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Women's Rights and Humanitarian Emergencies in Nigeria

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Abstract: This paper examines women's rights during humanitarian emergencies, with particular reference to North-East Nigeria. In highly patriarchal societies such as Nigeria, women's rights are deeply rooted in existing customs, practices, and religious beliefs which undermine the fundamental human rights of women and hinders the full realization of gender equality. However, in complex humanitarian emergencies as in North-East Nigeria, research shows that women experience gross human rights violations as a result of their vulnerability. This paper employs the qualitative research approach, using relevant documents, observation and focus group discussions as sources of data, analyzed using content analysis. Within the state fragility theoretical framework, this study concludes that the Nigerian government has not shown full commitment to prevent and investigate human rights breaches by failing to address the violations of women's rights. The paper therefore recommends the need for pragmatic and gender-sensitive measures regarding the subject matter.

Keywords: Humanitarian Emergencies, Patriarchal Societies, State Fragility Theory, Vulnerability, Women's Rights

Introduction

Conflicts wreak havoc on society for a variety of reasons. These include erroneous perceptions of the opposing parties, a lack of resources, conflicting objectives, and unequal power relations, among others (Sherif, 2015; Mbaeze, 2018). However, research reveals that globally women and children are mostly affected in conflicts. They either lose their houses due to violence, become refugees, are kidnapped, or are killed in the process (Alobo & Obaji, 2016; Olusegun & Ogunfolu, 2019). In 2022, UNHCR reported that West and Central Africa would be home to 11.2 million forcibly displaced and stateless individuals, which included 7.8 million internally displaced persons (IDPs), 1.6 million refugees and asylum seekers, and 931,200 stateless people. Recent displacements data shows that there are 800,000 IDPs (internally displaced persons) in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Central African Republic (CAR), and Mali. Also, 138,000 refugees from Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Mali, Nigeria, and Sudan. People were relocated due to flooding and heavy rainfall in Chad, Cameroon, Niger, and Nigeria (UNHCR Global Report, 2022).

IDPs in the Northeast increased dramatically in 2018, with an estimated figure of 1.8 million. This consisted of 440,000 women, 364,000 men, 614 girls and 516,000 boys. 94% relocated because of the ongoing violence (OCHA, 2018). 2.9 million people from the northeast were internally displaced as of January 2019. The aforementioned statistics reveal that in Nigeria's Northeast, when there is a serious humanitarian crisis women and children are the most group of the internally displaced. Between May 27 and June 2, 2019, 5,998 people became displaced due to the Boko Haram insurgency, 5,494 arrived and 504 departed (Displacement Tracking Matrix, 2019). In 2022, as a result of armed conflicts, insecurity and gross violations of human rights, 1.1 million persons recently experienced displacement. People become vulnerable as they relocate due to these circumstances (UNHCR Global Report, 2022).

Complex emergencies (Abdallah and Burnham, 2000; quoted in Anderson & Gerber, 2018) or humanitarian situations have become a critical issue that warrants increased research. In strongly patriarchal societies like Nigeria, women's rights are firmly ingrained in customs, beliefs, and religious practices that disrupt their fundamental rights as humans and thwart the full self-actualization of gender equality (Bako & Seyd, 2018). Humanitarian crises in the North-East have been significantly worsened by the Boko Haram Conflict. Higazi(2015), asserted that the North-East of Nigeria, that comprises of Lake Chad, Niger, and Cameroun, is the home of Boko Haram, an insurgent group which means western education is outlawed. Also, Boko Haram's goal is to establish a caliphate in Nigeria's north-eastern region, and ultimately throughout the entire country (de Montclos, 2014).

The research of Bloom and Matfess (2016) concludes that the Boko Haram Islamist cult frequently uses suicide bombing, guerilla warfare, kidnappings of boys, girls, and women, and forced conscription of males. The international community paid particular attention to this when more than 200 schoolgirls were kidnapped at Chibok in April 2014 (Blanchard, 2014), which has since become rampant in Northeast Nigeria. However, the military has engaged in several operations against the insurgency, such as Operation Lafia Dole, Operation Hadin Kai, etc. (Premium Times, 2023) and negotiations to free the kidnapped

schoolgirls from Chibok and other abductees, which involved paying millions of naira in ransom, with varying degrees of success (Oriola, 2023).

Conflict with Boko Haram is a complicated humanitarian problem. Furthermore, the sect's growing activity has had a negative impact on society, particularly on women and children, as typified by the increase in widows and orphans in Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa states. Also, as Emmanuelar(2015), rightly noted, this has therefore caused an increase in gender- and sexual-based violence especially in IDP camps and in communities that host them. Similar to this, it is thought that female IDPs experience gender and sexual-based violence frequently, both in host communities and in various camps (Mashi & Thelma, 2020). Hence, it is impossible to ignore the gross violations of the rights of women who have become vulnerable by conflict. Precisely, this study aims to evaluate women's rights amid humanitarian catastrophes, with Nigeria's Northeast as a case study. The focuses on gender-based violence against women in humanitarian emergencies. Furthermore, it examines the protection of the rights of women under international law and the constitution of Nigeria so as to assess the scope of violations and recommend gender-sensitive solutions to the Nigerian government to improve her counterinsurgency measures.

Conceptual Clarification
Women's Rights
Human rights apply to everyone. They are equally applicable to both genders, boys and girls. For instance, women have the same rights as men do to life, education, and political involvement (UNFPA & UNICEF, 2010). The UN Charter of 1945 establish that the human right is not gender-discriminatory, rather, it is for all. Since 1945, equality and non-gender discrimination dominates the human rights instruments in the international space, portraying human right as one that both genders are entitled (Otto, 2017).

However, in reality, these rights are consistently infringed - in almost every nation on earth. The essence of gender equality and women's rights is emphasized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, while the international community eventually realized that some rights should be highlighted and re-emphasized in the case of women. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) stands significant in the international and regional legislation that outlines these rights. CEDAW OF 1979 outlines fundamental guidelines to uphold this right and defines the right of women to be free from all forms of discrimination. It also lays the groundwork for attaining gender equality and creates a plan for national action to abolish discrimination. In order to achieve this, politics, education, public life, health and career must ensure that women have proportionate opportunities and access.

Humanitarian Emergencies
Humanitarian emergencies portray incident or incidents that pose a serious risk to security, health, safety, or well-being of a community or other significant group of people, typically over a vast region, are referred to as humanitarian emergencies. It is an event or series of events that seriously disrupt a society's ability to function and inflict more losses in terms of people, property, or the environment than the afflicted population is able to bear on their own. It becomes a humanitarian emergency when the

impact of the incidents on the affected communities becomes unmanageable. When the ability of people or group of people within a given community is reduced or diminished to the extent that they become incapacitated to recover from life-threatening loses and dangers, such portrays humanitarian emergencies, which can be worsened by poverty. Thus, when a poverty-stricken community is affected by life-threatening emergencies which could take the form of natural disaster or man –mad e disaster, such community finds it more difficult to rejuvenate, especially the less privileged, nursing mothers, children, migrants, pregnant and the internally displaced.

Diseases, starvation, armed wars, natural disasters, and other serious issues may render the society into a state of humanitarian crises and emergencies. In such situation, victims become in need of food, water, first-aid and medical attention. When under a severe amount of stress, fragile environments are more vulnerable to humanitarian emergencies. Because institutional systems in such situations might aid to sustain the circumstances of a crisis, fragile environments may also be more vulnerable in extended humanitarian crises (Berman et al., 2016; Di John, 2008).

Theoretical Framework

State fragility theory is the theoretical foundation of this study. It emphasizes a state's intrinsic inability to carry out tasks required to satisfy citizens' fundamental wants and expectations (Emmanuelar, 2015). Furthermore, it establishes the inability of the government to guarantee security that is fundamental, uphold justice, the rule of law or offer residents access to fundamental services and prospects for employment (Ciorciari, 2021). Notably, at the centre of the state fragility theory suggests a weak government at the centre, not effective with little and ineffective control of its territory, lack of public services, rampant corruption, delinquency, refugees and population movements that are not of the people's free will (Adeyeye, 2013; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2008).

This theory is relevant as it is evidenced that the insurgency continues to thrive due to the Nigerian government's incapacity and weakness in maintaining security and effective control over the wide regions of the North East (Aghedo, 2014; Okunade, 2019). Additionally, Oluwole et al. (2017) and Mudasiru et al. (2019) opined that the government of Nigeria's ineffectiveness to secure the inhabitants of the North East led to rise in internal displacement, a refugee crisis, and a boom in the drug trade.

In light of this, Nigeria's fragility disorder is further confirmed by the failure of the government to grant the demands of the internally displaced by providing nutrition, housing, a means of survival, and restoration into the community(Tsokwa, 2019). Similarly, Boko Haram's activities have worsened the humanitarian crisis in Nigeria's North East, precisely food insecurity, which has resulted in rise in the cost of staple foods within the country as well as dairy products in Niger, Chad and Cameroon (Amusan, 2022). Thus, there is negative economic, security consequences and continues to speed up the rate of refugee inflow (Rotberg, 2004).

Legal Framework for the Protection of Women's Rights in Nigeria

International Human Rights Law (IHRL) provides significant guarantees for the rights of women through various binding treaties. As a member of the United Nations (UN) community, Nigeria has an obligation to domesticate these treaties. These instruments, which are globally

crucial for the protection and promotion of women's rights include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), and the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, and Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT). In the past, human rights discussions within the international community neglected gender issues, focusing primarily on general human rights. This inadequate approach persisted through the development of several conventions, starting with the UDHR, to ICCPR and ICESCR (Alston, 1982). However, after the adoption of the UDHR, there was a period of rapid evolution of human rights within the UN and a significant rise in women's rights movements between 1970 and 1980 (Chen, 1995).

In the last 40 years, the concept of gender equality has been integrated into international law and multilateral institutions like never before. The World Women's Conferences held between 1975 and 1995 played an important role in this movement. Among these developments, the Convention against Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) stands out as the most authoritative and consistent international discourse of women's rights. The convention was adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly and it has been signed by 187 governments. However, when compared with other themes of human rights discourse, the topic of women's rights has been relegated to a "domestic affair". This is as a result of the fact that many violations of these rights are rooted in sociocultural traditions and as such been long viewed as a problem that must be addressed gradually from within societies, rather than through international intervention or even pressure.

Nigeria has shown commitment by signing various international and regional human rights instruments that protect and promote women's rights (the UDHR, 1948; the ICESCR, 1966; the ICCPR, 1966; CEDAW, 1979; the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, 1981; the Maputo Protocol, 2003; and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, 2004). These conventions provide comprehensive protection for women, encompassing their human rights as stipulated in the ICCPR and ICESCR. However, it is important to note that according to the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, international treaties must be domesticated in order to be applicable. Unfortunately, these international and regional human rights instruments specifically designed to promote women's rights such as CEDAW and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, have yet to be fully adopted into domestic law.

The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) includes four key provisions which protects women against discrimination. The provision of the charter which is most relevant to the present study is Article 18(3), which states that "The State shall ensure the elimination of discrimination against women and also ensure the protection of the rights of the woman and the child as stipulated in international declarations and conventions". The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, otherwise known as the Maputo Protocol, was espoused with the sole aim of upholding the rights of women and girls in Africa. The whole gamut of the provisions of Article 2 through Article 25

prohibits all forms of harmful, violent, and prejudicial practices against women (Durojaye, 2013).

In terms of domestic provision by the Nigerian government, the 1999 Constitution includes relevant provisions in Chapter II, which focuses on the fundamental objectives and directive principles of state policy. Section 17(1), establishes that the state's social order of the state is based on the principles of freedom, equality, and justice. Section 17(2) further emphasizes that, to promote this social order, every citizen has equal rights, obligations, and opportunities before the law, and the dignity and sanctity of every human person should be recognized and enhanced. Furthermore, there should be no form of disparity, ensuring equal treatment for all citizens, regardless of gender. This suggests that males and females must not be treated differently and must have access to the same opportunities.

Although Nigeria has signed numerous international treaties that enhance women's rights, the full realization of these rights by women in the country remains incomplete. Chapter IV of the Constitution recognizes various human rights particularly as contained in the ICCPR and ICESCR. While Section 42 specifically discourages discrimination based on sex. The Constitution lacks specific and substantial provisions on the protection of women's rights. This shows that there is an intention to to protect women's rights but without consideration for the patriarchal nature of the Nigerian society and also the fact that women are even more vulnerable in dire emergency situations.

Women's Vulnerability and Rights During Humanitarian Emergencies in Nigeria
Violations and Vulnerability

To Otto (2017), violence against the female gender persists and may even be on the rise as a result of the new forms that the internet and other forms of communication technology have produced. The World Health Organization (2009), submits that 830 women and girls die each day from avoidable problems associated with pregnancy and delivery as inequality between men and women is still widely seen as being "natural" and dictated by cultural practices, traditions and religious beliefs.

Just 10 nations are home to the majority of 140 million people who are starving worldwide, and they are Nigeria, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Haiti, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Sudan, Syria, Yemen, and Afghanistan (UN, 2021). The humanitarian crisis in northeastern Nigeria and the Lake Chad area is one of the worst in the whole globe (UN, 2017 cited in Nwizu-Okoye, 2022). The operations of Boko Haram have instigated fear of kidnapping and sexual assault of women.

Women and girls from Northeast Nigeria have been particularly impacted by the fighting, which has also been shaped by the deaths of male family members and family division because of displacement. Nigerian female gender has been impacted differently by the conflict than Nigerian men and boys. Although males are the majority of those actively involved in the war, bandits have targeted civilian women in particular and have used them as symbols in their violent battle with the Nigerian government (Bloom & Matfess, 2016).

When a two-group member of an IDP camp and the host community focus

group discussion were asked *What are the forms of violence and abuse you see happening in the camps or the community where you stay?* **The summation of their responses are;**

GROUP ONE: The forms of violence that mostly happens in the camp are, rape, denial of resources, domestic violence, early/forced marriage, child sexual abuse and child labor.

GROUP TWO: Child labour, early/forced marriage and child sexual abuse.

There have been instances of women and children, who make up a sizable number of IDPs, having their human rights violated. The Kampala Convention, which requires nations to ameliorate IDPs' living circumstances, is broken by this. Additionally, Ojeme, (2016) reveal that Internally Displaced Camps experience starvation while camp authorities steal food and other relief supplies for themselves and elites (Faluyi, Khan, & Akinola, 2019). Around 4.4 million people in the conflict-affected region are suffering from severe food insecurity (Nwizu-Okoye, 2022). As of 2017, 8.5 million people were reportedly in need of humanitarian aid in Yobe, Borno, and Adamawa of Nigeria (UN, 2017 cited in Nwizu-Okoye, 2022). A conflict that has resulted in massive forced displacement, severe nutrition and food crises. These transgressions to the international humanitarian and human rights law continues to inflict a heavy burden on civilians.

Two traditional chiefs in Yobe State received punishment for stealing food intended for internally displaced people (Joel, 2016). In particular, rice that was donated for the IDP camps has been accused of being repackaged and diverted by some government officials (Premium Times, 2016). It is also alleged that a few NGOs obtained financial support from international donors while pretending to be providing humanitarian aid to the IDPs (Salau, 2016). Also, the perpetrators of these menaces are not limited to the elites. When a two-group member of an IDP camp and the host community of Damasak, Mobbar Local Government area of Borno State, Nigeria, focus group discussion were asked *Who are the perpetrators?* They responded that they are majorly men and the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF).

Also, it is found that;

GROUP ONE: NGOs provide most of our needs, like water, food, shelter, Nonfood items like blankets, water storage containers, Hygiene kits, dignity kits, latrines, skills acquisition materials, etc. Access to justice, GBV case management, psychosocial support, health care, nutrition.

GROUP TWO: there are lots of interventions that comes from the NGOs, like healthcare, nutrition, food intervention, hygiene, women and girls' safe space.

To Salleh, Ahmad, and Jamil (2018), OCHA (2018), Kanu, Bazza, and Omojola (2019), the rule of law has collapsed, leading to violations of human rights, casualties, internal and external displacement of people, the loss of means of subsistence, and a lack of basic amenities such as medical facilities and supplies.Chibok, Ajigin, Kawuri, Baga, Konduga, Gwoza, Bama, Giwa, Shuwa, and Gamboru-Ngala are communities in Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe states that have an extremely low quality of life (Salkida, 2012). Studies have revealed that there is a food scarcity as evidenced by malnutrition of women and children in the various internally displaced persons (IDPs) camps. More crucially, returning IDPs are faced with desecrated homes, stolen food, and the destruction of their farmlands by members of the Boko

Haram group in border areas where many of the local people have returned (Okunade & Ogunubi, 2020).

When a two-group member of an IDP camp and the host community of Damasak, Mobbar Local Government area of Borno State, Nigeria, focus group discussion was carried out on *women access to shelter, food, and water during humanitarian emergencies, as they are also essential rights that are often affected during insurgencies.* The question, *do they face discrimination to have access to these based on their sex?* They responded that;

GROUP ONE: There are no discrimination when it comes to access to shelter, the challenge faced is insufficient shelter due to an increase in the number of new arrivals from Niger.

GROUP TWO: Because we are indigenes of this place, after we returned from displacement, we renovated our houses and currently staying there.

In October 2021, the UN World Food Programme stated that Nigeria's displaced families in the northeast are prone to starvation because of the region's protracted insecurity, which has disrupted livelihoods and compelled hundreds of thousands of people to relocate. It reported that severe level of hunger is being experienced while about 8.4 million Nigerians would require humanitarian assistance in the northeast, with 4.1 million experiencing extreme food insecurity as reported by Matthias Schmale, the UN's resident and humanitarian coordinator in Nigeria (Tauna, 2022). Therefore, no country is immune to the inflated conflict caused by human insecurities.

Causes

Only 15% of the world's 3.3 billion females reside in high-income nations, with the majority of women living in low- or middle-income nations (Savarese, 2009). While women have longer life expectancies than men, this does not mean that they have a higher quality of life than men. Instead, older women suffer from marginalization as societies divide benefits according to age and sex, which is made worse by humanitarian crises (WHO, 2009). More than one in three women also live in low-income countries.

According to Aoláin (2009b), there is a high rate of women's mortality during humanitarian crises in developing nations due to pregnancy, childbirth, inadequate postnatal care, smoke from solid fuels used for cooking and heating, unsafe drinking water, malnutrition, and communicable diseases, which account for over 38% of female deaths; made worse by the heat of insurgencies and exacerbated poverty.

According to the UN (2009), women are disproportionately responsible for providing acute care in most countries and for providing community and family care in areas hit by natural disasters, armed conflict, and other emergencies. Women may have limited access to cash, social goods, and other legal protections when crises develop due to their differing social and legal standing in many nations. Women differ in their legal competence to enter into contracts across countries (Goodrich, 1996), experience systemic job discrimination, earn unequal compensation while employed, and are unable to own or transfer property (Schroeder, 1994). The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (UN, 1979) outlines these numerous and interrelated discriminations as well as the necessity to address them.

Although this fact is being acknowledged more and more in academic and political discourses, the depth of the descriptive frequently falls short of capturing and

completely appreciating the scope of gender damages and gender insecurity (Rivers, 1982). In addition, women are frequently excluded substantively and procedurally when experts and politicians choose how national and international communities should respond to such situations (Aoláin, 2009a).

Although, regarding gendered violence as a violation of women's rights is a significant progress in the women's rights discourse, the execution of such as been a bottle neck especially in response to women's rights violation during humanitarian emergencies. This bottle-necked women's right is also characterized by myriads of conceptual and practical issues intersecting with or exacerbating prejudice against women. While a major obstacle to the attainment of women's rights and equality is a lack of political will, this is not the only issue, there are some challenges with international human rights legislation itself regarding how to frame, assess, and actualize women's substantive equality (Otto, 2017).

As males do not require a particular enumeration of their gender-specific injuries, measures intended to remedy women's distinctive injuries and disadvantages continue to support the maleness of the universal subject of human rights legislation (Otto, 2006). Whether women's rights are best preserved by universal standards that treat women and men equally, or by particular norms applied solely to women, is what Charlesworth refers to as the "paradox of feminism" (Charlesworth, 2005). In the end, the contradiction makes us consider challenging issues, such as how to include women as full persons under the global framework of human rights legislation.

Hartman (2019) submits that "…even before the conflict, local institutions created the conditions for women and men to perceive women to be of a lesser value. When asked about enjoying rights in displacement, women and men both often acknowledged that women and men were unequal and this was because of existing customary and religious institutions and social norms that participants perceive as linked to those institutions" (p. 17).

Drawing from Okunade and Ogunnubi, (2020), the following also characterized the endemic causes of women vulnerabilities and trampled rights during humanitarian emergencies in the northeast Nigeria:

Insufficient coordination and collaboration between the government and relief organizations

Despite the fact that many NGOs wanted to assist, many were dissatisfied with the Nigerian government's lack of a well-coordinated response. The 'perfect storm' for access by aid organizations to places in need of assistance, according to one NGO spokesperson (CORE, 2020). Many IDPs were had to live in unauthorized shelters, incomplete sites, and improvised accommodations in addition to unauthorized camps, according to the Humanitarian Needs Overview (2014). These shelters were provided by tiny local organizations and were not under the control of the government.

The Absence of a system for tracking and observing displaced people

Preparing humanitarian aid has become problematic because of absent established structure and a clear system that ensures the monitoring of people who are internally displaced within a host community. since there was no clear system in place to trace and keep an eye on displaced persons residing with host communities and families. As a result,

displaced persons were seen seeking refuge in mosques, churches, town halls, vacant lots, unfinished structures, and improvised camps, all of which are woefully inadequate and unsustainable given the population's steady growth (Humanitarian Needs Overview, 2014). This demonstrates the country's precarious position because it was unable to fulfill its obligations despite the help provided by several interested parties, including governments and NGOs.

Restrictions and limitations imposed on NGOs and charity organizations

In addition to failing to recognize the humanitarian catastrophe and request assistance from other countries, the Nigerian government imposed strict restrictions on relief organizations/NGOs, according to CORE (2020). Even within the government-controlled zones, these NGOs are not allowed to move about freely. Their authorities have frequently been forced to violate their standard operating procedure of impartiality as a result. Additionally, only the food, fertilizer and fuel are permitted to be transported into IDP camps and border settlements, and humanitarian organizations must get permission from the military to do so.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper highlights the implications of the ongoing Boko-haram insurgency on the rights of women and that the Nigerian government has a legal obligation to prevent, investigate, and punish human rights breaches committed by state and non-state actors. However, the government has not shown full commitment to prevent and investigate human rights breaches by failing to address the violations against women committed with impunity by the identified perpetrators.

Consequently, counter- insurgency responses must prioritize the protection of women's rights and dignity, as women and children bear the greatest impact of the insurgency. It is important to recognize that prior to the Boko Haram insurgency, women and girls in Northern Nigeria experienced discrimination, violence and gender inequality. Hence, the need for the implementation of pragmatic measures to ensure women's equality and the protection of their rights. By understanding humanitarian crises and emergencies as inevitable and epochal, women's rights are better protected through counter policies that are gender and rights- sensitive, thus, women and

girls should be consulted and actively participate in decision-making. Their active participation will help ensure that their specific needs and rights are addressed and protected effectively.

Furthermore, it is critical that the general public be educated on the prevalence of violations of women's and girls' rights as well as conduct in-depth analyses of topics surrounding gender-based violence. Advocating and sensitizing traditional, religious, and community leaders on the effects of violence on girls and women will play a significant role in curbing these abuses against women. These sensitization programs should target women, girls, men, and boys, as the involvement of all is critical to driving more effective change within society. Also, security agents at all levels must be equipped and empowered to provide security in communities, particularly for vulnerable women and girls. The formation of women's legal agency to give free legal services to victims and survivors of GBV as well as to prosecute criminals. From a legal perspective, it is also important that the perpetrators of these crimes be brought to book and justice served after thorough investigations. It is not enough to

sensitize and educate; both are recommended. The government has to fully implement the conditions stipulated in several conventions discussed, which they are parties to.

The government and donor agencies should emphasize and provide sustainable education for women and girls in the region. The government should establish empowerment programs and skill acquisition centers for girls and women that are free of political overtones. Of utmost importance is women's inclusion in politics at all levels of decision-making, as no one can better promote their rights and call for the implementation of programs and laws to ensure that these rights are protected. Finally, because no state can thrive in isolation, it is critical to seek greater and improved cooperation with other foreign nations in the international community in order to gain support and assistance in counterinsurgency operations.

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Peoples' Rights
CAT- Convention Against Torture and
Other Cruel, Inhuman, and Degrading
Treatment or Punishment
GBV- Gender-based Violence
ICCPR- International Convention on
Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR- International Covenant on
Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights
ICRC –International Committee of the
Red Cross
IDPs – Internally Displaced Persons
IHRL- International Human Rights Law
OCHA – United Nations Office for the
Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UDHR- Universal Declaration of Human
Rights
UN – United Nations
UN- United Nations
UNFPA – United Nations Population
Fund
UNICEF – United Nations International
Children's Emergency Fund
WHO – World Health Organization

Abbreviations
ACHPR- African Charter on Human and