

EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES AND NATIONAL DEVELOPEMENT: BRIDGING THE GAP IN EDUCATING INTERNALLY DISPLACED CHILDREN

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Abstract

The paper looks at education as philological concept. What type of life is expected of the learners or young recruits to the society when their education is halted or totally cut off? That Nigeria did not achieve the target of the Education for All (EFA) goals and goal 2, target 3 of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and currently struggling with attainment of all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) set by world stakeholders in 2030 is no longer news. What is news however, and particularly worrisome is that the Country is bedeviled with over 10 million out-of-school children and increasing conflict situations. What happens to the quest for education of children in these emergency situations? How does the Ministries of Education in the Country, Development Partners and Stakeholders in the education industry provide adequate and well compensated teachers, teaching aids and basic infrastructure to the internally displaced Children Camps? The paper analyzed these situation closely and its attendant consequences for the overall national development of the Country. The impact of violence or crisis, wars, natural and man-made disasters and insurgencies like the notorious and intractable bandits ravaging the North West and Boko Haram in the North East Zones are quite exemplary. The paper recommends that to ensure a peaceful society, free of sectarian and ethno-religious crisis etc. all stakeholders must work

together and an enduring political will on the part of the Nigerian Government is a key to providing quality education to crisis affected children.

Key terms:

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), Education in Emergency, Insurgency, Teacher Emergency Package (TEP), Safe School.

Introduction

Education as a philological concept is relatively a difficult concept to define. This may be so especially when viewed from from the standpoint of what education is meant to do. What is its purpose in human existence and at what point can we say that education is deemed to be taking place? Answers to this question will vary from one sociocultural environment to another. What can be said however, is that education and educational processes are dynamic and thus education's expected end remains in perpetuity. The concept of futuristic education has gained attention of notable scholars such as (Obiwelouzor, 2015, Muhammed, 2007, Anriquez and Stamoulis 2007.) The recognition of education as a right of every child is a global charter derivable from the 1948 United Nations Universal Delectation for Human Rights.

The concept of Education in Emergencies is used to refer to the schooling and other structured activities for those whose lives have been thrown into disorder by extreme

and difficult situations or emergencies, especially children. This exact scenario is the case of children scattered in various internally displaced camps as internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Nigeria at the moment, living either with their parents or simply as orphans.

In general terms, Emergencies can be deemed to include natural catastrophes such as flood and earthquakes, and man-made crises often resulting from civil strife and wars. The banditry and Boko Haram saga sporadically depleting the human and material resources in the North West and Eastern parts of Nigeria are quite exemplary. Others include the intermittent and fatal clashes between Fulani herdsmen and natives of Agatu in Benue, Taraba and Plateau States respectively to list a few. These situations often pave the way for emergencies with long term debilitating consequences for education in the Country.

In the words of Malala (2022), “**One child, one teacher, one book, and one pen can change the world.**” This paper is concerned with how unfortunate socio-political, economic and ethno-religious crisis as war, natural disasters, sectarian and communal clashes like the intractable insurgency arising from banditry and Boko Haram as mentioned earlier in the North West and Eastern Zones of Nigeria and spreading into neighbouring Countries like Chad and Cameroon, have left untold debilitating consequences for the education of children in Nigeria.

The UN General Assembly Resolution 45/1822 referred to this as “complex emergencies”. According to The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (2005) there were 20.8 million internally displaced people worldwide ‘of concern’ to the organization, including an estimated 8 million refugees, of whom 6 million are hosted by developing Countries. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) equal provide support to

another 4.3 million refugees from Palestine. Some 24 million people are displaced within their own countries due to conflict. Conflict also has a lasting impact on those who have returned home after displacement and have to re-establish their lives and livelihoods: almost 4 million internally displaced people returned home during 2005 alone, while 6 million refugees returned from exile between 2002 and 2005. Millions more have been affected by conflict but without leaving their home areas; often they were too poor to make the necessary arrangements to live elsewhere. This would seem to be the case for all those displaced from North Eastern zones of Nigeria in recent times. Furthermore, over 150 million people were affected by natural disasters in 2005.

Other agents of emergencies are said to spring from protracted poverty, increasing number of children living on the streets, and the pandemic of HIV/AIDS. All these, constitutes silent and chronic emergencies with often long and devastating consequence for education in Nigeria. In all the emergency situations mentioned above, women and children are the most adversely affected. As Nicolai (2003) rightly asked:

Does a Sudanese child living in the midst of civil war need more than food and medicine to survive? Is shelter enough to restore the life of a girl in India who has just experienced an earthquake? Will putting down the gun be all that’s needed to change the future of a child soldier from Colombia? What happens to the millions of children around the world who live in crisis, and are given no chance to learn? Can their education wait?

Children, for example, especially girls, drop out of school during natural disasters sectarian and ethno-religious/communal clashes. During these crises, parents may not be able to pay required school fees. Poverty and fighting destabilize students, which hampers their ability to learn. War,

communal and religious intolerance has been fingered as a major psycho-social stressor with long-lasting effects that influence education in any Country.

Theoretical Framework

The paper built its theoretical framework on constructivist learning theory which explains how learners individually or socially construct meaning in the process of learning. (Hein, 1991). Constructivism is the theory that says learners construct knowledge rather than just passively take in information. As people experience the world and reflect upon those experiences, they build their own representations and incorporate new information into their preexisting knowledge (schemas). Constructivist theory is associated with other behavioral theories such as Lev Vygotsky, Jean Piaget, John Dewey and Jerome Bruner (Huitt, 2004).

The constructive learning theory has broad applications especially in the field of

education as exemplified by Semerci and Batdi (2015:176) who made this application in a comprehensive meta-analysis and concluded that the application of constructivist learning theory influenced learners' positive academic achievements, retention level and attitude scores.

Some Benefits of Education in Emergency Situations

Discussing the many benefits of education in emergencies, one must bear in mind the training of teachers who are vested with the responsibility of realizing this objective. Winthrop and Kirk (2005) agree clearly with this saying 'Teachers are the key to quality but in emergencies many are new to the profession, untrained and lacking in confidence. Even experienced teachers have not been trained in emergency response'. Some of the many benefits of Education in emergencies include inter alia:

Table 1: Benefits of Education in Emergency

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• provide a sense of normality;• restore hope through access to the 'ladder' of education;• support psychological healing from traumatic experiences through structured social activities in a 'safe space';• convey life skills and values for health and prevention of HIV/AIDS, gender equality and prevention of gender-based violence, conflict resolution, peace-building, responsible citizenship and environmental awareness;• protect the investment that children, families and nation have made in education |
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Source : Author's compilation

Recent research has demonstrated the conditions under which positive change can indeed be fostered during emergencies. To this, the following learned scholars assert accordingly. Nicolai (2009) maintains:

Education not only save lives in emergencies, it also sustains life by giving children a sense of the restoration of normalcy, familiar routine and hope for the future, all of which are vital for mitigating the

psychosocial impact of violence and displacement for individuals and whole communities.

Contributing on this topic, UNESCO (2010) posits that: 'good quality education provided during wartime can counter the underlying causes of violence, by fostering values of inclusion, tolerance, human rights and conflict resolution'. Again Nicolai (2009) and Novelli and Smith (2011) had these to say:

Education has enormous value for all children and young people, including those affected by conflict, to have the right to receive a qualitative life. However, education is also needed in emergency situations to prepare societies for eventual post-conflict or post-disaster reconstruction and social and economic development.

A balanced development with economic growth requires that young people of all social, ethnic, religious and political backgrounds are equipped with literacy, numeracy and basic information technology and vocational skills to contribute to rebuilding of national economies and this must include those affected by emergencies. Without the social capital constructed by strong education, a Country or region may remain dependent on the international community during and for some time after an emergency. As a matter of fact, the need for young people to acquire up-to-date skills to earn a living in the informal economies that spring up during wartime can never be over-emphasized.

It is important to note that emergencies may actually create additional learning needs that are incorporated into the learning activities such as life skills, safety, health, hygiene and sanitation and HIV/AIDS etc.

Consequently, educational programmes in crisis situations must take cognizance of children with disabilities, street children and those with HIV/AIDS and other life threatening afflictions. While some writers believe that degradation of the environment is a major factor contributing to conflicts, such emergencies can also open up opportunities for educational system reform. To this Pigozzi (1999) remarks:

An emergency can provide a “crisis situation” in which immediate change is possible. In fact it may be much easier to introduce change into education systems as a result of an emergency than in peaceful, orderly times. Emergencies can thus provide an opportunity for transforming education.

Wars or internal conflicts and insurgencies are now overwhelmingly internal to nations, though foreign intervention plays a role in many such conflicts and they frequently spill across borders. Armed groups are increasingly recruited and deployed by non-state actors for several reasons. Civilian populations are deliberately targeted and most conflicts tend to be long lasting with women and children being the most affected.

Fig. 1: Transformative Power of Education
EDUCATION TRANSFORMS LIVES



Source : <http://unesco.doc.unesco.org/image/0022/00223115E.pdf>

Kolo (2009), linking education and the colossal importance of children in the society and development opined thus:

One of the main reasons human societies have remained in existence over the ages and civilizations, is the ability for regeneration amongst people in their respective communities, cultures, races and nations, the phenomenon of societal regeneration itself is the product of education and social transformation within a civilization or nation.

From Kolo's words above, it is glaring that no human society can remain in existence

without regenerating itself through children and educating the children becomes the only way of societal growth and socioeconomic transformation. Kagia (2006) shares the opinion above by his words 'the history of civilization itself reflects the transformative power of education'.

The Rights of the Child to Education Even In Emergencies

As evidenced by this provision in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 28): States Parties recognize the right of the child to education and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity.

Table 2: Rights of the Child to Education Even In Emergencies

(a) Make primary education compulsory and available and free to all;
(e) Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.'

Source : Author's compilation

Can the Nigerian nation argue that the education of refugees or internally displaced children in various camps in the Country at the moment wait until they returned home? According to Sinclair (2003) 'there is no way to be sure whether the wait will be for weeks, months, years or decades'. The near universal ratification of the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child meant that governments and agencies are obliged to promote or facilitate access to education for children within their territory, regardless of their status. This even extends to children who are asylum-seekers in nations other than theirs.

According to Nwite's report (2022), It is particularly worrisome that the 2021 data published by the World Education Forum reported by Insider Africa in the 2022 World Education Forum's ranking involving 140 countries, including 38 African countries, Nigerian educational system failed to find a place among the top 10 in Africa. Below are the top 10 African countries with the best education systems:

i. Seychelles

An Island country in East Africa with a population of 98,347 people, Seychelles is the first and only African country to fully accomplish UNESCO's "education for all" aim. The country's educational system is also the only one in Africa to be ranked among the top 50 systems in the world, placing 43rd overall, ahead of Ukraine, Hungary, Russia, and the United Arab Emirate. It holds the position for the best education system in Africa with 69.3 points.

ii. Tunisian

Tunisian educational system ranks 71st among the best worldwide, with a 61.4 points rate of excellence. This country has invested 20% of its national budget into the educational sector and ranks 49th position for School life expectancy and 51st for Pupil-to-teacher ratio in primary education.

iii. Mauritius

This country is rated the 3rd best in Africa with 61 points in the educational system and ranks 74th in the global education system. Schooling in Mauritius is compulsory up to

the age of 16. The country is also ranked 47th in the world in vocational training because of its reputation for providing high-quality programs.

iv. South Africa

The literacy rate in South Africa is 94 per cent. This country is rated the 4th best country in Africa in educational development with 58.4 points. It also holds the 84th position in the global education system.

v. Algeria

Algeria is the second country with the best education system in North Africa. It is the 5th best in Africa with 57.4 points, and the literacy rate in the country is 75%.

vi. Botswana

Botswana holds the 6th position in Africa with a score of 56.7 points. It is also rated the 92nd best country in the Global education system. With a population of 2.3 million, the literacy rate in Botswana is 88%.

vii. Kenya

Kenya ranks 7th in Africa with 55.4 points and is rated the 95th best country in the world, with a 78.7% literacy rate. It is estimated that the Kenyan government invests 17.58% of its budget in the educational sector.

viii. Cape-Verde

Cape Verde ranks 98th in the global education system and number 8th in Africa, with 53.3 points.

ix. Egypt

Egypt is ranked 9th in Africa with 52.8 points. The country is also rated the 99th

best country in the world, with the rate of 71% literacy rate.

x. Namibia

Namibia has a population of 2.34 million, and the country is ranked 100th in the global education system and 10th in Africa, with a score of 52.7 points. The literacy rate in Namibia is 88.2%.

The situation above can hardly pave way for national development of Nigeria especially viewed from the standpoint that education is the bedrock of development of any nation. Education is a human right, important in itself and also ‘enabling’ access to other rights. The Convention on the Rights of the Child requires governments to promote free and compulsory schooling at primary level, access to secondary education, and access to tertiary education on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means. In emergency situations, it may be more difficult to meet these goals but they cannot be ignored by Nigeria. In fact, developed nations displaced by war or calamity accord high priority to restoring education – they see education as important for the future of their children and of their society. The Nigerian government is equally expected to work assiduously and accordingly to bridge the gap for the education of children torn by conflicts in the Country.

Established Principles of Cooperation For Education In Emergencies

According to UNHCR/UNESCO/UNICEF (2022), the following are delineated guidelines for handling education under emergency situations:

Table 3: Principles of Cooperation for Education in Emergencies

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The initial response must address specific, local needs of school age children.• The approach to emergency education must have a longer term view to rebuild the education system.• Cooperation among various agencies is essential and requires a joint committee/technical unit.• Views of education must be children-based—there must be direct and, if possible, unbroken links between refugee camps and later settlement locations.• The first agency operating in the field must collect educational statistics to facilitate planning.• There is a need for simple guidelines on how to get started/where to look for support.• Special attention must be paid to girls and adolescents.• Adolescents must be brought into the process as early as possible.• "Second chance" or "drop-in" education for adolescents should be a component of education in emergencies.• There is a need for agreed-upon mechanisms for working with NGOs.• There is a need for agreements on salaries/payment for work.• Education in emergencies must be more than kits—it must include, for example, training, dealing with trauma, and community building must be included, and it may be necessary to tailor curriculum under emergency situations.• Curriculum issues need special attention, particularly with regard to the relevance of the "former" curriculum and language policies. A long-term view is necessary.• Speedy identification of local skills and capacity are essential.• Teachers and teacher training are especially important in relation to emergency situations.• If vocational skills are considered as part of education in emergencies, particular attention must be paid to output and likely opportunities.• Educational content must include basic life skills that are particularly necessary in the existing emergency.• Health campaigns should remain the responsibility of health workers.
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Source : Author's compilation

Steps To Be Taken By Nigeria To Bridge The Gap In Various IDP Camps In The Country

Table 4: Steps to be taken by Nigeria to bridge the gap in various IDP camps

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reproduce local language textbooks and teachers' guides;• Provide tools and training for rehabilitating learning sites;• Assist with organizing and supervising primary education;• Train teachers and paraprofessionals;• Train teachers in conflict resolution skills;• Address the special needs of stressed children with other involved organizations, if necessary;• Assist with community organization in support of primary education; and provide learning materials, including 'edukits'.

Source : Author's compilation

Conditions That Must Be Met Before Implementing Emergency Education In The IDP Camps In Nigeria

Table 5: Conditions That Must Be Met Before Implementing Emergency Education in the IDP Camps in Nigeria

- An organizational structure should be in existence, or emerging, identifying the affected populations;
- An expressed interest for children's education;
- Securing a suitable site for the learning Centre;
- Availability of teachers/facilitators;
- Availability of the most essential educational materials;
- Acceptance of the suggested educational programme and language of instruction should be obtained from the parties concerned;
- No immediate serious health risks should be involved in gathering the children together; and
- All learning sites should have been de-mined in post-conflict circumstances.
- Develop a special curriculum to be used at the various IDP camps.

Source : Author's compilation

Two important aspects must be taken into cognizance with regard to the curriculum. First, there are the core knowledge, skills, behaviour, attitudes, and values that are an essential part of basic education, regardless of where the various IDP camps are located. The curriculum should support a range of areas which include human rights, environmental awareness, and a sustainable future. Secondly, there is the aspect that is essential for immediate and long-term survival: the essential knowledge and skills that enable a child or adult to survive and cope with the emergency. Examples include mine-awareness; information on HIV/AIDS, Cholera, and other health issues; and psychosocial well-being.

For a truly successful education programme of children in the IDP camps in Nigeria, the following advice by *UNESCO/UNHCR (1988)* will be of great benefit:

In emergency situations, the local context takes on an especially important dimension which cannot be ignored by education if it is to be effective. Thus, it becomes important to shift emphasis in emergencies to address critical and immediate needs. The Teacher Emergency Package (TEP), or School in a Box developed and used by UNESCO and UNICEF in Rwanda during its recent crisis is highly recommended.

General Benefits Of Education For Children In The IDP Camps

Generally speaking, some of the benefits of education include inter alia:

Table 6: Benefits Of Education For Children In The IDP Camps

- Education is a fundamental right of all children.
- Education is critical to normal development.
- Education can help children deal with the effects of conflicts and emergency situations.
- Education helps to create a sense of normalcy for children and communities.
- Education is an important means of promoting tolerance and conflict resolution.
- Education provides a means for children to access the skills, knowledge, values, and competencies that can empower them to better respond to and overcome their difficult circumstances, and to lead a productive life.

Source : Author's compilation

Consequences of Violence Against Children

According to Price (2011), the following are some of the attendant consequences of violence against children:

Table 7: Consequences of Violence Against Children

- There is impact on the physical and mental health and quality of life of the victims of violence.
- Those who face violence when young are likely to become violent when they become adults.
- Those who face violence for a long time may accept violence as a means of resolving issues.
- Armed conflicts increase school drop outs, injuries, disabilities, psychological trauma and victims may join armed gangs.
- There are increased risks of child labor or sexual exploitation.
- Education of the children is disrupted.
- Chronic poor health may result from malnutrition in emergencies.
- Physical injuries from landmines, improvised explosive devices and environmental damage.
- The loss of family members and friends.
- Separation of children from their families.
- Loss of structures, route and predictability of daily activities of children with displacement from familiar places and loss of social services.

Source : Author's compilation

Nigeria was adjudged by the Global Monitoring Report of UNESCO (2015), to be lacking progress in every target toward achieving the Education for All (EFA) Goals, in the period 2000-2015. According to the report, Nigeria has the highest number of out-of-school children in the world, amounting to 10.5 million children. The report adduced a combination of corruption,

conflict and lack of investment as responsible for the poor state of the failure and the poor state of education. Another disturbing factor is the spate of violence and destruction of schools and the senseless killings of school children and teachers by the armed Bandits and Boko Haram in the North West and Eastern parts of the Country.

Safe School Initiative and Emergency Education

The Safe School Initiative programme originated by former British Prime Minister and UN Special Envoy for Global Education, Gordon Brown is one in which its environment allows learners and teachers and the community to interact in a positive non-threatening manner that ensures the achievement of the education goals of the school, while fostering positive relationship and personal growth.

According to the National Policy On Safety, Security And Violence-Free Schools In Nigeria (2021) , Armed conflicts affect education negatively; they can expose learners to trauma, psychological crises, mental health disorders and physical abuse. Disruption can lead to suspension of classes, which can last for long periods, and schools may end up being used as temporary evacuation centres. The government at all levels should liaise with relevant authorities to do the following:

- a. Collaborate with relevant stakeholders with the aim of protecting learners and schools from the adverse effects of armed conflicts.
- b. Develop curriculum for preventing and mitigating, preparing for, and responding to the impact of incidents of armed conflict.
- c. Build a culture of peace and resilience in the school community. This involves the integration of peace-promoting concepts and values in the curriculum as well as peace-promoting processes and structures within ministries and schools at all levels.
- d. Ensure that school activities support a culture of peace, which can be inculcated not only in learners but also in all internal and external stakeholders.

e. Ensure that education continues even in situations of armed conflict since access to good education is a basic human right.

f. Ensure that appropriate steps are taken so that no military detachment or patrol base is constructed within 500 metres of a school. This applies even when a school has been temporarily abandoned by the learners and personnel.

g. Negotiate with relevant authorities to ensure that schools are treated as civilian objects and shall therefore not be targets of any form of attack. This covers both physical and non-physical attacks which put the lives and rights of learners and school personnel at risk, and which may cause damage to educational resources and facilities.

h. Ensure that school curriculum include the following:

- Peace concepts and values;
- Cooperative/dialogical teaching-learning methods;
- Peace-promoting co-curricular programmes;
- Contextualization and use of teaching-learning resources on peace;
- Enrichment programmes for school personnel on peace and conflict resolution.

i. Create peace-building programmes involving parents; build and sustain participative structures and caring relationships among the school, families and the community. Peace concepts and values that promote a culture of peace may include spirituality; human rights; non-violence; social justice; interfaith and intercultural solidarity; respect for diversity; common humanity; oneness with nature; human security; critical thinking; conflict resolution; conflict management and transformational skills; and the attitude of caring, empathy, and compassion.

- j. Promote conflict-sensitive education. All schools, both public and private, shall provide educational services which do no harm. More specifically, education policies, programmes and services – especially in conflict-vulnerable and conflict-affected areas – shall be informed by adequate conflict analysis that provides a clear understanding of the context of social conflict prevailing in the areas where they operate and shall be designed accordingly to minimize their negative effects, that is, in a way that does not exacerbate the conflict, but maximizes the positive effects in said areas.
- k. Consult, coordinate with and capacitate concerned organizations, institutions, and community-recognized groups to ensure that peace-building efforts take into account the attainment of education outcomes.
- l. Lead security reviews on a regular basis to assess whether continued military use of a school is necessary, so that such use can be brought to an end as quickly as possible.
- m. Establish protocol for external, civilian avenues for holding accountable any units that violate orders to avoid using schools or universities for military purposes.
- n. Take steps to raise awareness among security and military actors of the risks associated with the military use of educational infrastructure, including the particular risks for women and girls.
- o. Raise awareness among state authorities, and community leaders and members, of the risks associated with the military use of educational infrastructure, including linked violations, such as child recruitment and sexual exploitation and abuse, with the aim of reducing

Roles And Responsibilities Of Teachers And Care-Givers

Table 8: Role of Teachers and Caregivers

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize each child as an individual with unique abilities, personality traits and ways of responding to the world.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow children to participate fully in activities such as plays, drama and traditional games and explore the immediate environment.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide open and safe learning spaces.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide appropriate psychosocial support skills.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create healing classroom with available resources.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The learning spaces should be safe and to all the children.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create child friendly classroom through implementing child- centered pedagogies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide psychosocial support skills to all children, identify those traumatized, mitigate the conflict or disasters and make referrals for those who require special attention.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care-givers or parents should protect their wards from peer groups or bullies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care-givers should provide safety and monitor wards movement.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish communication with parents or caregivers and the community. This should be from school to community and vice versa through feedback and social or cultural activities with the active involvement of all.

Roles And Responsibilities Of The Local Community

Table 9: Roles of Local Community

• Provide security and safe school environment.
• Involve and participate in all activities at the school.
• Provide teaching and learning resources.
• Enlist teachers that can exhibit appropriate caring relationships with children.
• Provide opportunities for social integration and unity.

Source : Author's compilation

Conclusion

It is apparent that the concept of education in emergencies is still struggling to gain much grounds in comparison to the plethora of challenges facing the education sector in the wake of insurgencies arising from banditry and Boko Haram sagas being experienced by the Country at the moment. The myriad of challenges it poses as well as being a very dynamic area with little being accomplished so far at the curriculum and field level is quite worrisome. This calls for sporadic and urgent interventions. In concluding this paper, the author wishes to state that extending educational access to children and adolescents and women alike, affected by conflict or disaster will assist them in no small measure to see a positive future and maintain their believe in the Nigerian nation rather than suffering alienated debilitating depression, leading them in some cases to seek aggressive and retrogressive outlets for their feelings. In most cases, these groups of Nigerians have already suffered from inferior educational and socioeconomic opportunities prior to the conflicts, which may have made them more vulnerable to conflicts and disasters in the first place. Fissures of these natures in society easily lay the foundations for future violence. If Education for All can become a reality for the young people at the fault-lines of social conflict or natural disasters, then the whole Nigerian society has a better chance of peace and prosperity and national development. The education of displaced children in the various IDP camps in the Country, who constitute a significant percentage of the future of Nigeria will

serve as a great impetus for 'Peace and Unity' as contained in the last stanza of the national anthem and consequently, the chances for a better, united, socio-political and economically developed Country will be further enhanced.

Fasinu (2011:270) supports the above saying 'If a young child doesn't receive sufficient nurturing, nutrition, parental/caregiver interaction and stimulus during this crucial period, the child may be left with development deficit that hampers his or her success in preschool, kindergarten and beyond'.

Recommendations

As ways of mitigating the problem of children being 'left out' and 'behind' educationally as a result of emergencies as enumerated above in the paper, it is recommended that the Nigerian Government, Development Partners and Stakeholders in general should:

- Emulate her Malaysian and United States counterpart by enforcing and sustaining Safe Schools initiative with the active involvement and participation of all the stakeholders at local, state and federal levels.
- Ensure Capacity building and training for teachers and other stakeholders on the role and responsibilities of education for all, especially as it affects children during emergencies.
- Provide human and material resources with dynamic curriculum for effective engagement in learning.

- Stakeholders such as Development Partners should provide best practices for Governments to key into.
- Politicians and other leaders in government circles should be discouraged from diverting funds meant for education of the citizens, especially in emergency situations into other ventures.
- Government at all levels must make education top priority indeed and fund it appropriately and stop paying lip service as has been the case most times.
- Sound, tested and trusted educational policies with international standards must be put in place and implemented to the letter.

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