**INPUT OF NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION OF NIGERIA INTO ‘RESETTLEMENT AS A HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE’**

Nigeria like many development countries faces challenges of displacement as a result of numerous reasons ranging from conflict, natural disasters and developmental activities of government and corporations. In recent times, most displacement and loss of households resulted from natural causes such as flooding between June and November, 2022 as well as the protracted conflict of in the Northern Easter part of Nigeria. For instance, a total of **2,375,661** persons were reported to be internally displaced in Round **43** of Internal Organisation Migration (IOM) Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) in 2022. So many Nigerians have also been displaced as a result of demolitions’ and other official actions.

**IDENTIFY KEY HUMAN RIGHTS CHALLENGES POSED BY RESETTLEMENT IN NIGERIA AND TAKE STOCK OF INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL LAWS, REGULATIONS, POLICIES AND PRACTICES RELATED TO RESETTLEMENT.**

Resettlement in Nigeria, like in other countries, can be fraught with challenges, including inadequate housing, lack of access to basic services, and difficulties in securing livelihoods in the new locations.

The challenges posed by resettlement in Nigeria include:

***1. Inadequate Compensation:*** Displaced individuals often do not receive fair compensation for their land, property, and assets, leading to economic hardships and potential disputes.

**2.Loss of Livelihoods:** Resettlement can disrupt people’s livelihoods, particularly for those who rely on agriculture or informal employment. Displaced individuals may struggle to find alternative sources of income in their new locations.

**3.Social Disruption:** Resettlement can lead to the fragmentation of communities and social networks. Displaced individuals may face difficulties in integrating into new communities, resulting in social isolation and a loss of support systems.

**4.Inadequate Infrastructure and Services:** Resettlement sites often lack basic infrastructure such as water, sanitation, healthcare facilities, and schools. This can result in inadequate access to essential services for displaced individuals and communities.

**5.Cultural Displacement:** Resettlement can lead to the loss of cultural heritage and identity. Displaced individuals may be forced to abandon their traditional practices, customs, and ways of life.

**6.Inadequate Consultation and Participation:** Displaced individuals are often not adequately consulted or involved in decision-making processes related to resettlement. This can lead to a lack of ownership and a sense of powerlessness among affected communities.

**7.Lack of Legal Protection:** Displaced individuals may not have access to legal remedies and protection mechanisms to address their grievances and violations of their rights. This can leave them vulnerable to further exploitation and rights abuses.

 **8. Environmental Impacts:** Resettlement can have adverse environmental consequences, such as deforestation, loss of biodiversity, and pollution. Displaced individuals may face challenges in adapting to new environmental conditions and may experience negative health effects.

Addressing these challenges requires the implementation of comprehensive resettlement policies that prioritize the protection of human rights. This includes ensuring fair compensation, livelihood restoration, access to basic services, and meaningful participation of affected communities in decision-making processes. It is also crucial to conduct thorough impact assessments and establish effective monitoring and grievance mechanisms to address the concerns and needs of displaced individuals.

International and national laws play a crucial role in addressing these human rights challenges. The international legal framework, includes;

**Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**, guarantees fundamental human rights that should be upheld during resettlement processes.

**REVIEW THE LAW, REGULATION, POLICIES AND SAFEGUARDS OF STATES, INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL LAWS, REGULATIONS, POLICIES AND PRACTICES RELATED TO RESETTLEMENT IN NIGERIA**

In Nigeria, the specific laws and policies related to resettlement can vary depending on the context and the reason for resettlement. Here are a few key laws and policies that may be relevant:

**1. Land Use Act of 1978:** This legislation vests all lands within the territory of each state of Nigeria in the Governor of the state. It provides a legal framework for land administration and regulates land transactions, including acquisition for public purposes such as resettlement projects.

**2. National Policy on Resettlement and Rehabilitation of Persons Displaced by Development Projects (2005):** This policy provides guidelines for the resettlement and rehabilitation of individuals and communities affected by development projects. It emphasizes the need for consultation, compensation, and provision of adequate infrastructure and livelihood support for those being resettled.

**3. National Policy on Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) (2018):** This policy focuses on the protection, assistance, and durable solutions for internally displaced persons in Nigeria. It provides a framework for the provision of basic services, livelihood support, and the safe and voluntary return, resettlement, or integration of IDPs.

**4. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Act of 1992:** This legislation requires developers to conduct an environmental impact assessment before embarking on projects that may have significant environmental and social impacts, including resettlement. The EIA process involves public consultation and the consideration of potential impacts on affected communities.

It is important to note that while Nigeria has made efforts to develop legal frameworks and policies related to resettlement, there are ongoing challenges in effectively implementing and addressing the needs of displaced persons. The government continues to work towards improving the protection, assistance, and durable solutions for IDPs and refugees through ongoing policy revisions, capacity-building initiatives, and collaboration with relevant stakeholders.

**ANALYSE WHAT IS NEEDED TO ENSURE THAT LEGAL PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDS ARE APPLIED IN PRACTICE, AND WILL LOOK TO COMPILE GOOD PRACTISES**

To ensure that legal protection and safeguards are applied in practice and to compile good practices in Nigeria, several key actions can be taken:

**1. Strengthen Legal Frameworks:** Review and update existing laws and regulations to align them with international human rights standards and ensure comprehensive legal protection for resettled individuals. This may involve clarifying rights and obligations, addressing any gaps or inconsistencies, and incorporating specific provisions for vulnerable groups.

**2. Capacity Building:** Provide training and capacity-building programs for relevant stakeholders involved in the resettlement process, including government officials, law enforcement agencies, and humanitarian actors. This can enhance their understanding of human rights principles, legal obligations, and best practices for protecting and promoting the rights of resettled individuals.

**3. Awareness and Outreach:** Conduct awareness campaigns and outreach activities to ensure that resettled individuals are informed about their rights, entitlements, and available legal protections. This can include disseminating information in multiple languages, using accessible formats, and engaging with community leaders and local organizations to reach the most vulnerable populations.

**4. Monitoring and Reporting Mechanisms:** Establish robust monitoring and reporting mechanisms to track the implementation of legal protections and safeguards during the resettlement process. This can involve conducting regular assessments, collecting data on human rights violations, and ensuring transparency and accountability in the reporting of such incidents.

**5. Collaboration and Coordination:** Foster collaboration and coordination among relevant stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society organizations, international organizations, and local communities. This can facilitate information sharing, exchange of best practices, and joint efforts to address challenges and improve the implementation of legal protections.

**6. Access to Justice:** Strengthen access to justice mechanisms for resettled individuals by ensuring the availability of legal aid services, simplifying legal procedures, and establishing specialized courts or tribunals to handle cases related to human rights violations and grievances.

**7. Documentation and Data Management:** Develop comprehensive systems for documenting and managing the data of resettled individuals, including their legal status, entitlements, and any human rights concerns. This can support evidence-based decision-making, facilitate targeted interventions, and ensure accountability in the provision of legal protections.

**8. Research and Evaluation:** Conduct research and evaluation studies to identify gaps, challenges, and best practices in the implementation of legal protections for resettled individuals. This can inform policy development, improve program design, and promote evidence-based interventions.

By implementing these actions, Nigeria can strengthen the application of legal protection and safeguards in practice. Compiling good practices from various stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society organizations, and international partners, can further enhance the effectiveness of these efforts and serve as a valuable resource for future initiatives.