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Supporting the fight against terrorism: A proposal for public library services provision for internally displaced persons in North-East Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This paper examined the state of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) in North-East Nigeria, the need to provide education and information services to the IDPs, and the role of libraries. It begins with the remote cause of the displacement. The paper also examined the state of the IDPs in terms of education and information services provision. It reported that the IDPs live in very deplorable conditions. There are no provisions for education and information services. The paper further discussed the importance of education and information to IDPs especially the children, teens, and youths. It recommended the empowerment and involvement of public libraries in the provision of education and information services to IDPs. It alluded that public libraries and librarians are better positioned to provide education and information services to displaced persons. The paper concluded that if necessary logistics and support are provided, libraries and librarians have the capacity to provide effective and efficient education and information services to IDPs and therefore bridge the current gap.

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Information services provision; internally displaced persons; libraries; North-East Nigeria; public libraries

Introduction

North-East Nigeria has been under siege of terrorism for some time now. The region consists of three main states of Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa. The ongoing armed conflict started as a mere religious crisis orchestrated by the Boko Haram Islamist sect. Now in its tenth year, the crisis has degenerated into a full-blown terrorist war; resulting in environmental degradation, destruction of lives and infrastructure, poverty, health challenges and insecurity. The Boko Haram Islamic sect is a religious group that is interested in creating an independent caliphate in North-East Nigeria, using any means possible including armed conflict and terrorism. The Nigerian Government's resistance to the activities of the sect has resulted in a humanitarian crisis. OCHA (2017) observed that since the crisis started, more than 20,000 people have been killed; the terrorist sect have abducted thousands of women, young girls, and children, leading to millions of people fleeing their homes; OCHA