

# Contribution Of Voluntary Organisations To Flood Disaster Reduction In Lokoja, North Central Nigeria

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## **Absract :**

The study examined the contribution of voluntary organizations to flood disaster reduction in Lokoja, North Central Nigeria. A total of 91 and 56 respondents were administered questionnaire in selected urban and rural areas respectively in Lokoja. The questionnaire was used to obtain information on respondents' awareness of the type of voluntary organizations and external supports provided by them. Residents' ratings of the organizations' performance were also assessed. It was shown through findings that most of the respondents both in the urban and rural areas were aware of voluntary organizations in their localities. However, most of the respondents in the rural areas did not benefit from the assistance rendered by the organizations compared to those in the urban areas. The organizations' performance was rated higher in the

urban than in the rural areas. It was thus concluded that rural areas had less access to external supports from voluntary organizations than their urban counterpart.

Voluntary Organisations, Flood Disaster Reduction, Urban Areas, Rural Areas.

## **Introduction:**

Voluntary organisations play vital role in economic and social development of a community. Their involvement in the development process has been examined in a number of studies. As opined by Bamidele (2023), voluntary organisations are formed by members of the community to assist the vulnerable population through various forms of support to complement aids from other stakeholders. They provide charge free and readily accessible services to the people. One of the most significant aspects involving voluntary organisations is

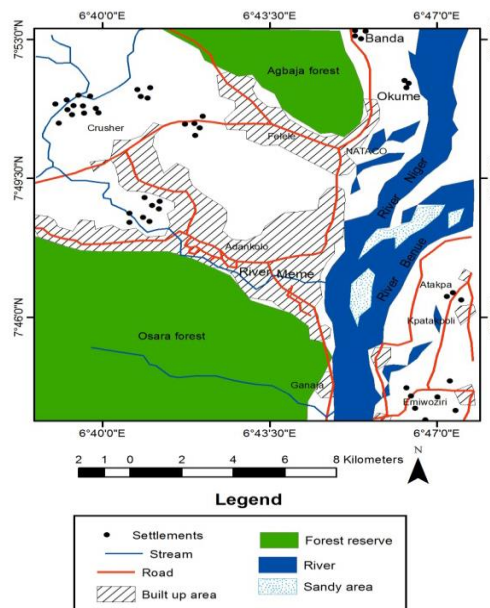
the issue of disaster management. The roles played by voluntary organisations in disaster management in recent times are becoming more significant than ever before (Bamidele & Badiora, 2019).

As argued by Jung and Ha (2021), the involvement of these organizations in disaster response are becoming more complicated recognising the fact that a single individual or institution is not sufficient to manage the diverse disaster in a region. Voluntary organisations have thus become an inevitable part of the disaster reduction system (Water, 2019). Although extant studies (Hossaine, 2020; Mabuku, 2018; Al-Mueed, Ahasan & Al-Wathinani, 2022) have acknowledged the importance of voluntary organisations in the disaster management system, only scanty literature exists on their involvement in flood disaster reduction in Nigeria. Recent studies by Hussain (2020) examined the various forms of voluntary organisations involved in disaster reduction, their level of performance as well as challenges faced by them. For instance, Ahasan and Al-Wathinani, (2022) argued that voluntary organisations provide relief, rescue, recovery and rehabilitation services to affected victims in form of financial and material assets. It was further added by Hossiane (2020), most voluntary organisations augment a community’s ability to respond to disasters by providing additional response capacity through different skills and abilities. However, the aforementioned studies were neither conducted in Nigeria nor attended to flood disaster. It is against this background that study

examined the contributions made by voluntary organisations to flood disaster reduction in Nigeria.

**Study Area :**

Lokoja, the capital of Kogi State is located at latitude 7° 45’N and 7°51’N and longitude 6° 41’E and 6°45’E (Fig.1). It lies at an altitude of 45-125 metres above sea level. It also lies on the western bank of the River Niger, close to its confluence with River Benue and sandwiched between the River and the mount Patti. The town is characterised by atropical climate that comprises of wet and dry seasons and falls within the Guinea Savannah belt. The annual rainfall is about 1150mm, with mean annual temperature of about 27.7°C. The terrain of the region comprises of dissected undulating plains on the one hand and lofty hill masses on the other. Mount Patti is the dominant physical feature of the town coupled with a number of intermittent valleys and streams crisscrossing the breadth of the town.



**Figure 1.1: Map of Lokoja Showing the Study Area**

**Methodology**

A multistage sampling technique was used for the study. The first stage involved purposively selecting urban and rural areas adversely affected by the 2022 flood incidence. The urban areas selected were Felele and Adankolo while rural areas chosen were Crusher, Kpatapoli and Okume. At the second stage,

the numbers of buildings in each selected settlement were determined through physical counts. It was observed that Adankolo and Felele had a total of 225 and 230 buildings respectively. On the other hand, Crusher, Kpatapoli and Okume consisted of 103, 123 and 96 buildings respectively (See Table 1).

**Table 1. Number of Buildings in the Study Area and Samples Selected**

Settlements Type	Number of Buildings	Sample Selected
<b>Urban Area</b>	Adankolo	225
	Felele	230
	<b>Total</b>	<b>455</b>
<b>Rural Area</b>	Kpatapoli	123
	Okume	96
	Crusher	103
	<b>Total</b>	<b>332</b>

Source: Authors' Field Work (2022)

Every fifth building (20%) was selected across the chosen settlements for questionnaire administration. This amounted to 91 and 56 selected buildings across the rural and urban areas respectively. A household head in each sampled building was administered questionnaire to elicit information on their awareness on voluntary organizations, external support received and their rating of the organizations' performance. Furthermore, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with five community heads chosen across the selected settlements was conducted to elicit information on the various forms of voluntary organizations in their locality and the assistance they got from them.

**Results and Discussion**

Findings as indicated in Table 2 revealed that out of the residents that were interviewed both in the selected rural and urban areas during the study it was revealed that majority (79.5% and 80.1%) of respondents both in the urban and rural areas acknowledged that they were aware of voluntary organizations. On the other hand, only 20.5% and 19.9% of them across the respective areas claimed they were not aware. This implies that most of the respondents in the study area were aware voluntary organizations. This could be because voluntary organisations are found all over the parts of the states.

**Table 2. Respondents' Awareness of Voluntary Organizations**

Awareness of Voluntary Organizations	Urban Areas	Rural Areas
Yes	80.1	79.5
No	19.9	20.5
Total	100.0	100.0

Source: Author's Field Work (2023)

However, well over two-thirds (76.2%) of the respondent in the rural areas reported that they did not receive any external supports from voluntary organizations after the 2020 flood incidence while only 23.8% received assistance (See Table 3). On the contrary, 82.5% of urban respondents acknowledged to have received external supports from voluntary organizations while 17.5% did not. It was revealed through FGDs with community heads that most of the assistance was in form of relief materials such as food items, drugs,

housing reconstruction and funds in form of financial aids. According to the respondents, major organizations that assisted them after the floods were the Vigilante Groups, Action Aid, Flood Search and Rescue Team, Youth and Women Empowerment Association. Chi-square (test revealed that there was no significant difference ( $p > 0.05$ ) in their level of awareness across the study area.

**Table 3. Respondents' Access to External Support**

Access to External Support	Urban Areas	Rural Areas
Yes	82.5	23.8
No	17.5	76.2
Total	100.0	100.0

Source: Author's Field Work (2022)

About 20.4%, 60.3%, 46.7%, 50.2%, 40.0% and 53.3% of the respondent in the urban areas received aids from Vigilante Groups, Action Aid, Flood Search and Rescue Team, Youth organizations and Women Empowerment Association respectively. A significant percentage (85.5%) of respondents in the urban areas opined that assistance were rendered to them by most of the organizations mainly after the flood incidence in 2020 while only 14.5% said they got some form of help in form of relocation before flood. About 45.5% of the respondents in the rural areas argued that voluntary organizations assisted them only after the 2020 flood occurrence in contrast with 40.3% that did not receive any aids. About 14.3% were assisted with funds before the floods occur. It was further confirmed through Chi-square that there was a significant difference in residents' access to external support from voluntary organizations across the study area. Binomial Logistic Regression showed that respondents' location ( $p < 0.05$ ), educational background ( $p < 0.05$ ) and age ( $p < 0.05$ ) significantly influenced. Respondents' level of awareness of voluntary organization and income did not significantly influence their access to external supports. The findings in this study is in line with those

of who opined that assistance rendered to flood affected communities are always in favour of the urban than rural areas.

Some (38.2%) respondents in the urban areas rated the performance of voluntary organizations as very satisfactory while 30.3% rated their performance as satisfactory. About 12.5% of them rated it as dissatisfactory while 10.0% were neutral in their response. Very few (9.0%) rated it as very dissatisfactory. Furthermore, as little a percentage as 7.1% of the respondents in the rural areas rated their performance as very satisfactory while 8.5% rated it as satisfactory. Respondents that were neutral accounted for 12.5% while 40.0% and 31.9% represented those that rated their performance as dissatisfactory and very dissatisfactory respectively. On average, the performance index of the voluntary organizations across the study area was 2.75, indicating a fairly good performance. The average performance indexes (API) in the urban and rural areas were 1.76 and 3.36 respectively. By implication, the result of the analysis shows that the voluntary organizations were more active in the urban than in the rural areas. However the performance of the organizations generally was rated fairly good.

- The specific role of the voluntary organisations as reported by their heads were:
- relocation of the vulnerable and affected communities;
- provision of funds for relief and relocation;
- awareness creation;
- provision of material and technical aids.

The major challenges faced by the organizations as reported by the heads were:

- difficulty in raising financial assistance for effective operation;
- difficulty in reaching affected residents in the rural remote areas;
- inadequate access to flood information for effective operation.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

The contribution of voluntary organizations was examined in this study. It was found that most of the respondents both in the urban and rural areas were aware of voluntary organizations in their localities. Such organizations were the Vigilante Groups, Action Aid, Flood Search and Rescue Team, Youth and Women Empowerment Association. However, majority of the respondents in the rural areas did not benefit from the assistance rendered by the organizations. Major forms of external assistance rendered included provision of food items, drugs, housing reconstruction and funds in form of financial aids. Those in the urban areas benefitted more than those in the rural areas. In terms of performance, urban residents gave higher ratings than rural residents.

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