the troubled state, warning that if Nigerians wanted to see where hatred and intolerance could lead, they should consider what happened in Rwanda."

Plateau State violence sparks revenge attacks in Kano and Adamawa States, May-June 2004

- About 30 people are killed and 10,000 displaced in two days of violence between Muslims and Christians in the northern city of Kano in May 2004
- IDPs are mainly Christians fleeing from attackers in the predominantly Muslim city
- Thousands of IDPs find refuge at the main military and police barracks
- The violence was seen as a reprisal for the killing of several hundred Muslims in the town of Yelwa, Plateau State, about one week earlier

IRIN, 12 May 2004:

"Police have imposed a dawn to dusk curfew in Kano, the largest city in northern Nigeria, where about 30 people have been killed in two days of religious violence, sparked off by a Muslim protest demonstration against a massacre committed by Christians.

Kano State police commissioner Abdulganiyu Daudu told reporters on Wednesday that about 30 people had been killed in the city of eight million people.

A further 45 had been arrested and 40 had been injured after mobs of youths armed with clubs, machetes and jerry cans of petrol roamed the streets on predominantly Muslim Kano, attacking suspected Christians, burning their homes and property, he added.

[...]

State-run Radio Nigeria said an estimated 10,000 Kano residents, mostly Christians fleeing from their homes in troubled parts of the city, took refuge at the main military and police barracks on Wednesday. Grief stricken relatives of the missing tried to trace their loved ones.

[...]

The two days of violence in Kano were sparked off by a protest demonstration on Tuesday against the killing of several hundred Muslims in the small town of Yelwa in Plateau State in central Nigeria on 2 May.

The Nigerian Red Cross has estimated that more than 600 Muslims were killed in the attack by militia men of the mainly Christian Tarok tribe. Most of the dead were from the Hausa and Fulani ethnic groups which dominate northern Nigeria.

Angered by the massacre, thousands of Muslims marched from Kano's main mosque to the state governor's office on Tuesday. But the protest, called and led by Islamic leaders, quickly degenerated into a riot as mobs launched assaults on Christians."

BBC, 12 June 2004:

"Christians and Muslims clashed in Numan [Adamawa state], following a long-standing dispute over the rebuilding of a mosque which was destroyed in communal violence last year.

The latest fighting began when the local chief, a Christian, complained that the minaret overlooked his palace compound.

The Red Cross says that in two days of fighting, 41 people were killed and 145 injured.

At least 2,000 people were displaced when their homes were burned to the ground."

Thousands displaced by religious cartoon riots, February 2006

- As many as 50,000 people were displaced and about 150 killed in a wave of sectarian violence across various Nigerian states at the end of February 2006, sparked by protests over caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad
- The majority of deaths occurred in the mainly Christian southeast city of Onitsha, where groups of armed youths attacked Muslim Hausa-speakers from the north in revenge for Christian Igbos killed some days earlier in the north of the country
-
- Spiralling violence spread across at least six states, with thousands of IDPs taking refuge mainly in police and army barracks or churches – although many later returned to their homes
-

NRCS, 22 February 2006:

"The reprisal attacks that started in Onitsha, Anambra State in the South-Eastern Nigeria on Tuesday, February 21, 2006 continued unabated. The situation has now spread to the neighboring Enugu State. Some of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are now fleeing the South East returning to the North. The total numbers of **IDPs have increased to 50,000 people** with about **150 people reported dead**. Kotangora, Niger State has reported attack and burning of some churches and shops and over 10 people killed. Majority of the shops in Kontagora are now closed. Red Cross Team headed by the Zonal Disaster Management Officer, North Central Zone is on ground to assist and conduct Damage and Needs Assessment (DANA)."

IRIN, 23 February 2006:

"At least 123 people have been killed in four days of sectarian violence across Nigeria, after protests over caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad fuelled underlying religious and ethnic tensions.

Two-thirds of the deaths in the past six days have occurred in the mainly Christian southeast city of Onitsha, where groups of armed youths took to the streets to seek revenge against Muslims in reprisal for deadly attacks on Christians last weekend in the predominantly Muslim north.

At least 80 people were slaughtered during two days of violence in Onitsha, leading Nigerian human rights group Civil Liberties Organisation (CLO), said on Thursday. 'We counted at least 60 dead on Tuesday, and on Wednesday no less than 20,' Emeka Umeh, who heads CLO in Anambra State, told IRIN.

The violence erupted following the rumoured arrival in Onitsha on Tuesday of the corpses of Christian Igbos killed in the north. The reports sent angry crowds of armed youths onto the streets, bent on hunting down Muslim Hausa-speakers from the north.

The toll was expected to rise further following reports of attacks against Muslims in the nearby towns of Awka and Nnewi. Anambra state governor Chris Ngige late on Wednesday slapped curfews on both towns. Onitsha was already under curfew.

Killings of Muslims were also reported on Wednesday in the city of Enugu, the capital of Enugu State, about 100 kilometres north of Onitsha.

In northeast Nigeria last weekend, protests over the caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad turned violent, claiming 18 lives in the city of Maiduguri. On Monday and Tuesday at least 25 people were killed in Muslim attacks on Christians in the northern city of Bauchi.

With Nigeria's population of 126 million people roughly split between a predominantly Muslim north and a Christian majority south, analysts say the cartoon controversy has simply served as a spark for this latest episode of sectarian violence."

Sectarian violence displaces thousands in Bauchi, December 2007

- Thousands of people were displaced in the city of Bauchi in December 2007 following clashes between Christian and Muslim communities over the planned construction of a mosque
- People fled their homes for fear of getting caught up in the fighting

IRIN, 13 December 2007:

"At least six people have been killed and 30 critically injured since clashes between Muslim and Christian communities in the north-central Nigerian city of Bauchi broke out on 11 December, Red Cross workers and residents said.

Some 3,000 people have fled their homes in the area of the fighting, witnesses said. The government has ordered a 9pm to 6am curfew and closed the local university, which has often been the site of violent clashes.

Fighting started 11 December and continued to the next day, following a dispute over the planned construction of a mosque at a secondary school in Yelwa - a mixed Muslim and Christian neighbourhood of the city.

[...]

People have fled their homes for fear of getting caught up in the fighting, Godwin Agbara, a local journalist, told IRIN by phone from the police barracks where he and his family are staying. "I left my home because it is not safe for me to stay as tension is still high. I can't risk my life and that of my family."

Agbara said people are sleeping in the open. "The National Emergency Management Agency has brought mattresses and blankets while Red Cross provides medical supplies but we feed ourselves which is not easy."

A government official said troops have been deployed in the city, which has a population of about 1 million and is in the state of Bauchi. "Apart from the curfew military troops have been deployed from Gombe, Plateau and Adamawa states to patrol the city and ensure the return of normalcy," Muhammad Abdullahi, the governor's spokesman, told IRIN by phone from Bauchi. "

For an account of previous ethno-religious violence affecting Bauchi state, see IRIN's ["Nigeria: IRIN focus on ethnic conflicts in the central region"](#) (18 July 2001)

Displacement related to communal conflicts over land

Land disputes in Ebonyi State caused displacement in July 2001

- Fighting between two communities in Ebonyi State displaced more than 1,000 people, many of whom took refuge in and around Afikpo town.
- Cause of the clashes was a land dispute in 2000 between the two communities

IRIN, 24 July 2001:

"Renewed fighting between two communities in southeastern Nigeria's Ebonyi State has claimed at least 27 lives, local officials and residents said on Tuesday [24 July 2001].

The fighting between the neighbouring communities of Akaeze in Iro local council and Osso Edda in Afikpo South displaced more than 1,000 people, while several homes, two schools and a community health centre were destroyed, Samson Agwuocha, a resident of Afikpo, told IRIN.

[...]

Many of the displaced people have taken refuge in Afikpo town and neighbouring communities. Residents of the affected communities trace the latest incident to lingering anger and the desire for vengeance by families whose members died in fighting over the disputed land last year, in which at least seven people were reported killed."

People displaced from farming villages in Adamawa and Gombe states after attacks by armed cattle herders, February 2003

- 20 farming communities in Dumne (Adamawa State) attacked from 26-28 February 2003, temporarily displacing some 20,000 people

- More detailed assessment later found that nearly 4,000 IDPs from the Dumne attacks required urgent assistance, in May 2003 it was reported that these IDPs had returned, but that shelter remained a problem as houses had been burned
- Assumed that attackers were nomadic herdsman from neighbouring Chad
- Similar attacks in the Gombe State during the same period affected 14 villages and over 3,700 people were displaced
- Reported in May 2003 that about 3,000 IDPs in Gombe were still sheltered at relatives and friends, while about 1,500 IDPs were still staying at a temporary school shelter

IRIN, 4 March 2003:

"At least 40 people were killed when a group of heavily armed men attacked the town of Dumne in northeastern Nigeria, police said on Monday [3 March 2003].

The attackers, thought to be nomadic herdsman from neighbouring Chad, attacked the rural town on Friday. 'We have so far confirmed that 40 people were killed, including seven policemen, a soldier and 32 civilians,' police spokesman Chris Olakpe told reporters.

He said the security forces had sent reinforcements to the area to restore order and that police had begun investigating the motives of the attackers, some of whom were arrested and were being questioned.

Residents of Dumne said the attack was launched in the middle of the night. Dozens of houses were set ablaze, as was the town's market. Some people who escaped from the burning houses were shot or hacked to death with machetes. Most of the victims were women and children, they said.

According to reports from the area, some of the residents believed the attack was not unrelated to a violent dispute over grazing land in September 2002 between local people, who are mainly farmers, and nomadic herdsman.

Parts of central and northeastern Nigeria have recorded many violent disputes between indigenous farming communities and nomads in recent years, as increasing desertification on the country's northern fringes forces grazers southward.

A year ago, a similar conflict in the Mambilla plateau, which is in the same region, resulted in dozens of deaths and forced more than 25,000 Fulani herdsman to flee across the border to Cameroon.

The northeastern, where Nigeria meets Cameroon and Chad, has been particularly volatile in recent years, with heavily armed groups, remnants of Chad's rebel wars, often crossing the border to fight in local conflicts."

IFRC, 16 April 2003:

"Udawa cattle herders attacked and burned 34 farming villages in Adamawa and Gombe States in February and March 2003 resulting in 63 dead, 563 injured and 23,700 displaced. The displaced persons, mostly women and children, fled their villages to urban centers in search of safety, shelter and means of sustenance.

1- Adamawa State

Following an attack on 20 farming communities by armed Udawas cattle herders in Dumne, in Song Local Government Area of Adamawa State from 26-28 February, Adamawa Red Cross branch reported that that over 500 people were injured, 63 people died and over 20,000 persons

displaced. Several people sought refuge in a temporary shelter at the Central School of Dumne town. Calmness has returned to Dumne town and the attacked villages. The assessment team visited Dumne town, which hosts a large number of the internally displaced persons (IDP), who are still looking for assistance. The victims who look frail are housed in a temporary shelter without potable water and toilet facilities.

The Commissioner for Special Duties of the State informed the assessment team that the number of IDPs requiring urgent assistance was 3,820 (532 families). The team assessed three destroyed villages and observed that returnees were making efforts to rebuild their houses. It was clear that the farming communities lost most of their property and their houses were burnt down. They have been without any outside assistance except for some food provided by the local Red Cross branch. The team also observed cases of diarrhoea, malaria and infected wounds on those injured during the crisis."

IFRC, 9 May 2003:

"[9 May 2003:] Presently, all the 532 displaced families (3,820 persons) have moved back to their burnt villages and houses after receiving some food and non food items assistance, which lasted them for not more than 3 weeks.

The returned families have not been able to repair and restore their houses and farming due to their inability to afford basic housing repair materials. Shelter remains a critical problem as rainy season commences shortly. Food has become a more serious problem as they have to depend on the good will of their friends and relations, who provided short time assistance in line with local norm.

Farming activities is seriously affected and delayed during the rainy season since they had lost their farming implements when their communities were attacked."

Gombe State

IFRC, 16 April 2003:

"In Gombe state, 14 villages were attacked by Udawa armed cattle herders from 15-17 February injuring over 63 people. The Gombe Red Cross branch reported that over 3,700 people were displaced. Calm has returned to the area and the IDPs are sheltered at both Bambam Secondary School and Primary School. Food is in short supply as containers were destroyed together with several corn milling machines and people have to trek into the neighboring states to Taraba and Adamawa looking for milling facilities."

IFRC, 9 May 2003:

"The situation of the displaced persons in Dadiya and Maitukun communities, Bambam Local Government of Gombe State is far from resolved as about 3,000 IDPs have left a temporary school shelter to stay with relatives and friends around the shelter area, while about 1,500 IDPs are still staying at the school shelter. The condition of the people is very pathetic and the children are getting malnourished due to irregular and poor feeding. Children are developing fever and diarrhea at the camp."

Plateau State: farmers killed as they flee nomad attack, February 2004

- Nomads kill 49 townspeople in the farming town of Yelwa, Plateau State, in February 2004
- Although tensions were growing between Muslim and Christian communities in the region, the conflict was over land rather than religion per se

See also 'Renewed violence in Plateau State causes major displacement, state of emergency declared in May 2004' in the section on displacement related to ethno-religious conflicts

AFP, 25 February 2004:

"Nigerian troops and police have deployed to keep the peace in a small farming community in the country's central highlands after nomadic fighters slaughtered 49 townspeople, officers said Wednesday.

Plateau State's police commissioner, Innocent Ilozuke, said that most of the victims died after seeking shelter in a church from the raiders, thought to be members of the Fulani ethnic group, which attacked the town of Yelwa.

[...]

Nomads and farmers, who compete for grazing land, often clash in central Nigeria, where deep ethnic and religious divisions fuel tensions over control of the region's sparse natural resources.

Yelwa is a small farming community in the Shendam local government area 300 kilometres (190 miles) east of Nigeria's capital Abuja, in a part of Plateau State which has frequently been the scene of fighting since 2001.

[Plateau State's police commissioner] Ilozuke said the headquarters of the state's intelligence and criminal investigation teams had been moved to Yelwa to probe the latest clash, which is believed to be a spillover from fighting nearby earlier this month.

On February 13 trouble flared between the mainly-Christian Tarok community and the Muslim villagers of Mavo in the Wase district neighbouring Shendam, leaving 11 people from both sides dead, officials said last week.

Community tensions in Plateau have often been exacerbated by differences between the Muslim and Christian communities in the region, although religion does not appear to have been a factor in Tuesday's attack.

Most of the people of Yelwa are Muslims, like the Fulani who are said to have attacked them."

Further deadly clashes in Adamawa state, February 2005

- In February 2005 dozens of people were killed in Adamawa state when Fulani herdsmen attacked 'indigenous' farming communities in a dispute over grazing land
- Clashes are part of pattern in several parts of central Nigeria, caused partly by increasing desertification and shrinking pasture land
- Allegations were made that former rebel fighters from Chad and Niger are involved in the violence

IRIN, 8 February 2005:

“At least 30 people have been killed in a week of clashes between farming communities and nomadic cattle herdsman in Adamawa state, near the eastern frontier with Cameroon, local officials and residents said on Tuesday.

The deadliest fighting took place last Thursday when ethnic Fulani herdsman attacked the farming village of Bali, killing 28, said Saidu Adamu, a local government official.

‘Farmers in the area have been complaining that cattle have been grazing on their land, and on Tuesday last week killed two Fulani herdsman over the dispute,’ Adamu told IRIN. ‘This latest incident was obviously a reprisal,’ he added.

One Bali resident, Kwanga Dogo, told IRIN that the attackers had been armed with assault rifles, machetes and bows and arrows and had stormed the village in the early hours of the morning.

Dogo said the dialects spoken by some of the assailants suggested they hailed from nearby Chad and Niger, but police and local officials would not confirm the claims.

Dogo said he had escaped from the village and had fled to the state capital, Yola.

Adamawa state police chief, Hafiz Ringim said police reinforcements were being sent to the affected area to stop the violence from escalating.

Over the last decade, clashes between indigenous farming communities and nomadic herdsman have increased in several parts of central Nigeria, including the country’s eastern flank.

Increasing desertification in northern Nigeria has been forcing herders further south into the central region in search of pasture, raising the ire of farmers that work the land.

Remnants of former rebel forces in Chad and Niger have moved into Nigeria during this period, engaging in banditry.

Residents and police have in the past blamed these armed gangs for some of the violence, alleging that they often hire themselves out as mercenaries.”

Conflict over farmland in southeastern Nigeria, April 2005

- In a resurgence of perennial conflict over farmland, dozens of people were killed in clashes between two rival communities in Cross River and Ebonyi states in April 2005

IRIN, 26 April 2005:

“Dozens of people died in clashes last week between two rival communities in southeastern Nigeria over ownership of prized farmland, residents and officials said Tuesday.

More than 50 people were killed in the worst day of the violence last Thursday when fighters armed with machetes and rifles, believed to be from Cross River State, rampaged through a settlement of people across the border in neighbouring Ebonyi State, residents said.

John Otu, Ebonyi commissioner for information, confirmed there were many deaths but said he could not give definite figures. He said a longstanding dispute over farming land flared up again last week, with retaliatory attacks culminating in Thursday’s mayhem.

'The people are farmers and this is the farming season which often brings such conflicts,' Otu told IRIN.

Ebonyi governor, Sam Egwu, on Saturday met his Cross River counterpart, Donald Duke, in an effort to calm rising tension in the area and stop the violence from spreading.

Police officials said reinforcements had been sent to the area to prevent more fighting and Otu said no further violence has been reported between the two communities.

Thousands of people have died in Nigeria in communal, ethnic and religious clashes often triggered by land disputes since the 1999 election of President Olusegun Obasanjo ended more than 15 years of repressive military rule."

People flee communal fighting on border between Benue and Taraba States, 2007

- Over 3000 people have reportedly been displaced due to communal fighting in a border town between Benue and Taraba States
- Most of the displaced come from two main villages on the border between the two States and they tend to find refuge with family and friends

NRCS, August 2007:

"Over 3,000 people have been displaced in both Takun Local Government of Taraba State and Katsina –Ala in Benue State. The crisis took place in Dogon Gawa a border town between Benue and Taraba State. The area is still very volatile due to the nature of the conflict."

IRIN, 25 July 2007:

"A growing stream of villagers are fleeing border areas between Benue and Taraba states in central Nigeria after an upsurge of deadly clashes between ethnic Tiv and Kuteb communities over a protracted land dispute, residents and officials said on 25 July.

Over 200 people have arrived in the town of Katsina-Ala – about 30km from the fighting – since the latest reported attack on 19 July in which local militia fighters opened fire on a crowded minibus, killing nine passengers, Rufus Achenge, a local government official, said.

Dozens of people have been reported killed since the resurgence of fighting in early June in the Katsina-Ala and Takum districts spanning Benue and Taraba states.

"Most of the displaced people arriving in the last week are coming from areas around Dogon Gawa and Kwaghando villages where we had the most recent fighting," said Achenge. "They generally find refuge with relations and friends." "

Land clashes previously broke out in 2002 in Mambilla Plateau in Taraba State. For an account of those clashes and for an analysis of the causes of the conflict, see UNHCR's "Africa Newsletter" (1 March 2007) and The Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution's "Home Sweet Home: Exploring Issues Related to the Repatriation of Nigerians Affected by Land Related Conflict on the Mambilla Plateau" (February 2006)

Communal conflicts in southeastern Nigeria cause displacement, 2008

- Communal clashes in Akwa Ibom state over the control of a parcel of land in August 2008 caused destruction and displacement
- In neighbouring Ebonyi state, clashes between the Ezza and the Ezzillo communities in a feud over land in July 2008 forced thousands of villagers to flee
- The military was finally called in to pacify the area in October 2008 prompting the resettlement of hundreds of families
- At the root of both conflicts lies the distinction between indigenous populations and settlers and the different type of access to land that is traditionally granted to the latter

Akwa Ibom State

Vanguard, 7 September 2008:

"COMMUNAL clash reared its ugly head, August 28, in Akwa Ibom State when the Andoni militants, from Eastern Obolo Local government Area, wreaked havoc on the quiet village of Ikot Akpan Udo where not less than 37 houses were completely brought down, the market razed and the villagers taking refuge in the neighbouring satellite villages.

[...]

The current mayhem was said to have started from a disagreement between two motor cyclists from the two communities, but the Ikot Akpan Udo community traced its remote cause to the unbridled quest by the Andonis to acquire Ibibio land in Ikot Abasi Local Government Area.

The community, which alleged that the Andonis were settlers, said the court at Ikot Abasi had in the past adjudicated in land disputes between it and the Andonis, adding that the court ruled that the Andonis were granted tenancy on condition of payment of tributes to the Ibibios. It said that even the West African Court of Appeal (WACA) ruling on the issue of tenancy of the Andonis in Ikot Abasi in 1945 and 1953 respectively, affirmed that the natural boundary of the Ibibios on the west would be the Opobo River."

Ebonyi State

Reuters, 5 July 2008:

"Nigeria has deployed troops in the remote southeastern state of Ebonyi after 14 people were killed and scores of buildings destroyed in clashes between rival groups feuding over land, police said on Saturday.

The violence between the Ezillo and Ezza of Ishielu district first erupted last month following a dispute over the land where a telephone booth was installed.

The violent clashes, which flared again this week, were not reported before because the district is remote and inaccessible.

The fighting has forced thousands of villagers to flee to the state capital, Abakaliki, witnesses said."

BBC, 3 October 2008:

"The military has been called in to help split up a town in south-east Nigeria after bloody clashes between two communities, the state government says.

A curfew has been declared for three months while hundreds of families are separated and resettled.

[...]

The Ezza are being relocated to a place called Eguachara, a few kilometres away from Ezillo town.

The clashes began when the Ezza people moved to the area in the late 1950s, state authorities said.

In Nigeria, migrant communities have limited rights to land, even years after they settle in new areas."

Conflict related to new administrative boundaries and political elections

Violence linked to new administrative and national boundaries, mid-1980s-2008

- 15 new states and 300 new local government areas created after mid-1980s
- Affected communities not properly consulted during redrawing of the boundaries and existing historical demarcations were ignored
- Location of capital of any new local administrative area (LGA) often contested, especially if communities belonging to different ethnic groups are involved
- The location of the capital of an LGA is seen by some ethnic groups as the chance to free themselves from neighbours, or to take revenge at rivals, while others see it as a denial of their right to self-determination
- Military governments have in the past sought to reward certain ethnic groups seen as their supporters, for example through the creation of new administrative areas and the location of their capitals
- In the case of the Bakassi peninsula, Nigeria handed over the disputed strip of land to Cameroon on 14 August 2008 following a 2002 ruling of the International Court of Justice
- Although Bakassi residents had the option of staying in the peninsula under Cameroon as foreign residents or acquire Cameroonian nationality, thousands of them fled to the Nigerian states of Cross River and Akwa Ibom for fears of violence from Cameroonian security forces

OMCT, 2002, pp.12-13:

"In the fifteen years of military rule preceding the inauguration of the present elected government, a total of additional 15 states and over 300 local government councils were arbitrarily created in Nigeria. These creations necessitated re-adjustment of existing local boundaries. However, in the process of redrawing these boundaries the affected communities were not consulted and existing historical demarcations were ignored by state officials who carried out the exercise. A National Boundaries Commission exists in Nigeria. Apart from the tardiness of the Commission's work, its powers are limited to making recommendations on internal boundary questions, recommendations that the government is not obliged to implement. Petitions and protests by affected communities seeking redress for lost assets, including farmlands occasioned by the exercise of creation of new administrative units, were either ignored or brutally repelled. Consequently, the communities are periodically pitched in violent conflict in an effort to seek local solutions."

Ibeanu, 1999, pp. 172-173:

"Perhaps the most common conflicts in Nigeria today are linked to the process of transition from military to civilian rule. Not only has the state targeted many opponents as individuals, but there have been many other conflicts involving groups. The most significant, however, are numerous conflicts associated with decentralization of government, particularly the creation of new local administrative areas (LGAs). For one thing, their creation has reopened a number of old inter-

communal rivalries, some dating to the colonial era. For another thing, the enormous power that people have come to associate with government, especially the tendency for people who occupy political positions at all levels of the state to amass personal wealth and influence, has made 'government', even at the very local level, a highly contested terrain. In addition, because of the tendency for governments in Nigeria to focus attention only on certain areas, urban centres and capital cities in particular, to the negligence of the vast rural areas, the location of the capital (the seat of government) of any new LGA is hotly contested. This contest is particularly fierce if communities belonging to different ethnic groups are involved. Moreover, some local communities and/or ethnic groups see in the creation of local governments an opportunity to free themselves from overbearing neighbours. Others see it as an opportunity to get back at rivals. Still others see it as a denial of their right to self-determination, especially where their request for a local government is denied. The situation is worsened by the manipulation of old inter-communal rivalries by politicians who seek office in the newly created local councils. It was therefore to be expected that the creation of 181 new LGAs in the country in late 1996, as part of the transition to democracy, would unleash a new fury of violence across the country."

The case of the Bakassi peninsula

IRIN, 13 November 2007:

"Following years of tensions between Nigeria and Cameroon which led to clashes in the 1990s, Nigeria officially accepted a 2002 decision by the International Court of Justice which awarded all of the swampy peninsula to Cameroon.

Diplomatically, the process has been touted as a huge success. Nigeria had administered the peninsula since independence from Britain in 1960, except during occasional incursions by Cameroon. The withdrawal followed a series of border agreements between the two countries covering the 2,300 km land border, from Lake Chad and to the Gulf of Guinea - where the two countries plan to share significant offshore oil reserves.

According to UN officials who are members of the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission helping to monitor the agreement, Bakassians have three choices: They can take full Cameroonian citizenship, they can remain Nigerian and take resident alien status in Cameroon, or they can leave Bakassi and resettle in Nigeria."

IFRC, 10 November 2008, p.2:

"The Nigerian Government's formal handover of the Bakassi Region to Cameroonian authorities on 14 August 2008 resulted in a significant population movement. Thousands of Nigerians residing in Bakassi feared for their security and fled to Nigeria's Cross River and Akwa Ibom States. Most returnees left without basic personal items or lost money and belongings due to violent attacks.

Despite enormous efforts made by Akwa Ibom's local authorities to provide makeshift camps (the majority of the returnees are concentrated in Akwa Ibom State), the support provided does not meet all of the returnees' immediate needs. In Cross River State, there are smaller numbers of returnees, and Government has been able to provide more support. Since the influx started, the Nigerian Red Cross Society (NRCS), with support from their volunteers, has been receiving the returnees and providing limited assistance in temporary facilities or camps provided by the local authorities."

IRIN, 25 September 2008:

"The Nigerian government has announced it is unprepared for the tens of thousands of returnees who have fled the southern Bakassi province over the past month, and is calling on the UN to help it handle the unexpected return.

Up to 76,000 returnees have registered at 12 sites in Akwa Ibom and Cross River states, according to Victor Antai, council chairman of Mbo, one of the sites in Akwa Ibom."

Election-related violence reportedly displace some 4,600 people in Kogi, Delta and Nasarawa States, 2007

NRCS, August 2007:

"There were few violence recorded during the recently concluded 2007 General Elections. The violence occurred in Ihima Local Government Area of Kogi State, Ukwale Local Government Area of Delta State , Asakio Local Government of Nasarawa State.

There were also a few other places where minor incidents were recorded and people displaced due to the destruction of their residence but these people were absorbed by their relations.

S/NO	STATE	NO OF DISPLACED	Location
1	Ihima Communal Clash –okehi LGA , Kogi	1250 people	Ihima Primary School
2.	Ukwale Local Government Area Delta	2,000 people	
3.	Assakio Local Government Area of Nasarawa state	1,415	

"

Post-election violence displaces thousands in Jos, December 2008

- Following news of disputed local state elections results, violence spread throughout the city of Jos causing hundreds of deaths and the displacement of thousands of residents
- Residents of Jos north, the scene of violence, were among the majority of the IDPs
- Thousands of houses were burnt this making it impossible for IDPs to return home

Reuters, 30 November 2008:

"The latest clashes between gangs of Muslim Hausas and mostly Christian youths began early on Friday and were provoked by a disputed local election after news spread that the ANPP party candidate backed by Hausas had lost the race to the ruling PDP.

"The PDP provided an all-Christian ticket. They started the trouble because they couldn't win," said Samaila Abdullahi Mohammed, spokesman for the Imam at the main mosque.

He accused the security forces of heavy-handed tactics.

"As far as we are concerned, we have stopped the violence, but the police have not," he said. Official results showed the PDP candidate won the vote but his swearing in, originally due on Monday, has been postponed."

IRIN, 1 December 2008:

"Preliminary police figures show that some 200 people died in the violence, triggered by local election results, but the number is thought to be higher.

Health workers fear infection from dead bodies still strewn about the city, and say they can barely cope with the injured.

Up to 10,000 residents of Jos North, the scene of the violence, have sought refuge in local mosques, churches, and army and police barracks, according to Nigerian Red Cross director in Jos Dan Tom."

IRIN, 4 December 2008:

"Calm has been restored to the city following sectarian violence that broke out on 27 November, but thousands of residents whose houses were burned down during the three days of fighting are still sheltering in mosques, churches, army barracks and hospitals."

See also Human Rights Watch's "[Nigeria: Prevent Further Bloodshed in Jos](#)" (1 December 2008) for a clear account of the root causes of the violence

Displacement caused by conflicts in oil-producing southern Nigeria

Oil resources makes competition for political power particularly violent in the southern Delta region, 1999-2008

- An unequal redistribution of oil revenues has fuelled decades of resentment that has evolved into armed struggle since the early 2000
- There is a risk that inflow of money from oil companies to local communities reinforce factional violence within a community or between one village and the next
- Impunity for abuses is more likely in the Delta as lack of infrastructure limit information flows
- Violence is linked to state corruption and competition for public posts
- A solution to the Niger Delta unrest would have to involve not only political and economic issues but also social and environmental damage
- Environmental pollution has caused widespread pauperization among Delta communities thus fuelling additional tensions

ISN Security Watch, 27 June 2008:

"Militants in the southern region, which accounts for nearly all the oil that is the mainstay of Nigeria's economy, accuse the oil companies of collaborating with successive Nigerian governments to deny them access to the oil wealth pumped from their land. The leading international oil companies operate joint ventures with the Nigerian state, splitting profits with the government.

Nigeria, Africa's most populous country of 140 million people is made up of more than 250 different ethnic groups, with the biggest of them - the Hausa-Fulani, the Yoruba and the Igbo - dominating government. The impoverished inhabitants of the oil region - mostly ethnic minorities - have had little or no influence on how the oil wealth is expended while having to cope with the pollution and environmental damage that have come along with its exploration. It is a situation that has fuelled decades of resentment that evolved into armed struggle in recent years.

[...]

"The people moving with guns in boats in the delta are symptoms of a complicated problem requiring equally a complicated solution," Antony Goldman, a London-based independent analyst specializing on the Gulf of Guinea, told ISN Security Watch. "It goes beyond holding a stakeholders' conference."

[...]

Solving the oil region's problems requires a comprehensive approach that will address not only political and economic issues but also social and environmental damage, he said."

IRIN, 12 December 2001:

"The 70,000-sq km Niger Delta is one of the three largest wetland areas in the world, with a unique but fragile ecosystem. It produces more than 90 percent of the crude oil that is the lifeblood of the Nigerian economy. However, more than four decades of oil exploration and production by international oil companies in the area left massive environmental degradation. As a result the farming and fishing communities of the region watched their yield decline dramatically over the years.

[...]

In the past decade, neglect suffered by the region also fuelled restive feelings among impoverished locals. Violence swirled through the region as angry youths disrupted oil operations, kidnapped expatriate employees of oil multinationals for ransom or fought each other for the few benefits that came from oil companies. On the eve of Obasanjo's election in 1999, violence in the region had spiralled out of control and become a threat to Nigeria's oil production, often cutting exports by as much as a third."

HRW, October 2002, pp.2, 3, 7:

"When a civilian government was reinstated in Nigeria in 1999, many of those living in the Niger Delta region, the source of Nigeria's oil wealth, hoped that a "democratic dividend" would end decades of neglect they had suffered under successive military regimes. From the early 1990s a cycle of protest and repression had led to the militarization of large parts of the delta, notably in Ogoniland, a small area of Rivers State where demonstrations leading to the closure of oil production had led to a five-year deployment of a special military taskforce to the area and the 1995 execution of nine minority rights leaders, including author and activist Ken Saro-Wiwa. The situation has eased under the new government, and in particular Ogoniland is no longer occupied. But there is still widespread deployment of army, navy, and paramilitary Mobile Police at oil facilities across the delta. In November 1999, five months after the new government headed by President Olusegun Obasanjo took office, soldiers destroyed the town of Odi, in Bayelsa State, killing hundreds of people. Though the past three years have seen no incident of similar seriousness in the delta area, past human rights violations by the security forces have gone unpunished and new abuses related to oil production continue to be committed. Moreover, though vastly increased sums of money are flowing from the federal government to the delta region, under a new "derivation formula" that requires at least 13 percent of the oil revenue to be returned to the states where it is produced, ordinary people living in the delta see little if any benefit from these funds.

[...]

The environment of the Niger Delta, and the difficulties of transport and communication in the mangrove forest areas, where telephones are not accessible to most people, means that often information is late and unreliable. Impunity for abuses-too often the norm in Nigeria-is thus even more likely in the delta. There have not been any attempts to investigate or prosecute those who were responsible for hundreds of deaths and massive property destruction in Ogoniland and Odi.

[...]

[Oil companies]are thus targeted for protest by the communities in which they work. Responding to these protests-which range from politically motivated occupations of their facilities that close down production to essentially criminal hostage-taking for ransom-the oil companies now have quite extensive programs for community development projects in the "host communities" for oil facilities, make substantial payments for allowing oil work to be carried out both to local

government authorities and to other interest groups in the areas they are working, and frequently hire youth as "ghost workers" or for "surveillance contracts" in order to satisfy a demand for employment that cannot be met in this capital- rather than labor-intensive industry. In other cases, they hand out cash payments, sometimes to legitimate representatives of the communities where they operate as compensation, for example for spills, but often to individuals or groups who have gone into hostage-taking or oil facility occupation as a means of earning a living. These payments, even the best intentioned, have themselves generated problems. The companies have in most cases taken insufficient care to monitor the use made of their money; in particular, to ensure that it does not reinforce factional violence within a community or between one village and the next. In addition, they continue to fail to monitor closely security force activity at or near their facilities or where work is being carried out on their behalf, or, in many cases, to intervene with the authorities when abuses are committed.

[...]

The presence of the oil companies in the Niger Delta exacerbates communal tensions of the type seen across Nigeria. The weakness of conflict resolution structures-whether the courts, responsible elected and appointed state officials, or the law enforcement agencies-means that many disputes in Nigeria are settled violently that could have been resolved through peaceful means. In Nigeria generally, the level of state corruption means that government positions are highly sought after and that competition for party candidacy or electoral victory often leads to violence. In the Niger Delta, the stakes are higher, even at local government level, because of the amount of money that flows to the delta, both through state structures and directly from the oil companies. Conflict related to local government, state, and federal elections that will take place during 2002-2003 has already been more bloody in the Niger Delta than elsewhere in Nigeria."

Environmental pollution caused by the oil production is also a cause behind ongoing conflicts:

Ibeanu, 1998, p.49:

"These conflicts date to the very beginnings of oil exploration in Nigeria. Most of them, however, date to the past ten years and still remain unresolved. Several oil-producing communities, especially in the Rivers, Delta and Cross-River states, have had to cope with continuing military and police 'occupation' and systematic state repression, sometimes taking the form of extra-judicial killings enacted in summary executions. The disputes usually arise over environmental pollution and material deprivation in these communities. Villages like Umuechem, Obagi, Brass, Nembe Creek and Rumuobiokani, as well as dozens in Ogoniland, all in Rivers state, have experienced extensive population displacement resulting from environmental pollution caused by crude oil mining and refining, as well as from material deprivation and state violence. The relationship between the multinational oil company Shell, the Nigerian state and the Ogoni people, which culminated in the mock trial and execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa, is well-documented."

IRIN, 12 December 2007:

"Civil society groups in the Niger Delta region have warned that the government is destroying communities' health and Nigeria's environment by flouting laws against gas flaring, a technique used in oil production.

For decades gas flaring has been used to separate crude oil from the associated gases that are extracted with it, but Nigeria flares more gas today than any nation in the world after Russia, even though it is only the world's eighth largest oil producer.

In most other countries the excess gas has been harnessed to generate power, but about 50 communities in the oil producing Niger Delta region have had to put up with gas flares burning continuously for decades.

Bari-ara Kpalap from the Nigerian non-governmental organisation (NGO) Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People, which is based in the Delta and represents a large ethnic group there, said oil and gas flaring had caused devastating pollution for the region's farming communities."

JSDA, 2008, p. 182:

"The twin evils of oil spills and gas flaring, in addition to seismographic and construction activities of the oil companies have undermined the local economies of Oil Producing Communities, leading to occupational disorientation and the exacerbation of poverty. The result of this is normally displacement of people."

See also Amnesty International, 'Nigeria: Are human rights in the pipeline?' (9 November 2004)

Political violence in Delta region, 2003-2005

- Warri is a base for oil operations and tension between the communities has been intensified by the competition for benefits from the oil companies.
- One root cause is the tension between the Itsekiri, Urhobo and Ijaw ethnic groups linked to the number of electoral wards allocated to each community and the drawing of boundaries between wards
- More than 200 people were killed in 2003 in fighting between Ijaws and Itsekeris around Warri, mostly over claims of ownership of oil-bearing land
- In June 2004 at least 50 people were reportedly killed in a clash between government troops and Ijaw militants near the oil city of Port Harcourt
- In September 2004 at least 100 people were reported killed and more than 6,000 displaced in Port Harcourt in violence the government blamed on an Ijaw militia group led by Asari Dokubo
- A Human Rights Watch mission to Rivers State in November 2004 found that months of clashes between Asari's militia and his main rival, Ateke Tom, had caused the displacement of tens of thousands of villagers and serious human rights abuses
- In February 2005 government troops allegedly killed at least 30 people and torched houses whilst investigating an oil dispute between two communities in Bayelsa state

November 2002

IRIN, 5 November 2002:

"Tension is mounting in Nigeria's oil region Delta state over recent deployment of troops amid allegations by residents that they were subjecting several ethnic Ijaw communities to harassment.

Residents of villages including Diebiri, Batan, Ajuju, Ewerigbene and Kumusi said scores of heavily armed naval personnel have been deployed in their riverine communities since an oil spill last month, which affected their farmlands and fishing areas."

January 2003

HRW, April 2003, pp.26-27:

"Some of the most recent large-scale violence in Nigeria broke out in and around Warri, Delta State, on January 31, 2003, and again in March 2003. On January 31, the PDP attempted, for the second time, to hold party primaries for Delta South Senatorial District. There is a history of

conflict between the Itsekiri, Urhobo, and other ethnic groups in the area, but the immediate tension between the Itsekiri and Urhobo was motivated by a dispute over the number of electoral wards allocated to each community and the drawing of boundaries between wards. The military also played a major role in what happened; according to reports, one of the first casualties was a soldier, and many of the initial deaths were a result of military reprisal. The exact number of people killed over several days of fighting is unclear, but it seems likely that at least dozens died. According to news reports in the first day or two of fighting, individual eyewitnesses had reported seeing twelve, eighteen, and twenty bodies; a local organization estimated that at least two hundred people were killed. The Nigerian Red Cross reported that the fighting had left more than six thousand people displaced from their homes.

The Itsekiri and Urhobo ethnic groups are two of the main groups in Warri South local government area, with Ijaw and other groups also represented. The January 2003 conflict was not the first time that ethnic groups in the area had clashed. In 1997, a dispute between the Ijaw and Itsekiris over the location of the local government headquarters led to a crisis that left scores of people dead. Again in 1999, fighting between the Itsekiri and Urhobo led to many deaths. Both clashes occasioned the intervention of the military, which was still patrolling the area when the crisis broke out in January 2003. Because Warri is a major base for multinational oil operations, tension between the communities has been intensified by the competition for benefits from the oil companies.

The delineation of wards in the local government in the lead-up to the repeat senatorial primary left Urhobos feeling disenfranchised. The specific issue was whether the number of wards controlled by the Urhobo would increase from two to four. According to news reports, officials from the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) had recognized only two Urhobo wards in accrediting delegates for the primaries, despite claims from some Urhobo groups that INEC had earlier approved two additional wards.

On the afternoon of January 31, Urhobo youths from Okere, disgruntled by their inability to participate in the primary, proceeded to an Itsekiri area of Okere and began to loot and burn property. Soldiers who had been stationed there since the earlier crises intervened, and one soldier was shot and killed during the attempt to stop the rioting; it was unclear whether he was killed accidentally by other security forces or by the rioters. Meanwhile, a group of Itsekiris voting at the township stadium heard of what had happened and began to rush to Okere; on their way, they encountered an army detachment. According to one version of events, the soldiers opened fire on the Itsekiris in reprisal for the earlier killing of a soldier, apparently either not realizing that the earlier burning and looting that led to a soldier's death had been committed by Urhobos, or not knowing the people they had encountered were Itsekiris. The random shooting by soldiers reportedly led to several deaths among the Itsekiris as well as passersby. Over the next two days, as the Itsekiris attempted to avenge their losses, killing, looting, and burning of homes and other buildings spread to various surrounding neighborhoods. Although the military intervened early on, they were unable to halt the violence completely, and the fighting renewed in intensity on February 2. On February 3, the state government imposed a dusk to dawn curfew. As military reinforcements were sent to the area, most activity in the city ground to a halt, although a local organization reported that this still did not stop some attacks and counter-attacks. Fighting finally appeared to peter out on February 5 and 6.

From March 13, 2003, serious fighting broke out again, primarily in Warri Southwest LGA. In clashes between the Ijaws and the Itsekiris, and between the Ijaw and the military, scores of people were killed and dozens of villages destroyed over a period of around two weeks, according to reports from local non-governmental organizations, journalists and other sources. One of the reasons for the fighting between Ijaws and Itsekiris was a dispute over the distribution of electoral wards, which the Ijaws believed favored the Itsekiris. The majority of the victims in the fighting between the two groups were reported to be Itsekiris. After four military personnel were

killed on March 13, a large contingent of Nigerian army, navy and police was deployed to the area, clashing primarily with Ijaw youths. There were reports of indiscriminate reprisal attacks by the security forces on Ijaw communities, particularly in the village of Okerenkoko; dozens of Ijaws were reported to have been killed."

March 2003

IRIN, 19 March 2003:

"Violence has escalated in southern Nigeria's Niger Delta, with militants from one community attacking villages populated by a rival ethnic group and storming an oil facility, officials and residents said on Tuesday.

At least seven people were killed on Monday [17 March 2003] when armed Ijaw militants in speed boats attacked the Itshekiri villages of Aruton and Madangho, residents said, bringing the death toll in a week of clashes to 15.

[...]

Many displaced residents of the affected communities took refuge inside ChevronTexaco's Escravos compound and arrangements were being made to transfer them to other safe locations, Omole added.

The latest violence brought to 15 the number of people who had died since Ijaw militants and naval troops exchanged gunfire at the Ijaw village of Okerenkoko on 13 March. Five civilians and two soldiers were killed in that clash.

[...]

The conflict is directly linked to a violent dispute which broke out in Warri in February between the Urhobo and the Itshekiri communities over the delineation of electoral wards ahead of general elections in April-May. The Ijaws have sided with the Urhobo, alleging that the distribution of wards favoured the Itshekiri."

IRIN, 21 March 2003:

"At least 60 people were killed on Thursday [20 March 2003] in Nigeria's volatile Niger Delta oil region during a pitched battle between troops and ethnic Ijaw militants fought a pitched battle, military sources and militants said.

The latest confrontation signaled a worsening of a confrontation that has disrupted the operations of oil transnationals in the area and cut Nigeria's oil exports of about two million barrels a day by more than 10 percent.

[...]

Oil giants Royal/Dutch Shell and ChevronTexaco, which have operations in the conflict-ridden area have been pulling out their staff and shutting down facilities. They have also been helping to evacuate scores of displaced people from communities affected by the fighting."

May 2003

IRIN, 14 May 2003:

"At least 25 people have been killed in a fresh outbreak of political violence in the volatile southern oil town of Warri, residents and officials said on Wednesday.

Residents said violence between supporters of the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the rival Alliance for Democracy (AD) broke out on Monday in the Effurun district of Warri and continued on Tuesday. Several buildings were burned down.

"More than 25 people have been killed and some houses are still burning," Thompson Mukoro, a resident, in Warri, the capital of Nigeria's Delta state, told IRIN."

AFP, 15 May 2003:

"Some 12,000 people have fled fighting in the southern Nigerian oil city of Warri, the Nigerian Red Cross said Thursday [15 May 2003] as it launched a relief operation.

At least 18 people have been killed in three days of riots between armed political gangs in the Effurun district of the Niger Delta city, according to witnesses. Press reports speak of up to 25 casualties.

'As of last night, around 12,000 people have been displaced,' Red Cross president Emmanuel Ijewere told AFP.

'These are people either made homeless because their houses have been burnt or were forced to flee the conflict area,' he said."

July 2003

IRIN, 29 July 2003:

"Renewed fighting between militias from the Ijaw and Itsekiri ethnic groups in Nigeria's volatile Niger Delta have killed at least 25 people in the past week and displaced hundreds, residents said on Tuesday.

And in yet another incident underlining escalating restiveness in the region, women protesters occupied an oil facility belonging to oil giant Royal/Dutch Shell to back demands for jobs and amenities for their community while an employee of Chevron-Texaco has been kidnapped by armed militants.

An attack on Abi-Gborodo, an Itsekiri village on the bank of Warri River last Thursday in which at least 15 people were killed, was followed on Friday by an apparently retaliatory attack on the nearby Ijaw village on Mangorogbene in which 10 people were killed, local officials said.

'The information we have now is that at least 25 people have died in these attacks,' Mike Birisibe, an official of Warri North local government, where the incidents occurred, told IRIN. He said hundreds of people had fled their homes while several others were still missing, presumed injured and likely to die in the bush.

He said attempts were made by armed attackers suspected to be Ijaw militants on Saturday and Sunday to invade the mainly Itsekiri town of Koko - still largely in ruins following attacks in April - but were repelled by troops now stationed there."

August 2003

IRIN, 22 August 2003:

"The Nigerian Red Cross said on Friday about 100 people were killed in five days of ethnic violence that rocked the southern oil city of Warri.

The federal government meanwhile set up a task force protect oil wells in the area and crack down on the massive theft of crude oil from pipelines.

The shadowy figures behind this racket are widely believed to have flooded the Niger Delta with sophisticated weaponry that used by the tribal gangs to attack each other and the government's security forces.

Fighting erupted between rival militias of the Ijaw and Itsekiri ethnic groups on 15 August, defying a night curfew declared by the Delta State government. Gangs of armed youths armed with automatic rifles engaged each other in a series of gun battles.

Calm returned to the city on 20 August as troop reinforcements arrived. The Delta State government said it had persuaded the warring groups to agree a truce.

'With calm now returning to the city we are beginning to see the extent of the damage and have reason to believe close to 100 people died,' Emmanuel Ijewere, president of the Red Cross told IRIN.

He said more than 1,000 people had been treated by the Red Cross, mostly for minor injuries, while more than 4,000 had been displaced from their homes."

October 2003

IRIN, 23 October 2003:

"Fresh ethnic clashes around the Nigerian oil town of Warri have claimed several lives over the past week, threatening a fragile ceasefire secured between rival tribal militias in the troubled Niger Delta, residents said on Thursday.

More than a dozen people have been killed since Saturday in violent clashes between armed groups from the Ijaw, Itsekiri and Urhobo tribes, the main ethnic groups inhabiting the Warri area, they said.

Ijaw militant leader Bello Oboko said a boatload of Ijaws, mostly women and children were attacked on Tuesday by armed men while travelling between the riverside towns of Ogulagha and Burutu. He blamed the attack - in which he said four people died - on rival Itsekiri militants.

[...]

But Daniel Iremiji, who leads the Itsekiri Youths Council, denied it was a premeditated attack. He blamed Ijaws instead for sparking the latest clashes.

[...]

Ijaws and Urhobos have in the past been allies against the Itsekiri, who are perceived by both groups to be getting more than their fair share of benefits accruing from oil operations in the western Niger Delta.

But the alliance appears threatened by the clashes between the Urhobo village of Okwagbe and the Ijaw village of Ayakoromo in Burutu local council area over a land dispute."

IRIN, 9 December 2003:

"More than 200 people have been killed this year in fighting between Ijaws and Itsekiris around Warri. Much of the fighting have been over claims of ownership of oil bearing land, which the poor communities in the region believe will attract to them amenities and other benefits that flow from oil production.

Following fighting in October in which more than 100 people had died, the Nigerian government had sent in a military taskforce to pacify the region and it has since imposed a fragile truce between the warring sides."

June 2004

IRIN, 7 June 2004:

"At least 50 people died in a clash between government troops and Ijaw militants near the oil city of Port Harcourt in southeastern Nigeria at the end of last week, witnesses and a local human rights organisation said.

However, a military spokesman denied there had been any casualties when troops raided the nearby community of Ogbakiri before dawn on Friday.

The armed forces said they shot dead 17 pirates in an unrelated incident near Warri in the west of the oil-rich Niger Delta on Saturday.

Eye witnesses, including local residents, said the security forces used gunboats, helicopters and ground troops in the attack near Port Harcourt. They said the security forces killed more than 50 people as they occupied Ogbakiri and exchanged fire with militants said to have abducted two policemen.

They accused the security forces of firing indiscriminately and burning houses in Ogbakiri and in other neighbouring communities."

September 2004

IRIN, 10 September 2004:

"At least 100 people have been killed and more than 6,000 displaced from their homes in Nigeria's oil city of Port Harcourt as a result of gang violence over the past month and attempts by the security forces to suppress it, a local human rights group said on Friday.

The Lagos-based Committee for the Defence of Human Rights (CDHR) said thousands of residents in Port Harcourt and nearby villages had been forced to flee their homes as a result of these clashes.

They involved at least two local militia groups which have political connections. The armed bands finance themselves by tapping oil illegally from pipelines in the Niger Delta and selling it to tankers waiting offshore."

CDHR said the worsening security situation around Port Harcourt raised questions about the legitimacy of the government of Rivers State, of which it is the capital.

According to official results, Governor Peter Odili and his People's Democratic Party (PDP) each won 98 percent of the vote in last year's elections.

This is the party of President Olusegun Obasanjo, who was returned to power for a second four-year term in the April 2003 elections.

All the main opposition parties and many independent observers protested at what they said was widespread fraud.

Obasanjo's government blames the Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force, a group of armed Ijaw militants led by Asari Dokubo, for the recent spate of attacks on Port Harcourt.

Last week, the federal authorities sent in extra troops to start 24-hour street patrols in the city of three million people, which controls most of Nigeria's strategic oil production."

HRW, February 2005:

"On September 27, 2004, the leader of a powerful armed group threatened to launch an 'all-out war' in the Niger Delta -- sending shock waves through the oil industry -- unless the federal

government ceded greater control of the region's vast oil resources to the Ijaw people, the majority tribe in the Niger Delta. The threat, made by Alhaji Dokubo Asari, leader of the Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF), followed the deployment of federal government troops to quell months of intense fighting between the NDPVF and a rival armed group, the Niger Delta Vigilante (NDV), led by Ateke Tom. The threat also provoked an immediate response from multinational oil companies, global financial markets, and Nigerian government officials. Shell Petroleum Development Company, which produces about half of Nigeria's approximately 2.1 million barrels per day (bpd) production, shut down a facility that produces some 28,000 bpd because security concerns prevented the company from traveling to the area to fix a technical problem. The threat of supply disruption rattled already twitchy oil markets, and helped push global crude prices above an unprecedented U.S. \$50 a barrel.

A Human Rights Watch fact-finding mission to Rivers State in November 2004 found that months of fighting between the armed groups has led to serious human rights abuses against ordinary Nigerians. The violence between Asari's NDPVF and Tom's NDV occurred mainly in riverine villages southeast and southwest of Port Harcourt, known as the oil capital of Nigeria, and within Port Harcourt itself. Since late 2003, the running fight for control of these villages and towns has resulted in the deaths of dozens of local people and forced tens of thousands to flee their homes. Schools and businesses have closed, and homes and property worth millions of dollars has been destroyed. Hundreds of mostly young male fighters have also been killed. The violence has created a profound climate of fear and insecurity in Rivers State, leaving local people reluctant to return to their homes or to seek justice for the crimes committed.

The recent violence in Rivers State is primarily the result of a struggle between the NDPVF and rival NDV for control over illegal oil revenues. Underlying the conflict are several key issues that fuel the violence, including: the manipulation of frustrated youth¹ by political leaders, traditional elites, and organized crime syndicates involved in oil theft; the impact of oil money on community politics; crushing poverty and youth unemployment; and the widespread availability of small arms and other lethal weapons. Human Rights Watch found strong evidence to suggest that senior members of the state government at one time gave financial or logistical support to Asari and Tom, laying the foundations for a later conflict that would spin out of control. Both the leaders of armed groups and their backers have been emboldened in their acts of brutal violence by the prevailing culture of impunity. Across the Niger Delta, as throughout Nigeria, impunity from prosecution for individuals responsible for serious human rights abuses has created a devastating cycle of increasing conflict and violence."

February 2005

IRIN, 24 February 2005:

"Residents in a rural town in the southern Niger Delta said government troops killed at least 30 people and torched houses during a raid carried out as part of investigations into an oil dispute between two local communities.

More than 200 soldiers in gunboats attacked the remote town of Odioma in the Nembe district of Bayelsa state on Saturday, burning houses and firing at the inhabitants as they fled in confusion, residents said.

Nimi Barigha-Amange, a clan chief in the area, said more than 30 bodies had been recovered and that many people were still missing.

Felix Tuodolo, a local minority rights activist, circulated a list compiled by the Odioma community of 33 people allegedly killed by the soldiers.

But a spokesman for the Nigerian army denied that there had been any deaths in the incident, which took place near the Atlantic coast 80 km southwest of Port Harcourt, the hub of Nigeria's vital oil industry.

[...]

Both Odioma and the neighbouring town of Obioku each lay claim to a stretch of swampland adjoining the two communities where Shell recently began drilling for oil.

Earlier this month, a boat taking local leaders mediating in the dispute to Obioku was attacked by gunmen, whom the authorities suspect came from Odioma. Four local officials were among the 12 people killed in the attack.

Army spokesman Yusuf said troops had been sent to hunt down those responsible. But he said the soldiers came under fire as they approached Odioma last Saturday and opened fire in return.

A Shell spokesman declined to comment on the violence, saying the land dispute was a matter for the Nigerian authorities to resolve. Shell has in the meantime suspended drilling activities in the disputed patch of swamp land, known as Owukubu.

Violence between communities laying competing claims to oil land and the jobs and welfare amenities associated with it, is rife in the impoverished Niger Delta, the region that produces much of Nigeria's 2.5 million barrels of daily oil exports.

In response to violence by gangs of criminals and militants who steal oil from pipelines, kidnap workers and generally disrupt oil operations, President Olusegun Obasanjo's government has deployed thousands of troops to the region in the past two years."

Clashes between militias and government security forces displace thousands, 2007-2008

- Heavy fighting between militia members and government security forces in September 2008 led to the alleged displacement of thousands of residents
- Previously, violence had erupted on 6 August 2007 because of clashes between rival armed gangs over control of resources and criminal rackets
- Hundreds of people have reportedly fled the city for fear of further attacks and of being caught between the armed gangs and government security forces

IRIN, 19 September 2008:

"Even by the usual violent standards of Nigeria's conflict-ridden, oil-rich southern Niger Delta region, it has been a bloody seven days, with dozens of civilian casualties and many more wounded or displaced, according to local observers, in [clashes in Rivers state](#) between the military and rebel fighters.

The clashes – reportedly the heaviest in two years in the region – were sparked on 13 September when government security forces allegedly razed the villages of Soku, Kula, and Tombia, in Rivers state while looking for Farah Dagogo, a member of rebel group Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND).

Civilians caught in crossfire

"I got distress calls from the affected areas saying two of the villages had been razed to the ground, and there was an urgent need for medical teams to go there, but it was not possible for us to go." said Chika Onah with the Nigerian Red Cross (NRC) in Port Harcourt.

Ongoing insecurity has cut off access to parts of Rivers state, making it hard for disaster workers to count how many of the estimated 20,000 inhabitants in the three towns have fled, according to NRC."

IRIN, 17 August 2007:

"People are fleeing Nigeria's main oil city of Port Harcourt amid heavy fighting between government troops and armed gangs, residents and officials told IRIN on Friday.

"The whole thing appears to be completely out of hand," said Opuka Ibiede, a resident of Port Harcourt, a 2 million strong city in the south of the country, who said he was fleeing the city with his family.

"We have no choice but to leave this city as it is not safe any more."

Fighting broke out in the early hours of 16 August after the military launched an attack in the Makoba district of the city on what was believed to be a hideout of top militia leader, Soboma George, known often simply as George."

AI, 22 August 2007:

"The latest outbreak of violence in Port Harcourt started on 6 August when two rival armed gangs clashed in the streets. In the following ten days, the armed gangs attacked not only each other, but they also randomly shot ordinary civilians. At least 30 persons were killed. According to Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), over 70 people with gunshot wounds were treated in the first two weeks of August in Teme hospital, Port Harcourt. Seven of these patients died from their injuries. A third of these people were bystanders, including women and children, who reportedly witnessed armed gangs deliberately and indiscriminately shooting into crowds of people at a bus stop and in a market.

On 16 August, the Joint Task Force (combined troops of the army, navy, air force and the mobile police) intervened, using helicopters and machineguns. At least 32 people -- gang members, members of the security forces and bystanders -- were killed. Amnesty International has received several reports claiming that bystanders, including women and children, were killed and many more wounded as a result of the intervention of the Joint Task Force. Reports suggest that several innocent people, who had nothing to do with the gangs, were arrested.

In response to the violent clashes, the Rivers State Governor has imposed a curfew from 7 pm till 6 am. The Governor stated that the Joint Task Force will stay in Port Harcourt for six months, and described this deployment as a "temporary inconvenience aimed at restoring law and order."

[...]

The clashes of the last weeks have had a considerable impact on the local population. Hundreds of people have fled the city out of fear of more attacks. Amnesty International fears that more people will be displaced, as the Rivers State government decided to demolish houses in the Port Harcourt waterfront area and replace them with 6,000 new housing units. The Rivers State government assumed that this area served as a haven for the gangs."

POPULATION FIGURES AND PROFILE

Global figures

Undetermined number of IDPs in Nigeria, 2008

There are no reliable statistics on internally displaced people (IDPs) in Nigeria and no general agreement on their actual numbers in the absence of any comprehensive survey. The figures available are generally only estimates provided by government and non-governmental agencies. According to Moremi Soyinka-Onijala, former Special Assistant to the Nigerian President on Migration and Humanitarian Affairs, estimates on the number of IDPs in Nigeria have varied from 500,000 to millions (Brookings, June 2006, p.8). Complex movement patterns combined with the overwhelming lack of data in Nigeria makes the issue of numbers of IDPs very problematic. There has been no systematic registration or verification of numbers of IDPs and figures are often "grossly misleading," according to Zanna Muhammed, deputy director of the National Emergency Management Agency.

The National Commission for Refugees estimates in its mid-year 2007 report the number of IDPs at 1,210,000 with no distinction between IDPs and returnees. It is therefore safe to say there is an undetermined number of IDPs in Nigeria.

This Day News, 17 April 2008:

"About 500,000 Nigerians were displaced between 1999 and 2005, the Federal Commissioner for refugees Hadiza Sani Kangiwa has said.

She said the figure excluded newly displaced persons caused by natural and man-made disasters since the dawn of democracy. Speaking yesterday when she led the management team of the National Commission For Refugees to a courtesy call on the nation's capital office of THISDAY Newspaper in Abuja, the Commissioner disclosed that the period between 1999 when the country returned to the path of democracy and 2005 when communal clashes and skirmishes peaked, about half a million Nigerians were displaced.

She quoted figures from a research conducted in 2005 by Swedish Development Agency that put the figure of Nigeria's Internally Displaced Persons (IDP's) to 500,000 explaining further that the figure was exclusive of newly displaced persons caused by natural and man made disasters. "The Swedish Development Agency in 2005 put the figure of IDPs at 500,000. The figure could be more if we consider newly displaced persons since then as a result of skirmishes and disasters.

Nothing has been done to address their plight. No enduring solution yet to their plight. We are not only concerned with the protection of refugees but concerned with a durable solution" she said."

NCFR, September 2007:

"Table 5. Summary of the IDP's spread in Nigeria

S/N	State	No of IDP's	Causes	Remarks
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1.	Delta	200,000	Conflict/Returnees from Bakassi	Yet to be reintegrated
2.	Bayelsa	80,000	Conflicts/Returnees from Bakassi	Resettlement on-going
3.	Akwa Ibom	150,000	Conflicts in Ika/Ikot-Offiong L.G.A, Returnees from Bakassi	Reintegration on-going
4.	Cross River	345,000	Border Conflicts/ Returnees from Bakassi	"
5.	Benue	100,000	Conflicts	No solution
6.	Taraba	50,000	Conflicts	No solution
7.	Plateau	150,000	Conflicts	Yet to be reintegrated
8.	Adamawa	50,000	Flood	No response
9.	Mambilla Plateau	30,000	Returnees/IDPs	Resettlement on-going
10.	Yobe	6,000	Flood	No response
11.	Gombe	5,000	Flood	No response
12.	Kebbi	300,000	Flood	No response
13.	Ondo	100,000	Flood	No solution
14.	Jigawa	200,000	Flood	No solution
15.	Ebonyi	80,000	Conflicts	Reintegration on-going
16.	Bauchi	25,000	"	Resettlement on-going

See also NCFR's *"IDP Assessment in Nigeria"* (March 2008) for an overview of displacement situations in Nigeria and estimates of IDPs per situation

UN estimate of total number of IDPs is 200,000 – but reliable statistics are non-existent, November 2004

- The 2005 Humanitarian Appeal (CAP) for West Africa puts the total number of IDPs in Nigeria at 200,000 (as of November 2004)
- According to the Nigerian government, 250,000 people remain displaced across the country (as of June 2004), and as many as 800,000 have been displaced in the last four years
- There is no independent verification of these figures, as data collection and tracking of population movements have been virtually non-existent

The Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP): Humanitarian Appeal 2005 for West Africa, 11 November 2004, p9, states that there are 200,000 IDPs in Nigeria

GIDPP, 30 June 2004:

"The government estimates that there are currently 250,000 IDPs in Nigeria..... [but] in the case of recent attacks and displacement in general, no systematic effort has been made to objectively document population movement in Nigeria."

IRIN, 2 January 2004:

"Some 800,000 people have been displaced from their homes as a result of communal and religious clashes that have rocked Nigeria over the past four years, according to the government's National Commission for Refugees (NCR).

Igna Gabriel, the head of the NCR, told reporters in the capital Abuja on Thursday that areas with the highest concentrations of displaced people were Plateau and Benue states in central Nigeria, Yobe State in the Northeast, Cross River State in the Southeast and the oil-rich Niger Delta.

He did not provide any breakdown of the figures by state or region.

However, Gabriel said Plateau State had the highest number of displaced people as a result of clashes between Christians and Muslim communities there. These had led to the burning down of 72 villages over the past two years, he noted.

More than 1,000 people were killed in sectarian clashes between Christians and Muslims in Jos, the Plateau State capital, in September 2001.

Subsequently a low intensity conflict spread to the surrounding countryside, where the mainly Christian farmers clashed repeatedly with the predominantly Muslim livestock herders.

Several hundred more people died in these skirmishes, which forced several thousand people to abandon their homes.

Gabriel said most of the displaced people in Nigeria were women and children who were psychologically traumatised and required counselling as well as food and other material assistance."

Geographical distribution

Some 14,000 people displaced in Jos, Plateau State, December 2008

ICRC, 4 December 2008:

"As at 1 December, the Red Cross had taken 148 injured persons to various hospitals and registered over 14,000 displaced people at 13 different camps."

IRIN, 1 December 2008:

"Up to 10,000 residents of Jos North, the scene of the violence, have sought refuge in local mosques, churches, and army and police barracks, according to Nigerian Red Cross director in Jos Dan Tom."

Between 50,000 and 100,000 Bakassi residents flee to Akwa Ibom State, September 2008

IRIN, 11 September 2008:

"Up to 100,000 Nigerians displaced from Bakassi in southern Nigeria are sheltering in makeshift camps 10 kilometres away in the state of Akwa Ibom. More keep arriving according to the Nigerian Red Cross, leading local authorities to fear an impending humanitarian crisis."

Vanguard, 28 August 2008:

"Akwa Ibom State has recorded the influx of no fewer than 50,000 displaced people from Bakassi, Mr. Victor Iyanem, Akwa Ibom State Attorney-General and Commissioner for Justice, has said. Iyanem told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Abuja that the returnees, who are indigenes of the state, were in Mbo, Oron, Okobo, Uruan, Udung Uko, Nsit Eket, Eket and Ibiono Ibom Local Government Areas."

Estimates of number of people displaced by violence in Plateau State, February-May 2004, vary between 40,000 and 258,000

- Following the February-May 2004 attacks in Plateau State, there were anything between 40,000 and over 258,0000 IDPs either within the state or in neighbouring Bauchi and Nassarawa states
- Most IDPs were absorbed in host communities, making it difficult to ascertain figures accurately

NRCS, 1 October 2004:

"Plateau State witnessed series of ethno-religious conflicts since the year 2000. The most recent one was in May, 2004 which led to the displacement of over 40,000 people from Plateau to neighboring Bauchi and Nasarawa States. The figure included people displaced in Kano as a result of a reprisal attack immediately following the attack on Yelwa in Plateau State.

As at October, 2004 there are a total of 625 families consisting of 3,128 people displaced in both Bauchi and Nasarawa States in this order;

BAUCHI

- Unguwan Barno Primary School	1,320
- Women Centre	734
- Boto Village	122
- Maraba Liman Katagum	54
- Tashan Mai Alewa	43

NASARAWA

- Shinge	645
- Shabu	110
- Nasarawa Eggon	100

The displaced persons in Kano have either been integrated into the community or relocated to their States of origin or other States."

Reuters, 4 August 2004:

"More than 258,000 people are still displaced from religious clashes in Nigeria that killed hundreds of people in the central state of Plateau three months ago, officials said on Wednesday.

Christian militia massacred hundreds of Muslims in Plateau in early May after a series of tit-for-tat killings over land and political power, forcing thousands to flee and prompting President Olusegun Obasanjo to assume emergency powers.

"Over 258,000 persons in the state (Plateau) have been identified as having been displaced during the state's ethno-religious crisis," said Thomas Kangnaon, Chairman of the Plateau State Committee on the Census of Displaced Persons.

The majority have remained in Plateau and had no access to aid, relying mostly on family and friends to survive, aid agencies said. About 60,000 people in camps in neighbouring Bauchi state have received medical attention, water and access to makeshift schooling.”

AFP, 15 August 2004:

“A total of 141,345 people were displaced while 10,463 houses were damaged in a wave of Christian-Muslim violence in two Nigerian states in May, a state-run relief agency said Sunday in a statement.

The states of Plateau, in the centre, Bauchi in the north and Taraba in the east took in the highest number of displaced people, respectively 45,000, 36,240 and 30,150, according the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA).

Some of the displaced people remained in camps three months after the unrest, although most had now left, NEMA said.”

GIDPP, 30 June 2004:

“Briefing the IASC on a recent mission to Nigeria, UN OCHA reported that as a result of the recent attacks in Plateau there are an estimated 40-60,000 people displaced inside the state and in the neighbouring states of Bauchi and Nassarawa. Others are reported to have gone to Kano and other northern states. Most IDPs live with host families and relatives and do not readily consider moving into IDP camps. This makes it difficult to ascertain actual figures of IDP populations. In the case of recent attacks and displacement in general, no systematic effort has been made to objectively document population movements in Nigeria.”

PATTERNS OF DISPLACEMENT

General

IDPs find refuge with family and friends or shelter in public buildings (2008)

The vast majority of displaced people in Nigeria seek refuge with family, friends or host communities in areas where their ethnic or religious group is in the majority or they found shelter in public buildings like schools, churches, mosques and police and army barracks. Many appear to return to their homes or resettle near their home areas soon after the violence which forced them to leave has subsided, but an unknown number also resettle in other areas of the country.

In Jos:

IRIN, 4 December 2008:

"Calm has been restored to the city following sectarian violence that broke out on 27 November, but thousands of residents whose houses were burned down during the three days of fighting are still sheltering in mosques, churches, army barracks and hospitals.

[...]

Meanwhile families, whose homes still stand, are starting to return.

"I have returned to my house which has been partially burnt and I feel luckier than those that have completely lost their homes to fire. But having no water or food to eat, I feel like returning to the [displaced] camp where I can get some little food and water when I need it," resident Lawan Kabir told IRIN."

In Bakassi:

IFRC, 10 November 2008, p. 2:

"Returnees [Bakassi residents] are residing in camps and residential areas in both the interior and coastal areas. Some are integrated into local communities. There are four main camps in Akwa Ibom State (Esik Eket, Ibiono Ibom, Ikot Abasi and Obono). [...] In Ibiomo Ibon returnees have crowded into the classrooms of an abandoned school and collect water from a nearby stream. In Okobo, returnees have occupied empty grass huts and collect rainwater to drink. In Esit Eket returnees are encroaching upon the resources of long-term inhabitants creating a potential conflict."

PHYSICAL SECURITY & FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

General

Nigerian government and security forces accused of failing to provide security during violence in Plateau State and Kano, 2004

- Human Rights Watch (HRW) denounces the failure of the Nigerian government and security forces to provide security to the population of Plateau State from as early as 2001
- Local residents of Yelwa town accuse police and army of assisting the attackers, according to a Nigerian newspaper
- During the violence in Kano in May 2004, Nigerian police used excessive force to restore law and order, contributing to the high death toll, according to HRW

HRW, 11 May 2004:

“Plateau State has been ravaged by interethnic conflict since an unprecedented outbreak of violence in the state capital, Jos, claimed as many as one thousand lives in September 2001. The government set up a commission of inquiry into the violence in Jos, but has still not published its findings. Hundreds of people—both Taroks and Fulanis—have been killed in different parts of the state since 2002. The fighting around Yelwa has intensified since February 2004, when scores of people died, including around 50 Taroks reportedly killed by Fulanis in Yelwa at the end of February.

‘In light of the pattern of violence in Plateau State over recent months, with each community seeking to avenge attacks by their opponents, the latest outbreak should have come as no surprise to federal and state authorities,’ said Takirambudde. ‘Yet the Nigerian government took no action to preempt the massacre.’

Human Rights Watch denounced the failure of the Nigerian government and the security forces to provide security to the population of Plateau State. In the latest incident, police and army reinforcements were only sent to Yelwa after hundreds of people had already been killed.

‘The government’s neglect of the situation in Plateau over the last three years has resulted in an endless cycle of revenge,’ Takirambudde said. ‘Not only have the police been unwilling or unable to stop the fighting, but the government has not taken responsibility for finding a lasting solution to the crisis.’

Vanguard, 8 May 2004:

“ Some residents [of Yelwa] accused the police and army of assisting the attackers -- some of whom were armed with military-issue assault rifles -- and dark rumours are swirling around Yelwa of the kidnap and rape of young women.

Such stories could not immediately be confirmed and, for their part, the police deny any involvement in the atrocities. Officers did, however, admit that the ferocity of the attack had left them powerless to protect the innocent.

'The truth is that the policemen and soldiers were overpowered by the attackers. The various interest groups are better equipped than the security forces,' said an officer in the town, playing down the larger casualty estimates. 'It is a war situation where propaganda also plays a role.'

It's a prospect that daunts the townsfolk here. Lawal Abdullahi, a 35-year-old farmer, is pessimistic: 'When we can, we defend ourselves with bows and arrows, spears and machetes, but this time we were overpowered'.

Community elder Mohammed Babayaro echoed him: 'This time they meant to finish us all off.' "

HRW, 17 May 2004:

"Nigerian police deployed to quell violence between Muslims and Christians in the northern city of Kano have used excessive force and may have committed dozens of unlawful killings in the name of restoring law and order, Human Rights Watch said today.

Police fired into a crowd on May 13, killing around 40 people and wounding numerous others, according to credible local sources. These sources also reported that police used lethal force in several other incidents.

[...]

Police reinforcements were sent to Kano after two days of rioting on May 11 and 12, when scores of people were killed as Muslims attacked Christians in reprisal for an attack by Christians against Muslims in Yelwa, Plateau State, on May 2. Several hundred people were killed in the Yelwa attack.

The attackers in Kano used a range of weapons—including machetes, knives, daggers, arrows and stones—as they targeted Christian residents of the city. Witnesses reported that they did not use firearms. Yet many of the dead and injured had gunshot wounds, which local sources believe must have been inflicted by the police. In several cases, eyewitnesses confirmed that the victims had been shot by the police.

Police officials have confirmed in public statements that the police shot a number of people, but claimed that this was in self-defense.

Over the last three years, Human Rights Watch has documented a similar pattern of unlawful, arbitrary and extrajudicial killings by the police following outbreaks of intercommunal violence in Plateau, Kaduna and other states. Some of the victims were not even participating in the rioting or the violence.

In past incidents, none of the police officers responsible for unlawful or extrajudicial killings have been brought to justice."

SUBSISTENCE NEEDS

General

Plateau State IDPs in Bauchi and Nassarawa have wide-ranging needs, 2004

- During the violence in the Yelwa area in May 2004 most houses were burnt down or looted, displacing many thousands of residents
- Some 48,000 people were estimated to have fled to Bauchi and Nassarawa states, some taking refuge in congested camps with urgent needs for medicine, food and other supplies
- A UN OCHA mission to the affected areas in June 2004 reported that while immediate needs, especially in the camps, were being addressed, specialist support such as trauma counselling was required
- With some IDP camps in school buildings, education was disrupted for both local communities and displaced children

IFRC, 17 May 2004:

"Ethnic-religious hostilities broke out on 1 and 2 May 2004 in Shimkar and Yelwa in Plateau State. The conflict rapidly spread to the neighbouring communities of Zomo, Doka and Lupidi, Laraba and Unguwar Adamu. Many people were wounded and many houses were burnt. Many others, including women and children, were reportedly abducted from Yelwa and taken to Langtan-south and Mikan Local Government those who escaped fled to Nasarawa and Bauchi States for refuge.

On 13 May 2004, a total of 735 internally-displaced families were sheltered in school compounds, markets and mosques in Lafia town of Nassarawa State. This figure includes 1,543 displaced children.

About 2,770 internally displaced persons are also taking refuge in five camps in Bauchi State. Of the 33 people hospitalized in Bauchi, 22 died. Approximately 2,000 persons are also reported displaced in various parts of Plateau State. Despite the relative calm in Yelwa, thousands of its inhabitants have not yet returned; approximately 8,000 displaced people are taking refuge in the remaining un-burnt houses.

[...]

Most of the houses in Yelwa and neighbouring villages were either burnt down or looted and will also be required to be rehabilitated for the displaced persons to return to their villages and towns. A rehabilitation assistance to complement government efforts to return the displaced persons is also required. About 1,000 families in Yelwa need long term support in food and non-food items when they return. The Nigerian Red Cross disaster preparedness stocks (pre-positioned materials), used in response to this emergency last week, need to be replenished."

UN OCHA, 26 May 2004:

"The recent crisis started in February 2004 with the killing of about 100 persons from one of the major ethnic groups. This group retaliated in May 2004 resulting in the killing of over 250 persons and the destruction of property. This escalation of the conflict resulted in population movements and another influx of people to Bauchi and Nassarawa. It is estimated that the population of IDPs in Bauchi is about 39,000 while those in Nassarawa State are about 9000. Most of the IDPs in

Bauchi are currently camped in various centres within and around Bauchi. The camps are congested and toilet facilities, water supplies and a supportive social infrastructure are inadequate. The use of schools as temporary shelters has resulted in the halting of teaching. The overcrowded conditions are likely to lead to outbreaks of infection, social vices, and other psychological problems. The influx of IDPs has continued unabated. There is an urgent need to provide material for temporary shelters, medicines, food and other supplies to alleviate the current situation. In the longer term, resources are required for resettlement and the resumption of economic activities.”

GIDPP, 30 June 2004:

“Briefing the IASC on a recent mission to Nigeria, UN OCHA reported that the humanitarian needs of the affected populations, both in IDP camps and affected villages, have in general been adequately addressed through combinations of national and state governments, Red Cross, NGOs and UN agencies. There are no immediate or obvious nutritional and health problems that are commonplace especially in camp settings. Shelter and non-food items are provided with no overcrowding seen. Nassarawa state government addressed over crowding in the Dunama school IDP camp, through building Shingo camp with temporary shelter with water and electricity supplies for over 500 people.

However, UN OCHA stressed that specialist support needs to be more readily available in the camps. For example, in Lafia camp in Nassarawa state, MSF reported that there are a number of cases of rape having occurred while people were fleeing. Some 6 weeks after the incident MSF have had to organise trauma counsellors from overseas. MSF also report that in Bauchi camps there is an increase in the levels of depression, especially among men, as the period of displacement and inactivity increases. This is also the main farming season in the home areas of Plateau. Perhaps because of the semi-permanent nature of current displacement, there is a growing dependency effect shown by certain IDPs, who have started to complain about the quality and quantity of assistance provided.

Some of the IDP camps in Bauchi and Nassarawa are in school buildings. Children from these schools have been decanted elsewhere. As there are no educational facilities in these camps, two sets of children are now having their education disrupted. Water, sanitation and waste disposal problems are being slowly addressed. However, if care is not taken, the onset of the rainy season might exacerbate the current health of the population in camps.”

People fleeing violence in Kano require medical, food and shelter assistance, May 2004

- Hostilities in Kano State in May 2004 displaced more than 17,000 people, many of whom sought refuge in police and military barracks
- About 500 people required emergency medical treatment
- Red Cross reported that IDPs required emergency assistance in terms of medical, food and nonfood items

IFRC, 17 May 2004:

“Following the Yelwa hostilities, the conflict in Kano State began on 10 May 2004; it escalated on 12 May 2004 in the Sharada area of Kano city resulting in more deaths. The Kano State Branch of the Nigerian Red Cross Society reported that 36 persons were killed and 598 injured, with a lot property destroyed. As a result, 17,087 people fled their homes; about 8,000 are seeking refuge in various police and military barracks. The situation is tense in spite of heavy police and military presence in some parts of the city.

The Nigerian Red Cross Emergency Team reported that about 500 people with bullet, machetes and arrow wounds requiring immediate evacuation and medical assistance were attended to and evacuated nearby hospitals (Aminu Kano Teaching Hospital, Murtala Mohammed Specialist Hospital, Mohammed Wase Specialist Hospital and Mohammed Sanusi Hospital).

[...]

The first field assessment by the Red Cross showed that emergency assistance in terms of medical, food and nonfood items are required for the displaced persons. The hospitals in Kano are congested with victims; more dressing materials will be needed to treat them. The Kano Branch report indicates that IDP staying in various military and police barracks need food assistance i.e. rice, sugar, beans, salt and drinking water. Non-food items are also urgently needed i.e. mats, blankets, cooking pots, feeding utensils and toiletries."

Health

Bakassi IDPs encounter difficulties accessing healthcare facilities (2008)

- Serious outbreaks of various diseases have occurred among Bakassi IDPs in the makeshift camps where they have found refuge
- There are also concerns of possible increases in HIV/AIDs cases
- Financial constraints may impede access to healthcare services for IDPs as they tend to lack even basic items
- Distance to nearest healthcare facilities is also an obstacle

IFRC, 10 November 2008, p. 2

"A lack of appropriate interventions to date have increased the potential for a serious outbreak of various diseases, such as cholera, dysentery, typhoid fever, worm infections, skin infections and malaria. A possible increase in the spread of HIV/AIDS is also a concern. More than thirteen people have been confirmed dead in the camps. No immunization efforts have been reported since the arrival of the returnees.

Access to health services in Nigeria is not free, and returnees must pay for health services. The distance to the nearest health facility from each of the four camps is 10 km or more. There is an urgent need to support the returnees in health and care, the provision of relief materials, and with safe drinking water. The Nigerian government has offered free health services to returnees in Okobo camp, but the cost of transportation to the health facility is unaffordable for most residents."

Food and nutrition

Food shortages affect Jos IDPs (December 2008)

- Jos IDPs are at risk of food shortages aggravated by the burning down of city food market
- Some food suppliers are also fearful of bringing their supplies into the city
- State government and NGOs are struggling to meet the needs of the IDPs

IRIN, 4 December 2008:

"Water, medicine and food supplies are running low for an estimated 10,000 people displaced by violence in Jos, northern Nigeria, following three days of violent clashes.

[...]

Food shortages have been heightened by the burning down of over 3,000 grain shops and warehouses in Laranto grain market, the city's only food market, which was the scene of much of the violence.

"The whole city relies on this market for food, but nothing is left of it but rubble, ashes, and mangled remains of roofing. Even we who sell [food] to the city don't have enough to eat," said trader Mohammed Sani while clearing the smouldering debris that used to be his shop.

Many other traders who have some supplies left, are too nervous to bring them to the city, he said.

According to Dan Tom, a federal lawmaker and director of non-profit organisation the Nigerian Red Cross in Jos, emergency food and medical supplies are insufficient to meet the needs of the injured and displaced. The Red Cross, the Nigeria Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Plateau state government, and other NGOs are struggling to meet people's needs, he said."

No information available on impact of conflict in the Delta on food production and sustainable livelihoods (2006)

FewsNet, November 2006:

"The GoN's presidential initiative on fishery development is aimed at boosting the contribution of fish resources to food security and livelihoods in Nigeria. The target is to increase domestic fish production to two million MT by 2007. There is a need to fully explore the fishing potential of Nigeria, taking into consideration the impact of conflicts and environmental degradation on food production and sustainable livelihoods in southern Nigeria. Such analysis is especially important in the Niger Delta region, where the availability of water resources, environmental conditions conducive to fish production, and the already high consumption of fish make such an initiative particularly feasible."

ISSUES OF SELF-RELIANCE AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public Participation

Uncertainty about voting rights of IDPs (January 2003)

ThisDay News, 24 January 2003:

"Eligible voters displaced by inter-tribal and religious clashes in Kaduna and Plateau states are to forfeit their voting rights since they will not be registered by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) at the on-going make-up registration exercise.

Niger state resident electoral commissioner (REC), Alhaji Ismaila Abdulkareem disclosed this to THISDAY in Minna on Monday after a close door meeting with leaders of all the political parties in the state.

According to him, victims of ethnic or religious riots that fled from Kaduna and Plateau States to Niger State are not eligible for the make-up exercise, saying "any attempt by the victims of these riots to re-register will tantamount to multiple registration and it is illegal."

The INEC boss said all displaced eligible voters are to hold on to their temporary voters slip until the completion of the compilation and release of final voters cards.

Abdulkareem, who was particular about those who fled from Kaduna State to Muan and Tafa local government, Niger State at the wake of the last religious riot, advised such people not to present themselves for the make-up exercise.

According to him, such persons who can not say where they were initially cannot present himself or herself for re-registration, as this will be a double registration."

The commissioner, who had earlier educated the political leaders on those eligible to register said that the make-up exercise was designed primarily for those who could not be registered during last year exercise.

"These categories of Nigerians include those who were out of the country, those who were hospitalised and those genuinely left out for being below 18 years when the voters registration exercise was conducted in September 2002," Abdulkareem explained.

He then advised the affected people to hold on until the permanent voter's card is released before they can apply for transfer of card from the affected state to their new state.

Abdulkareem maintained that the interest of such victims is taken care of by the Electoral Act, which approves transfer of voter's name from one state to another. "Not until we (INEC) is about to do that victims of ethnic or religious clashes will have to wait," he concluded. "

PROPERTY ISSUES

General

More than 1000 houses burned during Lagos clashes, February 2002

ICRC Geneva, 18 March 2002:

"On 02.02.02 an ethnic clash broke out between a faction of the Yoruba ethnic militant troop, Oodua People's Congress (OPC) and a section of the Hausa community in Idi-Araba area of Lagos. Although there have been conflicting reports on the real cause of the crisis, it is reported to have left over 100 people dead and over 400 wounded. More than 1000 houses were burnt and a number of cars were destroyed. Residents fled their homes resulting on about 5,000 displaced persons. Some of the residents took refuge in the Lagos University Teaching Hospital in Idi-Araba while others were evacuated to a nearby army barracks. By the third day of the crisis, the ethnic disturbances spread to some other parts of Lagos creating tension in the lives of Lagos inhabitants. Soldiers were then drafted to the area to assist the police to bring the situation back to normal."

Communal violence in and around Jos causes major destruction, September-October 2001

- Dilimi village on the outskirts of Jos town suffered the most intense destruction
- In the Angwan Rogo suburb of Jos houses belonging to Christians were all burnt and their property destroyed

OMCT, 26 August 2002, p. 119:

"Dilimi village on the outskirts of Jos town suffered the most intense destruction. Inhabited mostly by Muslims, virtually the entire village was razed to the ground. The only buildings left standing were those belonging to Christians and "indigenes". In all, about four thousand houses, eleven Mosques, and two schools all belonging to Muslims were systematically destroyed in Dilimi. Some residents of Dilimi are still living in a displaced person's camp in Gangare Primary School in Jos. The entire Muslim population of the village had to be relocated there. In Angwan Rogo on the other hand houses belonging to Christians were all burnt and their property destroyed. Churches in the area were also destroyed."

Soldiers plunder abandoned farms in Benue State, October-December 2001

- After the October violence in Benue State, the deployed army forces allegedly were involved in extortion, harassment and looting
- Soldiers also regularly plundered farms which were abandoned by frightened farmers, harvesting the crops and selling the produce
- As a consequence of this conduct, people were displaced and fled into the bush to hide

HRW, April 2002, p.14:

"While the majority of rape cases reported to Human Rights Watch took place between the end of October and the end of November, other forms of abuse by the military continued into December. The most common complaints by residents were of systematic extortion and harassment, especially at roadblocks, and looting. Soldiers regularly plundered farms which had been abandoned by frightened farmers, harvesting the crops and selling the produce. A source in Makurdi reported that in mid-November, more than fifteen military trucks were seen passing through the town carrying yams and other goods, and that soldiers in Abako town were harassing farmers and preventing them from returning to their fields to harvest their crops. In mid-December, there was still a military presence at Vaase, despite the fact that the village was almost empty. Local residents complained that the soldiers were harassing the few people who were still there, harvesting their crops and stealing machinery and vehicles. Residents of Gbeji also complained of looting and extortion by soldiers. One man told Human Rights Watch that soldiers had come on four consecutive days in mid-November and asked the residents of Gbeji to give them yams or money. "They said that if we didn't give them what they wanted, they would not cooperate with us. People were afraid, so we ran into the bush to hide [...] Soldiers are still taking our yams and beating people."

Property of IDPs destroyed by fighting in Nasarawa and Taraba States, July-August 2001

- Many displaced believe that their homes have been destroyed by the fighting
- Destruction of crops
- No male adults in Lafia camp, since they keep vigil over their property (July 2001)

CRS, August 2001:

"The fighting has taken its toll on the lives of the displaced. Some have lost family and many believe that their homes have probably been destroyed by the fighting."

NGO (anonymous), 14 August 2001:

"Food needs are always great for IDPs in Nigeria and particularly this year when many IDPs are themselves subsistence farmers whose crops have been ruined."

UN-OCHA, 14 August 2001:

"No male adults are in [Lafia] camp except camp administrators. On questioning response was that some of the men are dead & others are keeping vigil in the villages/communities to ensure that what is left does not get burnt down."

Houses of as many as 60,000 IDPs destroyed in reprisal attack on Odi in the Bayelsa State in 1999

- Most houses destroyed and 60,000 inhabitants forced to flee
- Reported in October 2002 that at least 90% of the population still lived in temporary structures

OMCT, 26 August 2002, pp. 71, 76, 78, 80:

"On December 14 1999 Abdul Oroh, Executive Director of the Civil Liberties Organisation, in a press conference summed up his impression of Odi after the invasion [i.e. reprisal attack by the Nigerian army] as thus: "we saw no single livestock, poultry or domestic animals except a stray cat.

[...]

Over 95% of the Odi population were displaced by the invasion and to date at least 90% of the population live in temporary structures. Some lucky ones have been able to rebuild or live as squatters in some rooms in primary school buildings and partially completed buildings built by the Bayelsa State government to house some of the displaced individuals in Odi. Many inhabitants of Odi who managed to escape the invasion spent the fourteen days of invasion and its immediate aftermath hiding in the bush and living under the elements. Others managed to flee to neighboring towns and villages for the entire period. On their return home most of them found themselves homeless and had to live under open canopies for weeks until they were able to relocate into classrooms, uncompleted houses or makeshift shelter made of wood, roofing sheets or mud depending on the availability of the building materials."

PATTERNS OF RETURN AND RESETTLEMENT

General

Villagers in Plateau State have used looting and vandalism of property to deter IDP return (2004)

- In some areas of Plateau State, vandalism, looting and burning of property took place well after the original attacks in order to discourage returning IDPs
- Government 'peace committees' and religious 'interfaith' groups were targeting these areas with reconciliation work
- According to UN OCHA, the government must do more to establish a safe and enabling environment for IDPs who want to return

GIDPP, 30 June 2004:

"Briefing the IASC on a recent mission to Nigeria, UN OCHA reported that areas of conflict visited were Shendam local government area – Yamina/ Yelwa and Kadarko in Wase local government area. Both local government areas are in Plateau state, from where the IDPs in Bauchi and Nassarawa originate.

IDPs normally return to their homes after the violence and other dangers have been removed. In the areas visited clearly much of the vandalism, burning and looting took place well after the original attacks. People in the villages and have used looting and destruction of property as a tool to discourage returning IDPs e.g. in Yelwa and Yamina. Weeks after the violence erupted, there was evidence of fresh burning of property and vandalism. Perhaps these symbols would also impact visiting authorities and others for receiving relief items.

As in the case of IDP camps visited, interlocutors in these town and villages were not very willing to attempt compromise or accommodation for those former residents who fled. However, the government has established peace committees to target these areas. In addition, reconciliation work is being undertaken by an 'Interfaith' group that includes representatives of Muslim and Christian faiths.

More effort has to be made by the Government to establish a safe and enabling environment for IDPS who want to return. Security must be assured, as well as an obligation to protect freedom of movement. IDPs will only return when these conditions are met and police and other security forces are seen to be impartial and respect laws and conventions that govern their behaviour."

IDPs in Nigeria appear to return after major threats recede (2003)

- Unknown number of IDPs apparently also resettle elsewhere or get assimilated into the communities that had given them shelter
- Return must be analyzed in the context of general movement patterns between the different Nigerian states and ethnic groups

Global IDP Project, April 2003, p.8:

"In Nigeria it seems to be a pattern that displaced people are able to return to their homes after the violence and other dangers that forced them to flee no longer represents a major threat. However, an unknown number of IDPs apparently also resettle elsewhere or get assimilated into the communities that had given them shelter during their displacement. The latter must also be seen in the context of general movement patterns between the different Nigerian states and ethnic groups. In some cases, former neighbors have used looting and destruction of property as a tool to discourage return, while in other areas there are examples of local authorities actively guarding property until the IDPs return. Unfortunately, several participants indicated that such solidarity is on the decline.

The discussions indicated that Guiding Principles 28-30 would be a relevant basis for a future official policy on return/resettlement of IDPs in Nigeria. Several participants underscored in particular the need to involve IDPs more actively in the return process, and to inform better both IDPs and the communities where IDPs return or resettle about the approach taken and the role of national and international humanitarian actors. Those providing assistance in the return phase should pay attention to the potential tensions that access to humanitarian assistance can create between beneficiaries and their neighbors. International actors should thus acquire a better understanding of local conditions and practices before initiating humanitarian assistance activities."

People who fled armed raids in Gombe State lack support to reintegrate (May 2003)

IFRC, 9 May 2003:

"The situation of the displaced persons in Dadiya and Maitukun communities, Bambam Local Government of Gombe State is far from resolved as about 3,000 IDPs have left a temporary school shelter to stay with relatives and friends around the shelter area, while about 1,500 IDPs are still staying at the school shelter. The condition of the people is very pathetic and the children are getting malnourished due to irregular and poor feeding. Children are developing fever and diarrhea at the camp.

[...]

Although the displaced persons have made all efforts to return to their communities, their attempt for the restoration of their normal life and farming have not been achieved due to lack of supports. The Red Cross branch offices and volunteers in Adamawa and Gombe States have continued to mobilize local resources to help the vulnerable persons.

The Red Cross branches will be responsible for the implementation of the distribution supported by Disaster Management officers of the NRCS. The Federation's Regional office in Lagos will assist the NRCS in monitoring and reporting."

IDPs from Ogu/Bolo in the River State unable to return because of continuous harassment by political thugs (2003)

- "Hundreds" of IDPs from Ogu still sheltered in Post Harcourt in February 2003
- Difficult for IDPs seen as non-PDP supporters to return
- Women trying to return temporary to the local market experiences harassment

HRW, April 2003, pp. 10, 12-13:

"On August 6, 2002, about one month before the national voter registration process was due to begin, fighting broke out between the ANPP and PDP factions in Ogu, the headquarters of Ogu/Bolo local government area, during a personnel audit of the local government's staff. At least one person was reported killed, several people were injured, and significant property was destroyed. Hundreds and perhaps thousands of members of the ANPP and other residents fled Ogu, some of them moving into sites for groups of displaced persons in the state capital, Port Harcourt. Since that date, there have been several killings linked to the political conflict between the two parties, and political opponents of the PDP are still unwilling to return home.

[...]

Human Rights Watch visited two sites set up in Port Harcourt for displaced persons from Ogu; each was still hosting hundreds of people in February 2003. These sites were not set up by the government but rather were supported by private individuals. One was set up through Chief Ada George in the Rivers State UNPP headquarters and the other was at the premises of a church. We were unable to confirm the claim by ANPP and UNPP members from Ogu that tens of thousands of persons had been displaced. Some of the people we spoke with reported they had lost their means of livelihood and had received no support from the state or federal government.

Some of the former ANPP supporters have moved with Chief Ada George into the UNPP. They claimed that the PDP in Ogu continues to threaten all non-PDP supporters who return to Ogu. Nonetheless, women from the community have returned to Ogu on several market days to assess the level of tension in Ogu. A leader at one of the sites for displaced persons explained, "more than seven times [since August 6] we've sent women to market. Each time they're molested, their things are taken, their clothes are torn, or they're beaten [by Agaba boys]." A twenty-seven-year-old woman at the same site explained that, several weeks after fleeing Ogu on August 6, she and five other women had wanted to return to Ogu to check on their property in the market. "The Agaba boys sent their girlfriends to apprehend us or chase us away. They took one of us away and a group of them raped her. Both the men and women beat the rest of us. I recognized by name and face several of the boys who attacked us. I suffered bruises and some pain." Both she and her husband were UNPP members, and her husband had wanted to run for a councillorship position in Ogu/Bolo. Several of the displaced UNPP members staying at the UNPP headquarters in Port Harcourt reported that they felt unable to go into town even in Port Harcourt because they had been threatened there by thugs from the Okrika area supporting the PDP."

By 2002 many Odi inhabitants had still not reintegrated since being displaced by fighting in Bayelsa State in 1999

- Killings of policemen in November 1999 inside Odi by youth mob triggered major military operation
- Most houses destroyed and 60,000 inhabitants forced to flee
- Reported in October 2002 that at least 90 percent of the population remained in temporary structures.
- Over 95% of the Odi population was displaced by the invasion and to date at least 90% of the population lives in temporary structures

OMCT, 26 August 2002, pp. 71, 76, 78, 80:

"Odi is a town situated along the Portharcourt/Warri Motorway in Bayelsa State in the South - South zone of Nigeria. Until its invasion on 20 November 1999, Odi was the second largest town in Bayelsa State, one of the states of Nigeria's troubled Niger Delta region. The problem in Odi is reported to have started on or about 2.00 a.m. on November 20, 1999 when the might of the

Nigerian armed forces invaded the community and occupied it for fourteen days. At the end of their sojourn the town was utterly destroyed and a lot of people, with their lives and property were laid waste.

[...]

Following the killings of the Policemen [in November 1999 inside Odi by youth mob], the presidency wrote a letter to the Governor of Bayelsa for the arrest of the culprits within fourteen days, failing which a state of emergency would be declared in Bayelsa. But just after a week, while the state government was making efforts to round up the culprits the Army moved in.

[...]

On December 14 1999 Abdul Oroh, Executive Director of the Civil Liberties Organisation, in a press conference summed up his impression of Odi after the invasion as thus: "we saw no single livestock, poultry or domestic animals except a stray cat. The community's 60,000 inhabitants had fled into the forest... been arrested or killed..." As summed up by one of our respondents, "there was no ethnic or religious crisis in Odi. The case of Odi was a case when the government of the country, instead of protecting its own people, went to war against them."

[...]

Over 95% of the Odi population were displaced by the invasion and to date at least 90% of the population live in temporary structures. Some lucky ones have been able to rebuild or live as squatters in some rooms in primary school buildings and partially completed buildings built by the Bayelsa State government to house some of the displaced individuals in Odi. Many inhabitants of Odi who managed to escape the invasion spent the fourteen days of invasion and its immediate aftermath hiding in the bush and living under the elements. Others managed to flee to neighboring towns and villages for the entire period. On their return home most of them found themselves homeless and had to live under open canopies for weeks until they were able to relocate into classrooms, uncompleted houses or makeshift shelter made of wood, roofing sheets or mud depending on the availability of the building materials."

IRIN-WA, 7 January 1999:

"Government officials on Tuesday [5 January 1999] justified the deployment of troops and tanks in oil-rich Bayelsa State last week in response to protests by Ijaw youth, news agencies said. Information and Culture Minister John Nwodo told a press conference in Abuja that the troop deployment was aimed at protecting lives and property in the state, where Ijaw youths are demanding more control over local oil resources, the Nigerian daily 'The Guardian' said yesterday. [...]

The unrest in Bayelsa started on 30 December after the passing of an Ijaw deadline for oil companies to cease operations in the area. Up to 26 people were reported killed in ensuing clashes between the youths and security forces. Many civilians fled the state capital Yenagoa and other towns in response to the unrest, news agencies said."

IDPs sheltered in Benue state forced to return or resettle (2002)

- Reports of Tiv attempting to return to their homes in Taraba and Nassarawa being forced to turn back to Benue after non-Tiv residents of these states attacked them
- Security assessment by end March 2002 confirmed that repatriation for the IDPs was not yet safe
- In mid-March the IDPs were given one-week notice to leave (later extended by another week)
- One source claim that returnees apparently not allowed to resume living on their old land, but are given a communal area to share with other returnees
- Another source claims that few of the Tivs stayed in their areas of origin because of insecurity and the fact that their houses and farms were destroyed

US DOS, 31 March 2003:

"During periods of ethno-religious violence, numerous persons were displaced from their places of residence. For example, in September and October 2001, several hundred thousand persons were displaced due to the ethnic conflict in Benue, Taraba, and Nassarawa States [...]. In April media reports stated that three persons were killed and an undisclosed number injured when unknown gunmen assaulted displaced Tivs attempting to return to Taraba State. No arrests were made during the year. Hundreds of Tiv attempting to return to their homes in Taraba and Nassarawa were forced to return to Benue after non-Tiv residents of these states attacked them. Officials in Benue estimated that as many as 6,000 Tiv internally displaced persons (IDPs) were unable to return to their homes in other states. Other observers estimated that fewer than 1,000 persons remained. "

Timeline [from a NGO project document]:**PFD , 17 June 2002:**

March 2002: PFD [Partners for Development]project funds released to CDM [Catholic Diocese of Makurdi]. March 4, 2002 all government food assistance stops in the camps. PFD/CDM are the only NGOs providing assistance. March 14 repatriation of all IDPs announced. March 28th a visit to the Northwest border areas confirms that repatriation for the IDPs is not yet safe for there were reports of shootings and IDP convoys forced to return back to Benue state.

April 2002: All funds exhausted for food provisions in Daudu, Ukpiam and Agasha camps. PFD/CDM are only NGOs providing food aid to the camps. IDPs continue to return home. End of April CDM and PFD announce in the camps that all funding for the feeding programs has stopped. Returnees still face obstacles upon returning to their home areas. Returnees are not allowed to resume living on their land, but are given a communal area to share with other returnees. No food or shelter provided by the state or local Nasarawa and Taraba governments. Returnees return to harsh condition and extreme heat and drought. Contract between PFD and CDM has finished.

May 2002: CDM still in camps, Catholic Relief Services provided a small amount of funding to continue the feeding program until end of June. Most IDPs have returned and face extreme hardship since no assistance is being provided for them upon their return.

June 2002: 1,800 IDPs remain in the camps.

[...]

The biggest challenge faced was the repatriation effort. Clearly, the government was not equipped with the knowledge or resources to facilitate the return. It was announced in the refugee camps on March 14, 2002, by the Tiv chief, that all IDPs were to return to their perspective areas within a week. It was understood that the Benue state government was to provide transport for all returning IDPs. The beginning phase of the repatriation many of the IDPs were cautious about their impending return. After a successful consultation between the IDP government chairman, Father John of CDM and the consultan, was the repatriation effort postponed for a week in order to provide adequate time to facilitate such endeavor and for the IDPs to prepare for their return. The IDPs did repatriate however no assistance was given to them upon arrival to their perspective areas. The IDPs were not allowed to return to their homes, rather an area of land was given to them by the local government. They had no food or shelter upon their arrival. Furthermore some of these areas are so remote that they do not have access to health care or education. "

UN-OCHA, 18 June 2002:

" It has been reported that the majority of the IDPs from Taraba and Nasarawa States have returned. However, [as of June 2002] IDPs from Plateau State still remain in Benue State. A

meeting has recently been convened between the state governments of Benue, Taraba and Plateau to agree on the return of IDPs.

[...]

In an effort to address the issue of return and resettlement, the State Government held consultations with other relevant state governments and traditional rulers to discuss peace settlement initiatives. Agreements were reached for the return of the IDPs to their respective states and the state government made transport available. Initially, few of the Tivs stayed in their areas of origin because of insecurity and the fact that their houses and farms were destroyed. However, it was reported that most of the displaced have now returned, although some (ICRC estimate 2,000) still remain in camps in Benue State. Government reports that many of the camps have been closed. Figures were not available on the numbers resettled or the current number of displaced within Benue State. ."

Return and resettlement strategy of the Nassarawa State Government (2002)

- The Nasarawa State Government followed a resettlement strategy, which included transportation to established transit camps and the provision of food, non food items and drugs to the IDPs on their arrival at the transit camps
- Assistance only provided for a short time
- Upon their return to Nasarawa State, the Tivs were encouraged to live in large settlements rather than their original communities

UN-OCHA 18 June 2002:

"The Nassarawa State Government appears to have a resettlement strategy of sorts, which includes transportation to established transit camps and the provision of food, non food items and drugs to the IDPs on their arrival at the transit camps. This assistance is only provided for a short time after which it is redirected to the communities to encourage resettlement. Usually, if building materials are provided at all, they will only be provided upon return to communities of origin to encourage the resettlement process. Insufficient attentions seems to have been paid to the issue of security and reconciliation to ensure that returning IDPs would be accepted back into the communities without fear of future attack or conflict.

Toto clashes – In 2000/2001, efforts were made to encourage the Bassa IDPs to return to Toto. A government committee was established and four transit camps were established within the Toto LGA. Many of the IDPs were assisted with transportation to move to the transit camps, where they were also assisted with food (for 5-6 months), non food items, drugs, etc. Roofing materials were promised upon the return of the IDPs to their original communities. However, the IDPs found that the situation was not conducive for their return (they still felt insecure) and returned to their places of displacement, where they had already established farms. The Bassa IDPs are now making a move to return on their own. Most of those who stayed away are farmers whilst those who have returned are mainly government workers. Government continues to make efforts to resolve the issue with the Ibiri community and promote reconciliation so that the Bassa can return and live in peace.

Tiv/Hausa-speaking Azaras and other ethnic groups - Government initiated dialogue with community leaders, opinion leaders, traditional heads in both Nasarawa and Benue States to appeal for peace and reconciliation and encourage the return of Tivs from Benue State. An agreement was eventually reached for the return and resettlement of the displaced Tiv community, which started a few months ago. Upon their return to Nasarawa State, the Tivs were encouraged to live in large settlements rather than their original communities. Around 21,000 returned and were relocated into a large settlement in the middle of town. (This also seems to go

against efforts at reintegration). The Federal Government gave the State Government 100 million Naira to develop this settlement area, which was later burnt causing the Tivs to flee again due to insecurity. To date, many of the IDPs have returned to their areas of residence and are trying to rebuild their houses and restart their farming activities. ICRC estimate that 2,000 still remain in camps in Benue State.

IDPs in Lafia camp and other areas were encouraged to return to their communities of origin. The government provided transportation for their return and also assisted with the provision of food and non food items.”

The Emergency Relief Committee in the Nasarawa State reported in May 2002 that:

“Following the restoration of peace and normalcy in areas affected by the communal disturbances, which led to the displacement of the Tiv community in the Nasarawa South Senatorial district in 2001, the Internally Displaced Persons, who were hitherto in Benue State were encouraged to return to their areas of residence, and to carry on with their normal activities in the State.

Consequently, a large number of the displaced persons returned to their areas of residence. However, most of their houses had been destroyed in the wake of the crisis and their basic source of livelihood disrupted. They are now engaged in the process of rebuilding their settlements and cultivating their farmlands.

[...]

Preliminary reports indicate that the Internally Displaced Persons are in fifty-two (52) settlements which are located in seven local Government areas of the State. [...]

Detailed Statistics of the returnees in the respective settlements are being compiled. Registers of the returnees have been opened in the various settlement areas. Interim report from seventeen (17) of the settlement areas indicate the following:

Fax from the Emergency Relief Committee in the Nasarawa State , 17 May 2002:

S/N	Name of Settlement	Location	Persons
1	Agon	Obi	3954
2	Ibuan Kertyo	Obi	3359
3	Imon (Samgor)	Obi	2960
4	Ihuman	Awe	1062
5	Anuku	Awe	1200
6	Shiika	Azara	475
7	Akondo	Azara	204
8	Igbatim	Obi	2421
9	Ayakeke	Azara	1146
10	Utsuwa	Obi	1256
11	Ukaa (Urvikaa)	Obi	1210
12	Hunki	Awe	350
13	Ikyosun	Awe	400
14	Kwashi	Obi	350
15	Adabu	Obi	300
16	Azongu	Awe	350
17	Kuje	Obi	400
TOTAL			21,397

Some 36,000 IDPs who had sought shelter inside Plateau State had still not returned by May 2002

- Thousands of Hausa IDPs fled Plateau for Kaduna, Kano, Jigawa, and Bauchi
- US DOS report suggesting that by end-2002 that majority of IDPs had not returned

UN-OCHA, 18 June 2002:

May 2002: Location of approximately 36,000 remaining IDPs in the Plateau State (Source Government of Plateau State, 21 May 2002):

- 20,058 in Jos and environs;
- 16,320 in Kanam and Sanga LGAs;
- 146 families in Foron area

US DOS, 31 March 2003, sect. 5:

"Some of the affected population fled into neighboring states, including Benue, Kano and Kaduna, whilst the majority were displaced within Plateau State. A number of camps were set up to accommodate some of the IDPs. There are no updated figures of how many displaced remain within and outside the state. However, it is reported that most of the camps are now empty.

Displaced camp - Gangare public school

The IDPs residing in Gangare public school are Hausa from Dilini village. The entire village fled following an attack by the Christians in the community who destroyed all the buildings in the village. The IDPs initially moved into Gangare public school, with an initial population of 1370. These IDPs later moved out of the school into surrounding areas where they had extended families. There are 40 IDPs who remained in the school. They are now living in a house adjacent to the school. The state government provided them with some food assistance every two-three months. All the IDPs would like to return to their village, however, they would first like to see a meeting held between themselves and the Christians in the village to agree on living together in peace without further clashes. The IDPs would also require assistance to rebuild their houses given that all buildings were destroyed.

[...]

Meetings are being held with relevant state governments and traditional leaders to encourage the return of IDPs still residing in neighboring states. There has been no provision of assistance for returning IDPs due to the lack of funds from government."

"Approximately 80 percent of the victims in Jos were Hausa Muslims, who constituted a significant minority in Jos. The military was able to restore order, but thousands of Hausa fled Plateau for Kaduna, Kano, Jigawa, and Bauchi. This conflict appeared to have been primarily ethnic and secondarily religious. Christians of different ethnic groups reportedly attacked each other, and Yoruba Muslims joined in targeting their Hausa co-religionists. There were reports of some IDPs returning to Plateau, but numbers cannot be confirmed and by most credible estimates the majority of the IDPs have not returned."

Over 85,000 IDPs, mostly ethnic Tivs, were resettled inside Taraba State by June 2002

- More than 85,000 displaced have been resettled to Taraba State
- The IDPs, mostly of the Tiv ethnic group, had fled ethnic and communal clashes in Nasarawa, Plateau, Taraba and Benue States between June and November 2001

- The Taraba State government provided transport to move most of the displaced who were settled in camps

UN-OCHA, 18 June 2002:

"Most of the Tiv population were displaced in neighboring communities and then into neighboring states, particularly Benue State. Two camps were set in Mutum Biyu and Bali in Taraba State to accommodate the displaced Tiv population who remained in Taraba State. These camps are now empty. The Jukuns were displaced mainly within the state. Many of them have returned."

IRIN, 18 June 2002:

"More than 85,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) have been resettled in their home villages in Nigeria's central region in the past two months, Red Cross officials said on Tuesday.

The IDPs, mostly of the Tiv ethnic group, had fled ethnic and communal clashes that wracked the states of Nasarawa, Plateau, Taraba and Benue between June and November 2001.

'Since April at least 85,000 people have returned to Taraba State from Benue State,' Alhaji M.D. Lawan, the Red Cross official overseeing the central region, told IRIN. 'Most of the people in camps set up in Taraba have also left,' he added.

According to Lawan, the Taraba State government provided transport to move most of the displaced who were settled in camps in Ibi, Dan Anache and Gosun local government areas. He said though the IDPs lacked adequate shelter and food, their discomfort was reduced by the Taraba government which provided them transport to their respective places.

'Most are now back in their farms planting with the rainy season now underway,' he added.

During the fighting which pitted Tivs against their Jukun neighbours, four camps were also set up by the Taraba government at Bali, Mutum-Biu, Wukari and Jalingo. But Lawan said all these camps have now been vacated by IDPs."

HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

General

Ongoing violence the most common obstacle for humanitarian access (August 2001)

- Ongoing fighting is often the main obstacle

NGO (anonymous), 14 August 2001:

"Access to IDPs does not usually seem to be a problem, as long as violence is not ongoing."

ICRC, 16 August 2001:

"Access to IDPs was always granted. In a few cases the access was delayed for security reasons."

Violence in Bauchi State impedes access to IDPs (August 2001):

IRIN-WA, 29 August 2001:

"Humanitarian workers said full details of casualties and displaced people were not easily available because the area was still unsafe."

The situation is really very tense and our people have not been able to get access to the affected area, Patrick Bawa, spokesman of the Nigerian Red Cross, told IRIN. Until there's some form of normalcy and they enter the area we can't tell much about casualties."

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES

National response

National response: overview (2008)

The repeated occurrence of conflict throughout the country and the lack of a comprehensive approach to internal displacement have meant that both the local and the federal governments have been unable to provide an adequate response. Although recognising the problem, they have struggled to intervene effectively because of their current structures. Even in terms of immediate relief, the Nigerian Red Cross, the most prominent actor engaged in humanitarian response, is often ahead of the local governments in providing relief. They have the structure and the personnel to respond to a crisis at very short notice.

The national governmental response to situations of internal displacement in Nigeria revolves around three bodies coordinated by the Federal Ministry of Special Duties, which was created under the new administration of President Yar'Adua. The Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) focuses on conflict prevention, as "an intellectual base to sharpen and support Government in formulating and implementing policies that relate to the promotion of peace and management of conflicts" (IPCR, 2007). The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) coordinates emergency relief operations and assists in the rehabilitation of victims where necessary. It is present in most states and often supports IDPs in the emergency phase of a crisis, but it lacks the resources to assist people displaced for a longer period of time or to help returnees reintegrate, and it has no age-specific or gender-specific policies. The National Commission for Refugees (NCFR) has taken de-facto responsibility for post-emergency and long-term programmes aimed at durable solutions for IDPs, in addition to refugees. If necessary, it assists NEMA with camp management.

The primary responsibility for responding to displacement, however, lies with the local governments, and only if they are unable to cope are state governments called in. State Emergency Management Agencies (SEMAs) exist in some states, but they have varying capacities. Only when this second level of response is ineffective does the state government appeal to the federal government for support. The President takes the final decision on whether the federal government intervenes.

In one noteworthy exception the federal government has taken direct responsibility, creating a new ministry charged with infrastructural development as well as youth development in the Niger Delta. The impact of this remains to be seen (BBC, 11 September 2008).

National responses are generally constrained by a lack of experience in dealing with IDP issues. This has resulted in ad-hoc responses, inefficiencies and gaps in support to affected populations, and also in competing mandates between institutions (Je'adayibe, 2008). The federal government is considering whether to create a separate agency responsible for IDPs or to formally attach such responsibility to the mandate of existing agencies such as NCFR. A national IDP policy has been planned since the creation of the Nigerian Presidential Committee on IDPs in January 2004, but it was still awaiting approval by the Federal Executive Council in mid-2008 (CEDAW, 3 July 2008). As highlighted by NCFR's Chief Executive in a press statement, Nigeria was among the countries in the African Union to deliberate on a convention for the protection and assistance of

IDPs in Africa (Daily Trust, 26 June 2008), a development which could encourage the adoption of a national IDP policy.

CEDAW calls on Nigeria to pay special attention to IDP women (2008)

- The UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) considered Nigeria's sixth periodic report at its 41st session from 30 June to 18 July 2008
- Among other questions, the Nigerian delegation was asked to report on the status of the national policy on internally displaced persons and on its efforts in collecting data and protecting internally displaced women
- In its concluding observations, the Committee expressed concern about the situation of internally displaced women and requested that the government pay particular attention to their needs through the adoption of a national policy on internal displacement and the formulation and implementation of gender-sensitive programmes

CEDAW, 18 July 2008, paras. 37-38:

"The Committee expresses concern about the situation of internally displaced women, including women with disabilities, displaced by violence and conflict, particularly in view of their precarious living conditions in camps where they are at increased risk of sexual and other forms of violence, and lack access to health care, education and economic opportunities.

The Committee requests the State party to pay particular attention to the needs of internally displaced women, including women with disabilities, through the adoption of a national policy on displacement in line with Security Council resolution 1325 and 1820, and the formulation and implementation of gender-sensitive plans and programmes for social reintegration, capacity-building and training of internally displaced persons. It also recommends that the Interministerial Task Force on Gender and Peacekeeping pay particular attention to the situation of internally displaced women. The Committee also requests the State party to ensure the protection of internally displaced women from violence and their access to immediate means of redress."

The Committee's concluding observations were based on an exchange had with the Nigerian government over the consideration of its sixth periodic report.

CEDAW, 3 July 2008:

"MARY SHANTHI DAIRIAM, expert from Malaysia, asked about the status of the national policy on internally displaced persons. Had it been drafted and when would it be adopted? How did it address specific vulnerabilities of women and girls during conflict, and what measures would it have for social reintegration of displaced women and girls? In the absence of such a policy, how was the safety of women and girls ensured? Were there any punitive measures to protect women and girls against sexual violence? Could the delegation provide examples in that regard? Was data collected on the existence of displaced women and girls? Was the Inter-Ministerial Task Force on Gender and Peacekeeping cognizant of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), which called on States to involve women in matters of peacekeeping?

[...]

[Nigeria:] Concerning the committee on internally displaced persons and gender violence, the previous federal administration had set up a provisional committee on internally displaced persons and, with support from the Brookings Institution, had set up a national policy on internally displaced persons. That policy had not yet been approved, but a final draft had been presented to the Presidential Council for adoption. The United Nations Secretary-General had visited Nigeria to ensure that the draft policy was fashioned in line with United Nations standards governing

internally displaced persons and gender violence. The National Commission for Refugees had a desk officer on gender and violence."

Mandate of the National Commission for Refugees and framework of cooperation with NGOs (2008)

NCFR, 2008, paras. 1-2, 6:

"The mandate

The Federal Government of Nigeria, further to the fulfillment of her obligations to the 1951 United Nations Convention, 1967 New York Protocol and Organisation of African Unity (African Union) Convention of 1969 on the status of refugees, domesticated some aspects of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and AU Conventions in Decree 52, now Cap 244, titled "the National Commission for Refugees", set up the commission as the sole agency responsible for overseeing all refugee matters in Nigeria.

In addition, during the inauguration of the Governing Board of the Commission in 2002, His Excellency, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo enlarged the mandate of the commission to include the issue of internally displaced persons (IDPs).

[...]

The main objective of this Framework is Emergency Preparedness and Risk mapping activities for durable solutions as a medium long-term development project for the management of refugees, internally displaced persons, returnees and other people of concern in the various conflict-affected areas in the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria. The framework is elastic and has a propensity to accommodate intervention from related agencies, donor organizations, development partners and other relevant institutions in the vanguard of poverty reduction as Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) projects."

International response

International response: overview (2008)

The UN in Nigeria has focused on development rather than humanitarian issues, as no humanitarian agency has been willing to commit the ongoing resources necessary and as the UN community feels there is more to be gained in tackling the development failures causing the recurrent conflicts. In this context, coordination between humanitarian agencies at all levels has been inconsistent. The UN country team will implement programmes under the second UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF II) for 2009-2012, for the first time "delivering as one" to ensure faster and more effective operations towards the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (UN, June 2008). As a first step, however, this new approach will only be implemented in six selected states, one in each of the geopolitical zones in Nigeria, where the UN country team will take collective responsibility for the achievement of outputs and progress towards the outcomes agreed under the UNDAF II (2009-2012).

The findings of a research study conducted on the management of internal displacement in Nigeria, with particular reference to the communal conflict in Kaduna in 2000, show that local or international humanitarian NGOs can only operate effectively in the presence of a supportive

government. Otherwise, they risk providing only “cosmetic relief” with serious consequences for displaced people (Brandeis University, October 2006). The primary necessity remains therefore a strong reform programme which supports good governance and the development or strengthening of institutions engaged in preventing and resolving conflicts and assisting those displaced by them.

'Delivering as One' approach to be implemented for the first time under UNDAF II (2008)

- Addressing issues of internal displacement has been mainstreamed into UNDAF II and specifically foreseen under the fourth priority, i.e. conflict prevention
- For the first time, the UN Country Team in Nigeria will implement the UN Development Assistance Framework according to the 'Delivering as One' approach
- This approach implies overall responsibility for the achievement of results and will be initially implemented in six selected states

UN, June 2008, p.9:

"The results matrix for UNDAF II is organised around four major priorities: (i) governance and accountability that supports transparent, equitable and effective use of resources; (ii) productivity and employment for wealth creation with a bias towards the poor and with the aim of contributing towards the growth of a private sector-led non-oil economy; (iii) social service delivery to invest in Nigeria's human capital and contribute towards a democratic dividend that reaches the poor even as it boosts current and future potential for equitable growth; and (iv) reduction of the risk of crisis and conflict to help address the challenge in the Niger Delta whilst assisting with crisis prevention, management and mitigation in other parts of the country. Taking a step further, these priorities have been disaggregated into specific areas of assistance to guide the formulation of results and identification of indicators.

Understanding 'Collective Work' and 'Collective Responsibility'

'Collective work' and its corollary 'collective responsibility':
apply to work that will be undertaken as 'One UN', whether at the Federal level or in the 6 focus States;
require UN agencies to manage the project cycle within a common framework through Strategic Programme Frameworks/SPFs and the associated Strategic Fund/SF (described in section 4.2 and Annex 3);
require that resource allocation, management and resource mobilization be managed within the framework of SPFs and the SF;
embrace the full range of modalities for implementation, thus, do not automatically imply that all programmes or projects must be 'joint';
necessitate programme planning, management and M&E arrangements and instruments that are appropriate to the close day-to-day collaboration that is envisaged; and
imply that overall responsibility for the achievement of results (agency outcomes and outputs) lies with the collective, that is, the UNCT rather than with specific agencies.

References to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement

Known references to the Guiding Principles (as of October 2007)

- References to the Guiding Principles in the national legislation
- Other references to the Guiding Principles (in chronological order)
- Availability of the Guiding Principles in local languages
- Training on the Guiding Principles (in chronological order)

References to the Guiding Principles in the national legislation

None

Other references to the Guiding Principles

Draft National IDP Policy (not yet available). Referred to in First Regional Conference on Internal Displacement in West Africa (see below).

First Regional Conference on Internal Displacement in West Africa: Held in the Nigerian capital Abuja, the conference was hosted by the Nigerian government and co-organised by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), UNHCR, the Representative of the UN Secretary-General on the Human Rights of IDPs and the Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement. It brought together a wide variety of representatives of ECOWAS member states, national, regional and international organisations, policy makers and academics. It was acknowledged that while there are currently around one million conflict-induced IDPs in the sub-region, there is a high risk of increased instability and further large-scale displacement. Discussions aimed at finding ways to improve the overall response to IDPs, mainly at a national and regional level. Key recommendations included the development of national laws and policies on internal displacement based on the UN Guiding Principles, and the strengthening of ECOWAS engagement on the issue, for example by developing a regional protocol, declaration or plan of action. The Nigerian government, for its part, presented its own draft National IDP Policy, based largely on the Guiding Principles.

Date: 26-28 April 2006

Document:

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Availability of the Guiding Principles in local languages

None

Training on the Guiding Principles

NRC training workshop: The Global IDP Project of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), in collaboration with the National Commission for Refugees (NCR), held a 3-day training workshop on the Guiding Principles in the city of Jos, the state capital of Plateau state. The workshop was part of a global NRC effort to disseminate and explain the Guiding Principles to representatives of governments, NGOs, the UN agencies and the displaced themselves, in order to ensure better protection and assistance to internally displaced persons. A total of 59 participants attended the workshop: 34 participants represented different state emergency agencies, the National Commission for Refugees and regional state authorities from all over

Nigeria; national and international non-governmental organizations sent 22 representatives and the UN system was represented by UNICEF and UNHCR (3 participants).
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