

## INTERIM REPORT OF THE AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON MOUNTING HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN THE NORTH EAST

Sequel to the mandate given to the Ad-Hoc Committee on Mounting Humanitarian Crisis in the North East, Committee visited some of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camps in the North East and conducted a three-day Public Hearing after which the following findings/observations were made;

### 1. Humanitarian Crisis Management in IDPs:

(a) It is absolutely true, that there is serious humanitarian crisis in the North East as evidenced by the plight of the internally displaced persons both in camps and within the host communities. There is hunger, diseases, squalor, deprivation and want amongst the IDPs. This observation is corroborated by a statement accredited to the United Nations' Deputy Coordinator of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Mr. Peter Lundberg to the effect that "a projected **5.1 million people** will face serious food shortages as the (Boko Haram) conflict and risk of unexploded improvised devices prevented farmers planting for a third year in a row, causing a major food crisis in the North East".

(b) Committee observed that the following Local and International Donor Agencies were found to be present in most of the IDP camps rendering critical humanitarian services:

- (i) World Food Program
- (ii) International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
- (iii) United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- (iv) Doctors Without Borders
- (v) Dangote group

(c) That there was vivid absence of the Federal Ministry of Health in all camps visited, however, while the few critical government agencies like National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) as well as States Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) were noticed, but without synergy with other agencies. However, the Nigerian Air force medical team was found rendering medical services to the IDPs with the little equipment at their disposal.

(d) That despite the claim by some Federal government agencies to the effect that huge sum of money is being spent on IDPs in the North East, what is on the ground as seen by the Committee does not justify/reflect the claims. For example:

(i) Over **70%** of displaced children both in camps and with host communities were out of schools due to lack of classroom infrastructure, inadequate teaching materials and even teachers. They were also seen loitering in the camps mal-nourished, sickly, and poorly dressed;

(ii) Generally, there is acute shortage of food amongst the IDPs, as observed in one of the IDPs visited, **three (3) bags**

of rice of **50kg** each, a bag of beans of **50kg** and a **4 liter** of palm oil were given to 30 people for 15 days. These were considered too insufficient as confirmed by many IDPs that interacted with the Committee.

## (2) Contracts Award:

(a) The Committee discovered that all contracts from the Presidential Initiative on North East (PINE) were awarded under the principle of emergency situation as stipulated in **Section 43 (i) & (ii)** but with absolute disregard to **Sub-section (iii) & (iv)** of the same **Section 43** of the Public Procurement Act, 2007 which states that:

“(iii) All procurements made under emergencies shall be handled with explanation but along principles of accountability, due consideration being given to the gravity of each emergency.

(iv) Immediately after the cessation of the situation warranting any emergency procurement, the procuring entity shall file a detailed report thereof with the Bureau which shall verify same and appropriate issue a Certificate of ‘*No Objection*’.”

Similarly, the entire procurement activities carried out by Presidential Initiative on North East (PINE) in the North East contravenes Federal Government’s Financial Rules and Regulations, number **2948** which states that:

“(i) Under emergency situation, a procuring entity may engage in direct or single source procurement of goods, works, or services.

(ii) Further to **sub-section (i)**, procurement shall be made expeditiously, without losing sight of the principles of accountability and transparency.

(iii) On cessation of emergency situation warranting Procurement under this method, the procuring entity shall file records of procurement proceeding with a view to obtaining Certificate of ‘*No Objection*’ if necessary from Bureau of Public Procurement”.

(b) That most of the contracts awarded by PINE have no direct bearing/impact to the lives of the displaced persons apparently languishing in hunger/starvation, disease, squalor and other deplorable conditions in all the IDPs. The contracts under reference include:

(i) PINE contributions to two (2) conferences on Rebuilding the North East; and

(ii) the purported payment of over **Two Hundred and Twenty – Three Million (₦ 223m) naira** for the removal of invasive plant species Komadugu, Yobe Water Channels;

(c) That the Presidential Initiative on North East (PINE) took undue advantage of the provision of emergency situation contract award in the Public Procurement Act, 2007 to over inflate contracts. Not only that, contracts were awarded to companies belonging to top government officials’ cronies,

family members and close associates. For example, **Rholavision Engineering Limited** incorporated in 1990 with RC No. 159855 at the Corporate Affairs Commission, Abuja to carry out information and communication technology services, anchored by Engr. Babachir Lawal, the current Secretary to the Government of the Federation was awarded consultancy contract for the removal of the invasive plant species in Yobe state on 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2016. Although, Engr. Babachir resigned the directorship of the said company in September, 2016, it is on record that he is still the signatory to accounts of the company;

(d) That **95% to 100%** payments of all contracts awarded by PINE have been paid even as some contracts are yet to be fully executed, e.g, payment of **One Hundred and Eight Million naira (N108m)** only for the supply **1100** units of temporary tarpaulin carbines at **Three Hundred and Two Thousand naira (N302,000:00)** per unit made to **Dantex Nigeria Limited** despite the fact that 125 units valued at **N37.7m** were yet to be supplied.

### (3) RECOMMENDATIONS

(a) The Federal government and States in the North East should as a matter of urgency that food items are adequately and promptly provided to displaced persons in order to address the prevailing mal-nutrition observed amongst them;

(b) Serious efforts should be put by both Federal and State governments of the North East to provide conducive learning atmosphere for the children of the IDPs;

(c) The Federal Ministry of Health should be compelled to immediately deploy their personnel to all the IDPs to support the efforts of the International Humanitarian Crisis Managers and the Nigerian Airforce medical team in providing the necessary medical assistance so as to avert possible outbreak of communicable diseases like cholera, measles, and diarrhea etc;

(d) Federal and State government should intensify efforts towards reconstruction of destroyed infrastructure, rehabilitation and empowerment of the IDPs so that they can go back to their respective homes;

(e) The newly constituted Presidential Committee on the North East Initiative (PCNI) should ensure that there is synergy and proper coordination among all humanitarian crisis agencies if the IDPs are to gain maximally from the entire exercise;

(f) The Presidential Initiative on North East shall forward a detailed report of all contracts awarded by it to the Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP) as requested by **Section 43 (iv)** of the Public Procurement Act, 2007;

(g) The Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP) should undertake a revaluation of all contracts awarded by PINE under the emergency situation arrangement to recover any proceeds from over-inflated contracts;

(h) Contracts partially executed but fully paid for must be completed by the concerned contractors, or asked to refund the equivalent money of outstanding jobs to the government treasury; and

(i) Any public officer culpable of contravening any of the provisions of the Public Procurement Act, 2007 and the Federal Government Financial Rules and Regulations pertaining to the award of these contracts should be duly Prosecuted by the relevant authorities.

Mr. Senate President, distinguished colleagues, on behalf of other members of the Ad-Hoc Committee, I wish to thank you for the opportunity given to present this interim report pending the completion of the main report.

**Senator Shehu Sani**  
*Chairman*

**Lawal Barau Bungudu**  
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