

ABSTRACT

TOPIC: CITIZENS WITHOUT A HOME: REFUGEE CRISIS AND THE NATION BUILDING PROJECT IN WEST AFRICA. (A CASE STUDY OF LIBERIAN REFUGEES IN NIGERIA)

One of the major consequences of the internecine conflicts that has plagued some west African countries including Sierra-Leone, Liberia, and cote- d'ivoire is the problem of Refugees. Cross-boarder migration and settlement of people displaced by conflict has been on ascendance In the sub-region. In Guinea, there are over 200,000 Liberian Refugees in that country. In Nigeria, over 1,792 Refugees from Liberia are in the country. While Refugees from cote d'ivoire have split into neighboring countries of Ghana, Togo and Senegal.

These Refugees are essentially citizens without a home. Though they constitute west African citizens, they are driven by circumstances out of their nation-states, to seek abode outside their homes. They do not enjoy the rights of citizenship in the countries they seek refuge neither do they have the necessary material comfort in the temporary homes where they are guests. This Refugee problem poses serious challenges for the task of post-war reconstruction and nation-state building in west Africa.

The paper examines the plight of Liberian Refugees in Nigeria. It investigates the circumstances of their movement, the problem of settlement that they confront in their Refugee camps, their social livelihood and condition and their integration with the host community. Further, the roles of NGO's and international Refugee agencies like the UNHCR in ameliorating their conditions is investigated. The paper ends with a problematic; what are the challenges that the problem of Refugees have for the task of nation-building in west Africa?

SUBMITTED BY
KASSIM SIKIRU TAIWO
LECTURER,
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY,
LAGOS STATE UNIVERSITY, LAGOS, NIGERIA
E-MAIL: taiwokassim@yahoo.co.uk