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Management of Internal Displacement in Nigeria

By

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FIELD RESEARCH DOCUMENTING THE CHALLENGES FACED BY THE NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT AND NGO'S IN ADDRESSING THE PROBLEMS OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDP's)¹

Abstract

This research examined the management of IDP's (internally displaced persons) in Nigeria based on the February/May 2000 communal conflict at Kaduna, Northern Nigeria, as an example and a focus for the study. The research took place against a background of few empirical studies of IDPs in Nigeria specifically within the purview of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. The challenges faced by the IDP's and by the various government agencies and NGOs involved in responding to the needs of the IDPs are assessed, documented, compared and analyzed. Recommendations for better responses to the management of IDP needs are given for the use of relevant governmental and NGO agencies.

Research Methodology

My host organizations/partners on this project are Corporate Mediators and World Peace Institute. They are both Nigerian organizations interested in peace-building. Corporate Mediators was based in Kaduna until the crisis in question when the staff had to flee the city. World Peace Institute has a contact still living

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in Kaduna who administered the questionnaires.

In addition to a visit to Kaduna, I prepared the questionnaires in the annexures. They are two sets of questionnaires. One was for IDPs. The other was for government agencies and NGOs. They were based on the United Nations Guidelines on Internal Displacement. My strategy for answering the question posed in the research is to use the Un Guidelines as a benchmark for determining the management of IDPs in Nigeria. This ensured objectivity because of its status as a UN document directly related to the question. I took each UN guideline, I looked for and noted aspects of the guideline that were relevant to my research. I then took the information I gathered and went through them to see how government/NGO action supported (or did not support) compliance with the particular UN guideline. I went through this process over and over again for each of the 30 UN guidelines.

My approach is to base my research on the UN guidelines. While the UN document might be well researched and respected, I cannot guarantee that they answer all questions that bother on IDP management. I however have no better judge to use as a benchmark other than this eminent international document.

On the information available to me at the moment, I think that using the UN guidelines as a benchmark led me to arriving at a fair picture of the situation of IDPs in Kaduna in particular and in Nigeria in general. Communal conflict have been rampant in Nigeria, many of them taking place after the 2000 Kaduna crisis. The information given is therefore easily verifiable. Even while I was in Nigeria in February 2006, there were new violent conflicts taking place in at least three

location – two in the North East and one in the South East. The reports on these fresh conflicts show that things have not changed from what the research participants report in respect of the 2000 Kaduna conflict.

In respect of my analysis, I have tried to present my perspective based on the data I have which though diverse in origin, was consistent in general terms and support the conclusions that I reached.

On any caveats readers should bear in mind, I would say that I am interested in doing more research on the subject. While I do not imagine there will be any fundamental change in my conclusions, I strongly think that I may be able to enrich the present findings.

Research Schedule

I followed the following schedule:

1. Fall 2005: I prepared the questionnaires with the support of various members of the MIT intervarsity committee.
2. December 17, 2005: I mailed questionnaires to my research assistants in Nigeria.
3. January to April 2006: My research assistants administered questionnaires to participants.
4. February 2006: I visited Kaduna; I collected some questionnaires
5. April 2006: I received the remaining questionnaires used for this report.
6. April-May 2006: I analyse the questionnaires and I write the report.

Research Scope and Approach

The researcher's initial goal was to source data from up to 50 respondents including individuals, federal and regional governmental agencies and local and international NGOs. As at the time of writing this report, we had only succeeded in getting all together 25 responses- 7 from NGOs and governmental agencies, and 18 from individuals. The breakdown of the responses are as follows: Muslim women IDPs native of the region of conflict (0), Christian women IDPs native of the region of conflict (0), Muslim male native of the region of conflict (4), Christian male native of the region of conflict (0), Christian women IDPs non-native of the region of conflict (0) and Christian male IDPs non-native of the region of conflict (10), Un-categorized Others (4). The paucity of data from some categories of respondents especially women is balanced by the surplus in another group of respondents, male IDPs non-native of the region of conflict. This balance is not from a gender perspective but from the perspective of counter balancing neutrality in the sense that these non-natives, though victims of the ethnic conflict, were not at the center of the conflict under review. They therefore serve the benefit of giving us a non-partisan perspective of events. Another counter balancing factor is that major international NGOs responded to the search for information on the IDP situation. A final reason why the data collected is sufficient for the purpose of reaching a just conclusion on the management of IDPs is that federal and regional government agencies in charge of IDPs are among the research's respondents. All the same the researcher regrets the particular paucity of female respondents in this research. Efforts is being made to

do a follow-up data gathering with a particular focus on women IDPs from both sections of the conflict and female IDPs who are non-indigenes of the conflict region.

Historical background to the research

Nigeria has witnessed numerous violent communal conflicts since the mid-1960s. These violent ethnic conflicts were first witnessed in Western Nigeria when former party chieftains, notably Obafemi Awolowo and Ladoke Akintola, parted ways. This led to a series of crises and clashes, until a state of emergency was declared in the Western Region. The Northern Region with Kaduna as headquarters was next. It was the seat of Government of the region, and was presided over by Ahmadu Bello the undisputedly most powerful politician in Nigeria in the early to mid-sixties. Bello was leader of the ruling Northern Peoples Congress, which controlled the federal government then headquartered in Lagos. The first crisis in Kaduna followed the assassination of Bello in the coup d'état of January 15, 1966. The coup was led by Kaduna Nzeogwu, who, though detribalized as a person, was of the Ibo ethnic stock which is mostly located in Eastern Nigeria. The Ibo leader in Eastern Nigeria was not assassinated, however, and this created resentment among northerners, primarily Hausa, and the coup failed. It triggered a backlash against Ibo by Hausa of Northern Nigeria. This led to the civil war of 1967-1970, essentially between the Ibo and the Hausa but with other ethnic groups in the federation fighting on the side of the federal government, which was headed at that time by Yakubu Gowon from Northern

Nigeria. After the civil war came relative peace until the 1990s.

Conflict between groups was present from time to time in Kaduna in the 1990s. But the nature and scope of conflict escalated in 2000. Unlike earlier incidents, the eruption of violence in 2000 was driven by the conflict between two incompatible identities: Islamized Hausa identity, associated with a drive to establish Shari'a Law in place of civil law in the northern states of the country, of which Kaduna was one, and Christian groups generally known as Southern Kaduna, notably the Kataf. The Hausa, being more numerous and having ruled Northern Nigeria for over 100 years through successful Jihads and domination, have had an advantage over the Kataf and other ethnic groups. Religion became a mark of Hausa and Kataf identities. In the history of Kaduna State's many conflicts, none compares in scope with the slaughter of 2000. That episode probably changed forever the character of Kaduna as a cosmopolitan city. President Olusegun Obasanjo is reported to have admitted, while visiting Kaduna in 2000 after the crisis, that the conflict under review was the worst crisis since the civil war; he went on to blame "leaders" for it.

The 2000 violence caused large-scale population displacement, leading to a sharp segregation of communities in some areas. By 2002, residents were describing particular areas of Kaduna town as 100 per cent Christian or 100 per cent Muslim. Christians and Muslims increasingly moved to areas which were dominated by people of their own faith in the hope of finding safety there; many of them did not return to their original areas of residence. Following renewed violence in 2002, this physical segregation of parts of the city appears to have

increased. This is a reflection of deepening polarization in what was once a genuinely mixed population. Many of the people interviewed by Human Rights Watch in December 2002 explained that they had moved homes not because they did not want to live with members of other faiths, but that it was a survival tactic: they expected to be safer surrounded by their own community in the event of any future resurgence of violence.

This became typical of subsequent crises in Kaduna. In 2002, more than 30,000 people were displaced during four days of another religious riot in Kaduna.

It has been reported that security forces sometimes escalated the plight of IDPs by actually attacking people who were already traumatized by ethnic conflict. It has also been reported that IDPs generally depended on charity and that government turns a blind spot to their plight, denying that they exist or lowering the figure of those affected. However, there exists governmental agencies mandated to deal with IDP related issues e.g., the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) created in 1999, the National Commission for Refugees (NCR) created in 1989 and mandated to cover IDPs in 2002. There are also international NGOs interested in IDP issues in Nigeria, notably the Red Cross, Catholic Relief Services, Save the Children UK, Amnesty International, UNICEF, UNDP, UNHCR. Similarly there are Nigerian NGOs that take interest in IDP issues. They include AREF-African Refugees Foundation headed by Ambassador Segun Olusola who doubles as Chairman of NCR, CLO-Civil Liberties Organisation. Medecins sans Frontiers (MSF) reported that it was one of the very few international aid organizations operating in Nigeria as at 2000,

most organizations having left the country during the military regime of Sani Abacha, who had the writer and environmental activist Ken Saro-Wiwa hanged.

Research Findings

Introduction

While I was in Kaduna in February 2006, it was reported to me that there was then an apprehension that the violent conflict that had recently erupted in Maiduguri while I was visiting Nigeria might spill into Kaduna. The new violence was in reaction to the cartoons on Prophet Muhammed published in Europe. Both Kaduna and Maiduguri have a large Muslim population. Non-Muslims in Kaduna, according to my source, were afraid that violence might be unleashed on them just as Non-Muslims had been killed and attacked in Maiduguri. This showed me that the town of Kaduna was still divided along religious cleavages. I was also told that the Kaduna governor was then going round to fellow Muslims to persuade them not to attack non-Muslims. This piece of information was relevant to my research because it confirmed what I had heard elsewhere that the governor had been taking great personal risks to protect non-Muslims. However, my visit gave me a new insight into my research. I needed to know the possibility of reoccurrence of the event that led to the IDP crisis of 2000. I came to a very novel conclusion that we cannot claim Kaduna is safe just because the governor is making personal appeals for peace. There is a fundamental challenge to peace in Kaduna. As I explained elsewhere in this report, the city

that was definitely divided by the violence of 2000, is yet to be fully integrated. It is therefore easy to have conflict because the 'battle line' is clear: Muslims on one side, non-Muslims on the other side. This seems to be the reason for the high degree of tension among those non-Muslim on the border line or in the largely Muslim community of Kaduna North where I visited.

The summary of my findings is that the management of IDPs in the Kaduna metropolis February/May 2000 ethno-religious conflict was a humanitarian disaster. Almost all the respondents (government agencies, NGOs, IDPs and non-IDPs) were agreed on this. However, the respondents are also unanimous that the government of Kaduna State has since taken numerous steps to improve on management of IDPs. The facts on ground however show Makarfi's laudable reform barely scratches the surface. The real IDP problem on the ground now is that people cannot return to their old homes for fear of religious persecution. The peace that Makarfi is so courageously managing is an uneasy one: the city is clearly divided on ethno-religious lines. Considering that Kaduna had for about 100 years been the metropolitan headquarters of Northern Nigeria which is comprised of hundreds of different ethnic groups and religions, the town as it is now is a shadow of itself and a city turned on itself for destruction. When the city has been psychologically rebuilt and restored to its true status as home to all Nigerians irrespective of language, culture or religion, when any Nigerian can live anywhere in Kaduna without fear of being killed for believing differently or speaking differently, then would one say that the local underlying causes of violent conflict and IDPs has been truly addressed. Furthermore, a

preponderance number of respondents agreed that the underlying causes of conflict and incidence of IDPs is economic – youth unemployment. This is a national problem. I sense desperation and helplessness in the responses on this issue of poverty. The federal government in Abuja does not seem to know what to do to address this economic panic. There is therefore no guarantee that the personal efforts of Governor Makarfi in Kaduna are alone sufficient to prevent future violence and IDP crisis. Other states appear even less prepared than Kaduna in terms of proactive provision for preventing and managing incidences of IDPs. I can only hope that the federal government and other state governments will borrow a leaf from the IDP failure and successes of Governor Makarfi and Kaduna State. If they do, they will put institutions and structures in place to prevent and manage the rise of new IDPs. More importantly, they would begin to seriously address endemic corruption, youth unemployment and illiteracy which all feed violence in Nigeria.

I set out below my findings in respect of each of the UN guiding principles relevant to this research. At the end of my analysis, I will summarize suggestions for any necessary improvement. Suffice for now to note that a significant outcome of the 2000 crisis that led to a significant exodus of Kaduna residents was the establishment by the regional government at Kaduna of a specialized agency that caters specifically for IDPs. This is the Kaduna State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) which is one of the institutional respondents in this research. Whether this agency is adequately equipped to carry out its specialized role may be debated, but establishing the structure is a move in the right

direction considering the fact that Kaduna has been prone to communal violence for about two decades. Another significant fact is that Governor Makarfi of Kaduna State is perceived as playing a balancing role to prevent reoccurrence of violence. The researcher's concern is that we cannot make security of persons and property dependent on the goodwill of an incumbent. It must be institutionalized. Makarfi set up the SEMA. He has also set up a local government emergency committee in each of the twenty-three local governments in Kaduna State. We can therefore say that he himself realizes the need for institutionalization. The government's effort has to however also include institutionalization of other aspects of peace and security. The researcher's suggestions on specific actions that government needs to take are contained in the conclusion to this research below.

Details of research findings²

Principle 1

1. Internally displaced persons shall enjoy, in full equality, the same rights and freedoms under international and domestic law as do other persons in their country. They shall not be discriminated against in the enjoyment of any rights and freedoms on the ground that they are internally displaced.

2. These Principles are without prejudice to individual criminal responsibility under international law, in particular relating to genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

² As I have indicated I set out each UN guideline ('Principle') and compare it with what we found on ground.

My finding

Respondent B1 talks about inequality of distribution of aid to IDPs. Respondent B5 talks of inadequate care for IDPs. Both respondent B5 and B6 talk of aid diversion by those put in charge of aid distribution. B8 talks about absence of coordination of relief services, use of untrained aid workers, non-existence of IDP camps and IDPs' feeling of alienation from their former places of abode due to fear of religious discrimination/persecution which was the immediate cause of this crisis in the first place. B8 says that "IDP is not viewed as priority... most agencies, IGOs & NGOs maintain a small unit (referred to as Emergency Response) compared to HIV/AIDS or rights programming." B9 talks of IDPs as being victims of structural discrimination that made them IDPs in the first place, i.e. poverty. The respondent claims that six years after the crisis some of these poor IDPs are yet to regain their pre-conflict livelihoods.

The researcher's view on this UN principle of equality is that there is no evidence that IDPs were particularly set out for discrimination by relevant agencies. This is however against B9's submission that whereas pursuant to an earlier crisis in another part of the same state where 100% compensation was given to IDPs for property reconstruction, only 25% compensation was given to IDPs for the same purpose in 2000.

The challenge the researcher perceives is inadequate support for IDPs in general. IDPs were the people that immediately needed help in this situation and the only way we can say they were discriminated against is that government did not reach out to them adequately. This does not make them unequal to other

citizens because it could be argued from many of the respondents' submission that the source of the violence in the first place is absence of good governance – youth unemployment, uncontrolled religious bigotry, government disrespect for rule of law and the courts, general insecurity due to inadequate policing and absence of structured/institutionalized peaceful conflict resolution mechanisms like community mediation centers that people can resort to in order to avoid self-help and violence.

Principle 2

1. These Principles shall be observed by all authorities, groups and persons irrespective of their legal status and applied without any adverse distinction. The observance of these Principles shall not affect the legal status of any authorities, groups or persons involved.

2. These Principles shall not be interpreted as restricting, modifying or impairing the provisions of any international human rights or international humanitarian law instrument or rights granted to persons under domestic law. In particular, these Principles are without prejudice to the right to seek and enjoy asylum in other countries.

My finding

This principle deals with applicability of the legal instrument. It does not require any findings. Except to note that there is nothing on ground to show that government or NGOs are aware of the principles. None of the agencies that responded to our questionnaire mentioned the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.

Principle 3

1. National authorities have the primary duty and responsibility to provide protection and humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons within their jurisdiction.
2. Internally displaced persons have the right to request and to receive protection and humanitarian assistance from these authorities. They shall not be persecuted or punished for making such a request.

My finding

The overall response on this principle is that government in Nigeria at local and federal levels does not have adequate machinery in place to address IDPs issues. There are organizations created by government but their capacity to handle IDP related problems is minimal. This is a very urgent concern given that Nigeria is prone to communal conflicts, not just in Kaduna but also in several parts of the country. After a forty-year history of communal conflict and a major civil war, it is inexcusable that a country the size of Nigeria does not have a blueprint for internal displacement. More importantly, it is worrisome that conflict is not planned for and nipped in the bud through provision of grassroots institutions and structures to deal with conflict and distress. The total absence of a government welfare system in Nigeria as evident from the research data is itself an official perpetuation of poverty and therefore of violence and conditions that lead to the occurrence of IDPs.

Principle 4

1. These Principles shall be applied without discrimination of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion or belief, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, legal or social status, age, disability, property, birth, or on any other similar criteria.

2. Certain internally displaced persons, such as children, especially unaccompanied minors, expectant mothers, mothers with young children, female heads of household, persons with disabilities and elderly persons, shall be entitled to protection and assistance required by their condition and to treatment which takes into account their special needs.

My finding

See my finding on principle No. 1 above.

SECTION II - PRINCIPLES RELATING TO PROTECTION FROM DISPLACEMENT

Principle 5

All authorities and international actors shall respect and ensure respect for their obligations under international law, including human rights and humanitarian law, in all circumstances, so as to prevent and avoid conditions that might lead to displacement of persons.

My finding

See my submissions on principle No. 3 above.

Principle 6

1. Every human being shall have the right to be protected against being arbitrarily

displaced from his or her home or place of habitual residence.

2. The prohibition of arbitrary displacement includes displacement:

(a) When it is based on policies of apartheid, "ethnic cleansing" or similar practices aimed at/or resulting in altering the ethnic, religious or racial composition of the affected population;

(b) In situations of armed conflict, unless the security of the civilians involved or imperative military reasons so demand;

(c) In cases of large-scale development projects, which are not justified by compelling and overriding public interests;

(d) In cases of disasters, unless the safety and health of those affected requires their evacuation; and

(e) When it is used as a collective punishment.

3. Displacement shall last no longer than required by the circumstances.

My finding

There is no reliable protection in place against arbitrary displacement. The concern of every respondent is the existence of a social system that is structurally violent: people are expecting chaos because there is no leadership. I asked every respondent to give a general comment. A reading of the respondents that offered to comment gives a picture of the situation in Nigeria today, a situation that makes one know that conditions that lead to displacement of persons is part of the current socio-political and economic make-up of Nigeria today. I will let the respondents speak directly below:

B1: The government should do something about the youths who are drug addicts. This group cannot work even if employed. Street begging should be stopped. Diligence should be encouraged among able youths.

B2: My comment is that people should be looked after by the government. It is poverty that causes curses, people are hungry and the government needs to do something about our youth.

B3: Conflict management and prevention committees should be formed from federal, state and local governments, comprising traditional rulers, wealthy individuals, and youth associations, and religious leaders.

B6: My comment is that the government, both state, local level should sit up to their responsibility about managing crisis and forestalling it.

B9: Let government make a strong law that will ground religious crisis. In terms of punishment, anybody who incites religious crisis should be punished with life imprisonment or death by hanging. But I am not happy when somebody is taken to Court and the case is discharged. You would see the person outside, tomorrow he will repeat it.

B10: I plead with the international community to come to the aid of Nigerian youth, so that they can find something doing, because if they are doing something they won't be interested in conflicts, they won't have time to destroy other peoples' properties, because they would believe they have their own at hand.

B12: I appeal to the Federal Government of Nigeria and the United Nations to

look for a lasting solution in this part of the world, by empowering the youths economically, to avoid reoccurrence of crisis of this great magnitude.

B13: I pray to God and mankind, let peace reign. Be you Moslem or Christian, we are one. Religions are for peace and unity.

B15: I am advising government to provide much security for the state.

B16: There is a need for every member of the society to love each other. Love will bring peace. Government and religious leaders should find profitable ventures for citizens to avoid idleness which is always the devil's workshop.

B17: The government should provide improved policing during rallies

B18: We should stop being sentimental, especially the two major religions, and even our politicians are too biased, government does not respect our Courts today (rule of law).

B20: My comment is based on negligence of government in such crisis, because government did not take action in time, until almost half of the population of Kaduna was killed, and there were destructions for almost two days, before government sent police and soldiers for peace.

C1: There is the need to be assertive about what happens after conflict situation. Most times, less attention is paid to support IDPs while a lot of resources go into conflict resolution and peace-building. It is equally important to raise awareness about likely national disasters that may surface in the future, so that people can be prepared to reduce the level of vulnerability.

C2: For IDPs to be managed effectively there is need for constant training of the

personnel involved in managing these IDPs.

C4: Government agencies handling such issues should have a proper pattern by liaising with the necessary stakeholders in handling displaced people.

C5: I advise government to bother and be concerned about the citizens of Nigeria because we are one; we are created by the same God. Government should say something about the school fees, so that when every child is engaged doing something, it would not be like this again.

C6: It is also very good for parents to teach their children what is right and avoid what is wrong. Also the youths should be made to engage themselves in working and not to be left doing nothing otherwise they would be used as the machine during peace time to cause conflict.

Principle 7

1. Prior to any decision requiring the displacement of persons, the authorities concerned shall ensure that all feasible alternatives are explored in order to avoid displacement altogether. Where no alternatives exist, all measures shall be taken to minimize displacement and its adverse effects.

2. The authorities undertaking such displacement shall ensure, to the greatest practicable extent, that proper accommodation is provided to the displaced persons, that such displacements are effected in satisfactory conditions of safety, nutrition, health and hygiene, and that members of the same family are not separated.

3. If displacement occurs in situations other than during the emergency stages of

armed conflicts and disasters, the following guarantees shall be complied with:

(a) A specific decision shall be taken by a State authority empowered by law to order such measures;

(b) Adequate measures shall be taken to guarantee to those to be displaced full information on the reasons and procedures for their displacement and, where applicable, on compensation and relocation;

(c) The free and informed consent of those to be displaced shall be sought;

(d) The authorities concerned shall endeavour to involve those affected, particularly women, in the planning and management of their relocation;

(e) Law enforcement measures, where required, shall be carried out by competent legal authorities; and

(f) The right to an effective remedy, including the review of such decisions by appropriate judicial authorities, shall be respected.

My finding

Not relevant to this research.

Principle 8

Displacement shall not be carried out in a manner that violates the rights to life, dignity, liberty and security of those affected.

My finding

Not relevant to this research.

Principle 9

States are under a particular obligation to protect against the displacement of indigenous peoples, minorities, peasants, pastoralists and other groups with a special dependency on and attachment to their lands.

My finding

Not relevant to this research.

SECTION III - PRINCIPLES RELATING TO PROTECTION DURING DISPLACEMENT

Principle 10

1. Every human being has the inherent right to life which shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his or her life. Internally displaced persons shall be protected in particular against:

(a) Genocide;

(b) Murder;

(c) Summary or arbitrary executions; and

(d) Enforced disappearances, including abduction or unacknowledged detention, threatening or resulting in death.

Threats and incitement to commit any of the foregoing acts shall be prohibited.

2. Attacks or other acts of violence against internally displaced persons who do not or no longer participate in hostilities are prohibited in all circumstances.

Internally displaced persons shall be protected, in particular, against:

(a) Direct or indiscriminate attacks or other acts of violence, including the

creation of areas wherein attacks on civilians are permitted;

(b) Starvation as a method of combat;

(c) Their use to shield military objectives from attack or to shield, favour or impede military operations;

(d) Attacks against their camps or settlements; and

(e) The use of anti-personnel landmines.

My finding

See my submissions on principle No. 6 above particularly of respondent B9.

Principle 11

1. Every human being has the right to dignity and physical, mental and moral integrity.

2. Internally displaced persons, whether or not their liberty has been restricted, shall be protected in particular against:

(a) Rape, mutilation, torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and other outrages upon personal dignity, such as acts of gender-specific violence, forced prostitution and any form of indecent assault;

(b) Slavery or any contemporary form of slavery, such as sale into marriage, sexual exploitation, or forced labour of children; and

(c) Acts of violence intended to spread terror among internally displaced persons.

Threats and incitement to commit any of the foregoing acts shall be prohibited.

My finding

See my submissions on principle No. 6 above. See also the comment of respondent B20 under the same principle.

Principle 12

1. Every human being has the right to liberty and security of person. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention.
2. To give effect to this right for internally displaced persons, they shall not be interned in or confined to a camp. If in exceptional circumstances such internment or confinement is absolutely necessary, it shall not last longer than required by the circumstances.
3. Internally displaced persons shall be protected from discriminatory arrest and detention as a result of their displacement.
4. In no case shall internally displaced persons be taken hostage.

My finding

Not relevant to this research.

Principle 13

1. In no circumstances shall displaced children be recruited nor be required or permitted to take part in hostilities.
2. Internally displaced persons shall be protected against discriminatory practices of recruitment into any armed forces or groups as a result of their displacement. In particular any cruel, inhuman or degrading practices that compel compliance

or punish non-compliance with recruitment are prohibited in all circumstances.

My finding

Not relevant to this research.

[Principle 14](#)

1. Every internally displaced person has the right to liberty of movement and freedom to choose his or her residence.
2. In particular, internally displaced persons have the right to move freely in and out of camps or other settlements.

My finding

Not relevant to this research.

[Principle 15](#)

Internally displaced persons have:

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

My finding

Not relevant to this research.

[Principle 16](#)

1. All internally displaced persons have the right to know the fate and whereabouts of missing relatives.
2. The authorities concerned shall endeavour to establish the fate and whereabouts of internally displaced persons reported missing, and cooperate with relevant international organizations engaged in this task. They shall inform the next of kin on the progress of the investigation and notify them of any result.
3. The authorities concerned shall endeavour to collect and identify the mortal remains of those deceased, prevent their despoliation or mutilation, and facilitate the return of those remains to the next of kin or dispose of them respectfully.
4. Grave sites of internally displaced persons should be protected and respected in all circumstances. Internally displaced persons should have the right of access to the grave sites of their deceased relatives.

My finding

We did not enquire directly on this point. Our respondents did not also raise the issue missing relatives. Care for missing persons is part of comprehensive IDP management blueprint. There is at yet no basic emergency plan for adequate provision of basic need for IDPs. It would therefore be going too far expect that missing relatives would be a concern of government in Nigeria at the moment. The general feeling that one takes out of the respondents stories is that government does not care, and when it does, it does not care enough and adequately for basic IDP needs.

Principle 17

1. Every human being has the right to respect of his or her family life.
2. To give effect to this right for internally displaced persons, family members who wish to remain together shall be allowed to do so.
3. Families which are separated by displacement should be reunited as quickly as possible. All appropriate steps shall be taken to expedite the reunion of such families, particularly when children are involved. The responsible authorities shall facilitate inquiries made by family members and encourage and cooperate with the work of humanitarian organizations engaged in the task of family reunification.
4. Members of internally displaced families whose personal liberty has been restricted by internment or confinement in camps shall have the right to remain together.

My finding

See my submission on principle No.16 above. According to respondent B1, there is “no proper record of the displaced persons.”

Principle 18

1. All internally displaced persons have the right to an adequate standard of living.
2. At the minimum, regardless of the circumstances, and without discrimination, competent authorities shall provide internally displaced persons with and ensure safe access to:

- (a) Essential food and potable water;
- (b) Basic shelter and housing;
- (c) Appropriate clothing; and
- (d) Essential medical services and sanitation.

3. Special efforts should be made to ensure the full participation of women in the planning and distribution of these basic supplies.

My finding

See my submissions on principle No. 16 above. This principle deals with basic needs of IDPs. The picture the researcher gets from the respondents stories is that government throws money at the problem of IDPs' welfare and nothing much happens thereafter in respect of their basic need. If the IDPs got the money, their problems would have been reduced even though the government does not care much afterwards. The problem with IDPs welfare in Nigeria however is that government aid (money/relief) gets diverted and never gets to the IDPs themselves. This of course raises an issue of corruption which the country has been battling with for a while. One other light from the research is that although government, both state and federal were caught unawares by the IDP situation in 2000, the Kaduna State government, more specifically the governor, Makarfi, has since been more proactive. There is nothing to show that on its part the Federal government is better in its planning and preparedness than it was six years ago. In fact, the country has witnessed several communal conflicts since the 2000 crisis, the last known to the researcher happened during his visit to the

country in February 2006 in respect of the Danish cartoons on Prophet Mohammed. And his observation during that visit including one to Kaduna was that there is unmanaged tension in the country, there is so much fear in the country. One cannot but conclude that the current leaders of the country are yet to reach the grassroots for change in inter-communal perception. People were still afraid that they may be killed only because they were of a different religion from those who constitute the majority in their community. This kind of instinctive fear cannot be justified in this day an age, especially when it concerns a country as geo-politically strategic as Nigeria, from the perspective of regional/continental stability and global peace. Nigerian leaders need to be more proactive in conflict prevention. There is very little on the ground to shield the people from fear, quite apart from an economic situation that belies the status of Nigeria as a leading exporter of oil. Leadership is absence in Nigeria. Research respondent B9 captures my thoughts in this respect. He said: "I want government to understand: anybody who works and happens to build a house (and) stay with his family, it is not easy. But a day, a minute, somebody will come with intention to kill him and burnt the house, all this person is lucky in escaping with his life, family but the entire house and property is burnt. Government will not take good care of that person and we have the money. One of the ideas is that government should have a place for them to settle, security should (be) provided in the place; medical attention should be constantly provided..."

This principle of welfare is probably the most important or basic of all the UN principles, where Nigeria is concerned. I would therefore let the respondents

speak again, to give us a picture of the situation in Nigeria:

B1: The affected persons were accommodated by the Kaduna State Government.

B3: They are given manageable shelter... and medical treatment.

B4: The only situation is that you only find them leaving their homes to army and police barracks... government has done nothing tangible... they are not equipped and prepared.

B5: The management (of IDPs) was very poor considering the way the government managed the situation during the conflict... the only people that helped most were the NGOs... government supplied money but it did not reach the affected people...they have been living in a very poor condition. The government does not look much after their welfare... (but) provides them with shelter, some material support and money... (and) the people do not get the relief provided for them... government should go to the place and see things for itself, not sending delegates who will not go and do nothing.

B6: The treatment (of IDPs) was very poor because government and NGOs do not usually take prompt action until the IDPs (had) suffered before any aid goes to them... they were managed unsatisfactorily since their demands were not met... the problem and challenges before the government is lack of taking prompt actions and also not putting responsible citizens who have human sympathy to take charge of items that are aided to the IDPs. So government should deal ruthlessly with those who divert aids that are meant for IDPs.

B9: In beginning of this violent conflict in Kaduna, 2000 February and May, was an unexpected crisis, and... government had no plan... then the affected IDPs had to escape with their life. Some go to army and barracks for safety. The support of government in this case was very poor, no proper medical attention; and feeding was not supplied the way it's supposed to... they were stranded, no where to go, especially visitors (non-natives) like Igbo, Yoruba etc... no place to go... no any step taken to... manage the IDPs apart from assistance rendered to them – they gave them money and wears – government has not any important thing for them. If you look very well, you can see no area where federal government built or arranged for the IDP... PDP (ruling political party) chairman donated money... and other political parties. Individuals also donated money... but there are strong steps from the state government by Alhaji Ahmed Mohammed Makarfi to protect IDPs. Yes, he is adequately addressing the problems and he even removes fear from them. Whereby you find out people now in Kaduna are freely living without fear or favour.

B20: All the agencies play role after many people were killed and destruction of properties for two days

C1: The management of IDPs before CRS intervention was unprofessional. The actors were not trained to manage IDPs... CRS provided food and non food items to IDPs. The organization also provided items for house reconstruction. There were other actors involved. There was no effort to coordinate the provision of relief materials... there are no physical IDP camps in Kaduna

C2: There was an initial problem of IDPs during the 2000 crisis because a lot of

people were displaced and they were not ready to settle in the IDP camps because of fear of insecurity... There was lack of knowledge in managing IDP at that time because Kaduna did not experience a communal crisis as bad as the 2000 crisis where a lot of lives and properties were destroyed. It was different from the Miss World crisis which was managed well because a lot was learnt during the 2000 crisis and measures were taken to avert the mistake of 2000... Kaduna State government is working hand in hand with the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) in combating emergencies and NEMA is always ready to assist the state with items for settling IDPs camps whenever there is a crisis in the state. Kaduna State has set up local government emergency committees at the 23 local government areas of the state to oversee and manage emergency cases including IDPs... Kaduna State has an Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans to cater for IDPs in case of emergency.

C3: The management/treatment of IDPs was very poor and bad, because these people went through untold hardship. There were no organized IDPs camps in the state... the problems were jointly managed by government and NGOs i.e. in terms of provision of food and clothing. Other problems such as tracing missing family members and shelter were not immediately resolved... the possible main factors/challenge are lack of proper planning; no organized IDPs camps apart from military barracks; lack of governmental agencies then (2000) responsible for IDPs in the state.

C4: The management wasn't done properly. Those that were camped at military barracks and schools suffered hardship, lack of food, shelter and medical

treatment; a lot of them still depend on relations and friends... most of the relief materials did not get to the displaced people... the main factors (problems) is the officials handling the relief materials. There is diversion; and getting an appropriate place for the displaced people to feel free and safe... the situation is pathetic, there is no proper and conducive (safe) place for them to stay and feeding was a problem, distribution of relief materials was not properly done. The life of people are in danger in some camps... at the national level, it is handled proper way because they are provided with funds, relief materials and shelter. But at the local level the situation is pathetic and there is a need to address it very well at the grassroots and to ensure accountability.

C5: The situation of IDPs from Kaduna was terrible and difficult.

C6: Unlike us, the Nigerian Red Cross Society, I don't know about other organizations. We always have a contingency planning even during peace time. And when the crisis occurred the government send law enforcement agencies all over the states which makes it much easier for us to evacuate the casualty from danger zones, go into search and rescue of survivors to our IDP's camps, distribution of relief materials to the IDP's and some to motherless babies homes, assisting doctors and nurses in hospitals, giving first aid treatments to casualties etc... the situation of IDP's were many which include injuries, psychological trauma, lack of food, sleeping materials etc.

[Principle 19](#)

1. All wounded and sick internally displaced persons as well as those with disabilities shall receive to the fullest extent practicable and with the least

possible delay, the medical care and attention they require, without distinction on any grounds other than medical ones. When necessary, internally displaced persons shall have access to psychological and social services.

2. Special attention should be paid to the health needs of women, including access to female health care providers and services, such as reproductive health care, as well as appropriate counseling for victims of sexual and other abuses.

3. Special attention should also be given to the prevention of contagious and infectious diseases, including AIDS, among internally displaced persons.

My finding

Kindly see my submissions on principle No. 18 above.

Principle 20

1. Every human being has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

2. To give effect to this right for internally displaced persons, the authorities concerned shall issue to them all documents necessary for the enjoyment and exercise of their legal rights, such as passports, personal identification documents, birth certificates and marriage certificates. In particular, the authorities shall facilitate the issuance of new documents or the replacement of documents lost in the course of displacement, without imposing unreasonable conditions, such as requiring the return to one's area of habitual residence in order to obtain these or other required documents.

3. Women and men shall have equal rights to obtain such necessary documents

and shall have the right to have such documentation issued in their own names.

My finding

This issue was not raised in this research.

Principle 21

1. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of property and possessions.
2. The property and possessions of internally displaced persons shall in all circumstances be protected, in particular, against the following acts:
 - (a) Pillage;
 - (b) Direct or indiscriminate attacks or other acts of violence;
 - (c) Being used to shield military operations or objectives;
 - (d) Being made the object of reprisal; and
 - (e) Being destroyed or appropriated as a form of collective punishment.
3. Property and possessions left behind by internally displaced persons should be protected against destruction and arbitrary and illegal appropriation, occupation or use.

My finding

It is clear from the respondents' submissions that the issue is not whether or not people are entitled to their abandoned properties. The issue is that deep fear prevents people from going back to areas where they constitute a religions/ethnic minority. The 2000 crisis shook the foundation of communal trust in Kaduna, in fact destroyed it. My February 2006 visit to Kaduna showed me clearly that it

would be foolhardy for anyone to return to an area from which s/he fled in 2000 as a result of the ethno-religious persecution. The Kaduna community has not healed; there is still very deep distrust. The people still truly deeply fear that they could be killed because of their faith. So the land remains divided: Kaduna North largely for people of a particular religion; Kaduna South for people of the other religion: an uneasy peace, a complete lack of coexistence. There must be a massive socio-cultural re-orientation to promote coexistence before people can feel confident to go to their old homes. The temporary solution is for government to buy over the houses so that they would not continue to waste. Respondent B9 both vividly captures the present situation six years after the crisis as well as what the long term vision of coexistence should be. He said: "Instead of management (government) to still advise the occupants to go back and stay where they were before, they kept quiet. For example, like Rigasa no Christian is there. Tudun Wada no Christian is there. Television no Muslim is there. Roma no Muslim is there. This management is responsible to make people understand since we are one Nigeria anybody who is a citizen can stay any where.

Principle 22

1. Internally displaced persons, whether or not they are living in camps, shall not be discriminated against as a result of their displacement in the enjoyment of the following rights:

(a) The rights to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, opinion and expression;

(b) The right to seek freely opportunities for employment and to participate in

economic activities;

(c) The right to associate freely and participate equally in community affairs;

(d) The right to vote and to participate in governmental and public affairs, including the right to have access to the means necessary to exercise this right;

and

(e) The right to communicate in a language they understand.

My finding

See my submissions on principle 21 above.

Principle 23

1. Every human being has the right to education.
2. To give effect to this right for internally displaced persons, the authorities concerned shall ensure that such persons, in particular displaced children, receive education which shall be free and compulsory at the primary level. Education should respect their cultural identity, language and religion.
3. Special efforts should be made to ensure the full and equal participation of women and girls in educational programmes.
4. Education and training facilities shall be made available to internally displaced persons, in particular adolescents and women, whether or not living in camps, as soon as conditions permit.

My finding

I refer to previous submissions above. There was a complete absence of all facilities for IDPs in 2000. Basic facilities were not provided. Education could not have crossed the mind of a government that could not feed the same IDPs.

SECTION IV - PRINCIPLES RELATING TO HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Principle 24

1. All humanitarian assistance shall be carried out in accordance with the principles of humanity and impartiality and without discrimination.
2. Humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons shall not be diverted, in particular for political or military reasons.

My finding

See previous submissions. Government failed in 2000 in large part because of diversion of aid meant for IDPs.

Principle 25

1. The primary duty and responsibility for providing humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons lies with national authorities.
2. International humanitarian organizations and other appropriate actors have the right to offer their services in support of the internally displaced. Such an offer shall not be regarded as an unfriendly act or interference in a State's internal affairs and shall be considered in good faith. Consent thereto shall not be arbitrarily withheld, particularly when authorities concerned are unable or unwilling to provide the required humanitarian assistance.
3. All authorities concerned shall grant and facilitate the free passage of

humanitarian assistance and grant persons engaged in the provision of such assistance rapid and unimpeded access to the internally displaced.

My finding

My finding is that there was a complete lack of coordination of all agencies. The claim by a few NGOs that they provided relief is unsupported by a majority of responses. The picture that one gets from a general study of the data is that both NGOs and governments failed in all respects: they were not there when the people needed them. I can only imagine that while these NGOs did what they could, it was grossly insufficient, given the magnitude of need.

Principle 26

Persons engaged in humanitarian assistance, their transport and supplies shall be respected and protected. They shall not be the object of attack or other acts of violence.

My finding

This was not an issue. The presence of humanitarian assistance on a large scale is unsupported by the preponderance of evidence.

Principle 27

1. International humanitarian organizations and other appropriate actors when providing assistance should give due regard to the protection needs and human rights of internally displaced persons and take appropriate measures in this regard. In so doing, these organizations and actors should respect relevant international standards and codes of conduct.

2. The preceding paragraph is without prejudice to the protection responsibilities of international organizations mandated for this purpose, whose services may be offered or requested by States.

My finding

There is neither need nor basis to comment here.

SECTION V - PRINCIPLES RELATING TO RETURN, RESETTLEMENT AND REINTEGRATION

Principle 28

1. Competent authorities have the primary duty and responsibility to establish conditions, as well as provide the means, which allow internally displaced persons to return voluntarily, in safety and with dignity, to their homes or places of habitual residence, or to resettle voluntarily in another part of the country. Such authorities shall endeavour to facilitate the reintegration of returned or resettled internally displaced persons.

2. Special efforts should be made to ensure the full participation of internally displaced persons in the planning and management of their return or resettlement and reintegration.

My finding

See my submission on principle No. 21 above.

Principle 29

1. Internally displaced persons who have returned to their homes or places of habitual residence or who have resettled in another part of the country shall not

be discriminated against as a result of their having been displaced. They shall have the right to participate fully and equally in public affairs at all levels and have equal access to public services.

2. Competent authorities have the duty and responsibility to assist returned and/or resettled internally displaced persons to recover, to the extent possible, their property and possessions which they left behind or were dispossessed of upon their displacement. When recovery of such property and possessions is not possible, competent authorities shall provide or assist these persons in obtaining appropriate compensation or another form of just reparation.

My finding

See my comment under principle No. 21 above. Government does not care in Nigeria. There is a total disconnect between the public and the government in Nigeria. Expecting government to comply with this principle of resettlement is literally calling for a revolution in Nigerian governance in the last 21 years. Government just does not care. There is no governance in Nigeria. People are at the mercy of an often hostile government at the center. The satellite state governments are dependent on the central government for everything and are constantly in a race to survive impeachment, so there is very little that can be expected at either at the center or at the periphery. This explains the vicious circle of violence and IDPs and uneasy peace: it is literally living in a jungle.

Principle 30

All authorities concerned shall grant and facilitate for international humanitarian organizations and other appropriate actors, in the exercise of their respective

mandates, rapid and unimpeded access to internally displaced persons to assist in their return or resettlement and reintegration.

My finding

I refer to my immediately preceding submission. Humanitarian NGOs local or otherwise can only do so much in the absence of a supportive government. There are foundational challenges that keep pulling Nigeria into chaos and this cannot be solved by cosmetic NGO relief. There is a need for an overhaul of governance; there is a need for good governance, governance that sees individual Nigerians as its first and principal responsibility.

Conclusion: Lessons learnt and Suggestions

An examination of the data collected for this research leads to the conclusion that to prevent and better manage IDPs related problems, government and relevant NGOs and IGOs need to consider the following suggestions:

1. Economic empowerment of young people so that they would not be attracted to violence.
2. Effective policing – round the clock security in all nooks and crannies of the community so that people would be deterred from committing violence with impunity.
3. Government respect for the rule of law to set a good example for people. The incidence of executive disregard and disrespect for the judiciary and judicial orders should stop, to avoid decline into anarchy.

4. There should be a clear separation of state and religion: politicians and political leaders should desist from using religion and ethnicity to divide and rule the ordinary people.
5. Education of youth. Government should reduce the cost of education for the public. I cannot justify why any child should beg to go to school in Nigeria at any level, primary, secondary or tertiary.
6. Religious bigotry should be contained by the government.
7. Only experts and professionals should be given the task of managing IDPs.
8. Young drug addicts should be rehabilitated.
9. Street begging should be stopped.
10. Create a system that rewards diligence among the young.
11. Empower religious and opinion leaders to transform to standing community mediators. They have the weight and respect of large segments of the population. This respect has been used to foment hate and violence. They must now be trained to make peace, preach love, tolerance and happy coexistence.
12. Prompt action in times of conflict. The current situation where a violent communal conflict could go on for 2 days before government takes action is intolerable.
13. Give conflict resolution (mediation) training to the police rank and file. IDPs hide in police and army barracks. It also serves a prevention purpose. Many conflicts are referred by ordinary people to the police.

Knowledge of mediation will empower the police to solve thousands of civil conflicts that could spark communal violence.

14. Promotion of inter-faith and multi-ethnic dialogue.
15. Adequate monitoring of distribution of relief materials and aid to avoid diversion.
16. The United Nations agencies should make the UN Guidelines on Internal Displacement a household name. Its principles are the basic non-negotiable benchmark for action but they cannot be complied with nor enforced if they remain only in the books. Publicity of the principles will save many people. The UN also ought to review the principles to give itself specific functions, not only of sanctioning non-compliance but also of playing specific role in bringing relief to IDPs.
17. NGOs, backed by government, are best suited to lead in the management of IDPs. This will ensure effective reach and care, proper monitoring and accountability.

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Annexures

FIELD RESEARCH DOCUMENTING THE CHALLENGES FACED BY
GOVERNMENT, IGOs AND NGOs IN ADDRESSING PROBLEMS OF
INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPs) IN NIGERIA, WITH A FOCUS ON
THE FEBRUARY/MAY 2000 KADUNA CONFLICT, AND ELICITING
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE BETTER MANAGEMENT OF IDPs IN
NIGERIA

CONDUCTED BY OLAJIDE OLAGUNJU
(BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY)

IN COLLABORATION WITH

ANIEDI OKURE, OP

STELLA OJEME
(WORLD PEACE INSTITUTE)

AND

CORPORATE MEDIATORS

Questionnaire for Internally Displaced Persons
(Confidential)

Questionnaire for Internally Displaced Persons
(re: February/May 2000 Communal Conflict in Kaduna)

1. (a) Before, during or after the February-May 2000 violent conflict in Kaduna, did you leave Kaduna; or did you move to a different part of Kaduna?

- (b) Where did you go and when?

2. (a) If you left the city, why and under what circumstances did you leave the city?

(b) How did you manage to leave the city?

(c) Who helped you to evacuate from the city? Was it individuals or Government agencies or NGOs?

(Confidential)

(d) Where did you go? Why did you go there? (If you are now someplace else, how did you get here?) Why did you choose to settle here?

3. How many members of your family left the city?

4. What was your occupation in the city?

5. What kind of jobs (after you left/first displacement) are you now engaged in?
Or, if none what are your sources of livelihood now? Are you better off now than when you left the city?

(Confidential)

6. Who helped/assisted you in settling in your new location?

7. Do you know other people who were in similar situation with you? If so, how many?

8. Do you know people who have moved from the Kaduna to other cities such as Lagos and Abuja? Why did they move to the particular city they evacuated to?

10. What role did the government agencies (police, Soldiers etc), Religious/community/political leaders and NGOs play during the conflict?

11. If you have moved back to Kaduna, when, how, and why did you return to Kaduna?

12. If you have not moved back to Kaduna, why have you not returned to

Kaduna?

13. Would you return to Kaduna if government took steps to improve security or economic opportunity and ethnic/religious coexistence there?

14. What other steps do you think the government should take to help you return?

15. What is your religious affiliation?

(Confidential)

16. Which ethnic group do you belong to?

17. What is your gender: Male_____

Female_____

18. Do you have any other comments to make?

Thank you for answering the above questions.

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(Confidential)

FIELD RESEARCH DOCUMENTING THE CHALLENGES FACED BY
GOVERNMENT, IGOs AND NGOs IN ADDRESSING PROBLEMS OF
INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPs) IN NIGERIA, WITH A FOCUS ON
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Questionnaire for IGOs, NGOs & Government Agencies
(Confidential)

Questionnaire for IGOs, NGOs & Government Agencies
(re: February/May 2000 Communal Conflict in Kaduna)

1. Would you say that there was a problem with the management/treatment of

(Confidential)

5. Are you aware of how many people left the city and where did they go? What percentage of people left the city?

6. How many of them came back to Kaduna?

7. What do you know about what government has done so far at the national and local levels to manage the IDPs?

(Confidential)

8. What political or social initiatives have been taken to address the IDP situation?

8. Do you think the IDP problem, if any, is a security, economic or a humanitarian issue?

(Confidential)

9. Are you aware of any specific plans for future initiatives to protect IDPs? Do you think they will adequately address the problem?

10. Do you have ideas about how to resolve the problem of managing IDPs?

(Confidential)

11. Do you think governmental agencies, IGOs and NGOs are now better equipped and prepared to manage IDPs? If so, to what extent? If not, why not?
