Effect of Insecurity and Desertification on the socio-economic development of selected states in West Africa

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Abstract

This study investigated the effect of Insecurity and Desertification on the socio-economic development of selected states in West Africa. The study pointed out that the challenge of desertification and increasing insecurity has remained very palpable in the global arena most especially within the West African Region. The region though tremendously blessed with huge human and natural resources but adversely impeded in terms of socio-economic development and has remained perpetually poor and underdeveloped with the issues of socio-economic quagmire necessitated by the effects of insecurity vis a vis the challenge of desertification and mal-administration. Desertification as revealed in this paper does not just happen rather it is caused by a combination of factors that change over time and these factors vary within localities. It is against this backdrop that this paper attempted an investigation into the hydra-headed effects of Insecurity and Desertification on the socio-economic development of the states within this region. The paper adopted environmental theory and employed the qualitative methods. The study discovered that several factors promote insecurity and lack of socio-economic development, and some of these include: land-use patterns and practices, climate-related processes, population pressure, policy factors, corruption, mal-administration and misappropriation of public fund, lack of policy implementation, etc. The study therefore, recommends urgent need to tackle the issue of lack of development and its security implication, unemployment, poor education, excessive poverty, scarcity of basic services as well as the rights of women and socio-economic quagmire and

eradication of all forms of human rights violation and abuse within the West African sub-region.

Key Words: Insecurity, Desertification, socio-economic, development, West Africa

Introduction

Interestingly, according to the Special Report from the Millennium 2000, the West African sub-region with an area of the highest dynamism of desertification- has tremendously witnessed one of the worst states of deterioration in political, social, economic, conditions with a large degree of humanitarian effects and consequences as well as lack of food security and human security. Statistics revealed that more than 18 million population figure of people are at risk of hunger and starvation in this region due to the prevalence of desertification and environmental damage cumulating to internal displacement.

The challenge of desertification and increasing insecurity has remained very palpable in the global arena. Desertification as we know it does not just happen. It is caused by a combination of factors that change over time and vary by locals. There are direct factors which include, among others; land-use patterns and practices, and climate-related processes. Indirect factors include population pressure, socio-economic factors, policy factors and among others.

Climate change as a very topical issue has given rise to desertification ranging from greenhouse emissions, ozone layer depletion, global warming, flooding to droughts. Climate change caused by droughts, desertification, reduces plant population which retains nutrients in soil and it further prevents the erosion but due to the impact of the dryness through over using of the land for farming as well as in excess grazing, Kabara (2013), Oucho (2010), Vikram (2009). The truth is that if actions consistent with the preservation of the environment as stipulated in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of United Nations are not are not adequately adopted/taken, the world might sooner than later degenerate to a devastating deplorable state, posits the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification; (UNCCD, 2022, UNEP 2019). There is an association between the environmental, physical, psychological, economic, social, cultural, political,

military, and intellectual aspects of the human. There is a natural tendency in man to desire to live in an environment where the topmost desire priority of man in life must be considered very pivotal which includes; which is the very organic existential attributes of man's basic need namely food, clothe and shelter in a very good environment whereby food provision is available (an agrarian environment), a habitable place and availability of shelter. In this context, desertification and internal displacement cannot merely be understood as an environmental or even economic problem or political challenge but also a problem of security implications with huge humanitarian consequences. Desertification as a product of climate change is one of the major threats of the 21st century and poses a world problem not just to the natural habitats/environment, but also to socio-political, socio-cultural, socio-economic as well as geopolitical conditions and human lives. Desertification refers to total land degradation in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas resulting from various factors including climatic variations and excess human activities. This concept is equally a process by which a vegetation in a dry-lands that is arid and semi-arid lands, such as grasslands or shrub lands decreases and eventually disappears.

Worthy of noting also is the concept of internal displacement, which according to Oucho (2010), is a trend that is quite different from refugee which is commonly used but also inadequate and misleading in the context of environmental migration and displacement. Oftentimes, migration usually is highly influenced by the desire and adventure for better and greener pastures. People move from an environment of the scarcity of water, droughts, and environmentally degraded regions to areas with an abundance of life, green pastures, etc. The Refugee Convention of 1951 describes refugees as people who have migrated from an international border when running away from war or persecution while displacement or climate-induced displacement are those migrants who are compelled to run away or leave their habitual place of residence due to ecological or climatic variation.

Under the guiding principles on internal displacement, IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons) according to UN, 1998 are:

> "persons or group of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed

> conflicts, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human made disasters, who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border"

These groups of people do not belong to the group of persons legally termed as refugees in the Convention relating to the status of refugees. According to Oucho (2010), climate-induced or internally displaced do not, as such fall under this definition, and often do not cross international borders. Likewise, climatic variation and desertification leads to displacement, though not a primary factor but in various ways many drivers among others may compel an individual or family to flee their homes as a result of forced migration and displacement which are major drivers of internal displacement as expatiated in the course of this study. Starting from prehistoric times to this millennium era, the environment has played consistently major roles in the affairs of nations and regions. The impact of climate change is already been felt having its toils across the regions and it is estimated to increase in the coming years, where a significant population of the people of the region under our study are already in danger of hunger and starvation. The security implications of these challenges cannot be over-emphasized according to United Nations on Environmental Program (UNEP), 2017.

On the other hand, the politics of internal displacement has not only local, national security but elements of transnational and trans- cultural impact in scope. This also has some significant role in development and globalization at all levels. The pursuit for peace, security and development can be hampered when people are internally displaced in the course of the challenges posed by desertification. The challenges of desertification have impact on the economic, political, social, and military links which are integrally related and have a way of influencing the security of the people whether at the state, national, or transnational levels. Desertification is still an environmentally concerned issue and challenge in Nigeria particularly in the Northern of Nigeria prompting this study, the main Frontline States are as namely; Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Jigawa, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto, Yobe, and Zamfara being the 11 frontline states affected by desertification. NBS 2021 assessment and report. There is an association, a connection between environment and politics which means that there is a combination of geography and politics which pen ultimately gives rise

to geopolitics of internal displacement within the selected states of the region under our study.

Across the globe, the issue of environment and its implication of politics in the camps of IDPs cannot be overestimated as inmates are exposed to poor health standards, low standard of living, rape among women, sexual abuse, prostitution, lack or disruption of education, excessive poverty, hunger and starvation, psychological trauma and other issues that come with displacement and of course abandonment by government and its agencies as experienced by the internally displaced persons across the region is overwhelming on women, the aged and children who are the most vulnerable. The issues of the environment have some elements of sociological, political, economic, cultural, and agricultural windows and geopolitical implications on the community. That is to state that there are economic, political, scientific, environmental, and socio-cultural effects of desertification which lead to soil degradation and equally lead to economic, and socio-political strife as well as developmental quagmire. Beyond acting as a driver for migration and displacement, desertification in some cases is caused by the phenomena, in particular by the exacerbation of resource scarcity among host communities leading to extreme poverty. Note also that the effect of desertification on crop growth cannot be over-emphasized as this has led to some kind of resettlement as the best option. A typical example is the case of Fulani herdsmen clash with other host communities. For instance, beyond the West African region, the 2016 New York Declaration recognizes this threat and addresses the necessity to assist receiving states in the protection and rehabilitation of the environment as it is affected by large movements of displaced people and refugees. The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) 2021; desertification as land degradation in arid, semi-arid dry sub-humid areas because of various factors including climatic variations and desertification, been one of such climatic variations which is equally taking its toils on most developing countries.

Another factor is population increase which puts pressure on communities to expand the space of land under cultivation thereby forcing grazers, and other people to move to marginal lands. It is pertinent to note that the use of marginal lands for farming and grazing has necessitated desertification in extremely dry

areas or erosion or flooding in coastline regions. Furthermore, desertification has become one of the most endemic crises of high proportion that is currently affecting an estimated 100 to 200 million people globally; threatening lives , properties, agrarian lifestyle, agro-productivities and livelihoods, according to Adeel, Safriel, Niemeijer, & White, (2005) which invariably indicates that many are at the danger of hunger and starvation in this affected region. The number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) is rising dramatically and drastically because of climate change and the devastating effect of desertification in the last decades which is expected to increase in the coming years. These factors are the reason for this study as well as the inherent impacts of the desertification within the selected states of this region.

Migration and displacement, when driven by desertification, usually result in resource competition between newly arrived environmentally displaced and the host community. According to Burrows and Kinney (2016), Oucho (2010) this often occurs in a context when climate change has already led to resource scarcity to the added burden of a growing population. This may also contribute to security tension and even conflict between those in control of resources and those without access, though such tension is typically multidimensional as well as multifaceted and not solely a result of inward migration. For example, growing water scarcity in Jordan has been linked to the influx of Syrian refugees following the advent of the Syrian crisis in 2011/2012. Also, the issue of Fulani/herdsmen clashes in most Nigerian communities are as a result of the influx of cattle rearers to the affected host communities on account of climate change. Desertification-induced displacement and violence/conflict cause crisis for the displaced persons and the receiving states that is the host residents such that was experienced in Bangladesh that eventually turned into regional tension and insurgency, McAdam, (2010, p 105). As well as the one has been experienced in Nigeria, Ruga/National Livestock Transformation Plan (NLTP) brouhaha, herdsmen/farmers clashes, internal displacement of persons, NLTP, etc. However, cause of desertification such as biotic processes, variations in solar radiation received by the earth, and some other drivers and certain activities have equally been identified as basic motivators of ongoing climate change also known as global warming, greenhouse emission, desertification etc.

Climate change means changes in the earth's climate especially those said to be

produced by global warming (this refers to changes in earth's climate). This means change in statistical distribution of weather patterns which has continued to exist for an expanded period of time (i.e decades to millions of years). Accordingly, climate change may refer to a change in average weather conditions or in the true variation of weather within the context of longer-term coverage conditions. Climate change can be referred to as climatic trends at any point in earth's history among which there are global warming, ozone layer depletion, acidic rain falls, green house emission, etc. In 2013, the Intergovernmental Panel and Climate Change (IPCC) 5th Assessment report concluded that it is extremely likely that human influence has been the dominant cause of the observed warming since the mid-20th Century. The largest human influence has been the green house emission of gases; such as carbon dioxide, neutron oxide, methane etc. It is, however, pertinent to observe that climate change and its associated impacts differ from region to region all over the globe. Some of the already existing and on-going impacts are expansion of desert/desertification, rising sea level, temperature, changing precipitation, extreme weather occurrences, such as heat waves, heavy rainfall, flooding, excessive fall, oceanic acidification, droughts, and species extinction. Nations that are parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change [UNFCCC], posit that possible societal responses to ameliorating the challenge of desertification and its geopolitical implication globally have not received adequate attention; however, developing countries when they are getting industrialized are under pressure to increase outputs to meet growing population without attention given to environmentally friendly processes.

Of particular interest to this study is a major driver of migration and displacement is desertification which often than not gives rise to internal displacement. This study dealt with desertification as an aspect of climate change which has pen ultimately given rise to internal displacement where millions of people in the sub-Saharan Africa region are adversely affected and in particular West Africa sub region with the attendant security implications of these challenges across the region of sub-Sahara Africa.

Basically, the problem in this research is that there is paucity of information on the

burning challenges/role of desertification, and its security implications on internal displacement in selected States of West Africa region. The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), (2016), "argues that over 1.5 billion of the world population figures are dependent on land that has become extremely depraved out of the which, 74% are poor from the 3rd world nations and 169 out of 194 parties are affected by desertification".

- The West Africa Sub-region is confronted with multi-complex environmental challenge which pose as serious threats and menace within the selected states of West Arica.
- Prevalence of desertification
- Herdsmen/Farmers clashes, Grazing law brouhaha
- Security implication
- Internal displacement
- Rise in herders' insurgency/terrorism, economic/developmental quagmire
- Threats to sustainable development, poor agrarian livelihoods/human right abuse

Across the globe 25% that is 12.m hectares of land is highly degraded while 20 hectares of land in Nigeria per annum is desertified, according to Global Environmental Facility (GEF), & UNEP, 2017. The IPCC report from Internal Displacement Monitoring Committee (IDMC) and the NRC 2018, indicates that about 30.6 million people are displaced within these countries meaning that more than 80,000 people are displaced daily from the statistics. This figure was corroborated by the Director of IDMC, Alexander Bilak of the UN, 2018. The degree of displacement is saddening which portrays that a new approach be adopted in addressing this threat with drastic policy implementation. This figure is quite alarming which calls r e s e a r c h a n d for drastic response with possible policies to ameliorate the consequences of the menace and threat of desertification, security and internal displacement of persons. The intricacies of the challenge of desertification and environmental degradation where more and more migration and internal displacement of not just persons but livestock within the region of West Africa has seriously escalated debate in the last decade.

According to the UNEP (2018) more than 70% of cultivable lands have become highly degraded and there is projection that by 2020-2025 that most nations within

this region of Sahel may suffer from hunger, starvation, extreme poverty, with severe/acute water shortage as a result of desertification impact and security implication coupled with the challenge of Internal Displacement which calls for drastic research study.

A cursory look at literature reveals that an estimation of 45% of the total land area of Nigeria is prone to desert and about 70% cultivable land is palpably desertified. In Nigeria over 40 million people are affected by desertification each year, this poses a serious threat to lives, sustainable livelihood, agrarian lifestyles, developmental projects, plants, animals, and human lives alike. Well over 21 million are abandoned to their fate in most of the IDP camps. The following countries are affected within the region under study:

- Chad:15 million people affected by the impact of desertification
- Niger: 21 million people are affected by desertification
- Mali: 54 million people are affected by desertification
- Nigeria: 40 million people are affected by desertification

The United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) 2017 calls for World Economic concern. 2/3 of the World population shall face acute water shortage by 2020 according to statistics from NBS, 135 million placed at the risk of been uprooted and internally displaced and by 2020 many nations will suffer hunger and starvation by reason of desertification and its attendant impacts posits Mingst (2004).

Suffice it to say that in this study delved into the area of challenges of desertification as a driver of several worsening political, economic, social with huge humanitarian consequences coupled with security implication and the menace of internal displacement in West Africa region. Categorically the issue of desertification was researched in this study in order to bring to the fore that desertification is one of the major factors that give rise to internal displacement where people are forced to migrate from their regions, farmlands, as well as the issue of herdsman in Nigeria, grazing and forced migration which more often than

not result to loss of lands to desertification thereby forcing them to move in search of a greener lands. The herdsmen-farmers crisis is a consequence of the search for grazing space in Nigeria that has continuously led to the recent crisis among residential farmers with herdsmen in places like Osun, Enugu, Bornu, Benue, Delta, Edo States etc. arises from the movement (forced migration) from the far north (east or central) to south-south, southeast or southwest, in search of means of livelihood for cattle, greener land for herds, etc.

Theoretical Framework

Environmental Theory

Environmental theorists Harold and Margaret Sprout (1972) made a very important contribution to the study of international relations explorative of the ecological perspective stressing the extent to which human activities affect the uneven distribution of scarce resources, stressing the fact that environmental challenges matter in relationship among nations and within nations. In contrast, Meyerhoff (2003) in his work argues that political scientists have taken into account social factors that mediate between scarcity and conflict knowing that with conflict one may be tempted to neglect to theorize the social factors that build the environment and its links to scarcity that can lead to conflict, rationalize inequalities and be able to scrutinize the environment itself. These valuable views but flawed by the difference from political ecology, they argued.

Homer-Dixon argues that there is relationship between environmental scarcity, grievances over poverty and inequality and evil strife. They theorized that there should be intervening political variable because to them, environmental scarcity can lead to strife and it is possible where there are both state negligence and individual opportunities to overcome collective conflict as experienced in environmental theory which is core in the discus of climatic variation and desertification deference (Peluso & Watts (2003), Vikram (2009).The significance of spatial organization or environment in international relationships of boundaries can never be over-emphasized; the sovereignty, geography, boundary, and some internalized strategic areas are vital in this research. Environment affects the quality of individual and collective lives as well as political, economic, and natural resources, including population, energy, and

pollution aspects of the inhabitants; these are all integrally related, according to Harold and Margaret Sprouts (1957). Environmental theory, however, has realist tendencies in its underpinnings. The major assumptions of realism include that: Human nature is evil and susceptible to violence which breeds conflicts in the international system or among a comity of states, for example, Morgenthau (1973), etc, actually posits that there is no harmony of interest among states in the international system, moral principles cannot be applied to political actions and decisions, power should be acquired and consolidated, control over the might and actions of others (Morgenthau, (1973, and Deutch (1982), the capability of states are crucial and can promote peace, security, immutable factors of geography and natural resources promotes peace, security. Hence Carl Clausewitz postulated that war (crisis, conflict, clashes) is the continuation of politics or commerce. Note that geographically regions with internationalized choke points are naturally key players in international intercourse as they are drivers or instrumentalities of national power, South Africa's Cape of Good-hope (an international choke point) has made this nation co-opted into the Western ideology. The theoretical framework of environmental theory states that one's environment defines the nature and manner of politics of that given region. That is to say that both human and non-human environments all has impacts on people. The proponents of this theory; Harold and Margaret Sprouts (1957) made very useful contributions to the work of international relations, basically explorative of the ecological perspective exposing the extent to which human activities have affected the uneven distribution of scarce natural resources. Their work played a key role in introducing insights into geopolitics which later became known as "foreign policy analysis", both of them are proponents of this theory, among other exponents of environmental theory. The struggle and scramble of Fulani herdsmen and the politics of Grazing Law (and its attendant security implications) in Nigeria's politics of environment and dominion is typical of the influence of environment on the politics of a region.

IPCC, (2023) Assessment reports that as a matter of urgency the repair and protection of the environment is central to the preservation of the environment, (FEPA: Federal Environmental Protection Agency) in Nigeria and other societies including industrialized ones which are all exposed to proliferating damage and hazards from diverse sources, environment, and others, Harold & Margaret

Sprouts (1979).

Globally, the United Nations Conference on Human Environment (UNCHE) is armed with the steps to tackle the challenges of desertification which have been one of the major drivers of hazards and damage to the environment. The Sprouts postulated that factors that are causing international environmental problems such as climate change; which the duo consistently maintained a conviction that environmentally oriented research should be recognized. It was pertinent to note that ecological framework serves as an acceptable starting point for a general study in international relations. The impact of human beings, population, growth dynamics, natural resources, other flora, fauna in the ecosystem and technology cannot be over-emphasized in this study. In this case the ecological perspective calls for attention to the fact that humans depend upon the sustaining environment within which life evolved. Nevertheless, there are some elements of concepts of geopolitics in the interaction between the geography (environment) and the politics therein. The major assumptions of realism include that: Human nature is evil, and susceptible to violence which breeds conflicts in the international system or among comity of states, there is no harmony of interest among states in the international system, moral principles cannot be applied to political actions and decisions, power should be acquired and consolidated, capability of states are crucial and can promote peace, security, immutable factors of geography and natural resources promotes peace, security. Major proponents of realism include Morgenthau (1973). Hence Clausewitz postulated that war (crisis, conflict, clashes) is the continuation of politics/commerce.

Summarily, the concept of "environmental refugees" arose mainly in connection to desertification- a situation in which climate oscillation and desert-like dry lands have caused deforestation and droughts. Yet internally displaced persons may not really and or necessarily be compared to the same as development-induced migrants, disaster-induced migrants, ecological refugees' also known as environmental refugees.

Concept of Desertification

Desertification is a process by which a geographic region becomes a desert; this

change may result from natural climate changes and or by human activities. According To Green Facts on Health and the Environment (2021),

> "Desertification refers to the persistent degradation of dry land ecosystems by climatic variations and human activities".

It occurs on all continents (except in Antarctica) and affects the livelihoods of millions of people including a large proportion of the poor in dry lands. This menace of desertification is like an invisible frontline threat which situation is not peculiar to Sub-Saharan Africa where half a billion inhabitants are rural agriculturalists but it has become a constant threat to peoples' livelihoods, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification & the convention Framework International for tackling desertification, land degradation, droughts and flood 169 out of 194 parties have declared that all these are affected by desertification.
The challenge characterized in many rural communities across the regions of West Africa in terms of violence, crisis, and out challenge break of clashes and conflict between resident farmers and their counterparts herdsmen /grazers are necessitated by the declining legal framework and weak governmental capacities which is required but reduced by desertification, security and internal displacement across the region leading to existential challenge this is a silent invisible factor fueling crisis across the region. Desertification as a result of climate change has highly destabilized some rural communities across the global-in sighting violence and war, crisis. The challenge characterized in many rural communities across the region in terms of violence, insurgency, crisis, and outbreak of clashes and conflicts between resident farmers and herdsmen or grazers are necessitated by the declining legal framework and weak governmental capacities which is required but reduced by desertification, security and internal displacement across the region leading to existential challenges such as witnessed in Chad region.

The (1969) AU crafted the convention on the specific aspects of Refugees problems in Africa and also underlined the terminology "Refugee"

> "to apply to every person who due to some external occupation, aggression, foreign dominium or subjugation and military incursion or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or whole of his country of origin or land of nativity is forced to leave

> his place of habitual residence in order to seek refuge in another place outside his land of naturality/nativity."

At the regional level, ECOWAS (Economic Community of West Africa States) where both Nigeria, Chad, Niger, and Mali were enlisted as members established on May 28th, 1975 as a regional organization also aimed at combating any form of environmental degradation and its attendant effects (as part of its objective) including desertification whether they were caused by a combination of factors that change over time, both direct factor such as land use patterns, practices, climate related processes and indirect factors such population pressure, socio-economic factors and policy factors.

Grazing Law as a panacea to alleviate the effects of desertification in the frontline States of Northern Nigeria over animal grazing as instituted by the FGN is yet to realize this set objective as this has triggered many more vices in the society. Unfortunately, most of the states declined to apply to the institution of Open-Grazing rather those opted for the prohibition of Open-Grazing and establishment of Ranches. These differences have led to continual clashes between the herders and farmers. Not only within the affected states but extended to other neighboring states and spreading exponentially to other neighboring countries.

The United Nations and AU seem to underscore human factors to ignore environmental factors and drivers which are excluded from the above definition which implies that desertification and environmental hazards have not attracted much attention from the UNHCR and the AU as Conventional refugees and IDPs-who are currently dominating intra-extra African migration for some decades now which seem to have contributed to the impact necessitating forced migration within the Sub-Saharan region, (Oucho, 1996;2002) due to desertification. While IDPs according to Oucho, (1998),

> Internally Displaced Person are referred to as a person or group of persons who have been forced or compelled to move out of places of habitation (place of living) their places of abode and their habitual residence in particular so as to avoid the resultant armed conflicts, or wars, or situations of general violence or violation of human rights or natural or human made environmental disasters,

forced migration of people who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border.

This is distinguished from refugees the human being crossing territorial borders by refugees and IDPs without crossing the border but within the territorial border to the same territorial border.

Insurgency/security implication due to desertification

In far north region of Cameroun, security conditions have deteriorated, but as a region, the adoption of the MNJTF (Multinational Joint Task Force) has been used as a framework within the region to tackle the challenge of insecurity in most of West Africa such as Cameroun, Niger, Chad, Mali, Nigeria, etc. It is a combined multinational formation with military units mandated to bring an end to Boko Haram insurgency in Chad, Benin, Cameroun, Niger, and Nigeria. The influence of insurgency in driving displacement is also linked to the prevalence of desertification in the selected states which has been one of the triggers of internal displacement. It is worthy to note that in Nigeria, Chad, Cameroun, Niger, and Mali there is a total of 193,475 persons registered as displaced 30,000 persons in Nigeria, etc About 2.193,769 current population of displaced persons in the region majorly because of insurgency which also is not an art of insurgency but orchestrated by the menace of desertification leading to constant conflict/aggression, crisis across the region. Eg herders/farmers clashes, herders/wild game crisis, or the hunters/farmers conflict, Fulani herdsmen/farmers clashes which are common to Mali and Nigeria. Statistics related to Nigeria refugees referring to those in 3 main asylum countries according to UNHCR indicate that about 20,000 persons are already dead as a result of insurgency.

Table 1: Countries of asylum with their registered displaced persons

S/N	Location	Source	Data	population

1	Niger	UNHCR/Govt	30th June, 2018	118,786
2	Chad	UNHCR/Govt	31st Oct, 2018	101,404
3	Cameroun	UNHCR/Govt	30th Nov, 2018	11319
4	Nigeria	IOM/NEMA	31st Oct, 2018	231,504

Source: IDPs in the Lake Chad Basin IOM Government, NEMA as at October 31st, 2018 is totaled 2.537,992 while Nigerian refuges 231,504 according to Nigerian National Bureau of Statistics.

Note that of 101,404 from the above chart of Nigerian refuges in Cameroun, 99,489 are in the far north region, displaced by Boko Haram insurgency while the rest is from desertification related issues, (though politicized). An IDP camp within the UN hub in Ngamboru, Ngala Local Government Area of Borno State, North East, Nigeria was raided recently according to the nation online. And about 60 persons kidnapped in Cameroun by the Boko Haram. This has sparked up series of insecurity tendencies within the region.

Table 2: IDP Population by Country

S/N	Country of Origin	Source	Data Date	Population
1	Nigeria	IOM,NEMA	31/10/2018	2,026,602
2	Cameroun	IOM	15/9/2018	244,347
3	Chad	IOM	31/10/2018	162.755
4	Niger	Govt	30/6/2018	100,288

Source: IOM, NEMA (2018) Note: Chad, 162,755 persons displaced by insurgency and in IDPs is 124,078; Nigeria: 1.918, 508, IDPs 94% are displaced by insurgency in the North Eastern Nigeria.

In essence the insurgency can as well be triggered as a result of systemic frustration according to Kenneth Grundy which can be linked to economic deprivation, cultural heterogeneity, closed system of governance, lack of education, unemployment, excessive poverty, total inequality, climatic variations as well as distribution or allocation of scarce resources etc. These are indices of lack of development of the universal sustainable millennium development goals (SMDGs) which when elusive becomes a leading force for the people to rise up

with arms and agitations thereby leading to insurgency, militancy, banditry in the attempt to make their voice to be heard. What it entails therefore is that there are IDPs necessitated by desertification as a climate change challenge; noting the fact that:

> "one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter" as postulated by Alapiki 2016.

The post 2015 Development Plan of Millennium Development Goal (MDGs now SDGs-Sustainable Development Goals) related to intervention should be co-opted & followed as enshrined in the climate action, protecting of natural environment & conserving resources for sustainable development. It is pertinent therefore to state that insurgency and insecurity are contributory factors to the challenge of desertification within this region.

There are various numbers of IDPs (the total no of IDPs due to conflicts and violence are 1.707.000. IDP Camps in Nigeria among which are: in Abuja there are about four IDPs Camps; the Area 1 camp, the Kuje camp, the Lugbe camp, and the New Kuchingoro camp. In Lagos there is the Ibeju Lekki camp which was established 1st quarter of 2016 by the Federal Government to cater for migrants and internally displaced persons, while in Borno state over 2million people are displaced in the State 1.1 in 2016, 1.2 in 2017 and 2.0 million in 2018 and still counting especially with the recent upsurge of Fulani herdsmen effect. There are 32 IDP camps in Borno, 16 located in Maiduguri (130,000), one of such been the Gubio Camp which was provided with a learning space by a Church (body of Christ Embassy) and 16 in the LGAs, they are the highest in Northern region. In Taraba State there is only one in Gassol LGA, etc. truly desertification and its effect have so much far-reaching impacts on the internally displaced persons across the states.

A good number of Internally Displaced Persons due to conflicts and violence as at December 2017 totaled 279,000 while the total number of internally displaced persons as a result of climatic variation such as natural disasters, desertification between1stJanuary–31stDecember 2017 is 122,000, together all other figures, making it rise to 1.707,000 and many more were affected as the humanitarian situation worsened due to intensified conflict/clashes in the Middle Belt (Benue)

involving herders and farmers, displacement figure rose to 417,000 to make 1.707,000 in the beginning of 2018 according to statistics, NBS, 2018. It is pertinent to note that this figure is actually highly underestimated as there were access restrictions and other challenges due to the incessant attack by the Boko Haram insurgency around the zone making it difficult to truly get the actual figure.

Nigeria is criticized for her political instability, ethnic sectionalism, communal tensions rampant corruption and embezzlement and misappropriation of public funds in the oil sector especially. There are multiple advantages, however, to establish itself as one of the essentials powers of 21stC in Africa, Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa, a cultural center, 2nd economic Power, 3rd military power of the continent but a strong factor of stability in the sub region of west Africa on both security and developmental issues. In the whole of West Africa, desertification is said to be happening at an estimated 20,000 hectares per year according to statistics, according to UNEP 2018. Desertification has been caused by many factors that have necessitated the rise in pillaging, killing, banditry, hunger, starvation, and poverty; the more desertification - the more poverty-stricken – the more desertification prone the area - the more the people become poor.

Areas affected by Desertification & Regions with significant populations of IDPs across the globe:

Table 3: Population of IDPs

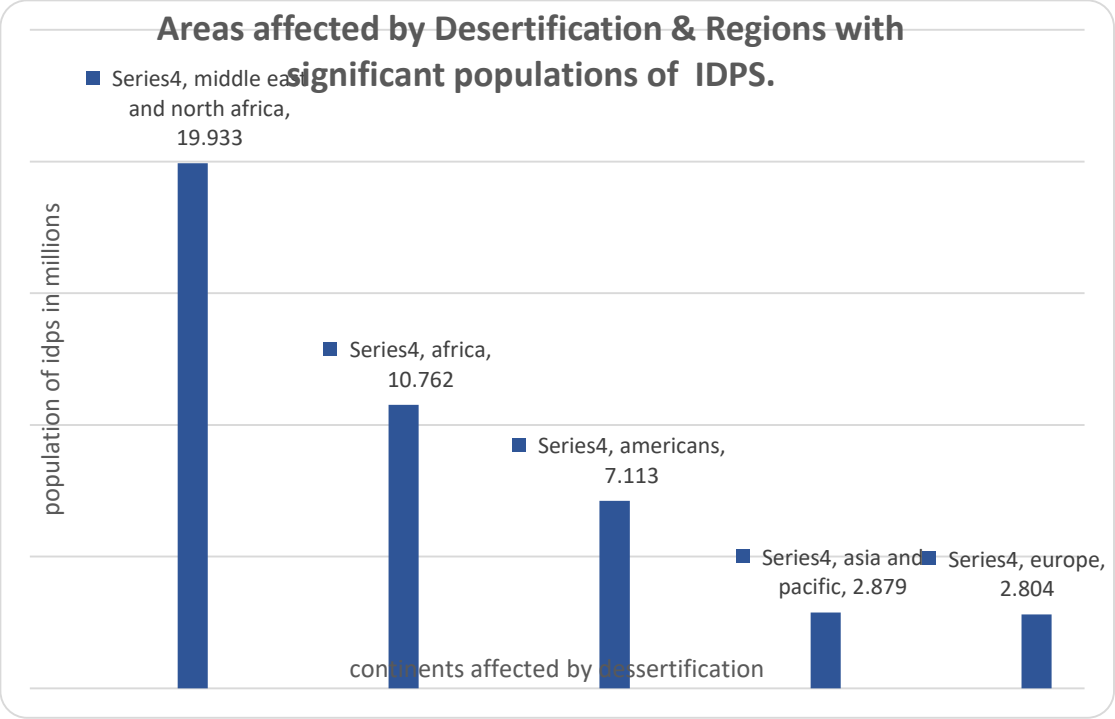
S/N	Continents	Population of IDPs
1	**Middle East & North Africa**	**19.933 million**
2	**Africa**	**10.762 million**
3	**America**	**7.113 million**
4	**Asia & Pacific**	**2.879 million**
5	**Europe**	**2.804 million**

Source: IDMC, UNHCR 2017.

In the region of sub-Sahara Africa as of 2017 about 40 million people were internally displaced due to generalized violence, armed conflict, clashes, crisis,

and violation of human rights according to IDMC, UNHCR 2017 including human rights abuse in IDPs; ex: Camp Guyaku in Gombi LGA of Adamawa; https//en.m.wikipedia.org.wiki world bank.

Table 4: Areas affected by desertification & regions

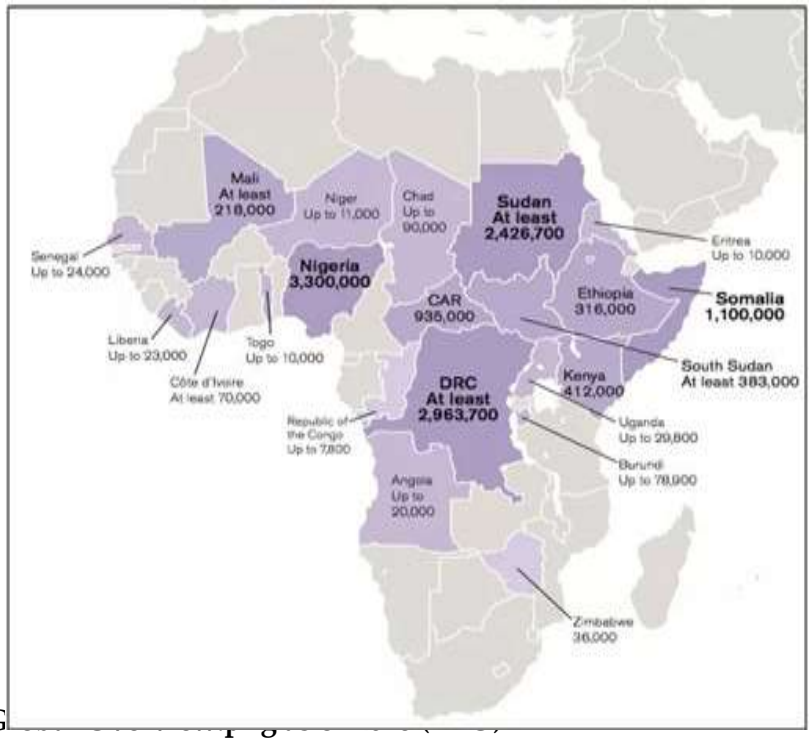


Source: IDMC 2017

The countries with the largest IDPs population are Syria 7.6 million, Columbia 6

million,
Iraq 3.6million, DRC 2.8 million, Sudan2 2million, Pakistan 1.4million, Nigeria1.2 million, and Somalia 1.1 million. The United Nations High Commission Refugees aids in monitoring and assessing worldwide IDPs through the Geneva-based Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) 2016, revealing that 70% -80% of all IDPs worldwide are basically women, the aged and children. About 320,000 are currently internally displaced. This portrays that most of these are the aged, women and children who suffer abandonment by either the NEMA or SEMA, those within school age drop out of school, many suffer sexual harassment, poor sanitary conditions and exposure to all manner of inhuman treatment, diseases, dangers and most often die in the process. Most of the IDPs camps in Nigeria have been hit by military men mistakenly. Others were kidnapped by the insurgent to be used for suicide bombing. http://www.idpproject.org.

Table 5: IDPs distribution in Africa



Source: G

Countries within the region affected by this threat and menace of environmental degradation desertification became prevalent in 2018

- Chad:15 million people affected by the impact of desertification
- Niger: 21 million people are affected by desertification
- Mali: 54 million people are affected by desertification
- Nigeria: 40 million people are affected by desertification

The United Nations Coverage & Press Release (2018) corroborated the statement postulated by the then Secretary General, Kofi Anan statement in 2006 a decade and some years ago:

> If no action is taken to tackle or curb the current trends suggest that by 2025 a projection of 60 million people could move from desertification areas of Sub Sahara Africa and Europe, and that worldwide 135 million people could be placed at the risk of being uprooted and internally displaced.

What is been said in the above statement corroborates the finding that if desertification is
not tackled; it will leave in its wake millions of people completely uprooted and many more at the risk of acute water shortage (which is a key natural resource very pivotal to animals, plants, and human lives), hunger and starvation, etc. which will eventually lead to worsening economic, political, insecurity, socio-cultural crisis conditions with huge humanitarian consequences.

What is the relationship between desertification and internal displacement?

Data on Desertification by Year

2014	38.2 million (the highest in global statistics since 1989)
2015	37.494 million
2017	6.9 million
2018	11.8 million

Climate Research Unit (CRU)

UNHCR registered IDPs and people in IDP-like situations by country/territory between 2014 and 2007

Country/territory	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007
Afghanistan	631,300	486,300	447,500	351,900	297,100	230,700	153,700	129,300

UNHCR registered IDPs and people in IDP-like situations by country/territory between 2014 and 2007

Country/territory	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007
Azerbaijan	609,000	600,300	599,200	592,900	586,000	603,300	686,600	686,600
Bosnia and Herzegovina	84,500	103,400	113,000	113,400	113,600	124,500	131,000	135,500
Burundi	78,900	78,900	78,800	157,200	100,000	100,000	100,000	13,900
CAR	894,400	51,700	105,200	192,500	197,000	197,000	197,000	147,000
Chad	19,800	90,000	124,000	131,000	170,500	166,700	178,900	112,700
Colombia	5,368,100	3,943,500	3,888,300	3,672,100	3,304,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000
Congo								3,500
Côte d'Ivoire	24,000	45,000	126,700	517,100	519,100	686,000	709,000	709,200
Croatia				2,100	2,300	2,500	2,900	4,000
DRC	2,963,800	2,669,100	1,709,300	1,721,400	2,050,700	1,460,100	1,317,900	1,075,300
Georgia	257,600	279,800	274,000	360,000	352,600	329,800	271,300	246,000
Iraq	954,100	1,131,800	1,332,400	1,343,600	1,552,000	2,647,300	2,481,000	1,834,400
Kenya			300,000	300,000	399,000	404,000	250,000	
Kyrgyzstan			163,900	80,000				
Lebanon							70,000	200,000
Libya	53,600	59,400	93,600					
Mali	254,800	227,900						
Montenegro							16,200	16,200
Myanmar	372,000	430,400	339,200	239,200	62,000	67,300	67,300	58,500
Nepal							50,000	100,000
Nigeria	360,000							
Pakistan	747,500	758,000	452,900	952,000	1,894,600	155,800	155,800	
Philippines	117,400	1,200	159,500	139,500				
Russia				75,400	79,900	91,500	263,700	158,900
Serbia	227,500	227,800	228,200	228,400	224,900	225,900	226,400	227,600
Somalia	1,133,000	1,133,000	1,356,800	1,463,800	1,392,300	1,277,200	1,000,000	400,000
South Sudan	331,100	345,700	209,700	223,700				
Sri Lanka	42,200	93,500	138,400	273,800	434,900	504,800	459,600	469,000
Sudan	1,873,300	1,873,300	2,033,100	1,602,200	1,079,100	1,201,000	1,225,000	1,325,200
Syria	6,520,800	2,016,500						

UNHCR registered IDPs and people in IDP-like situations by country/territory between 2014 and 2007

Country/territory	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007
East Timor						15,900	62,600	155,200
Uganda				125,600	428,600	853,000	1,236,000	1,814,900
Yemen	306,600	385,300	347,300	193,700	250,000	100,000	77,000	
Zimbabwe	60,100	57,900	54,300					

Source: UNHCR 2014 (IDMC) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internally_disp

According to Nnoli 1990, there is a propensity for climatic variation which can lead to desertification to cause interstate or community crises (the like of which we witnessed in Nigeria in Benue state in the wake of 2018 January) which has persisted as a result of forced movement of dozens of people across and within the state or community in West Africa (Nigeria, Cameroun, Mali, Niger), have had to rise as a region to deal not only with the effects/impacts of desertification as degradation of lands nomadism and livestock but also to be ready to tackle the influx of inmates seeking for IDPs camps to take refuge from in Mali, Niger, Nigeria etc as international boundaries. These internally displaced persons put extra pressure on the already weak economy, nascent democracy in the case of Nigeria weak social infrastructures, decrease in agro productive of the host countries or communities exposed to this kind of challenge. Also, population, pollution, NGOs and other actors are all contributory drivers of desertification and its attendant implication on Global Peace and Security.

The Impacts of Desertification

Desertification has become multidimensional in its impacts in its entirety. It is a silent invisible menace destabilizing states, rural communities as well as on international scale. One time Vice President of the United States of America Al-Gore stated that;

> " high increase in the world population, destruction of forest lands, topsoil, ozone layer depletion and all forms of environmental degradation issues across the globe pose as threats and more challenging to human development/existence. This calls for not just a strategic defense initiative but a strategic environmental initiative to save the earth. Ecology is the

> new sacred agenda to save humanity from huge humanitarian consequences and worsening political, economic, social conditions".

This is a steady menace to many livelihoods in the West Africa subregion, it has produced more refugees, internally displaced persons, and forced migration, turned many to radicalization, fanaticism resource/land farm drivers' crisis and violence, and scramble for survival. According to UNCCD 2017, "Desertification: The Invisible Frontline" postulated that it is either flight or fight. This work differs from this postulation in that the impacts of desertification and the consequent thereby have shifted from flight/fight to constant fight/violence/crisis/insurgency and eventual fight cumulating to violence and eventually war and terrorism.
The fight over few farmlands, the grazing routes brouhaha, and the effects of this threat are overwhelming.

Effects of the threats of desertification are:

i) Severely degraded land across the region where more than 55% of agricultural lands have been lost to desertification within the Sahel of Africa.
ii) Poor food security
iii) Poor agricultural yields/products
iv) Poor income due to low outputs of agricultural products
v) Excessive poverty
vi) Lack or stagnation of education
vii) Poor standard of living
viii) Over 13 million hectares of land lost to desertification yearly
ix) Lack of effective natural Drought policy whereby only 3 countries in the world have this policy according to IOM,2018
x) Lack of education leading to non-sustainability of millennium development goals vis a vis the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as stipulated in Chapters 13, 14 and 15 by conserving and sustaining the oceans, seas, marine resources, manage forests, combat desertification, etc even as it is enshrined in the 1999 Nigerian Constitution as amended.
xi) Increasing demands to access drinking water for plants, animals, and human as well as the grazers/herders' demand for scarce water supply for their livestock and livelihoods which have increased over the years and had continued

to increase without corresponding supply which has led to existential challenge within the region of Lake Chad.

xii) Violation and abuse of women/children/aged rights inside the IDP camp.

The effects of desertification as a climate change issue are irreversible; even though the increase in demand for action and policies, and treaties around the globe to address this menace. Nations are to rise to protest the challenge posed by environmental degradation and tackle the threat otherwise the world as it is known will sooner than later lead to self-destruction. Desertification protest will not be an economic, technical, social, or political issue. It is a question of safety, survival, and doing the right thing for the sustainability of the future seeing that a future that is not connected to today does not exist. Leah Stokes an Associate Professor, a political scientist of the University of California Santa Barbara has this to say that the entire globe is at the verge of global climate crusade, a powerful movement indeed. Most children within this region of desertification prevalence grow up in severe poverty-stricken area, living below less a dollar a day. The Nigerian State is liable to desertification and more 50% of the cultivable lands have become desertified. United Nation Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD, 2023) stated that 250 million people are affected within the region of the Sahel of Africa remains most vulnerable and that about 135 will be displaced by 2045. This indicates that desertification is most severe in environmentally challenging region and the most vulnerable are children and women who are adversely affected as IDPs or as environmentally challenging persons. From the content analysis the 11 frontline states of Northern Nigerian have lost 50%-70% arable lands due to this hydra-headed menace.

To what extend has Desertification affected the Socio-Economic Development of this region and the frontline states:

1. Lack of education
2. Inequality
3. Unemployment
4. Hectares of land lost to desertification
5. Herdsmen/Farmers crisis thereby brewing conflicts and violence
6. Insurgency/Terrorism
7. Lack of Agricultural outputs/poor food production according FAO 2023

These factors have necessarily given rise to the following:

a). Underfunding for the mitigation against the menace
b). Insecurity
c). Corruption and misappropriation of public funds meant for the combatting this hydra headed challenge.

Conclusion

This paper therefore concludes that there is prevalence of the incidence of desertification and consequent upon which there are cases of insurgency and displacement which has forced the movement of residents from many part of Northern Nigeria to neighboring Republic of Niger, Mali, Cameroun, Chad, Burkina Faso etc, and vise vice. This has necessitated the remote cause for lack socio-economic development in the region under review. There has been dire impact of desertification on the region among the selected states in West Africa. Categorically, in conclusion state that, our climate is consistently changing around the globe. This process of change is increasing ever more rapidly, more visibly and more alarming. Desertification as a climate change has contributed to an increase in extreme climate events and climate related natural disaster and devastating quagmirique socio-economic development within the region.

Recommendations

1) There is an urgent need to tackle the issue of development and its security implication as well as defend the right of women and children and stop all forms of human rights violation and abuse within the West African sub-region
2) There should be a check on human mobility associated with climate change which is a growing global reality, (to avoid influx of migrants from other neighboring nations to Nigeria). There ought to be regular check and balances, warnings to regulate the influx of internally displaced persons from one country to the other. Recently over 40,000 people were deported from Mali to Nigeria, these may not necessarily be as a result of migration but forced displacement because of increased number of inmates in some of IDPs Camp some of which have been abandoned by the state as well as federal government making many opt for cross-border migration not as a result of war but induced displacement.
3) There is an urgent need to abolish grazing routes establishment in this 21st

C and nomadic pastoralist have aggravated the dire palpable situation of climatic variation in sub region of West Africa thereby forcing the migration of livestock, human and properties.

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