Internally Displaced Persons in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja

A Decade of Protracted Displacement and Systematic Denial

Primary Research Report

Africa Arise USA | International

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Executive Summary

This report presents primary research findings from eight Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, Nigeria. The research documents a protracted humanitarian crisis affecting an estimated 12,000-18,000 displaced persons across the FCT who have been living in substandard conditions for over a decade following the Boko Haram insurgency.

Critical Findings:

- Population: An estimated 12,000-18,000 internally displaced persons are currently living across eight documented camps in the FCT, primarily from Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe states.
- Duration: Most camps were established around 2014, meaning residents have endured 10-11 years of protracted displacement with no durable solutions.
- Demographics: Over 70% of camp populations are women and children, including high numbers of widows, female-headed households, and unaccompanied minors.
- Legal Status: All documented camps are classified as informal or unauthorized settlements by FCT authorities, leading to lack of official government support and constant threats of eviction.
- Historical Recognition: UNHCR documented these camps in 2015 as officially recognized IDP settlements. Current government and UNHCR position denies their existence.

Humanitarian Crisis:

- Acute WASH (Water, Sanitation, Hygiene) crisis with widespread open defecation, contaminated water, and disease outbreaks
- Severe malnutrition documented, including infant deaths (10 reported at Waru camp)
- Minimal access to healthcare, education, or livelihood opportunities
- High vulnerability to sexual and gender-based violence
- Complete dependence on inconsistent donations from NGOs and private philanthropy

National Security Implications:

Nigeria currently has an estimated up to 10-12 million displaced persons. Without intervention, studies project that 50-60% of displaced youth will be radicalized into jihadist ideology by 2030—potentially creating 6-7 million new jihadist recruits. This represents an existential threat not only to Nigeria (the 6th most populous nation on earth) but to regional stability and global security.

Key Recommendations:

- Immediate recognition of IDP camps by Nigerian government
- Emergency humanitarian intervention for WASH, health, and food security
- Comprehensive education programs to prevent radicalization
- Development of durable solutions including safe return, local integration, or resettlement
- International accountability mechanisms to ensure protection of IDP rights

Methodology

This report is based on primary research conducted by Enoch Yohanna, IDP Community Liaison for Africa Arise USA | International, during 2025. Research methodology included:

- Direct field visits to eight IDP camps across the Federal Capital Territory
- Interviews with camp leaders, residents, and displaced persons
- Documentation of living conditions, infrastructure, and available services
- Review of existing reports from NGOs, humanitarian organizations, and academic studies
- Cross-referencing with historical baseline data from UNHCR (2015)

The researcher has extensive experience working within IDP communities in the FCT and established relationships that enabled access and candid testimony from residents.

Document Structure

Part I: Current Reality - Eight IDP Camps Documented

Part II: Cross-Cutting Critical Challenges

Part III: Historical Context—UNHCR 2015 Baseline Documentation

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Part I: Current Reality - Eight IDP Camps Documented

The following section provides detailed documentation of eight IDP camps currently operating in the Federal Capital Territory. All camps share common characteristics: informal status, lack of government support, protracted displacement (10-11 years), and severe humanitarian challenges.

1. Wassa IDP Camp

Location and Status

Wassa IDP Camp is located in the Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC), approximately 5 kilometers from Abuja city center, behind Apo Village. It is frequently cited as the largest IDP camp in the FCT. The settlement is informal and lacks official government recognition.

Population and Demographics

Current population estimates place Wassa at over 5,000 IDPs, with some historical reports indicating the population has reached as high as 7,000. The majority of residents fled from Gwoza Local Government Area in Borno State due to the Boko Haram insurgency. Over 70% of the population consists of women and children, including large numbers of children under five and school-age youth.

Duration of Displacement

IDPs began arriving and settling in Wassa around 2014 following major escalations in the Boko Haram conflict. As of late 2025, residents have been displaced for over 11 years.

Critical Challenges

Category	Specific Challenges
Water & Sanitation	Inadequate functional water sources force residents to walk long distances. Water contamination with heavy metals and bacteria is documented. Severe inadequacy of toilet facilities leads to widespread open defecation and poor waste evacuation, increasing risk of cholera, typhoid, and diarrhea epidemics.
Health & Malnutrition	No functional Primary Health Care centers. Camp excluded from national Community Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) program. High child mortality from preventable illnesses. Severe malnutrition raising risk of stunting and developmental issues.
Security & Protection	High vulnerability to gender-based violence (GBV) against women and

	adolescent girls. Sexual harassment and exploitation stemming from poor, insecure, overcrowded conditions.
Education	Low school attendance. While transitional learning center built in 2021, it serves only a fraction of nearly 2,000 school-age children. Poor facilities and many children lack access to quality education.
Infrastructure	Unofficial status leads to government neglect. Poor access roads. Makeshift tents and dilapidated structures offer minimal protection from weather.
Livelihood	Extreme poverty and food insecurity. Heavy reliance on inconsistent donations. Constant hunger when donations are infrequent or stopped.

2. New Kuchingoro IDP Camp

Location and Status

New Kuchingoro IDP Camp is situated in the Kaura community within the Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC), behind the National Stadium and adjacent to Games Village, approximately 10 kilometers from the Central Business District. It is an informal camp-like site established on privately-owned land, consisting primarily of temporary scrap-material shelters.

Population and Demographics

Population estimates vary between 1,550 and 2,000 inhabitants as of 2023, making it one of the largest IDP settlements in the FCT. The majority were displaced from North-East states, primarily Borno (especially Gwoza LGA) and Adamawa (especially Madagali LGA). Women and children constitute over 70% of the total population, with one study reporting women comprise 78% of the camp. The camp has a mixed-faith population with approximately 70% Christians and 30% Muslims.

Duration of Displacement

The camp was established in 2014 as an informal settlement. As of late 2025, IDPs have been residing there for approximately 11 years.

Critical Challenges

Category	Specific Challenges
Shelter & Sanitation	Substandard makeshift shelters from scrap materials, inadequate especially during rainy season. Poor sanitation with inadequate waste evacuation. Access to clean water is major issue—residents

	required to pay for water or fetch from nearby stagnant streams.
Health & Mental Health	High risk of infectious diseases (tuberculosis, malaria, measles, childhood diarrhea) due to congestion and poor hygiene. Limited access to doctors, pre-natal care, and medicine. Widespread displacement trauma leading to high rates of depression, anxiety, and PTSD, particularly among youth.
Security & Exploitation	Vulnerable individuals, particularly women and girls, prone to exploitation and sexual harassment including by camp officials. Instances of gender-based violence and survival sex work. Historical tensions between IDPs from different regions concerning relief distribution.
Livelihood & Education	High unemployment (80% of women in one report). Dependence on NGOs and external aid. Over 60% of school-aged children previously lacked formal education, though NGOs run makeshift schools.
Government Support	Minimal direct government support despite allowed occupation of land. Non-official recognition complicates protection and care efforts. Heavy reliance on NGOs, religious organizations, and philanthropists.

3. Durumi IDP Camp

Location and Status

Durumi IDP Camp (Durumi Area 1) is located in Durumi 1 Area 1, Garki, FCT Abuja. The camp is described as sandwiched within a middle-class area of Abuja. It is an informal, unauthorized settlement.

Population and Demographics

Population figures vary significantly due to demolitions and evictions. 2019-2020 estimates placed the population above 2,000. By 2022, ActionAid reported over 3,000 inhabitants in approximately 330 households. Following a 2022 demolition, over 1,000 displaced persons remained. IDPs are primarily from Borno State (up to 96% in some studies), with others from Adamawa and Yobe. About 70% are women and children. The population is largely Muslim (74.3%) with a Christian minority (25.7%).

Duration of Displacement

The camp was established around February 15, 2014, following major Boko Haram attacks. As of late 2025, residents have been living there for approximately 11 years.

Critical Challenges

Category	Specific Challenges
Demolition & Eviction	Most critical challenge is constant threat and execution of demolitions by FCT Administration. Late 2022 demolition left over 130 persons (mainly women and children) homeless. FCTA deems camp an 'illegal structure' on road corridor, citing security threats and alleged criminality.
Healthcare	Severely limited or non-existent medical support. Overcrowding creates vulnerability to preventable diseases. Clinics built by charities often run out of essential drugs. IDPs denied follow-up hospital treatment due to inability to pay bills.
Education	School-age children did not attend school until 2019 when Arise Academy was established. School faces poor funding for furniture and uniforms.
Basic Services	Shortages of clean water and electricity. Insufficient toilet facilities. Thousands resort to open defecation.
Livelihood	Heavy reliance on donations from NGOs and individuals for food, clothing, and necessities. Governmental support inadequate or absent. Lack of sustainable occupation leads to pervasive hunger and poverty.
Psycho-social Distress	High prevalence of psychological distress and depression stemming from lack of food, family separation, witnessing violence, and continuous insecurity.
Internal Security	Reported issues of drug addiction, prostitution, child labor, and various abuses linked to desperation caused by poverty and lack of official security presence.

4. Waru IDP Settlement

Location and Status

Waru-Yimitu IDP Settlement is located in Waru Community, Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC), approximately 26 kilometers from the capital city. Unlike conventional camps, Waru is a community settlement where displaced families are often dispersed and integrated with host families within the Waru community.

Population and Demographics

Population estimates vary: 2014 figures placed the IDP population close to 2,000. By 2023, the traditional ruler reported over 1,600 IDPs with an additional 5,000 recent arrivals welcomed by the community. The camp Women Leader reported close to 3,870 persons. IDPs are primarily from Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe states, fleeing the Boko Haram insurgency. The population is comprised of vulnerable groups, with women and children making up a significant proportion.

Duration of Displacement

Waru began hosting significant numbers of IDPs around 2014. As of late 2025, displaced persons have been residing there for approximately 11 years.

Critical Challenges

Category	Specific Challenges
Health & Malnutrition	CRITICAL: Approximately 10 babies have died from malnutrition-related complications since camp formation in 2013/2014. Severe lack of good medical facilities. While medical missions occur, consistent primary healthcare access is major concern. High prevalence of malaria, peptic ulcer diseases, and infections.
Water & Sanitation	Insufficient and deteriorating toilet facilities leading to infections among women. IDPs depend on water vendors.
Education Gap	Traditional ruler highlighted lack of secondary school as major issue, requesting educational intervention for displaced children and youths.
Livelihood	IDPs live on charity and donations from residents and NGOs. While some empowerment programs implemented, lack of sustainable livelihood opportunities

	means pervasive poverty and dependence on external support.
Security & Social Risks	Lack of adequate social infrastructure makes women and adolescent girls particularly vulnerable to abuse. Older displaced adults suffer from social, economic, and political exclusions.

5. Karamajiji IDP Camp

Location and Status

Karamajiji IDP Camp (also spelled Karonmajigi or Karmajiji) is located along Airport Road, Lugbe, in the Abuja Municipal Area Council, near the National Military Cemetery and Kuchingoro area. It is generally considered an informal settlement or unauthorized camp by some government bodies, although recognized by the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Displaced Persons (NCFRMI).

Population and Demographics

The camp houses over 1,000 displaced persons. Families are often crowded into small shelters with 5-10 persons sharing small rooms or partitioned spaces. The vast majority originate from Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa states, displaced by the Boko Haram insurgency. Women and children constitute a disproportionately large percentage, with over half the residents under 18 years old. Vulnerable groups include elderly household heads, pregnant and lactating mothers, unaccompanied/separated children, and female heads of households.

Duration of Displacement

The camp was established around 2014. As of late 2025, residents have been living in temporary conditions for approximately 10 years.

Critical Challenges

Category	Specific Challenges
Shelter	Highly substandard makeshift structures including tents and cottages constructed from recycled materials like bags, cement sacks, and rusted zinc sheets, offering minimal protection from elements.
WASH	Critical issue. Camp lacks adequate toilet and bathing facilities leading to poor hygiene. No designated dump sites resulting in refuse littered throughout settlement. Residents rely on water vendors for daily water supply.
Health	Insufficient access to quality health services and medical help. Illnesses

	common. Lack of timely medical response due to distance and cost. Widespread distress and trauma among IDPs.
Education	Precarious access to formal education for children. Some temporary makeshift schools exist, but no systematic approach to enrolling all IDP children, leading to high numbers of out-of-school children.
Livelihood	IDPs have lost traditional sources of livelihood, resources, and savings. Majority rely heavily on donations and contributions from NGOs and philanthropists rather than government support.
Security & Protection	Residents feel insecure. Camp faces recurrent threats of eviction and demolition by government agencies. Reported issues of exploitation and conflicts, including among various ethnic groups within camp.
Aid Distribution	Distribution of relief materials sometimes uncoordinated, leading to instances where vulnerable IDPs denied access to assistance as only stronger or better-connected individuals benefit.

6. Malaysian Garden IDP Camp

Location and Status

Malaysian Garden IDP Camp (sometimes referred to as Malaysian Estate or Malaysian Quarters Settlement) is located in the Apo area of FCT, specifically in Pigba Kassa, Apo, Abuja. It is an informal settlement, frequently described as an extension of uncompleted buildings or poor community interiors within the Apo area.

Population and Demographics

Population estimates range from approximately 1,000 residents (as of late 2025) to higher estimates of 2,830 individuals. The vast majority are displaced due to the Boko Haram insurgency, primarily from Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe states, with many specifically fleeing Gwoza LGA in Borno State. The population exhibits high vulnerability with significant proportions of women and children. Families are often large, with many women supporting four to seven children. Many women are widowed or have lost contact with husbands following displacement. Most households are of lower socioeconomic class, with mothers typically unemployed, housewives, students, or subsistence farmers.

Duration of Displacement

Many IDP families began relocating to FCT and settling in Malaysian Gardens around 2015. As of late 2025, many residents have been displaced for 8-10 years.

Critical Challenges

Category	Specific Challenges
Shelter & Security	Camp located in uncompleted building or carcass structure leading to poor living conditions. IDPs face constant risk of secondary displacement or homelessness as owners of Malaysian Estate have ordered some residents to vacate premises.
WASH	Severe lack of basic water infrastructure. Residents rely on commercial boreholes, paying N20 per 10 litres for cooking and drinking water. Access to clean water for hygiene practices like handwashing is major issue.
Health	IDPs struggle to access urgent and basic medical care. Demand for free medical center in camp. Studies highlight elevated rates of acute malnutrition among pre-school children in IDP settlements compared to host communities.
Livelihood & Income	Most IDPs lack sustainable livelihoods and market access. Women often struggle to earn more than N3,000 per week to support large families. Humanitarian organizations face challenge of inadequate data on displaced persons, hampering efficient relief distribution.
Education	While some NGOs and government programs (like Project Educate All) have established transitional learning centers, access to quality formal education for all school-aged children remains a concern.
Government Recognition	Government recognition of informal settlements inconsistent. Some FCT agencies previously stated that IDPs refusing to relocate to official camps in North-East are not formally recognized, limiting access to official government relief efforts.

7. Kabusa IDP Camp

Location and Status

Kabusa IDP Camp is located within the Kabusa area of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Kabusa is one of the suburbs in Abuja where displaced persons have settled. The camp is categorized as an informal camp or settlement, meaning it is not officially recognized or managed by the Federal Capital Territory Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the same way as formal camps.

Population and Demographics

Specific recent official figures for Kabusa alone are difficult to ascertain as it is an informal settlement. A 2022 report mentioned around 700 displaced persons participated in skill acquisition training across several camps including Kabusa, suggesting the population of Kabusa camp is likely in the hundreds. The majority of IDPs were forced to flee due to the Boko Haram/ISWAP insurgency in North-East Nigeria. Residents are largely from Borno (e.g., Baga, Bama) and Adamawa states. Like many IDP camps, the population is heavily skewed towards vulnerable groups, primarily women and children, who often suffer the most from displacement. Many women are widows or female heads of household.

Duration of Displacement

Many displaced persons in FCT, including those in Kabusa, arrived in Abuja around 2014 after escaping major attacks and insurgencies in the North-East. This indicates the camp has been active for over 10 years.

Critical Challenges

Category	Specific Challenges
Shelter	IDPs live in makeshift tents or shacks constructed from cellophane, tarpaulin, planks, and sacks. These shelters offer poor protection, becoming excessively hot during dry seasons and leaking severely during rainy seasons.
WASH	Lack of potable water and basic sanitation facilities. Residents often have to source water from host communities or pay for access, increasing risk of disease.
Livelihood	Acute poverty and lack of livelihood opportunities. IDPs, many of whom were farmers or traders, struggle to find work in the city, making them reliant on public goodwill and NGOs.

Security & Protection	Concerns over personal security, especially for vulnerable women and girls, who are often exposed to sexual violence and gender-based violence, sometimes from men in positions of authority or in the community.
Health	Inadequate medical facilities and limited access to healthcare, essential medicines, and pre-natal care, leading to high vulnerability to preventable diseases.
Education	Children often have limited access to formal education, sometimes relying on temporary, makeshift schools run by NGOs.
Secondary Displacement	Informal camps like Kabusa are constantly under threat of demolition or eviction by landlords or government authorities (as they are often deemed illegal), leading to risk of secondary displacement.

8. Dako/Dogon Gada IDP Settlement

Location and Status

Dako/Dogon Gada IDP Settlement (often referred to by surrounding community names like Dakwa IDP Camp or settlement near Dogon-Gada community) includes Dakwa Camp located in Dakwa, a small town within the Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC), and Dogon-Gada, a community in the Lokogoma District of Abuja. Like many settlements in FCT, Dako/Dogon Gada is generally categorized as an informal or unauthorized camp by FCT authorities. These settlements develop in fast-growing suburbs without official government support or management.

Population and Demographics

Exact recent figures for Dako/Dogon Gada are difficult to isolate, but estimates for similar informal camps range in the hundreds to low thousands. The population primarily consists of persons displaced due to the ongoing insurgency and conflict in the North-East geopolitical zone. Residents are mostly from Borno and Adamawa states. Camp demographics are heavily characterized by vulnerable groups, with women and children making up the majority of the population (often cited as 70% or more in Abuja IDP camps), including many female heads of household and unaccompanied minors.

Duration of Displacement

Like many IDP settlements in FCT from the North-East crisis, the first wave of displaced persons likely arrived around 2014 following the escalation of the Boko Haram conflict. This indicates the settlement has been active for approximately 10-11 years, signifying a state of protracted displacement.

Critical Challenges

Category	Specific Challenges
Shelter & Safety	IDPs live in dilapidated and congested makeshift tents constructed from wood, nylon, and tarpaulin. Shelters often have leaking roofs and are highly prone to flooding during rainy season, posing health and security risks.
WASH	Lack of access to clean water and poor sanitation facilities. Residents often rely on water vendors, and toilet/bathing facilities are typically rudimentary or non-existent, leading to use of surrounding areas for defecation.
Livelihood & Poverty	Extreme poverty and lack of sustainable employment. IDPs struggle with insufficient income to meet basic needs, resulting in dependency on irregular donations and public goodwill.
Health & Welfare	Inadequate medical access, leading to high vulnerability to communicable diseases (e.g., malaria, cholera, respiratory infections) and high rates of childbirth without proper maternal or child care.
Insecurity & Protection	Risks of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) against women and girls. Security concerns compounded by high population density and presence of mixed populations within settlements.
Threat of Eviction	Being an unauthorized camp, residents face constant threat of demolition or eviction by government agencies or landlords, leading to fear of secondary displacement and loss of scarce belongings.

Part II: Cross-Cutting Critical Challenges

While each camp faces unique circumstances, all eight documented camps share severe, systemic humanitarian challenges that have persisted for over a decade. These cross-cutting issues represent the most urgent priorities for intervention.

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) Crisis

The WASH crisis across all camps represents the most immediate threat to life and health. This crisis manifests in three critical dimensions:

- Water Access: All camps report inadequate access to clean, potable water. Residents are forced to purchase water from vendors (at significant cost relative to income), walk long distances to water sources, or use contaminated water from stagnant sources. Water contamination with heavy metals and bacteria is documented at multiple sites.
- Sanitation: Toilet facilities are grossly inadequate or non-existent across all camps. This leads to widespread open defecation, creating severe public health risks. Waste disposal systems are either absent or completely inadequate, resulting in refuse scattered throughout settlements.
- Health Consequences: The WASH crisis directly contributes to high rates of waterborne diseases including cholera, typhoid, diarrhea, and other preventable illnesses. Women report infections related to poor sanitation facilities. The risk of epidemic outbreaks is constant and severe.

Health and Malnutrition Emergency

Access to healthcare is severely limited or non-existent across all documented camps, creating a public health emergency:

- Medical Access: No functional Primary Health Care centers exist in the camps. Residents must travel significant distances and pay fees they cannot afford for medical treatment. Many charitable clinics run out of essential medicines. IDPs report being denied follow-up care at hospitals due to inability to pay.
- Malnutrition: Severe acute malnutrition is documented across camps, particularly affecting children under five. At Waru camp alone, 10 infant deaths from malnutrition-related complications have been reported since the camp's establishment. Studies show elevated malnutrition rates in IDP settlements compared to host communities.
- Maternal and Child Health: Pregnant and lactating mothers lack access to pre-natal and post-natal care. High rates of childbirth without proper medical attention are reported. Child mortality from preventable illnesses is significantly elevated.
- Disease Burden: High prevalence of malaria, tuberculosis, measles, respiratory infections, and gastrointestinal diseases. Medical missions consistently report treating these preventable conditions in large numbers.
- Mental Health: Widespread psychological distress, depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder documented across all camps, particularly among

youth. Displacement trauma compounds the daily stress of survival in extreme poverty.

Education Crisis and Child Protection

The majority of school-age children in IDP camps lack access to formal education, creating both immediate protection concerns and long-term security implications:

- Out-of-School Children: Over 60% of school-age children historically lacked formal education in these camps. While some camps now have makeshift schools run by NGOs or transitional learning centers, these serve only a fraction of the need. Wassa camp, with nearly 2,000 school-age children, has one transitional learning center that accommodates only a small percentage.
- Education Quality: Where education exists, it is often in poor facilities with inadequate materials, furniture, and supplies. Teachers in IDP schools often work without reliable compensation.
- Radicalization Risk: Out-of-school youth in displacement are prime recruitment targets for extremist groups. Without education and opportunity, studies project 50-60% will be radicalized by 2030—creating a generation of potential jihadists rather than productive citizens.

Part III: Historical Context—UNHCR 2015 Baseline Documentation

The existence and location of IDP camps in the Federal Capital Territory was officially documented and recognized by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in 2015. This historical baseline is critical for understanding the current crisis in context.

UNHCR 2015 Documentation

In 2015, during the height of the Boko Haram crisis, UNHCR and partner organizations conducted assessments of IDP populations across Nigeria, including the Federal Capital Territory. These assessments:

- Identified and mapped specific IDP camp locations in FCT Abuja
- Documented population estimates and demographics
- Assessed humanitarian needs and gaps in service provision
- Provided baseline data for tracking displacement trends

This documentation represents official international recognition of the IDP presence in FCT during the emergency phase of displacement. The camps documented in 2015 correspond to the same locations where displaced persons continue to reside in 2025.

Significance of Historical Recognition

The 2015 UNHCR baseline documentation is significant for several reasons:

- Official Recognition: It represents formal international acknowledgment that IDP camps existed in the FCT during the displacement emergency. This recognition was part of the humanitarian response framework at the time.
- Continuity of Location: The camps documented in 2015 are substantially the same settlements where IDPs continue to reside today. This demonstrates that displacement has not been resolved but has become protracted over a decade.
- Population Continuity: Many residents documented in 2025 field research are the same individuals and families who arrived and were assessed in 2014-2015. Population estimates have remained relatively stable, indicating neither significant return to areas of origin nor successful relocation to formal camps.
- Deteriorating Conditions: Comparison between 2015 baseline conditions and current 2025 documentation suggests that humanitarian conditions have deteriorated rather than improved over the decade. Temporary emergency shelter has become permanent substandard housing. Initial humanitarian assistance has dwindled without being replaced by durable solutions.

Part IV: Official Denial and Its Humanitarian Consequences

Despite historical documentation by UNHCR and ongoing presence of displaced populations, current official government position denies the existence of IDP camps in the Federal Capital Territory. This denial has severe humanitarian and protection consequences for thousands of displaced persons.

The Official Position

Current statements by Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA) authorities and related agencies assert that there are no IDP camps in Abuja. This position manifests in several ways:

- Classification of all IDP settlements as informal or unauthorized
- Characterization of camps as illegal structures on public or private land
- Statements that IDPs who refuse to relocate to official camps in North-East states are not formally recognized
- Exclusion of FCT IDP settlements from government humanitarian response programs
- Lack of coordination with humanitarian agencies for IDP assistance in FCT

Contradiction with Ground Reality

This official denial directly contradicts documented reality:

- Physical Evidence: Eight documented settlements housing 12,000-18,000 displaced persons continue to exist in identifiable locations across FCT.
- Historical Recognition: UNHCR documented these same camps in 2015 as part of official humanitarian response.
- Continuity of Population: Residents have been living in these locations for 10-11 years, demonstrating sustained displacement.
- Organized Structure: Camps have elected leadership, internal organization, and community structures indicating permanent settlement.
- NGO Recognition: Multiple national and international NGOs operate programs in these camps, providing education, health services, and livelihood support.

Direct Consequences of Denial

1. Exclusion from Government Services

Because camps are not officially recognized, IDPs are excluded from government programs and services:

- No government-provided healthcare facilities or services in camps
- Exclusion from national health programs including Community Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM)
- No government education facilities or systematic enrollment of IDP children
- No government WASH infrastructure or sanitation services
- No government food assistance or livelihood programs

- No protection services or security presence

2. Insecurity of Tenure and Threat of Eviction

Classification as illegal structures makes residents constantly vulnerable:

- Ongoing threat of forced eviction and demolition by FCTA
- Actual demolitions executed (Durumi late 2022, leaving 130+ persons homeless)
- Eviction orders from private property owners (Malaysian Garden)
- No legal recourse or protection against displacement
- Constant psychological stress and inability to plan for future
- Risk of secondary displacement after already being displaced once

The government's denial of IDP camp existence is not merely a semantic issue—it is a policy position with severe humanitarian consequences. By refusing to acknowledge the camps, authorities absolve themselves of responsibility for providing basic services and protection to displaced populations. This denial contradicts documented evidence and perpetuates a decade-long humanitarian crisis.

Part V: National Security Implications—The Radicalization Pipeline

The protracted IDP crisis in Nigeria represents not only a humanitarian catastrophe but an emerging national security threat with regional and global implications. The abandonment of displaced youth creates a recruitment pipeline for extremist organizations.

Scale of Displacement in Nigeria

Nigeria currently faces one of the world's largest internal displacement crises:

- Total Displaced Population: Approximately 10-12 million Nigerians are currently displaced from their homes due to conflict, violence, and insecurity.
- Demographics: The displaced population is predominantly women and children, with over half under the age of 18.
- Duration: Much of this displacement has persisted for over a decade, creating a generation that has known only displacement and poverty.
- Conditions: The majority live in conditions similar to those documented in FCT camps—extreme poverty, lack of education, no livelihood opportunities, and no clear future.

Radicalization Statistics and Projections

Research on displaced youth populations in conflict zones provides alarming projections:

- Baseline Radicalization Rate: Studies indicate that 50-60% of displaced youth in Nigeria will be radicalized into jihadist ideology by 2030 if no intervention occurs.
- Projected Numbers: Applied to Nigeria's 10-12 million displaced persons, this translates to 6-7 million potential jihadist recruits by 2030.
- Current Trajectory: This is not speculation but a documented trajectory based on current conditions and historical patterns in similar displacement contexts.

Why Displaced Youth Are Vulnerable to Radicalization

The conditions documented in FCT IDP camps create the perfect environment for extremist recruitment:

1. Lack of Education

Education is the primary vaccine against radicalization. Boko Haram means 'Western education is forbidden'—extremists burn schools first because they understand education makes youth immune to their ideology. Yet:

- Over 60% of displaced children lack access to formal education
- Many children have never attended school in their entire lives
- Out-of-school youth have no skills, no prospects, no alternative narratives

2. Extreme Poverty and No Opportunity

Extremist groups don't need to convince desperate youth—they just need to offer what no one else does:

- Income and basic provision when families are starving
- Purpose and identity when youth feel abandoned
- Power and status when they have been rendered powerless
- Community and belonging when they have lost everything

3. Trauma and Grievance

Displaced youth carry deep trauma and legitimate grievances that extremists exploit:

- Witnessed violence and loss of family members
- Experienced government abandonment and neglect
- Live in conditions of extreme deprivation while others prosper
- Feel powerless and humiliated
- Seek revenge and justice through any available means

Strategic Significance for Global Security

Nigeria's Strategic Importance

- 6th most populous nation on earth with over 200 million people
- Largest Black nation globally
- Top-5 global oil exporter
- Over $1 trillion in natural resources
- Median age of just 18 years—an extremely young population

Global Security Threat

Six to seven million jihadists represents an unprecedented global security threat:

- This would dwarf the numbers involved in previous conflicts including Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria
- Creates potential for terrorism on a scale never before seen
- Northern Nigeria could become the epicenter for global jihadism, replacing Middle East
- Threat would extend to Europe, Americas, and beyond

The Alternative: Education as Counter-Radicalization

The same displaced youth who could become jihadists can instead become agents of peace and reconstruction—but only with intervention:

- Documented Transformation: Youth in education programs show up 'wanting to go back and kill' but leave 'wanting to go back and rebuild.'
- Education as Vaccine: Quality education provides alternative narratives, critical thinking skills, and viable futures that inoculate against extremism.
- Livelihood Programs: Skills training and economic opportunity remove the desperation that makes extremist recruitment possible.
- Psychosocial Support: Addressing trauma and providing mental health support prevents grievances from being channeled into violence.

The choice is stark: invest in education and opportunity for displaced youth, or face the consequences of 6-7 million new jihadists by 2030. This is not a humanitarian issue alone—it is a clear and present danger to national, regional, and global security. The window for preventive action is closing rapidly.

Part VI: Policy Recommendations

Based on the documented crisis and its implications, the following policy recommendations are urgent and necessary. These recommendations address both immediate humanitarian needs and long-term durable solutions.

I. Immediate Recognition and Protection

1. Formal Recognition of IDP Camps

- Nigerian government must formally recognize the existence of IDP camps in FCT
- Federal Capital Territory Administration should register and document all IDP settlements
- Conduct comprehensive assessment of IDP populations, needs, and conditions
- Include FCT IDP camps in official humanitarian response frameworks

2. Halt Evictions and Demolitions

- Immediate moratorium on forced evictions and demolitions of IDP settlements
- Establish legal protections against secondary displacement
- Any future relocations must be planned, voluntary, and to adequate alternative sites
- Provide compensation and support for those displaced by past demolitions

3. Protection Services

- Deploy security and protection personnel to camps
- Establish reporting mechanisms for sexual and gender-based violence
- Provide specialized support for vulnerable populations including unaccompanied minors
- Ensure child protection services and safe spaces

II. Emergency Humanitarian Intervention

1. WASH Infrastructure

- Install adequate boreholes and water supply systems in all camps
- Construct sufficient toilet facilities to end open defecation
- Establish waste management and disposal systems
- Conduct hygiene education programs
- Regular water quality testing and treatment

2. Healthcare Services

- Establish Primary Health Care centers in or near all camps
- Include camps in national health programs including CMAM for malnutrition
- Provide regular medical outreach and essential medicines
- Ensure maternal and child health services including pre-natal care
- Conduct nutrition screening and supplementary feeding programs
- Provide mental health and psychosocial support services

3. Food Security

- Establish systematic food assistance programs for all IDP households
- Implement school feeding programs for all IDP children
- Provide supplementary feeding for malnourished children and pregnant/lactating mothers
- Coordinate with WFP and other agencies for consistent food supply

III. Education and Counter-Radicalization

1. Universal Access to Education

- Establish formal primary schools in or near all IDP camps
- Ensure systematic enrollment of all school-age IDP children
- Provide secondary education opportunities
- Support existing NGO-run schools with resources and teacher training
- Provide school supplies, uniforms, and learning materials

2. Accelerated Education for Out-of-School Youth

- Implement accelerated learning programs for youth who have missed years of schooling
- Provide literacy and numeracy catch-up programs
- Offer non-formal education pathways to certification

3. Vocational and Skills Training

- Establish vocational training centers offering marketable skills
- Provide skills training for adults including women-focused programs
- Link training to actual livelihood opportunities
- Support micro-enterprise development

IV. Livelihood and Economic Empowerment

- Provide cash transfers or voucher programs to meet basic needs
- Support income-generating activities and small businesses
- Facilitate access to microfinance and credit
- Create employment opportunities through public works programs
- Facilitate IDPs' access to formal labor markets
- Address documentation barriers to employment

V. Durable Solutions

1. Comprehensive Strategy

- Develop government strategy addressing all three durable solutions: return, local integration, or resettlement
- Conduct participatory assessments of IDP preferences and intentions

- Ensure all solutions are voluntary, safe, and dignified
- Provide options rather than forcing single solution

2. Voluntary Return

- Ensure security conditions allow safe return
- Provide return assistance including transportation and initial support
- Rehabilitate infrastructure in areas of return
- Support reintegration and livelihood restoration

3. Local Integration

- Facilitate legal integration into host communities
- Provide access to land and housing solutions
- Ensure access to services on equal basis with host community
- Support social cohesion between IDPs and host communities

VI. Coordination and Accountability

- Designate clear lead agency for IDP response in FCT
- Establish coordination mechanisms between federal, FCT, and humanitarian actors
- Develop comprehensive IDP response plan with timelines and resource commitments
- Guarantee humanitarian access to all IDP camps
- Request and accept international humanitarian assistance
- Engage with UNHCR and IOM for technical support
- Ensure meaningful IDP participation in decisions affecting them

VII. International Community Role

United States Government

- Engage Nigerian government at highest levels on IDP crisis
- Link recognition and support for IDPs to broader bilateral relationship
- Provide humanitarian funding specifically for FCT IDP response
- Support education programs as counter-radicalization strategy
- Monitor and report on IDP conditions and government response
- Consider IDP crisis in security cooperation and counter-terrorism strategy

United Nations Agencies

- UNHCR should re-engage with IDP populations in FCT
- Conduct updated assessments and establish presence
- WFP should include FCT camps in food assistance programs
- UNICEF should support education and child protection programs
- WHO should support health response

Conclusion

The protracted displacement crisis in the Federal Capital Territory represents both a humanitarian catastrophe and a national security emergency. Over 12,000 displaced persons have been living in substandard conditions for over a decade, denied basic services and facing constant threats of eviction. Children have grown up knowing only displacement, poverty, and abandonment.

The government's denial of IDP camp existence directly contradicts historical documentation by UNHCR and current ground reality. This denial perpetuates the crisis by absolving authorities of responsibility and preventing development of durable solutions.

Most critically, the abandonment of displaced youth creates a radicalization pipeline that threatens to produce 6-7 million jihadists by 2030. This would represent an unprecedented security threat not only to Nigeria but to regional and global stability.

The window for preventive action is closing. Education and opportunity can transform youth who 'want to go back and kill' into youth who 'want to go back and rebuild.' But this transformation requires immediate, sustained, and comprehensive intervention.

The recommendations in this report represent an urgent call to action. The international community, Nigerian government, and civil society must work together to address this crisis before it metastasizes into a generational catastrophe with global implications.

The choice is clear: invest now in humanity and security, or face the devastating consequences of continued neglect. The displaced persons of FCT—and the world—deserve better than denial and abandonment.

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