

EUROPEAN INTERDISCIPLINARY MASTER AFRICAN STUDIES (EIMAS)

**Examining Youth Livelihoods: Navigating Economic Hardships Among Displaced Youth in
Durumi IDP Camp**

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July

2025



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Durumi IDP Camp**

Master's thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master in EIMAS – European Interdisciplinary Master African Studies, supervised by Professor Maciel Morais Santos and Professor Amélia Polónia, mentored by Professor Sati Umaru Fwatshak.

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of Porto

2025

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Porto, Portugal, Julho 2025 / *Porto, Portugal, July 2025*

Nino Tandilashvili

Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been possible without the support, guidance, and encouragement of many individuals and institutions to whom I am deeply grateful.

First of all, I would like to thank the European Interdisciplinary Master African Studies (EIMAS) program for giving me the opportunity to take part in such a meaningful academic journey. The experiences, knowledge, and perspectives I gained throughout the program have shaped both my research and my personal development in important ways. I am especially grateful to co-supervisors, Prof. Dr. Maciel Morais Santos and Prof. Dr. Amélia Polónia, from the University of Porto. Their support, feedback, and guidance helped me stay focused and confident throughout this work. Thank you for always taking the time to listen and guide me with care and insight. I would also like to thank my mentor, Prof. Dr. Sati Umaru Fwatshak, from the University of Jos, Nigeria. His insights, encouragement, and deep understanding of the research context were incredibly valuable and helped me find clarity and direction during the fieldwork.

I would like to sincerely thank the Nigerian Red Cross Society for making my field research possible. Their support helped me gain access to the Durumi IDP Camp and carry out interviews in a safe and respectful way. I am especially grateful to Mr. Manasseh Panpe and Mr. Istifanus Eliphas, who guided me through the data collection process and helped with translation from Hausa to English. Their assistance made it easier for me to connect with participants and truly understand their experiences.

To the youth of Durumi IDP Camp, thank you for your openness, trust, and strength. Your stories and reflections are at the heart of this research. I also wish to thank the chairman of the camp, whose willingness to speak with me and share his insights added important context to this study. It was a privilege to learn from all of you.

Finally, I want to thank my family. Your love, patience, and quiet support gave me the strength to keep going, even when things felt uncertain. I am endlessly thankful for everything you have done for me.

Resumo

Esta tese explora de que forma jovens deslocados, particularmente na sequência da insurgência do Boko Haram, com idades compreendidas entre os 18 e os 24 anos, garantem os seus meios de subsistência e gerem os desafios económicos no Campo de Deslocados Internos de Durumi, localizado em Abuja, Nigéria. Estes jovens foram afetados por conflitos e deslocações forçadas, e vivem agora num assentamento urbano informal com apoio formal limitado. Esta investigação baseia-se em oito semanas de trabalho de campo, envolvendo entrevistas e observações de campo, com o objetivo de compreender melhor as suas experiências quotidianas.

O estudo destaca as diversas formas como os jovens participam em atividades geradoras de rendimento, como o pequeno comércio, os serviços e o trabalho informal. Muitos dependem de laços sociais e da cooperação local para aceder a materiais, clientes e informação. O género, o acesso a recursos e o ambiente envolvente influenciam os tipos de estratégias que desenvolvem. Apesar das condições desafiantes no campo, os jovens demonstram intensos esforços para se adaptarem e encontrarem formas de se autossustento.

Esta investigação pretende contribuir para as discussões sobre deslocamento, oferecendo perspetivas sobre a forma como os jovens em assentamentos urbanos informais respondem à incerteza económica. Também fornece elementos que podem informar apoios mais adaptados aos jovens em contextos semelhantes. Ao centrar-se nas realidades vividas pelos jovens deslocados no Campo de Durumi, o estudo oferece um modesto contributo para a compreensão das estratégias de subsistência em contextos de deslocamento.

Palavras-chave: Jovens deslocados, Insurgência do Boko Haram, Campo de Deslocados Internos de Durumi, Economia informal, Estratégias de subsistência, Resiliência

Abstract

This thesis explores how displaced youth aged 18 to 24 sustain their livelihoods and manage economic challenges in the Durumi IDP Camp, located in Abuja, Nigeria. These young people have been affected by conflict and displacement, particularly linked to the Boko Haram insurgency, and now live in an informal urban settlement with limited formal support. This research is based on eight weeks of fieldwork, involving interviews and observations, aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of their everyday experiences.

The study highlights the various ways youth engage in income-generating activities, such as small-scale trade, services, and informal work. Many rely on social ties and cooperation to access materials, customers, and information. Gender, access to resources, and the surrounding environment influence the kinds of strategies they develop. While conditions in the camp are challenging, the youth show a range of efforts to adapt and find ways to support themselves.

This research aims to contribute to discussions on displacement by offering insights into how young people in urban informal settlements respond to economic uncertainty. It also provides perspectives that may inform more tailored support for youth in similar settings. By focusing on the lived realities of displaced youth in Durumi Camp, the study offers a modest contribution to understanding livelihood strategies in displacement contexts.

Keywords: Displaced youth, Boko Haram insurgency, Durumi IDP Camp, Informal economy, Livelihood strategies, Resilience

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

DFID DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (UK)

ECOWAS..... ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES

FCT..... FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY

FIRS..... FEDERAL INLAND REVENUE SERVICE

IDP INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSON

IOM..... INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION

NBS NATIONAL BUREAU OF STATISTICS

NEMA..... NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

NGO NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

PRO..... PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER

UN..... UNITED NATIONS

UNHCR UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

Introduction

Scope and content of the thesis

Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, faces significant challenges caused by internal displacement. The country has faced the serious consequences of violent insurgencies and ongoing political instability. One of the most destructive forces behind this displacement is the Boko Haram insurgency, which has not only destabilized communities but also severely undermined the lives and livelihoods of young people (Bohm, 2020). In this context, Abuja, the nation's capital, has become one of the destinations for people fleeing violence, including many young individuals. This movement has led to the emergence of informal camps such as the Durumi IDP camp. Although Abuja was initially designed to be a modern, well-planned capital (Babagana, 2020), it has increasingly become home to displaced people living in overlooked urban outskirts with little access to basic services.

The emergence of the Durumi IDP Camp is closely tied to the violence that broke out in northeastern Nigeria, which forced many people to flee their homes. Although the camp is located in the capital city, it remains largely excluded from many government assistance programs. The camp has grown in an informal way, shaped more by the everyday needs and efforts of displaced residents than by any formal urban planning or government policy (Àjàdí, 2022). Young people aged 18 to 24 face many challenges in this environment, from unemployment and trauma to insecurity and being socially marginalized. Despite these difficulties, many young people find creative ways to get by, taking part in informal work, turning to NGOs for support, and relying on social networks to navigate the absence of formal systems.

It is important to mention that existing researches may not fully capture the lived experiences of young displaced people in urban IDP camps. Understanding how youth in camps like Durumi adapt to life in displacement, seeing them not just as victims but as active individuals finding ways to cope with economic challenges in a difficult environment, is a crucial area that deserves more attention. This research aims to add to academic literature and policy discussions by exploring

how young people navigate their livelihoods, focusing on resilience, personal agency, and the structural challenges they face.

Although Nigeria's displacement crisis has been widely discussed (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2025), there has been less focus on the economic realities of displaced youth living in informal urban camps. Most discussions tend to focus on security concerns or humanitarian aid, with much less attention given to how young people work toward building sustainable livelihoods.

Research Questions and Objectives

The central research question guiding this thesis is: *How do displaced youth in Durumi IDP Camp navigate economic hardships, and what strategies do they use to sustain their livelihoods?* To address this question, the thesis is structured to first trace the roots of displacement and then build a clear and logical path toward understanding how young people respond to the conditions they face. Before analyzing the coping strategies employed by displaced youth, it is crucial to first understand the underlying causes that forced them into this situation. That means beginning with a detailed look at the Nigerian state itself, including its political structure, federal dynamics, and the ongoing governance issues that have played a role in shaping regional disparities and periods of instability. Without this background, any discussion of displacement remains incomplete. The way Nigeria is governed, particularly through its federal and local systems, plays a significant role in how crises are either addressed or overlooked (Ata-Agboni, et al., 2023). Challenges such as limited institutional capacity, corruption, and forms of exclusion have contributed to social and regional tensions over time (Majekodunmi, 2015). By understanding these broader dynamics, it becomes easier to grasp the underlying factors that have shaped displacement issues in the country.

Following this broader context, the thesis turns to examine the specific conditions that have led to widespread displacement in Nigeria. A key factor is the Boko Haram insurgency, a militant group that has caused significant violence and disruption in the northeastern part of the country. The emergence and development of Boko Haram should not be understood solely in religious or

ideological terms. It also reflects the deep frustrations of communities that have long felt neglected, particularly in northern Nigeria (Al Jazeera, 2025). The group's violent actions have caused civilians to flee their homes, with many seeking refuge in informal settlements such as Durumi. Understanding what Boko Haram represents, as well as the impact it has on the lives of ordinary people, particularly young people, is crucial for contextualizing the challenges faced in the camp today.

After outlining the root causes of displacement, it is important to focus on the lived experiences of those who have been forced to flee. Looking closely at the daily life in the Durumi IDP Camp is crucial. For young people in particular, this setting comes with a range of ongoing challenges. These include poverty, food insecurity, poor living conditions, limited access to healthcare, and few opportunities for formal employment. It is only after examining these realities that the thesis explores how youth respond to such difficult circumstances. By first addressing the broader issues, such as how the country is governed, why displacement occurs, and what the living conditions are in the camp, the research is able to provide a clearer understanding of the coping strategies young displaced people adopt.

The study shows that, even in the face of exclusion and instability, many young people find ways to survive. They take part in informal economic activities, rely on social networks, and develop patterns of resilience. This approach, which moves from understanding structural challenges to examining individual and collective responses, allows the research question to be answered with greater depth and context.

The objectives of this research reflect this approach. First, the study identifies the main economic challenges faced by displaced youth in Durumi. Second, it explores the strategies these young people use to sustain their livelihoods, both within informal and formal settings. Third, it examines the role of social networks, community support, and the involvement of external actors such as NGOs in shaping these efforts. Finally, the research aims to contribute to academic and policy discussions by placing these findings within broader conversations on youth displacement, urban informality, and resilience.

By focusing on youth livelihoods, this research highlights the interplay between vulnerability and agency, showing how young people find ways to survive even in very difficult conditions. It also draws attention to the importance of informal economies and local networks in situations where government support is limited or inconsistent. In this context, it is important to view displaced persons not only as victims but as individuals who develop context-specific strategies for resilience (Cazabat, 2023).

Theoretical framework

Understanding how displaced youth in the Durumi IDP Camp deal with economic hardship requires an approach that considers both the broader structural challenges they face and their everyday efforts to survive. Displacement involves more than just loss and vulnerability. It also includes adaptation, individual agency, and informal systems of support. This study focuses on youth aged 18 to 24 and uses a combination of concepts to explore how they sustain their livelihoods in difficult conditions. This research draws on a combination of conceptual approaches to understand how displaced youth sustain their livelihoods under challenging conditions. These perspectives consider the resources available to them, the social and structural barriers they face, and the ways they adapt to uncertainty and instability. By examining both the external constraints and the everyday strategies young people use to survive, the research offers an insight into how livelihoods are shaped in settings of displacement and marginalization.

The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework, first inspired by the work of scholars such as Robert Chambers and Gordon Conway (1992), was later developed by the UK's Department for International Development. It provides a foundational understanding of how people construct and sustain livelihoods in contexts of poverty and vulnerability. It defines a livelihood as the set of capabilities, resources, and activities required to make a living, and considers it sustainable when it can recover from shocks, keep its resources intact, and create better opportunities for the future without harming the environment. This way of thinking highlights several key types of resources: human, social, physical, financial, and natural capital. It also recognizes the challenges people face in accessing and using these resources. Additionally, it emphasizes the role of institutions and systems that influence how people can reach these assets (Department Of

International Development, 2001). This approach is especially important in displacement situations where formal governance or legal recognition may be absent.

In the Durumi IDP Camp, displaced youth deal with many challenges such as being excluded from the economy, restrictions on their movement, no access to legal jobs, and limited support from the state. The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework helps us understand how these young people use the few resources they have. They rely on informal skills, support from friends, training provided by NGOs, and borrowed materials to find ways to earn a basic income and cope with the hardships.

Their activities are more than just economic exchanges. They are strategies shaped by a mix of the resources they have, their personal backgrounds, and the shared experience of displacement. Using the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework helps us understand how these young people adjust their ways of making a living when faced with changing conditions such as reduced aid, rising prices or the withdrawal of NGO support.

In addition, it is important to highlight the Resilience Theory that adds crucial insight to the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework. In this context, resilience refers to the ability of individuals and communities to adapt to and recover from difficult situations. As Michael Ungar explains, resilience is not just a personal trait or mental difficulties, but a dynamic process shaped by access to resources that are meaningful within their culture, social support, and chances to participate and be recognized (Ungar, 2008). In Durumi, resilience can be seen not only in how youth recover from hardships but also in how they actively adjust and reorganize their lives in the face of uncertainty. Many young people in this study described feeling responsible for helping their siblings, contributing to household costs, or starting small businesses, even when formal jobs are not available. Their efforts to keep informal businesses running or to gain new skills should be understood as everyday acts of resilience rather than simply isolated attempts to survive.

This process of adaptation is often collective, embedded in the relationships that youth maintain with one another and with other actors in the camp. Pierre Bourdieu offers an important lens for understanding these relational dynamics. Social networks based on trust, mutual support, and shared group identity play an important role in helping individuals access resources and create

opportunities (Bourdieu, 1986). In Durumi, these connections are essential for sustaining livelihoods, especially when formal support systems are absent. Young people often form close groups based on shared experiences of displacement. Within these groups, they are able to borrow materials, run small businesses together, exchange customers, or learn skills from one another. Everyday interactions show how close social ties can help fill the gap left by missing formal structures.

Taken together, these theoretical perspectives allow for a more nuanced understanding of youth livelihoods in displacement. The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework grounds the analysis in material conditions and resource availability. Resilience Theory highlights the agency and adaptation of young people amid stress while Pierre Bourdieu's concept of social capital helps explain how relational dynamics and networks of trust substitute for missing formal systems. This layered approach presents displaced youth as individuals making decisions within a difficult and shifting environment, where their actions are shaped by both structural limitations and personal efforts to cope. Their economic activities often reflect a mix of resilience, mutual support, and practical adjustments to ongoing uncertainty.

Methodological Overview

This study adopts a qualitative research design supported by the ethnographic elements and the quantitative description. As mentioned, this research aims to understand how displaced youth in the Durumi IDP Camp deal with economic hardship and sustain their livelihoods, focusing on their everyday experiences, personal stories, and practical strategies. Because issues of displacement and survival are often complex and deeply personal, a qualitative approach was the most suitable for capturing the depth and meaning behind how these young people cope. During the research, youth in the Durumi IDP Camp were observed through regular visits, and these observations provided valuable data that complemented the insights gathered from interviews, helping to provide a fuller picture of daily life in the camp and how social and material aspects shape livelihood practices. Statistics were also drawn from observation checklists to help highlight certain patterns in how youth earn and survive, allowing for a more rounded view that connects both lived experiences and observed behavior.

The fieldwork was conducted in the Durumi IDP Camp, located in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria. Durumi, an informal settlement formed in response to displacement caused largely by the Boko Haram insurgency, was selected as the research site due to its urban location, unique self-organized governance system, and relative underrepresentation in academic and policy discourse. The research focused on displaced youth aged 18 to 24. While the United Nations defines “youth” as individuals between the ages of 15 and 24 (UNESCO, n.d.), this study limited its focus to those aged 18 and above in order to ensure informed consent and to engage with individuals who could recall their lives prior to displacement. This decision was also motivated by the need to understand how young people compare their past livelihoods with their current realities, drawing on memory, personal agency, and future aspirations. Notably, the Durumi camp defines youth more broadly, including individuals between the ages of 15 and 45. However, this study chose to align partially with the United Nations definition of youth while tailoring the age range to suit the specific objectives of the research.

During the fieldwork, efforts were made to include a diverse range of participants, ensuring variation in gender, types of livelihood activity, and region of origin. A total of 25 in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with youth aged 18 to 24. Additional interview was carried out with the camp chairman, who offered insights into the camp’s demographic composition, governance structure, legal status, and patterns of aid and support. The Nigerian Red Cross Society facilitated access to the camp and provided assistance in identifying respondents. A local translator, Mr. Istifanus Eliphas, supported the entire data collection process by providing live interpretation between Hausa and English, since participants were not fluent in English. His role was crucial in ensuring both cultural and linguistic understanding. At the same time, steps were taken to reduce any potential influence from the translation process by clarifying key phrases during interviews, checking meanings, and cross-validating participants’ responses.

The semi-structured interviews with displaced youth were designed to gather detailed personal narratives across main themes: pre-displacement background and prior livelihoods, economic hardships encountered in the camp, coping strategies and livelihood practices, and aspirations for the future (see Appendix 2 – Interview Guidelines). The open-ended questions encouraged participants to reflect on their lived experiences and allowed for the emergence of unexpected

insights. Interviews were conducted in private or semi-private locations within the camp and lasted between 30 and 60 minutes. The interview with the camp chairman, as mentioned prior, addressed broader structural and administrative aspects of life in the camp, including population size, internal governance, NGO partnerships, funding sources, youth engagement, and legal uncertainties surrounding land tenure.

In addition to interviews, the research employed ethnographic observation to Observations were carried out over several visits and covered a total of 95 young people involved in different informal livelihood activities. These activities were documented using an observation checklist that included variables such as the gender and estimated age of the workers, the type of work they were doing, the location where the work happened, whether their customers came from, inside or outside the camp, and where they got their supplies from. The observations helped capture not only the visible patterns of how youth make a living but also the more unspoken or informal social interactions that support these activities. When appropriate and with permission, photographs were also taken to show the layout of key economic areas and how different activities were organized within the camp (see Appendix 6 - Photographs of the Durumi IDP camp). In addition, economic mapping was used to identify the main areas where economic activities take place, both inside the camp and, where relevant, in nearby markets in Abuja that displaced youth rely on. This mapping provided valuable context for understanding how young people move between spaces and use different locations to support their livelihoods beyond the camp itself.

Ethical approval for this research was obtained from the University of Porto (See Appendix 3 – Legal Opinion of the Ethics Committee of FLUP). All participants were fully informed about the purpose of the research, their rights as participants, and the voluntary nature of their involvement. Both written and verbal informed consent were obtained from each participant (See Appendix 1 – Consent Forms). All interviews and observational data were anonymized, with names and identifying information removed to ensure confidentiality. Participants were reminded that they could refuse to answer any question or withdraw from the study at any point without consequence. Given the vulnerability of the population and the potential for

psychological distress when recalling traumatic experiences, interviews were conducted with empathy and caution, ensuring participants' emotional well-being was prioritized.

The data from interviews were examined by identifying recurring ideas and grouping them into broader themes based on patterns found across the transcripts. The process began with familiarization, whereby all transcripts and notes were read multiple times to gain a comprehensive overview. Next, significant segments of text were coded manually, highlighting recurring patterns and concepts. These codes were then grouped into broader thematic categories. Themes such as “navigating informality,” “working through social networks,” “gendered constraints,” and “aspirations beyond the camp” emerged from this process. These themes were refined and revised to ensure consistency and representativeness across the dataset. Finally, the findings were interpreted in relation to existing academic literature on displacement, informal economies, and youth resilience.

The data collected through the observation checklist were organized into tables and analyzed using a quantitative approach. This made it possible to create summaries, such as the gender breakdown of different livelihood activities, how much income was earned inside versus outside the camp, and how often certain informal strategies were used. Tables and charts were developed to help clearly show these patterns. These observational findings were then compared with what participants shared during interviews. By looking at where the two sets of data aligned or differed, the study was able to cross-check and strengthen its conclusions. This combination of qualitative and quantitative methods helped ensure a more well-rounded and reliable understanding of youth livelihoods in the camp.

Despite the rich data generated, the research faced several limitations. First, the success of interviews and data collection depended heavily on the availability of the translator. Furthermore, the reliance on translation introduces the risk of misinterpretation, despite best efforts to ensure clarity and accuracy. Second, the fieldwork coincided with the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, which affected the daily rhythm of camp life. Many economic activities, particularly food-related ones, were postponed to evening hours, but due to security concerns, it was not feasible to conduct fieldwork at night. This limited the researcher's ability to capture

the full range of economic practices, especially those that occur after sunset. Third, the ethnographic observations were constrained by the availability and willingness of participants, especially in public spaces where some individuals may have been hesitant to engage. Even so, it was still possible to carry out meaningful fieldwork and gather valuable insights despite these challenges.

In sum, the methodology employed in this research combined qualitative depth with contextual observation, offering a comprehensive view of how displaced youth navigate economic hardship within the Durumi IDP Camp. Through interviews, observations, and mapping, this study highlights youth voices and experiences while attending to the broader structural conditions that shape their economic realities.

1. An Overview of Nigeria

1.1. Geography and Demographics

Located in West Africa, Nigeria holds a strategically important position along the Gulf of Guinea. It shares borders with Benin to the west, Niger to the north, Chad to the northeast, and Cameroon to the east (Onah, 2014). Nigeria is a large country, covering about 923,769 square kilometers, and has a significantly large population. (Yeboua & Cilliers, 2025). The country is made up of diverse ecological and cultural regions, which are often grouped into six broad geopolitical zones: North-East, North-West, North-Central, South-East, South-West, and South-South (Onah, 2014). These zones reflect not only geographic differences but also important social, political, religious, and ethnic divisions that influence social relationships and patterns of movement within the country.

Nigeria's population is more than 230 million, confirming its status as the most populous country in Africa. A notable characteristic of this population is its youthful composition, with more than 58 percent being under the age of 30. This large youth population brings both opportunities and challenges. It offers the potential for a dynamic and growing workforce, but at the same time, it creates concerns related to economic vulnerability, access to education, and the ability of the labor market to provide sufficient jobs for young people (Mbaegbu, 2025).

Cultural and linguistic diversity is another key feature of Nigeria. The country is home to more than 250 ethnic groups and over 500 languages (Oluwadele, Adediran, & Olaogun, 2023). Although English is the official language used in government and education, local languages such as Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa are widely spoken in daily life across different regions (Sewakpo, 2018). Hausa is mainly spoken in the north, Yoruba in the west, and Igbo in parts of the south-east. These three are often regarded as the country's major languages (Udoh & Emmanuel, 2020). This linguistic diversity is also reflected in displaced settings. In the Durumi IDP camp, for example, many residents had different mother tongues. As observed during fieldwork, youth in the camp mentioned speaking languages such as Fulfulde, Duwai, or Mafa. However, Hausa was commonly used as a shared language for communication across groups. This was also the

language through which interaction was possible with camp residents (Author's observation, 2025).

Religious diversity adds another important aspect of Nigeria's social landscape. The population includes a nearly equal proportion of Muslims and Christians, with just over half identifying as Muslim and approximately 46% as Christian. Islam is more prominent in the North-West and North-East, while Christianity tends to be more common in the Southern part of the country. However, it should also be recognized that both Muslim and Christian communities exist beyond these general regional patterns, appearing in various parts of the country, including many urban areas. Additionally, some communities continue to follow Indigenous African religious traditions, although such beliefs are often less prominently represented in broader national reporting (Brooke-Holland, Loft, & Robinson, 2023).

Undoubtedly, Nigeria's vast geography, youthful demographic profile, and rich cultural diversity create a complex and dynamic social environment. Together, these elements shape the broader context in which many individuals engage with economic and social challenges across the country.

1.2. Federalism and Political Structure of the Country

Nigeria follows a federal system of government organized as a federal republic. This structure divides authority into three main levels: the federal government, the state governments, and the local government authorities. The country is made up of 36 states and 774 local government areas, along with the Federal Capital Territory in Abuja (Onah, 2014). While each level of government is designed to function independently, they are also connected and expected to work together.

Nigeria's adoption of a federal system is influenced by its vast geographical size as well as its ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and religious diversity (Nkwede, 2014). The country is made up of numerous ethnic groups, each with distinct languages, belief systems, and historical backgrounds. This diversity requires a political structure that can effectively manage and accommodate such differences (Majekodunmi, 2015). In principle, federalism offers a framework

for promoting national unity by granting constituent states a suitable level of autonomy in local governance, resource control, and cultural expression, while preserving overall national cohesion (Ata-Agboni, et al., 2023). In practice, however, Nigeria's federalism has been marked by challenges. Despite its constitutional federal structure, political power remains highly centralized at the federal level, often overshadowing the autonomy of states and local governments. Leaders historically and presently have tended to govern in ways that resemble a unitary system, concentrating power and resources at the center, which undermines true federalism and the self-governance of federating units (Nkwede, 2014). As a result, some scholars argue that Nigeria's federalism leans more toward a unitary model than a fully decentralized federal system (Majekodunmi, 2015).

The strong centralization in Nigeria is seen in several ways, especially in how the government controls income from natural resources, such as oil, which is the country's important economic resource. Disagreements over how these resources and political power are shared between the federal government and the states often lead to political conflicts and increase regional tensions (Ata-Agboni, et al., 2023). Because the central government controls most of the revenue, states have less ability to govern independently and support development projects that meet their local needs. Local governments also suffer from weak autonomy, often plagued by corruption and limited capacity to deliver services effectively (Ata-Agboni, et al., 2023).

Nigeria's political system follows a presidential model, which has been in place since 1979, replacing the previous parliamentary system (Onah, 2014). At the federal level, executive power is held by the President, who acts as both the head of state and the head of government. The President is supported by a Vice-President and a cabinet made up of ministers. Each state is led by an elected Governor and Deputy Governor. Both the President and Governors serve four-year terms and can be re-elected for one additional term (Onah, 2014).

1.3. Nigeria's Socio-Economic Landscape

Nigeria's socio-economic landscape is marked by both potential and persistent structural challenges. At the time of independence, Nigeria's economy was mainly based on agriculture,

with different regions specializing in various crops and livestock. As Emmanuel Onah describes, the northern region focused on food crops and animal farming, while the southern regions grew cash crops such as cocoa, rubber, and palm oil. In the early 1970s, the discovery and development of oil gradually influenced a shift in national economic priorities. Oil began to play an increasingly significant role in the country's revenue, and by the mid-1970s, it accounted for a substantial portion of government income. This development contributed to a reorientation of Nigeria's economic focus, with lasting effects on both the agricultural and industrial sectors (Onah, 2014).

While Nigeria has seen periods of economic growth, the positive outcomes have not always been evenly distributed. Importantly, a drop in oil prices in the late 1980s, for instance, brought about economic challenges and made it difficult for policy reforms to achieve their goals. These setbacks affected efforts to reduce poverty and promote inclusive development (Onah, 2014).

In the years leading up to the COVID-19 pandemic, about 40 percent of Nigerians were living in poverty (World Bank Group, 2022). Although the revision of GDP figures in 2014 showed that Nigeria is Africa's largest economy, the benefits of this growth have not been widely shared. Wealth remains concentrated among a small group, while many Nigerians face ongoing economic hardship. Challenges such as corruption and problems within the system have made it harder to reduce income inequality (Onah, 2014). Poverty in Nigeria remains widespread and uneven. It is more severe in rural areas and in the northern regions, where access to resources and opportunities is limited. Recent years have seen little progress, and the COVID-19 crisis has worsened the situation (World Bank Group, 2022).

Nigeria faces a significant challenge with high unemployment, particularly among its large youth population. Since formal job opportunities are limited, many people rely on the informal economy for work. This sector, which has low entry requirements and little regulation, supports millions of livelihoods across a wide range of activities (Maryann, 2023). A similar pattern is observed in Durumi IDP Camp, where many displaced youth also depend on informal work to sustain themselves. Many informal jobs in Nigeria include activities such as street vending, tailoring, welding, collecting waste, small-scale farming, operating motorcycles and tricycles, and

domestic work. While these jobs often lack security and formal protection, they are essential for many people, especially in a situation where formal employment opportunities have not grown as quickly as the population.

In summary, Nigeria's economy has shown important growth in some areas, but many challenges remain. High poverty rates, unemployment, and dependence on informal work, especially among young people, highlight ongoing difficulties.

1.4. Abuja as an Urban Context

Abuja is the capital city of Nigeria. It is located in the geographic heart of Nigeria, within the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), and was officially designated the capital in 1991, replacing Lagos, under the leadership of General Ibrahim Babangida (Babagana, 2020). The decision to move the capital was influenced by several important reasons. Lagos had become overcrowded and faced significant urban challenges due to its rapid growth. In contrast, Abuja offered more space and better planning opportunities. Additionally, the government aimed to create a more neutral and centrally located capital that could help promote unity among Nigeria's many ethnic and religious groups (Shuaibu, 2018).

Abuja is the first capital city in Nigeria that was specifically planned and built for that purpose. Its development began mainly in the 1980s. The location was chosen because of several advantages. These included its position in the center of the country, the climate, a relatively small population at the time, and available land that allowed area for future growth (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2025). In terms of population growth, Abuja has expanded rapidly. In 1991, the city had around 317,673 residents. By the 2006, this number had increased to over 1.4 million (Shuaibu, 2018). As of 2025, the urban population is estimated to have reached about 3,656,455 (PopulationStat, 2025).

To guide its urban development, Abuja was divided into five planning phases, each made up of several districts. Phase 1 is the most developed and includes some of the most important and wealthy areas such as Asokoro, Maitama, Garki, and Wuse. These districts are home to major

government buildings, embassies, and key federal institutions (Babagana, 2020). Phase 2, which is also fairly developed, includes districts such as Durumi, Apo, and Jabi. Durumi is notable for hosting the Durumi IDP Camp, one of the informal settlements where internally displaced persons have settled. The remaining phases, Phases 3 to 5 cover several areas and some of them are still undergoing expansion at various levels (Babagana, 2020).

Abuja serves as the location for several major national institutions, including the country's main executive, legislative, and judicial bodies (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2025). It is also the base for important regional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States, along with numerous embassies (Adama, 2007). Through these functions, Abuja represents both national leadership and international engagement. As mentioned before, from its early planning stages, it was intended to serve as a modern capital that supports unity across Nigeria's diverse population and encourages fair development.

Challenges have accompanied Abuja's expansion. As many people moved to the city looking for opportunities, the government struggled to provide sufficient housing, infrastructure, and public services (Shuaibu, 2018). For instance, areas such as Nyanya on the city's outskirts developed beyond the original plan due to rising housing costs and uncontrolled urban expansion. These informal settlements often face problems such as overcrowding, poor sanitation, and limited access to basic services. This contrasts with wealthier neighborhoods such as Maitama and Asokoro, where infrastructure and public services are generally more reliable (Adama, 2007).

The differences in infrastructure and management reveal deeper, underlying problems. Although Abuja was planned to be a model city with carefully controlled growth, powerful political and economic figures sometimes ignored zoning rules and planning regulations. This has caused uneven development and harm to the environment (Shuaibu, 2018). Moreover, decisions are often made by federal agencies without much input from local communities, leaving many residents feeling excluded and with little opportunity to take part in the decision-making processes that affect their everyday lives (Adama, 2007).

Taken all together, Abuja stands as a symbol of Nigeria's federal identity and developmental ambition. However, the city also highlights the difficulties involved in urban planning, governance, and social inequality. These challenges are especially important to consider when looking at the living conditions and ways of life of displaced people who live in informal and less developed areas such as the Durumi IDP Camp.

2. Contextual Background: Displacement Crisis in Nigeria

2.1. Causes of Internal Displacement in Nigeria

Internal displacement refers to situations in which individuals are forced to leave their homes, communities, and sources of livelihood due to factors such as conflict, violence, natural disasters, or other forms of crisis. However, unlike refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) do not cross international borders but remain within the boundaries of their own countries. This often leaves them in extremely vulnerable and unstable conditions. According to (Adeleye, 2023), internal displacement has become a widespread and pressing issue in today's world, frequently caused by violent conflict and serious violations of human rights. Being displaced can have severe impacts on people's lives. It can expose individuals to increased vulnerability, making them more likely to face challenges such as economic hardship, poverty, and serious threats to their well-being.

Internal displacement in Nigeria is a complicated issue caused by a combination of human-related and natural factors. Although internal displacement is a challenge faced by many countries around the world, in Nigeria it has become prolonged and complex, particularly in the past two decades (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2025). The country has experienced various forms of displacement arising from civil war, insurgency and counterinsurgency, communal violence, electoral and political violence, religious clashes, and natural disasters. Among these, human-related causes, especially armed conflict, have played a particularly significant role. The insurgency carried out by Boko Haram, along with the rise in banditry in the northwest region, has further worsened the displacement situation in Nigeria (UNHCR, 2024). It is important to mention that military conflict has led to a significant rise in the number of internally displaced persons, with Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe being among the most affected regions. These areas have experienced years of attacks from different armed groups, resulting in widespread displacement, loss of life, and damage to livelihoods (Tunde, Shah, & Farah, 2024). Many of these displacements are caused by the combined effects of ongoing conflict and natural disasters such as flooding. This situation underscores the dual vulnerabilities faced by internally displaced

people in Nigeria, who must cope with both persistent insecurity and climate-related challenges (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2025).

It is important to emphasize the role of natural disasters. The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre reports that floods were a major cause of disaster-related displacement throughout 2024. For example, the overflow of the Alau Dam in Maiduguri, Borno State, alone forced tens of thousands of people to leave their homes (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2025). This highlights the growing impact of climate-related events on displacement in Nigeria.

Religious and ethnic tensions have also remained consistent causes of internal displacement in Nigeria. Adeola Adeleye explains that communal violence has been a longstanding and deeply rooted issue, contributing to displacement even before the rise of insurgent groups. Such violence often stems from ethnic divisions, land ownership disagreements, disputes over local administrative borders, and struggles for access to political and economic power (Adeleye, 2023). Similarly, Fatima Kyari Mohammed points out that Nigeria's past, including its civil war in 1967 and repeated ethno-religious clashes, has created conditions for ongoing instability and forced movement (Mohammed, 2017). Political violence during elections has also contributed to displacement. For example, in 2011, election-related tensions forced people to flee their homes in at least nine states (Adeleye, 2023), showing how political competition continues to trigger localized displacement in different parts of the country.

The situation is further complicated by the herder-farmer conflict, especially in the central region and parts of the Northwest. According to UNHCR, clashes between nomadic herders and settled farming communities have led to the displacement of many people. These tensions, made worse by desertification and the decreasing availability of grazing land, show how environmental pressure and conflict can cause displacement (UNHCR, 2024).

The Nigerian government has acknowledged the complex causes of internal displacement and introduced several policies in response. While these strategies suggest some institutional effort to link emergency aid with long-term recovery, progress has been limited. Key government agencies, such as the National Emergency Management Agency and the National Commission for

Refugees, Migrants, and IDPs, play central roles in managing the response. However, as Adeleye notes, the success of these initiatives largely depends on strong coordination, sufficient funding, and tackling deeper issues such as social exclusion and inequality (Adeleye, 2023).

2.2. Insurgency of Boko Haram

As mentioned earlier, Boko Haram is one of the main forces behind the large-scale displacement of people in Nigeria. The group emerged as one of the most violent jihadist movements in Africa, gaining global notoriety for its brutality and radical ideology. Officially known as “People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet’s Teachings and Jihad”, the group is more commonly referred to as Boko Haram, which in the beginning was a religious group in northern Nigeria. It followed a strict interpretation of Islam and strongly opposed Western education and modern state institutions. Over time, the group became increasingly violent, evolving into a deadly insurgency responsible for bombings, kidnappings, and attacks on civilians, schools, and government structures. These actions have caused deep harm to local communities and contributed to a serious humanitarian crisis, forcing civilians to flee their homes in search of safety and more stable living conditions (Thurston a. , 2018).

Boko Haram was founded in the early 2000s in Maiduguri, the capital city of Borno State in northeastern Nigeria, by Muhammad Yusuf. In its early years, the group operated more as a religious movement than an armed group. Its main focus at the time was preaching and building a community based on what Yusuf and his followers saw as a more authentic and purified form of Islam. Yusuf’s teachings strongly rejected Western influence, especially in the form of education, which he saw as a symbol of secularism and moral decline in Nigerian society. This rejection is reflected in the name "Boko Haram," commonly understood to mean "Western education is forbidden" (Bohm, 2020).

Boko Haram’s rejection of Western education goes beyond a simple opposition to schooling. It reflects a broader refusal of Western ideas and systems, including democracy, secular governance, and laws not based on Islamic principles. This worldview aligns with Salafi-jihadist thinking, which opposes any blending of Islamic values with secular state systems. However, Boko

Haram's version of this ideology developed in a local context, shaped by the political and economic neglect of northern Nigeria and the lack of opportunities for young people (Thurston A. , 2016).

The turning point in Boko Haram's trajectory came in 2009 following violent clashes with Nigerian security forces. The death of the group's founder, Muhammad Yusuf, while in police custody, became a turning point that pushed the group toward greater violence. After this, Abubakar Shekau took over as leader and led the group down a much more aggressive and militarized path. Under Shekau, Boko Haram carried out attacks such as bombings, kidnappings, and killings. His leadership was marked by a harsh and extreme interpretation of Islam, in which anyone who did not fully agree with the group's beliefs, whether Muslim or Christian, was seen as an enemy and could be targeted (Bohm, 2020). According to Vera Bohm and Alexander Thurston, Boko Haram labeled government employees even ordinary Muslim civilians who did not actively support the group as traitors to their faith. This view made it easier for the group to justify violent attacks on public places such as markets, schools, mosques, and entire communities.

After 2009, Boko Haram's violence grew alongside the group's increasing organizational capacity. began expanding beyond Borno State into other parts of northeastern Nigeria, including Yobe and Adamawa. By 2011, it had launched major attacks, such as bombings at the United Nations headquarters and the national police headquarters in Abuja (Bohm, 2020). These attacks showed that the group had become a serious regional and national concern. By 2013, Boko Haram began taking control of territory and, in 2014, declared a caliphate with the town of Gwoza as its capital. That same year saw the highest level of violence by the group, with more than 7,000 people killed (Bohm, 2020).

It is important to mention that even in its extreme views, Boko Haram reflects deeper frustrations within society. As Alexander Thurston explains, Boko Haram's beliefs can be seen as a radical version of ongoing debates in northern Nigeria about whether Western-style development fits with Islamic values. For some Muslims in the region, Western education is seen as a way to improve their lives, but at the same time, for some people, it is viewed as something that could

weaken their religious beliefs. This tension made some people more likely to accept Boko Haram's strict message (Thurston A. , 2016).

Over more than a decade, efforts to eliminate Boko Haram have achieved mixed results. Although Nigeria's current president, Bola Tinubu, came into office promising to strengthen national security, attacks, kidnappings, and insecurity remain persistent challenges. Boko Haram and its splinter groups continue to operate across Nigeria and in neighboring countries such as Cameroon, Chad, and Niger (Al Jazeera, 2025).

2.3. Youth Perspectives on the Impact of Boko Haram Insurgency: Stories of Displacement and Loss

It is crucial to examine how the Boko Haram insurgency has transformed the lives of young people. Numerous individuals, including children and youth, have been displaced internally as a direct result of Boko Haram's activities. In this context, giving attention to the perspectives of these young people is essential. Understanding how they remember and narrate these traumatic experiences, as well as how they compare their current circumstances with the lives they lived before the insurgency, provides valuable insight. Exploring the impact of Boko Haram through the voices of those directly affected is vital to gaining a deeper understanding of the consequences of the conflict.

Most of the young people interviewed in the Durumi IDP camp spoke about their lives before the insurgency in strongly positive terms. A common theme in their stories was a sense of comfort, family support, and the ability to manage their livelihoods. A 21-year-old male explained that he was living comfortably in Borno State with his family before the insurgency affected him (Displaced Youth No. 2, 2025). Another young man shared a similar reflection, saying that life was more simple and that livelihood was better in Gwoza before the conflict (Displaced Youth No. 11, 2025). These accounts highlight more than just material well-being. They reveal how strongly these young people valued the emotional and social bonds they had with their families and communities. The way they remember their pre-insurgency lives shows a deep sense of belonging and a longing for the familiarity and routine that once shaped their daily lives. For

many, the violence and displacement brought by Boko Haram did not only take away their homes but also disrupted their sense of identity, security, and connection to a supportive environment. These personal memories play an important role in how they understand and navigate their current situation.

Livelihoods before displacement were often connected to farming, small-scale trade, and family-run businesses. Many young people described a simple but functional way of life, where work was steady and based on cooperation within their communities. A 24-year-old female explained that before the Boko Haram insurgency, her family farmed in Adamawa State and lived peacefully. She recalled that after finishing work on their own land, she and her family would help others with farming in exchange for payment (Displaced Youth No. 25, 2025). This kind of arrangement reflects a rural economy built on mutual support, trust, and shared effort. It also shows how young people were actively involved in household and community livelihoods. As mentioned, the insurgency disrupted not only individual lives but also these systems of cooperation and everyday survival. With displacement, the loss is not just of income but also of the relationships and social structures that once made these livelihoods possible.

In many interviews, young people emphasized how normal and predictable life felt before the conflict. A 20-year-old male described it simply, saying that livelihood in Gwoza, Borno State, was good and that his father, a businessman, was able to provide everything the family needed (Displaced Youth No. 3, 2025). Another camp resident, a 23-year-old female, explained, “We ate morning, afternoon and evening. But, right now, if I eat in the morning, I am hundred percent sure there will be no lunch in the afternoon” (Displaced Youth No. 6, 2025). This kind of comparison highlights more than just a change in material conditions. It reflects a deep loss of food security and the emotional stress that comes from living with daily uncertainty. The shift from a life of routine and stability to one marked by scarcity and unpredictability has clearly left a lasting impact on the way these young people experience their present lives.

The transition from stability to displacement was often marked by violence and deep trauma. Many of the young people interviewed described fleeing their homes under the immediate threat

of attack, often surrounded by fear and confusion. Some recalled the sound of gunfire and the sudden chaos that forced entire families to run for safety. Others spoke about being chased from one place to another, with no sense of security or rest. These stories were often filled with painful memories of loss, including the disappearance or death of loved ones, and the destruction of their homes and livelihoods. Although not always shared in detail, these experiences clearly left emotional scars that still affect them today. The fear and grief connected to these events continue to shape how they view themselves and their futures, making recovery and long-term healing especially difficult.

One of the most common themes in the interviews was the disruption of education. Many young people shared that they had been enrolled in school before the insurgency began but were forced to stop once they fled their homes. A 24-year-old female explained, “We went to school... after Boko Haram, we live just for surviving” (Displaced Youth No. 8, 2025). Another respondent added, “Before the conflict, I was attending school regularly, but now I have no chance to continue” (Displaced Youth No. 15, 2025). Losing access to education has created long-term challenges. Without school certificates or training, many now struggle to find formal jobs. What was once seen as a path to progress and a better life has, for many, turned into something out of reach. This theme will be explored more deeply in the chapters that follow.

2.4. Displaced Persons’ Settlements in Nigeria

As previously highlighted, conflict and insurgency continue to heavily influence the distribution and organization of displacement sites across Nigeria. By September 2023, the country had recorded 1,134,828 internally displaced persons (IDPs) spread across 340 camps in seven major states. These states include Borno, Adamawa, Benue, Nasarawa, Sokoto, Yobe and Katsina, all of which remain deeply affected by ongoing violence, particularly from Boko Haram and other armed groups (Olatunji, 2024).

Borno State is among the most heavily affected areas, hosting 221 camps that shelter an estimated 877,299 individuals. This high number of displaced persons reflects the prolonged impact of Boko Haram’s activities in the region, which have driven large-scale population

movements. Adamawa State also accommodates a significant number of displaced people, with 25 camps across the state. In Benue State, where both insurgency and farmer-herder conflicts have contributed to instability, there are 34 camps currently operating. While Katsina, Sokoto, Yobe and Nasarawa have comparatively fewer camps, they still account for a meaningful share of the internally displaced population (Olatunji, 2024).

Official displacement data offer an important overview, but they may not fully reflect the complex and evolving landscape of internal displacement in Nigeria. One area that appears to be underrepresented in existing reports is the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja, which is home to IDP communities that have received relatively limited attention in national assessments. Unlike the formal camps found in conflict-affected areas, displacement sites in Abuja are mostly informal spontaneous settlements and are often not included in national Displacement Tracking Matrix data. This means they are frequently overlooked in policy discussions and humanitarian planning. However, information from the National Emergency Management Agency shows that Abuja hosts a number of IDP sites, each with different population sizes and needs. The most prominent camps in Abuja include Wassa, which has approximately 700 households; Waru with 456 households; Durumi (Area 1) housing 350 households; New Kuchingoro with 335 households; Malaysian Gardens with 178 households; Karamanjiji with 173 households; Yimitu with 160 households; Kabusa and Orozo, each with 120 households; Zhydna with 121 households; Gongola and Dutse Apo, each hosting 100 households; Takushara with 70 households; Dakwo with 63 households; Peggi with 67 households; Bwari with 35 households; and Dobi with 25 households (The National Emergency Management Agency, 2025).

The ongoing presence and growth of these camps show the choices displaced people make to find safety, stability, and chances for a better future. Interviews conducted during fieldwork at Durumi IDP Camp, one of the most prominent sites in Abuja, provide valuable insights into these settlement dynamics. The camp chairman explained why many displaced people choose Abuja as their destination, saying, “Abuja is the capital of Nigeria. There are wealthy people here. There are more opportunities here. It is safe here” (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025). This statement highlights the main reasons why many displaced people choose to move to the Federal

Capital Territory. As the center of Nigeria, Abuja is seen as a relatively safer place, away from active conflict, and as a city that may offer some opportunities. These include access to humanitarian support, informal work, and occasional help from wealthier residents. Compared to conflict-affected states such as Borno or Adamawa, Abuja is viewed as a place to stay for now, especially by those who feel they have no safer options due to the ongoing insecurity in their home regions.

3. Durumi IDP Camp: An Informal Settlement in the Capital of Nigeria

3.1. Camp Establishment and Demographic Overview

The Durumi IDP Camp, also known as the Durumi or Area 1 IDP Camp, was set up on December 15, 2014, after a large number of internally displaced persons fled northeastern Nigeria due to the growing violence caused by Boko Haram. The camp was not part of any official government resettlement plan but instead formed when people began settling there on their own. Located in Abuja, in the Federal Capital Territory, Durumi became one of the first urban camps for displaced people outside the main conflict zones. Over time, the growth of the camp happened not through planning, but because people had no safe way to return home and continued to face insecurity in their regions of origin (Àjàdí, 2022).

What makes the Durumi IDP Camp particularly interesting is its location. Situated in a middle-income neighborhood of Abuja, it stands out as an urban displacement site in the central area of Nigeria's capital. This central positioning gives it unique visibility geographically (Askederin, Omole, & Shonibare, 2021), especially since it is near important places such as the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) training center. However, despite being so close to government buildings and infrastructure, Durumi IDP camp is often ignored in terms of political attention and aid. For example, unlike camps in the northeast, which receive regular support from international organizations such as the International Organization for Migration, Durumi is rarely included in their programs. This is partly because aid groups focus on regions still experiencing violent conflict, and urban camps are not always seen as a priority (Askederin, Omole, & Shonibare, 2021). However, Durumi's location does not imply that its residents experience better living conditions. According to Stephen Àjàdí, the camp is physically visible within the city but often overlooked in social and political discourse. While the IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix provides detailed data on camps in states such as Borno and Adamawa, Abuja is often absent from these records. Stephen Àjàdí notes that this oversight is linked to the widespread but inaccurate perception that displaced people in urban areas are less vulnerable. In reality, residents of Durumi face significant challenges, including economic hardship (Àjàdí, 2022). In fact, Àjàdí's research reveals that 71% of Durumi residents feel disconnected from the rest of the city.

This challenges the assumption that living in an urban area offers displaced people more protection or better opportunities (Àjàdí, 2022)

The exact population size of the Durumi IDP Camp is difficult to determine, as estimates have varied across different sources and time periods. During the interview, the camp chairman reported that approximately 3,830 individuals lived in the Durumi IDP Camp. This figure, however, contrasts with earlier estimates. A study using spatial mapping and observational methods recorded a total of 2,740 residents in September 2019 (Àjàdí, 2022), a number also cited in official records from the National Emergency Management Agency. Another data source offered a slightly higher estimate of 2,830 residents, noting that this figure aligned closely with official data from NEMA, with an accuracy rate of 96.81 percent (Askederin, Omole, & Shonibare, 2021). Another study, drawing from FEMA records and consultations with camp leaders, placed the population at 3,220 (Ba-Ana-Itenebe & Edo, 2023). It is important to mention that many residents move in and out of the camp and it is hard to track the exact number of people living there at any given time. The lack of a formal system for collecting and updating data adds to the challenge.

Efforts to provide a more detailed demographic overview of the camp were reflected in a population breakdown shared during fieldwork, which grouped residents into the following categories: 140 people above the age of 45, 1,788 people between the ages of 15 and 45, 1,560 children, and 22 orphans. Based on these numbers, each household includes about 12 people on average, as individuals often live together to share available space and resources (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025). However, a closer look at the data shows a discrepancy as the total number of people in the listed categories is 3,488, which is 342 fewer than the reported overall population. It is also unclear how the category of “orphans” fits in, as it likely overlaps with the “children” group. These inconsistencies point to gaps or possible errors in the way the data was recorded or categorized. This may result from incomplete demographic records, overlapping categories, or basic data entry mistakes, all of which are common in humanitarian settings where administrative systems are under pressure. High levels of population movement, the absence of digital data systems, and limited capacity can further contribute to such gaps in information.

During interviews, the camp chairman provided additional insights. It was shared that youth in the camp are defined as individuals aged 15 to 45 and include a population figure for this age group (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025). However, there may be some uncertainty regarding the accuracy of this number, as data collection in such contexts is often challenging, as I mentioned before. While a formal demographic breakdown by gender or by narrower age cohorts, such as youth aged 18 to 24, was unavailable, he acknowledged, “Actually, I do not have that data” (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025). Without clear information about the population available for the camp management team inside the Durumi IDP camp, especially about youth and gender groups, it becomes difficult to design and carry out support that meets specific needs.

Based on figures shared by the chairman of the Durumi IDP camp, most residents come from northeastern Nigeria, a region heavily affected by the Boko Haram crisis. He said that up to 2,000 people have come from Borno State, over 1,000 from Adamawa, and more than 100 from Yobe (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025). Although these numbers are not precise, they show a clear pattern of people moving from the northeast to Abuja in search of safety and better living conditions. This matches findings from Stephen Àjàdí who states that the majority of the camp’s residents are from Borno State, creating a demographically imbalanced but socially cohesive environment. It is important to mention that People from Adamawa have built close communities in certain parts of the camp such as Abu, Dodo, Adabaza, and Kanuri. Interestingly, Àjàdí also points out that, despite the different backgrounds and groups within the camp, there have been no major reports of conflict, showing a strong sense of peace and social cohesion among the residents (Àjàdí, 2022).

3.2. Governance and Camp Leadership Structure

The governance structure of the Durumi IDP Camp in Abuja reflects a distinct model of community-based, self-organized leadership. Although the system operates informally and lacks bureaucratic structure, it is characterized by internal trust, coherence, and localized legitimacy.

Leadership is assumed by displaced persons themselves, forming a bottom-up framework that centers on accountability, familiarity, and community engagement.

At the heart of this governance model is the camp chairman, who is elected by the residents. As the chairman emphasized in an interview conducted during fieldwork, “It is always the people, the community who chooses” (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025). This perspective aligns closely with findings in the work of Stephen Àjàdí and Adenitan Olufemi Mirth, both of whom underline the importance of communal participation in leadership selection. The chairman's responsibilities are wide-ranging, encompassing conflict resolution, communication with aid organizations, and overall administrative oversight. He acts as the central authority figure and ensures the continuity of leadership and coordination within the camp (Mirth, 2015).

Beyond the role of the chairman, the camp's governance is supported by a collective leadership structure that ensures its effective functioning. This structure includes a vice president, a secretary, a public relation officer (PRO), a women's leader, a storekeeper, a provost, and representatives from each of the twelve sections of the camp (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025). The secretary is responsible for keeping records of camp activities, helping to maintain continuity and preserve institutional memory. The public relations officer plays an important role in managing communication between the leadership, camp residents, and outside visitors (Mirth, 2015). This function was highlighted in the chairman's interview, where he explained that the PRO helps mobilize the community and deliver important information (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025).

The role of the women's leader is particularly crucial in a displacement context, where gender-specific vulnerabilities often emerge. She provides a channel through which female residents can express their concerns and ensures that humanitarian organizations engage with women in a culturally sensitive and secure environment. As the chairman stated, “If the NGOs want to communicate only with women, the women's leader will play her part in this” (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025). This role illustrates how leadership within the camp is not only functionally distributed but also considers the different needs and experiences of people, especially based on gender.

The storekeeper, as mentioned by the chairman during the interview, plays a key role in managing the intake and distribution of donated goods, including food and medication. The provost, on the other hand, is responsible for maintaining order and ensuring basic security within the camp (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025). Together, these roles help the leadership coordinate daily life and uphold a sense of structure, even in the absence of formal government support.

Importantly, the camp is divided into twelve distinct sections or “groups,” each with its own representative. These sections include Dagba River site, Dodo site, Maman Dzamghara site, Kanuri site, Abu site, Adabaza site, Hajja Mallam, F.I.R.S site, Banana Village, Jumai site, Danja Fence, and Fulani site. The names of the groups often reflect either the ethnic background of the residents or the physical layout of the camp, showing the camp’s cultural diversity and how space plays a role in shaping social organization (Àjàdí, 2022). Group leaders act as key links between the people living in these sections and the main camp leadership, helping to pass along information and distribute resources efficiently throughout the camp (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025).

As highlighted, the camp’s approach to leadership accountability highlights its strong commitment to community-based governance. As Mirth explains, the executive leaders are evaluated every three months through a review process where residents share their feedback, especially about how fairly aid is being distributed. This kind of community involvement helps ensure that leaders remain answerable to the people they serve and strengthens their legitimacy within the camp (Mirth, 2015).

Another notable aspect of the camp’s leadership system is that it operates without any financial reward. As the chairman explained, “We are not paid, not even one naira by the people. Also, all of us are the residents of this camp. We are all IDPs” (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025). This highlights how leadership is seen more as a responsibility to the community than a privileged role. Still, as this thesis explores, leadership in displacement settings can bring certain benefits, even without formal payment. Leaders often become more visible and have greater contact with

NGOs and aid organizations, which can give them informal influence over decisions and how resources are shared. Therefore, although the system seems grounded in fairness and collective responsibility, it is essential to look more closely at the hidden forms of power that can exist in situations where resources are limited.

Taken together, the interview data and academic literature reveal a consistent picture of the camp's governance structure. Both Stephen Àjàdí (2022) and Adenitan Mirth (2015) describe nearly identical configurations of leadership positions and emphasize that the system is led by IDPs for IDPs. This alignment points to a certain level of stability and mutual understanding around governance practices that have gradually developed within Durumi Camp, even though occasional tensions, as in any community, are never entirely absent.

3.3. Legal Status and Land Ownership

The legal status and land ownership of the Durumi IDP Camp are critical factors shaping the everyday experiences of its residents, including youth. The lack of official recognition from the government and the different ideas about who owns the land create a constant sense of insecurity for residents of the Durumi IDP Camp.

According to the camp chairman, the Nigerian government is aware of the camp's existence but has never officially recognized it. As he explained during an interview, "The government knows the camp exists, but it is not officially recognized by them" (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025). Because of this, the camp exists in an uncertain position. Without formal status, residents are not guaranteed any legal protection, which makes life in the camp feel unstable and insecure. The chairman highlighted this fear, saying, "We know that this area belongs to FIRS and anytime, they can shift us" (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025). His dual role as both a leader and a resident adds emotional weight to this statement, emphasizing how deeply rooted the fear of eviction is within the community.

A clear sign of the camp's uncertain situation is that it is based on a land which, according to the chairman, belongs to the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS). He explained, "The land is owned

by the Federal Inland Revenue Service training school. It is a governmental institution” (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025). Living on government land without any kind of official permission creates a confusing situation, where the same government that owns the land does not officially recognize or support the people living there. This makes it harder for residents to speak up for their rights or receive long-term help from public institutions.

The threat of eviction is not hypothetical. In 2019 or 2020, the residents faced pressure from FIRS to leave the land to make space for parking. As the chairman recounted, “Yes, there was a threat. The FIRS wanted us to be relocated. They wanted to build the parking space for their staff here” (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025). Although the eviction was eventually avoided when an alternative location was found, this decision appeared to be driven more by convenience than by any real concern for the residents’ needs. The experience left a lasting impression on the community, reinforcing a shared sense of instability (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025).

Interestingly, secondary sources offer a slightly different perspective on land ownership in the Durumi IDP Camp, adding another layer to what the camp chairman described. Stephen Àjàdí notes that displaced populations in Abuja often live on privately owned land that is informally leased to them for uncertain periods. These arrangements usually come with the understanding that residents may be asked to leave with only three to six months' notice (Àjàdí, 2022). Similarly, Adenitan Olufemi Mirth explains that, in the case of Durumi, the land was originally made available by a private individual, with the condition that residents would settle there temporarily and build only non-permanent structures such as tents (Mirth, 2015). This version suggests that some parts of the camp may be located on privately owned land rather than government-owned land, as the chairman described. Taken together, these sources show that land ownership in the camp may be more complicated than it initially seems, adding to the uncertainty that residents already live with.

This unstable and insecure situation has significant consequences for the youth living in the camp. First, the absence of formal land rights discourages long-term investment in key areas such as income-generating activities. Without a sense of permanence, young people are unable to make

meaningful plans for the future, pursue stable employment, or develop small businesses with confidence. Second, the constant threat of eviction places a psychological burden on residents. As reflected in the chairman's remark that "anytime, they can shift us" (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025), the fear of being displaced at short notice creates ongoing stress and anxiety. This environment of uncertainty undermines the resilience of youth and limits their ability to build skills, develop personally, and contribute to the wider community.

3.4. Overview of Basic Services in the Durumi IDP Camp

The Durumi IDP Camp in Abuja offers a range of essential services that support basic survival, including access to water, sanitation, electricity, shelter, education, and healthcare. However, the availability, management, and quality of these services vary considerably across the camp. This section provides a descriptive overview of the services currently in place, drawing from both first-hand accounts gathered through interviews and existing research.

Water provision in the Durumi Camp is primarily reliant on a borehole, initially funded by a philanthropist (Askederin, Omole, & Shonibare, 2021). This borehole plays a vital role in meeting the daily water needs of residents. However, many people still struggle to access it. The camp chairman explained that he manages the water supply himself by placing containers at the camp's entrance. While young men usually collect water from this point, women and children tend to avoid it because it is located outside the camp, making them feel unsafe (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025). This unequal access highlights deeper issues of insecurity and exclusion that affect certain groups within the camp.

Sanitation facilities also vary in quality and accessibility. According to the camp chairman, some households with greater financial means have constructed private toilets for personal use. Others must rely on shared facilities, including those provided by NGOs. For instance, there are toilets reserved for pupils and teaching staff at the camp school (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025). Interestingly, it is important to highlight that the presence of gender-separated toilets and a sanitation schedule, with general cleaning conducted monthly. Despite these efforts, not all residents are able to use sanitation facilities equally, and open defecation remains common

among those who lack access to private or NGO-provided toilets (Askederin, Omole, & Shonibare, 2021).

Concerning electricity, the camp chairman explained that there is no support or subsidy from any organization or government body. Households are responsible for covering their own electricity costs by pooling money and making payments through the chairman or another community leader. If payments are missed, the government quickly disconnects the supply. This makes access to electricity uncertain for many residents (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025).

Shelter provision in Durumi Camp follows similar patterns of informality. New arrivals are allocated space by the camp leadership but are responsible for constructing their own tents using basic materials such as sticks and polythene sheets. As noted, there is no government role in the design or provision of shelter (Askederin, Omole, & Shonibare, 2021). The absence of formal housing solutions creates a feeling of instability and insecurity, which adds to the emotional and practical challenges faced by displaced people.

When examining the range of services available within the camp, it is important to highlight the provision of educational services, which are delivered entirely by non-governmental organizations. According to the chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, two main organizations, the Betharbel Foundation and Arise Academy, take the lead in providing teaching staff, educational materials, and organizing classes. The camp leadership does not participate in the administration of education, which underscores the strong presence of civil society support alongside a notable absence of state-led intervention (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025). In addition, Stephan Àjàdí remarks that although humanitarian actors have contributed meaningfully, government support for education has been minimal. It is important to mention that the coverage and quality of these services remain limited (Àjàdí, 2022). Interviews with displaced youth reinforce this view, with several respondents expressing concerns about irregular teacher attendance and inconsistent learning materials. These challenges may affect the long-term opportunities and future prospects of camp youth, many of whom perceive their education as lacking stability and broader recognition.

Healthcare services in the camp follow a similar NGO-led model. According to the camp chairman, the An-Nusrah Foundation operates a clinic that provides basic medical care (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025). As reported in secondary sources, this care is expected to include daily nurse attendance, doctor visits twice per week, and weekly immunizations (Askederin, Omole, & Shonibare, 2021). While services are meant to be free, the reality on the ground is more complex. When medications are unavailable, patients are given prescriptions to purchase them outside the camp, which is often not feasible for displaced individuals with little or no income. In interviews, camp youth expressed frustration with the inconsistency of care and the gaps in service. Stephan Àjàdí additionally notes that government involvement in healthcare has been limited, placing most of the burden on NGOs that operate with constrained resources (Àjàdí, 2022).

Taken together, the analysis suggest that the camp system is both operational and vulnerable. Basic services such as water, sanitation, electricity, shelter, education, and healthcare are present, though their provision remains uneven, largely informal, and influenced by socio-economic disparities. Residents who can afford to pay for additional services such as electricity, private sanitation or healthcare outside the camp often experience better living conditions, while those without the means continue to face challenges in accessing reliable support.

3.5. Funding, Aid, and External Support in Durumi IDP Camp

The Durumi IDP Camp in Abuja operates primarily with support from external actors. While formal government involvement has been limited, the camp continues to function through contributions from non-governmental organizations, faith-based groups, philanthropic individuals, and private donors. When asked about the presence of government assistance, the camp chairman responded simply, “To be honest, not really” (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025). This aligns with secondary literature, where it is emphasized that most donations come from concerned Nigerians and NGOs, with NEMA and politicians providing only symbolic or infrequent support (Mirth, 2015). In this context, civil society groups and members of the camp

community have taken on most of the responsibility for providing support and managing daily activities (Askederin, Omole, & Shonibare, 2021).

Most of the humanitarian support in Durumi is offered by NGOs working in specific sectors. For example, as mentioned before, Arise Academy and the Betharbel Foundation support educational activities, while organizations like An Nusrat Foundation and Médecins Sans Frontières provide health services (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025). In addition to these efforts, youth in the camp often pointed out that NGOs typically bring food and medications. This type of support was the most frequently mentioned during interviews, reflecting its importance in daily camp life. However, as the camp chairman noted, “Of course, this is not all the time” (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025). The irregularity of such assistance makes it difficult for the camp to plan ahead or consistently address urgent needs, especially when facing ongoing economic hardships. Given the unpredictability of such assistance, managing available resources becomes a vital aspect of daily life in the camp. In response, the community has developed internal systems to coordinate what they have and ensure support reaches those most in need. According to the camp chairman, when an NGO or individual donor provides financial support, the Public Relations Officer (PRO) brings together representatives from different groups in the camp to talk about the most urgent needs. “We are recording the problems and then direct the money for those problems to be fixed” (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025). This way of making decisions together shows a local and community-based approach to planning and accountability. Still, it also has some challenges. Without formal oversight, stronger or more influential groups in the camp might shape the decisions, which can lead to unfair access to resources for others.

Among the most significant areas of NGO intervention is capacity-building through vocational training. Over time, different organizations have introduced programs that teach both traditional and modern skills. These include tailoring, soap making, food preparation, hairstyling, cap knitting, makeup artistry, and digital literacy. A great example is the E-learning center in the Durumi IDP camp. This center provides ICT training to young people, offering them the opportunity to develop valuable digital competencies (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025).

During an interview, one young man, currently enrolled in the program, spoke about its significance to him. He explained that if the training continues, he would consider switching careers entirely to work in tech (Displaced Youth No. 1, 2025). His words show how learning digital skills can open up new and hopeful opportunities, even for those living in difficult circumstances.

Another important program is the Girlity Self-Development Initiative (GSDI). Led by the Girlity Foundation in partnership with the Hina Gana Foundation, the project aimed to support 100 displaced women and girls by focusing on both personal growth and vocational skills. The sessions, delivered by experts, covered topics such as self-discovery, entrepreneurship, financial security, gender equality, and human trafficking awareness. Participants also received hands-on vocational training in baking, tie and dye, and soap making. Out of the 100 women, 49 took part in practical workshops, while 61 joined the discussion-based sessions. In addition to providing knowledge, the program addressed basic needs by offering meals to over 300 people. Furthermore, 10 women who completed the training received starter kits to help launch small businesses. Despite some challenges, including reduced attendance during Ramadan and communication barriers, the program was considered well-organized and made a noticeable contribution to NGO activities in the camp (Girlity Self-Development Initiative, 2025).

Other NGO-led training programs have aimed to equip women with practical and income-generating skills, although the structure and level of follow-up support have often differed. Several women shared their experiences participating in sessions focused on soap making, food preparation such as chin chin and beans cake, as well as tailoring. A young woman explained that she had learned how to make soap during a program held in late 2024 (Displaced Youth No. 4, 2025). Another recalled gaining skills in preparing beans cake through a similar training (Displaced Youth No. 16, 2025). A third participant described receiving instruction in make-up services (Displaced Youth No. 8, 2025). At the same time, many residents raised concerns about the lack of continued support once the training ended. A young woman, who was involved in soap-making learning activity, shared that the organizers had promised to provide materials after the sessions, but nothing was delivered (Displaced Youth No. 4, 2025). This lack of follow-up assistance,

including tools or funding, was commonly mentioned as a challenge. Without this support, it becomes difficult for participants to move from learning new skills to using them as a reliable source of income.

The approach and impact of these training programs vary across organizations. The Brand Life Vision Foundation, for example, focuses on building long-term skills by providing a dedicated facility and a structured ICT training curriculum (Chairman of the Durumi IDP Camp, 2025). This shows an emphasis on sustainability and access to proper infrastructure. On the other hand, the GSDI project reflects a short-term but well-rounded model. It combines vocational training with psychosocial support and the distribution of material aid, aiming to address several needs at once (Girly Self-Development Initiative, 2025). In contrast, smaller or more informal efforts, such as personal instruction in tailoring, cap-knitting, or cooking, often rely on individual trainers, who are sometimes camp residents themselves. These initiatives usually do not have formal organizational support and operate on a more personal or community-based level.

Across these diverse initiatives, access to these opportunities remains uneven across the camp. Some young people mentioned they were either not chosen for training programs or did not know how to get involved in the first place. A few pointed to internal group dynamics or favoritism as reasons for being left out. This suggests that the effectiveness of NGO-led training in Durumi Camp is shaped not only by the quality of the programs themselves, but also by how inclusive it is and whether participants are provided with the necessary tools or capital to use their skills afterward.

Overall, NGO involvement in the Durumi IDP Camp reflects a complex and evolving landscape of support. While the provision of food, medicine and hygiene supplies remains essential to humanitarian aid, training programs have also become an important part of the camp's development. This shift suggests a move away from short-term relief efforts toward longer-term strategies that aim to build resilience among displaced populations.

4. Layers of Hardship: Youth Struggles in Durumi IDP Camp

4.1. Forced Displacement and the Legacy of Trauma

Forced displacement does not simply end when individuals flee their homes. For many, it marks the beginning of a long and difficult journey. In Durumi IDP Camp, young people aged 18 to 24 face more than just the physical consequences of conflict, such as poverty and poor living conditions. They also carry the emotional scars of violence, loss, and separation from family and community. Of course, it is important to pay attention to the immediate needs such as food, shelter, and medical care. At the same time, the emotional and psychological impact of displacement should not be left unaddressed. This hidden trauma can have serious and lasting effects. For many young people, the stress and emotional pain make it harder to rebuild their lives, focus on education or training, and take part in economic activities. Addressing these emotional challenges is therefore not only a matter of well-being, but also essential for supporting long-term recovery and resilience.

Many internally displaced youths in Durumi carry memories that continue to haunt them. A 21-year-old male interviewee shared, “The gunman would pick some of us, kill us, slaughter us” (Displaced Youth No. 1, 2025). In a similar account, a 24-year-old woman described her escape to Abuja after her husband was killed by Boko Haram, an experience she described as deeply traumatic (Displaced Youth No. 7, 2025). These are not isolated experiences. Across the camp, young people describe similar stories of violence, sudden loss, and emotional shock. This aligns with findings by Aluh, Okoro, and Zimboh, who reported the significant psychological impact of displacement in Nigeria. Their study found that 78 percent of internally displaced persons showed signs of post-traumatic stress, while 96.1 percent experienced symptoms of depression. These findings reflect how deeply displacement can affect emotional well-being (Aluh, Okoro, & Zimboh, 2019).

These findings are reflected in a more recent study carried out in Durumi IDP Camp. It was found that more than half of the 637 participants were living with some form of depression. Many reported experiencing mild to moderate symptoms, while others faced more serious challenges, including severe depression. Nearly half of those surveyed were between the ages of 20 and 24,

highlighting that young people are especially affected problems (Olufadewa, Adesina, Oladele, & Olufadewa, 2023). One reason for this is that young people are in a sensitive period of emotional and psychological development. According to the study, most mental health conditions begin before the age of 24. For displaced youth, this stage of life comes with even greater challenges. In addition to the usual pressures of adolescence and early adulthood, they must also cope with the effects of conflict, personal loss, and living in unstable and difficult conditions. These combined stressors make them especially at risk of developing long-term mental health problems (Olufadewa, Adesina, Oladele, & Olufadewa, 2023).

At the same time, mental health is often overlooked in humanitarian settings. The UNHCR has pointed out that conflict and forced displacement can create new mental health challenges or make existing ones worse. However, in most IDP camps, support for mental health remains very limited (Meyer, 2013). In Durumi, many young people who struggle with depression or anxiety have very limited access to trained professionals or counseling services. Some do not know where to turn for help, while others may not recognize their symptoms or feel too ashamed to speak about them. Because of this, mental health problems often remain invisible and untreated.

Furthermore, it is important to mention that the relationship between trauma and poverty is cyclical. When trauma makes it hard for young people to take part in economic activities, their financial situation can become even more unstable. This added stress can worsen their emotional and mental well-being. It is important to highlight that displaced people earning less than 10,000 Naira per month were more likely to experience mental health challenges. Unemployment can be especially harmful, as it affects not only daily survival but also how individuals see themselves. It can lead to feelings of worthlessness, social exclusion, and a deep sense of hopelessness. In this context, it is important to recognize a continuing pattern. Trauma makes it harder to take part in economic activities, and the poverty that follows increases emotional and mental suffering. Mental health is not just a secondary concern when discussing livelihoods. It is an essential part of any meaningful and lasting support for displaced youth (Olufadewa, Adesina, Oladele, & Olufadewa, 2023).

Despite these challenges, many displaced youths show signs of resilience. Research suggests that emotional strength can be supported by factors such as social connectedness and belief systems, which help individuals manage stress and adapt to difficult circumstances. These forms of coping are often linked to greater emotional balance and can play an important role in protecting mental well-being in conflict-affected settings. On the other hand, it is also worth noting that some youth turn to negative coping methods, such as using alcohol, which can make mental health problems even worse over time (Olufadewa, Adesina, Oladele, & Olufadewa, 2023).

Undoubtedly, addressing the emotional and psychological impact of displacement is just as important as meeting physical needs. Including mental health in long-term support strategies can help improve overall well-being and create better conditions for youth to move forward in their lives.

4.2. Barriers to Formal Employment

Accessing formal employment remains a major challenge for displaced youth living in the Durumi IDP Camp. This struggle is shaped by a mix of structural, social, and economic barriers. Most of the young people interviewed are not aiming for high-ranking jobs. Instead, they hope for basic and stable work such as cleaning jobs or entry-level positions in public services. But even these modest opportunities are often out of reach. Many face limited educational backgrounds, a lack of financial resources, and no influential social connections. In addition to these challenges, systemic issues like nepotism and corruption further block their path. It is important to examine the layered nature of these barriers, drawing on interviews with camp residents, academic literature, and broader studies on displacement and labor market access in Nigeria.

A common and significant barrier faced by displaced youth is the interruption of their education caused by the insurgency. Many explained that they had to leave school early or were unable to complete important national exams because of the conflict and their forced displacement. 20-year-old man shared that she had a strong passion for going to school, but the insurgency made it impossible for her to continue, and this remains a challenge in her life (Displaced Youth No. 3, 2025). Another young man recalled that Boko Haram attacks disrupted his final exams, which

meant he could not get the certificate he needed to follow his dream of joining the military (Displaced Youth No.12, 2025). Even for those who managed to complete secondary education, limited academic credentials and poor exam results still pose significant barriers to finding formal employment. One 19-year-old young woman explained, “I finished my secondary school, but my papers were not excellent” (Displaced Youth No. 21, 2025). Her experience reflects a broader challenge among displaced youth. Formal employment systems, particularly within government institutions, officially maintain strict requirements for academic credentials. These are standards that many camp residents are unable to meet because of the disruption caused by conflict and the systemic marginalization they continue to face.

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre highlights that lack of education and adequate skills is one of the key employment barriers for displaced youth globally (Cazabat, 2023), and this trend is clearly reflected in Durumi. Young people in the camp are not only unable to access educational opportunities but also have limited access to certification pathways that could offer alternative entry points into the job market.

Even when education is not the primary barrier, many displaced youths face another form of exclusion rooted in the lack of social capital. A significant number of respondents shared that having someone who can help or support them is seen as essential to securing any kind of formal employment. One 23-year-old young woman explained, “You must have somebody. I do not have understanding of how to start looking for the jobs” (Displaced Youth No. 4, 2025). A 20-year-old young man shared a similar experience and said, “I wanted to join the police, but... I do not have a ‘godfather’” (Displaced Youth No. 11, 2025). This idea of needing an advocate or personal connection in order to find work points to a deeply rooted culture of gatekeeping and nepotism within the Nigerian employment system. As a 22-year-old young woman put it, “I do not have forefronts, people who can speak for me... Without them, there is no access” (Displaced Youth No. 20, 2025).

Academic research supports these accounts and these experiences. Recruitment in Nigeria, both in the public and private sectors, is often shaped by nepotism, favoritism, and ethnic preference.

Instead of focusing on qualifications or ability, many hiring decisions are based on personal connections, shared ethnic or religious background, or even financial payments. The study describes cases where people were given jobs without going through any formal recruitment process, simply because they were chosen by managers or recommended by influential individuals (Adisa, Osabutey, Gbadamosi, & Mordi, 2017). This mirrors the lived reality for many youths in Durumi who reported exclusion based on not knowing “someone in power.” This lack of social capital is especially challenging for displaced youth who have been separated from their communities and extended families. As highlighted in the IDMC report, internal displacement often breaks important social networks that would normally help young people find jobs. This isolation is both physical and social. It limits not only access to opportunities but also access to the usual pathways through which people find work in Nigeria (Cazabat, 2023).

Another major barrier is the cost of accessing employment, both in a literal and a symbolic sense. Several respondents in the camp spoke about the need to pay bribes or offer what they described as “financial tips” in order to secure even low-level jobs. A 24-year-old woman explained, “In order to have a good job, you need to give financial tips. If you do not have money, you do not get the job” (Displaced Youth No. 8, 2025). Many displaced youths echoed this theme during the interviews, highlighting how financial barriers further limit their chances of entering the formal workforce.

It is important to mention that in Nigeria, some managers admitted that applicants are often expected to pay significant amounts of money just to be considered for a position. In some cases, organizations publish job advertisements only to meet legal requirements, while the actual roles are already given out through informal arrangements involving money or political influence. This results in an unequal system of employment, where access is often based on wealth and connections, while fair and transparent recruitment based on qualifications remains very limited (Adisa, Osabutey, Gbadamosi, & Mordi, 2017).

In this context, displaced youth in Durumi face multiple layers of disadvantages. They often do not have the formal qualifications, the financial resources, or the social connections that are

commonly needed to access formal employment. This combination of barriers makes it especially difficult for them to find stable work in formal job market.

An important point to highlight is the way gender influences access to employment among displaced youth. While both male and female respondents reported facing similar structural barriers, women often encounter additional challenges because of gender-based discrimination. Importantly, many private companies tend to prefer male workers, often due to concerns about maternity leave or assumptions that women are less available for late or demanding work schedules. As a result, recruitment practices frequently favor unmarried or childless men, especially in more conservative or patriarchal environments (Adisa, Osabutey, Gbadamosi, & Mordi, 2017). In a community like Durumi, where patriarchal norms are already deeply rooted and many displaced women take on caregiving roles, gender bias makes it even harder for women to access formal employment. While interviewees did not always speak about this directly, the gendered expectations within Nigeria's formal job market can make it more difficult for women to be considered for certain roles, which adds to the challenges they already face.

One of the most notable aspects of the findings is how modest the aspirations of these youths are. Many are not aiming for corporate positions or high-ranking roles. Instead, they hope for stability and dignity through jobs such as cleaning services or civil service positions. As one 22-year-old woman explained, "I would like if the government gave me even a cleaning job, but I do not have access because I do not know anyone and I do not have money" (Displaced Youth No. 20, 2025). This reflects a difficult reality. Even the most basic opportunities within the formal employment system remain out of reach for many displaced youths. Their experiences challenge the idea that hard work and education alone are enough to succeed. In a context shaped by structural barriers, formal qualifications do not guarantee employment. More often, what determines access is personal connections and the ability to pay.

4.3. Inadequate Shelter and Living Conditions

For many displaced youths in the Durumi IDP Camp, housing conditions form a significant part of their daily struggles. While some manage to make their living spaces more comfortable with the limited resources available, all residents live in accommodations that are often far from adequate. Issues such as leaking roofs, lack of mattresses, and the absence of mosquito nets are common, reflecting the broader challenges of life in displacement. These living conditions not only affect physical well-being but also point to the underlying economic difficulties that shape life in the camp. In this context, poor housing conditions become more than just a matter of shelter because they serve as a visible marker of the financial constraints and limited opportunities faced by displaced youth.

Across interviews conducted with camp residents aged 18–24, consistent themes emerged around poor shelter quality, overcrowding, exposure to disease, and the absence of sleeping materials. Most of the youth interviewed reported sleeping directly on the floor or on makeshift bedding such as thin cotton pads, old flour bags, or sewn-together fabric. As a 23-year-old woman noted, “we are just managing it. Some of us do not have actual mattresses, we sleep on the pads” (Displaced Youth No. 23, 2025). Another young man shared that four people were sharing a cramped room and sleeping on the hard ground using flour bags, which often led to persistent body pain. He explained, “Because the ground is very hard, we have body pains” (Displaced Youth No. 11, 2025). These accounts highlight how extreme poverty shapes daily life in the camp, making basic comfort and physical well-being a constant struggle for displaced youth.

The widespread presence of mosquitoes, constant heat, and leaking roofs further reflect the fragile and often difficult living conditions in the camp. A 21-year-old woman described living in what many residents refer to as a “bacha,” a makeshift structure built from scrap materials. As she noted, “The condition here is tough. Mosquitoes are everywhere” (Displaced Youth No. 5, 2025). In Hausa, bacha refers to the improvised tents commonly found throughout the camp (Mirth, 2015). These shelters offer little insulation or protection. During the dry season, they trap heat, making the indoor spaces nearly unbearable. In the rainy season, they frequently leak, contributing to the spread of illness. A 24-year-old woman explained, “During heat like now, it is

extremely hot inside the room. And also during the rainy season... we are experiencing different illnesses” (Displaced Youth No. 7, 2025). The lack of proper ventilation leads many to choose between heat exhaustion and exposure to mosquitoes. This dilemma poses serious health risks, particularly in a malaria-endemic area.

Overcrowding is another critical issue, with families and unrelated individuals often sharing small rooms. Shelter units in Durumi camp may house between 8 and 14 people, resulting in limited privacy and constant physical and emotional pressure (Askederin, Omole, & Shonibare, 2021). As a 19-year-old woman, shared, “I am staying with my sister. We are all in the same room and we are sleeping on the ground. We are trying to manage” (Displaced Youth No. 21, 2025). This constant strain from living in close quarters not only affects the feeling of personal space but also contributes to mental fatigue, stress, and the erosion of personal agency.

The inability to afford better shelter is closely tied to the wider economic struggles displaced youth face. The inability to afford better housing is closely connected to the broader economic challenges that displaced youth face. Many explained that although they would like to improve their living conditions, a lack of financial resources makes this extremely difficult. As one 22-year-old woman shared, “We are paying for the electricity, but when we do not have money, they are cutting off the light. Livelihood here is hard” (Displaced Youth No. 20, 2025). A 24-year-old woman echoed this, explaining that when income is low, even meeting basic needs such as food and electricity becomes a struggle. Not all the time can neighbors help, she said (Displaced Youth No. 22, 2025). These experiences highlight a cycle of poverty, where poor living conditions are both a result of and a contributor to ongoing financial hardship. Without proper rest or a safe and healthy environment, it becomes harder for young people to take part in work, training, or small business activities. Poor health, interrupted sleep, and constant stress make it even more difficult for them to build stable and sustainable livelihoods.

Additionally, the lack of consistent access to water and sanitation makes daily life even more difficult for many camp residents. While some youth live closer to water sources and face fewer problems, others must either buy water from vendors or walk long distances to collect it. A young

woman explained that even when there is no water available in the camp, she goes to the market to buy it. These extra efforts to meet basic needs add more financial pressure on youth who are already struggling (Displaced Youth No. 24, 2025). Regular expenses for water, electricity, and small repairs to their shelters gradually take away from the income or savings they may have. This makes it even harder for them to cope with unexpected challenges in the future.

The emotional impact of these living conditions is also significant. Several young people described their environment as difficult and very challenging, reflecting a persistent sense of tiredness or discouragement. The presence of bed bugs, lice, and poor hygiene, as mentioned in several interviews, adds another layer of discomfort that affects both physical health and mental well-being. The constant struggle to balance health, safety, and the need to survive financially highlights how uncertain and fragile life is for those living in the camp.

4.4. Food Insecurity and Its Impact on Youth Livelihoods

Food insecurity is one of the major challenges faced by displaced youth in Durumi IDP Camp. Although many young people are involved in different kinds of work, their income is often too low to provide regular and sufficient access to food. This lack of food security affects physical health, limits the ability to sustain livelihoods, and makes it difficult to plan for a more stable future.

Most interview participants described the lack of food as a serious issue in their everyday lives. A 21-year-old male participant explained, “Challenge is lack of food. There is not enough food in the camp” (Displaced Youth No. 2, 2025). Many others, especially women, said that changes in their daily income made it hard to afford enough food for themselves and their families. A 24-year-old woman with children shared, “Due to the low patronage, it is difficult to have three meals a day. I have children. Situation is tough for me” (Displaced Youth No. 16, 2025). Her words show how food insecurity is closely linked to unstable income and reveal the extra difficulties young women face when they are responsible for children.

In this context, food insecurity can be seen not only as limited access to food but also as a reflection of unstable income. It is closely connected to the everyday economic challenges faced by displaced youth. Many depend on small daily earnings from informal activities such as selling goods or providing services. When there are no customers, they are often unable to afford food. A young man who washes cars shared, “When it comes to food, it depends on the patronage. If there are no cars or motorcycles in morning that I can wash, it is going to be a challenge for me” (Displaced Youth No. 14, 2025). Others mentioned that they sometimes have to skip meals or borrow money from relatives to manage their basic needs.

It is important to note that some youths are forced to make difficult choices between feeding themselves and sustaining their small businesses. A 21-year-old male explained, “Since morning, I have not even had my breakfast. I have to limit my consumption. If I keep picking it [food] from there [provision shop], the business will go down” (Displaced Youth No. 11, 2025). This illustrates how food insecurity is directly linked to economic decisions. Young people are sacrificing their own nutrition to protect their source of income. Hunger remains a personal struggle for many, while broader economic challenges continue to shape their daily lives in the camp.

As previously noted, NGOs provide some support to displaced youth and their families. Several participants mentioned receiving food aid from these organizations as well as from generous individuals. While this assistance is valued, it is often inconsistent and insufficient to meet ongoing needs. One woman explained, “Sometimes the people [IDP camp residents] give us food. Sometimes NGOs give us food. But this food can only last for two to three days” (Displaced Youth No. 6, 2025). Others shared that when the donations run out, they are left with no option but to endure hunger until they can earn enough to buy food. This situation can lead to ongoing uncertainty, while the deeper economic challenges remain unresolved.

These findings are supported by other research. Extreme hunger and poverty are among the most common problems reported by IDPs in Abuja. While they receive occasional food support from NGOs and individuals, this help is irregular and does not meet the needs of the population (Ba-Ana-Itenebe & Edo, 2023). Winifred Ekezie also found that hunger was the most frequently

mentioned challenge across IDP camps in Northern Nigeria. Hunger was clearly connected to worsening health and even to deaths. One displaced person described hunger as the main cause of serious illness, emphasizing that it was the most significant threat to their well-being. This shows how food insecurity can become a life-threatening issue if it is not properly addressed (Ekezie, 2022).

From an economic perspective, food insecurity reduces physical strength, focus, and productivity. These effects can make it more difficult for young people to work steadily, attract customers, or grow their small businesses. Many of the economic activities they undertake, such as selling goods, washing vehicles, or transporting people, demand energy and focus. Ongoing lack of adequate food can reduce the abilities needed to perform well in these informal activities. It may also affect their confidence to plan ahead, take risks, or invest further in their businesses.

Importantly, some young people reported having relatively stable access to food, often because they had more reliable sources of income or stronger support networks. A 19-year-old male explained that his steady work helped him avoid major difficulties in obtaining enough food (Displaced Youth No. 13, 2025). Another camp resident mentioned that his business provided enough income to cover his needs (Displaced Youth No. 10, 2025). Logically, when earnings are more consistent, food insecurity tends to be less of a problem. However, these cases were not common among the youth in Durumi IDP camp.

4.5. Youth Experiences of Limited Healthcare Access

Access to affordable and quality healthcare remains one of the major challenges for displaced youth in Durumi IDP Camp. Although there is a medical unit within the camp and some young people occasionally visit clinics or hospitals outside, such as Garki Hospital, conversations with youth suggest that real access to effective healthcare is often limited. This challenge is not only related to health but also affects their economic situation. When young people experience health problems and cannot receive proper treatment, they may be unable to work or forced to spend money they do not have. This situation makes it even more difficult for them to maintain their livelihoods and meet their basic needs.

A major concern raised by many interviewees is that the medical unit inside the camp can provide only very limited care, often restricted to basic pain relief such as paracetamol, and even that is frequently unavailable. A 21-year-old woman explained, “Within the camp, they only prescribe just paracetamol. When it is a serious condition, they send us to the primary healthcare, which is far from here” (Displaced Youth No. 5, 2025). This statement highlights two layers of difficulty. First, there is a lack of adequate medical treatment within the camp itself. Second, the clinics outside the camp are difficult to access, both geographically and financially. For youth who do not have a steady income or reliable means of transport, reaching a health facility can become a serious barrier. As a result, many are discouraged from seeking medical care even when it is needed.

The financial barrier to accessing medication is especially troubling. A 23-year-old woman explained, “If you do not have money, nobody will give the medicine at the primary healthcare center” (Displaced Youth No. 19, 2025). This statement illustrates that, although healthcare services are theoretically accessible, many young people are unable to make use of them due to the inability to afford associated costs. Financial constraints act as a critical barrier, limiting access to appropriate care and forcing some to rely on alternative solutions.

Many respondents reported turning to informal sources of care, such as local chemists or roadside vendors. A 20-year-old man shared, “I usually do not go to the hospital. I visit local chemists. They are familiar with different illnesses but they cannot do the tests on us. I do not have money to go to hospital” (Displaced Youth No. 9, 2025). His experience shows how economic difficulties push young people to choose affordable options over proper diagnosis. They rely on informal vendors who may provide cheap medicine but lack the means to offer accurate treatment. This can lead to misdiagnosis, untreated illnesses, or long-term health problems, which then cycle back into reduced capacity to work or study.

Some youth spoke about having no interaction at all with formal healthcare, either because of lack of need or due to lack of resources. A 23-year-old woman explained that he has no experience with medical centers and usually goes to people nearby who sell medication

(Displaced Youth No. 23, 2025). This behavior, often normalized in the camp, shows how informal systems fill the gap left by limited public health services. However, this coping strategy carries risks of mistreatment, contributes to delayed recovery, and indirectly increases vulnerability to poverty.

One particularly painful story came from a 24-year-old woman who shared that she lost her son at Garki Hospital six days ago. She said that even after her child had passed away, the hospital staff did not inform her and continued to ask for payment (Displaced Youth No. 16, 2025). This painful experience goes beyond personal tragedy and highlights a strong mistrust in formal healthcare institutions. These situations can make people afraid to seek help in the future. They also point to unfair practices in some healthcare facilities that take advantage of vulnerable individuals who may not be able to speak up for themselves. These issues not only affect health outcomes but also damage people's trust in the idea of care, replacing it with fear and doubt.

For many young people, limited access to healthcare is closely linked to financial difficulties. They often cannot afford to visit a hospital, buy medicine, or take time off from work to rest and recover. At the same time, remaining sick or not receiving proper treatment can result in missed work or lost income. This creates a difficult cycle where illness leads to poverty, and poverty makes illness worse. Although this study did not specifically address reproductive health or contraceptive practices, it is worth noting that some interviewees mentioned having children at a young age. While the underlying reasons were not discussed in detail, this could be connected to challenges in accessing reproductive healthcare or common practices within the community.

5. Livelihood Strategies and Coping Mechanisms of Displaced Youth in Durumi Camp

5.1. Types of Economic Activities Among Displaced Youth

To better understand how displaced youth cope with economic hardship in the Durumi IDP Camp, the range of income-generating activities among young people aged 18 to 24 is examined. A variety of livelihood strategies were observed, highlighting the creativity and flexibility with which these youths respond to the challenges of displacement (Author's observation, 2025). The information, gathered through careful observation, points to a diverse set of practices that reflect both resilience and adaptability in the face of limited opportunities.

This analysis can be guided by the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework which offers a useful way to understand how displaced youth access and use different forms of capital such as human, social, financial, physical and natural to support their livelihoods. In the challenging context of prolonged displacement and limited institutional support their informal economic activities represent practical and strategic efforts to maintain self-sufficiency, build resilience and meet basic needs (Department Of International Development, 2001).

The economic activities undertaken by displaced youth in the camp show a dynamic, improvised economy shaped by necessity, skill, and the limited resources available in a setting of prolonged displacement. Looking closely at the kinds of work being done reveals not only a wide range of ways to earn money, but also the informal systems of work and trade that have developed within the camp (Author's observation, 2025). Although these activities differ in type, together they create an essential, though informal, economy that helps young people survive in difficult and uncertain conditions (see Appendix 5).

A common source of income for young people in the camp is engaging in food preparation and sales. For many, this activity is both accessible and consistently in demand. The range of meals offered, including staple foods such as beans, jollof rice, spaghetti, as well as local dishes such as bean cakes and rice cakes, reflects a practical response to the everyday nutritional needs and preferences within the camp population (Author's observation, 2025). Snack production is also

widespread, with many youths engaged in making items such as chin chin, doughnuts, and fried groundnuts (see Appendix 5). These snacks are usually sold at low prices, providing a regular but small source of income. These activities rely on human capital such as culinary skills, financial capital in the form of low-cost start-up funds, and basic physical capital like cooking tools, often supported by social networks that provide access to ingredients and customer interaction (Department Of International Development, 2001). Some vendors have even expanded into more technical preparation, such as dough-making using roller machines, which shows they are becoming more skilled and adapting to what people in the camp want, even though they are working in an informal setting (Author's observation, 2025).

Beyond food, textile work is another important area of activity for young people in the camp. Knitting caps, for example, has become a popular practice, providing a way to earn income through existing skills. Tailoring is also common and includes both clothing repairs and making custom pieces. Some young people are also involved in the hijab trade, handling everything from choosing fabrics to completing the sale. These fabric-related activities show creativity and practical ability, requiring a sense of style and an understanding of what customers need both inside and outside the camp (see Appendix 5).

Technical and mechanical work also plays an important role in the camp. Young people are involved in jobs such as car and motorcycle repair, construction, vulcanizing, and furniture repair. These roles require technical skills and, in some cases, access to tools and materials, which are often obtained through informal networks. This kind of work supports transportation and basic services that are essential for daily life in and around the camp. While these activities may receive less attention than food sales or small trade, they are necessary for the smooth functioning of the local economy. In parallel, youth are also engaged in vehicle-related services, particularly motorcycle taxi driving and car or bike washing. These roles respond to everyday mobility needs in and around the camp and reflect the presence of a transactional economy, where services are regularly exchanged for money or other kinds of support. Often physically demanding, this work also relies on flexibility and having a strong knowledge of the local area (see Appendix 5).

Personal care services represent another vital component of youth economic life. Hair braiding, makeup services, and henna design are commonly offered, often upon request. These activities meet both cultural expectations and everyday care needs, and are closely connected to social life in the community. Their economic importance comes not only from what is offered, but also from the trust and reputation that providers develop through their relationships with customers (Author's observation, 2025).

Petty trading is also common throughout the camp. Young people operate informal stalls or sell essential items like sugar, soap, drinks, vegetables, and charcoal, often moving between locations. These activities require relatively low startup costs and can adjust to changes in demand. Some youth also engage in trading medicines and over-the-counter health products, acting as intermediaries for commonly used items. This reflects another aspect of informal economic adaptation that helps fill gaps in access to formal health and retail services (Author's observation, 2025). In addition to these activities, a smaller number of young people work in electronics, especially phone repair. This type of work involves technical knowledge and sometimes requires access to specialized tools or training. Although less common, it shows that some youths are providing more specialized services. Others are employed in printing shops outside the camp, assisting with tasks such as photocopying and document handling. These roles play an important part in connecting the camp's economy with the surrounding urban environment, demonstrating the integration of local activities within broader economic networks (see Appendix 5).

Domestic services such as washing clothes and dishes also contribute significantly to the camp's economic landscape. While these roles are often low-paid and less visible, they are essential for fulfilling everyday household needs and highlight the diversity of service-oriented work within the community. Beverage vending, including the sale of cold drinks, hot beverages, and locally produced juices, further complement the informal market, with many young people selling refreshments from small shops or by moving through the camp.

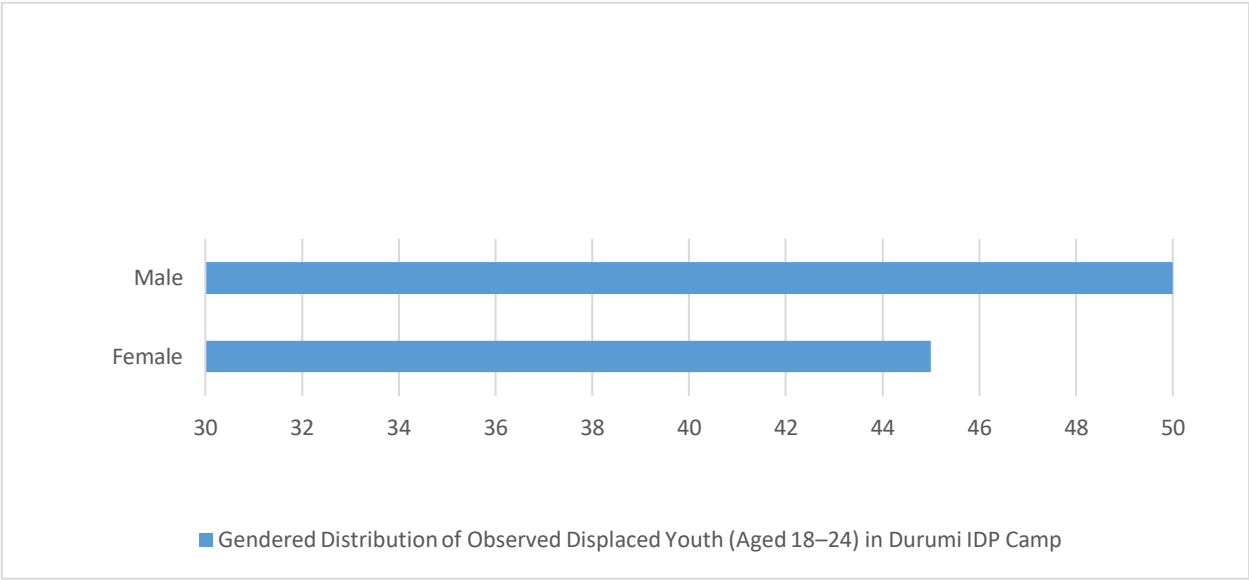
It is important to mention, that Agricultural work, while relatively uncommon, remains part of the livelihood strategies for some youth who maintain connections to rural areas. Seasonal farming activities, including the cultivation of crops such as corn, beans, and rice, are undertaken by those with the ability to travel outside the camp (see Appendix 5). This form of labor underscores an ongoing reliance on land-based activities as a supplementary source of income.

Undoubtedly, displaced youth in Durumi Camp engage in a wide range of economic activities. Their livelihoods are shaped by a combination of skills, needs, and opportunities within a flexible and predominantly informal economic framework. Despite the constraints imposed by displacement, the diversity and nature of their work demonstrate considerable adaptive capacity and commitment to economic self-sufficiency.

5.2. Prevalent Livelihood Activities and Gendered Divisions of Labor

A deeper understanding of how displaced youth sustain themselves in times of economic hardship requires a close look at the most common livelihood activities and the gender-based distinctions within them. Field data offers a clear statistical picture of the work young people are involved in, revealing notable patterns of participation (see Appendix 5). These insights help explain the adaptive strategies used by youth in Durumi IDP Camp, shaped not only by economic necessity but also by social expectations.

Figure 1: Number of Observed Displaced Youth by Gender



Source: Researcher’s field observations conducted at Durumi IDP Camp during fieldwork (2025).

It is important to mention the gender composition of the participants before analyzing their livelihood activities in depth. The gender distribution of the observed youth, illustrated in the bar chart, shows that among the 95 displaced youth in the Durumi IDP Camp, 50 were male and 45 were female. This nearly equal representation enables meaningful comparisons between male and female experiences. A balanced gender sample is particularly important, as the findings reveal that gender plays a key role in shaping how youth experience and navigate economic hardship during displacement.

Table 1: Livelihood Activities by Gender Among Displaced Youth

Activity	Female	Male	Total
Petty trading	4	0	4
Cap knitting	12	0	12
Charcoal selling	4	0	4
tailoring	4	4	8
Food selling	15	1	16
Fuel selling	0	2	2
Motocycle taxi driving	0	5	5
Provision selling	1	4	5
Make-up services	2	0	2

Mechanical Services	0	6	6
Farming	0	3	3
Vehicle washing	0	6	6
Labor work	0	1	1
Furniture repairing	0	1	1
Clothes washing	0	4	4
Hijab selling	1	0	1
Henna Art Services	2	0	2
Hair braiding services	2	0	2
Drinks selling	1	3	4
Vulcanizing Services	0	1	1
Barbering Services	0	1	1
Medicine selling	0	5	5
Phone repairing services	0	2	2
Phone accessories selling	0	2	2
Constructing services	0	2	2
Fuel Station Internship	0	1	1
Printing Services	1	0	1
Restaurant Service Staff - waitress	1	0	1
Dish washer	1	0	1

Source: Researcher's field observations conducted at Durumi IDP Camp during fieldwork (2025).

To build on the statistical overview presented in the table, a closer analysis of these figures reveals key patterns in how displaced youth in Durumi IDP Camp navigate their livelihoods, particularly in relation to gender and the types of economic opportunities available to them. Specifically, the data highlights that the five most common economic activities among displaced youth are food selling, cap knitting, tailoring, vehicle washing, and mechanical services. Each of these activities represents distinct aspects of informal economic participation, reflecting varying degrees of skill, capital, and mobility.

Food selling stands out as the most prevalent activity, with fifteen out of sixteen participants being female. This supports the understanding that many young women in the camp engage in food-related work, as it is often considered socially acceptable, can be carried out from or near the home, and aligns with high local demand. The consistent need for food within and around

the camp creates a favorable environment for such activities, leading to increased participation by women in response to this demand (Author's observation, 2025).

Cap knitting, also exclusively carried out by observed female youths, is the second most common activity in the camp. This activity likely draws on existing skills or community-based training and provides an accessible means of income generation. Tailoring follows closely, with an equal number of male and female participants. This balance is notable, as it suggests tailoring may be one of the few trades in the camp that cuts across gender expectations, perhaps due to its practicality, cultural acceptance, or the availability of training and tools within the camp.

In contrast, male youth predominantly engage in activities such as vehicle washing and mechanical services, with six individuals involved in both types of work and no female youth recorded in these roles (see Appendix 5). These activities typically require physical strength, specialized skills, and mobility beyond the immediate vicinity of the home, which limits female involvement due to cultural norms and safety concerns. Another distinctly male-oriented occupation is motorcycle taxi driving, locally referred to as *okada*. While only five young men were formally documented as motorcycle taxi drivers, it is likely that the actual number is higher. During interviews and informal conversations, it became apparent that many of these drivers were difficult to reach for data collection because of the nature of their work. They are constantly mobile, often spending long hours navigating the city to earn a living, which limited their availability for interviews or surveys (Author's observation, 2025). This distinction highlights the importance of contextual understanding when interpreting data. Some economic activities, especially those requiring mobility or irregular hours, may be underreported simply because the participants are harder to engage during fieldwork. Therefore, while statistical data is valuable, it must be complemented by qualitative observations to fully grasp the complexity of livelihood strategies in displaced communities.

What becomes clear through this analysis is the deeply gendered nature of economic roles in the camp. This gendered division can be understood through Social Role Theory (Eagly, 1987). The theory suggests that society shapes expectations by assigning women to caregiving and domestic

roles, which are often home-based or centered around the community. In contrast, men are expected to perform physically demanding tasks that require mobility and are more public-facing. This helps explain why young women are mostly involved in activities like selling food, knitting caps, and tailoring, as these align with socially accepted roles for women. Meanwhile, men tend to engage in work such as mechanical services and driving motorcycle taxis.

In addition to this, the concept of “doing gender” argues that gender is an ongoing social performance shaped by cultural norms and social interactions (West & Zimmerman, 1987). Displaced youth behave by adopting livelihood activities consistent with expected gender behaviors, thus reinforcing social norms. Women may avoid male-dominated work due to cultural sanctions, safety concerns, and social expectations, while men assert their gender identity through roles that emphasize strength and mobility.

5.3. The Role of Age in Shaping Economic Activities and Coping Mechanisms

As outlined in the research design, this study focuses specifically on youth aged 18 to 24. It is particularly important to examine how age influences the variation in activities and coping mechanisms observed within the camp. Understanding the extent to which young people at different ages engage in distinct activities or face varying levels of challenges offers valuable insight into their lived experiences. In my view, exploring this issue is essential to gaining a deeper understanding of youth livelihoods in the displaced setting.

While all observed youth were actively engaged in economic life, certain patterns suggest that age can influence the degree of independence, diversification, and external access in their livelihood strategies. For younger participants, particularly those aged 18 and 19, reliance on family networks, local knowledge, or informal support systems within the camp seemed more common (Author’s observation, 2025). For instance, an 18-year-old female was involved in cap knitting, henna artistry, and hair braiding, sourcing her supplies through relatives and local contacts (see Appendix 5, Observation No. 44). Another example is a 19-year-old male who worked as a car and motorcycle washer under a shared structure with limited control over pricing

or customer flow (see Appendix 5, Observation No. 25). These roles reflect active participation, but often within more supported or community-embedded arrangements.

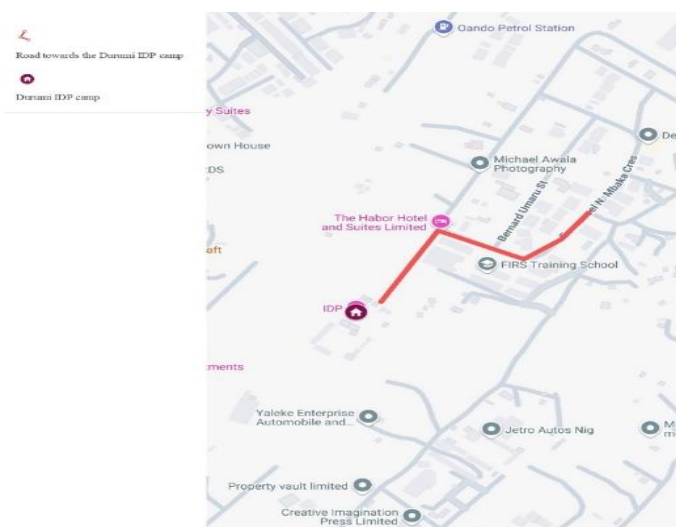
In comparison, many of the older youth, especially those aged 22 to 24, demonstrated a higher degree of independence and diversification in their economic roles (Author's observation, 2025). A 24-year-old male worked at a commercial car wash outside the camp, where he negotiated a profit-sharing arrangement with a supervisor, highlighting a more formal setting and greater decision-making power (see Appendix 5, Observation No. 78). Another 24-year-old female operated as a tailor using her own sewing machine, providing services both inside and beyond the camp (see Appendix 5, Observation No. 38). Similarly, one 24-year-old female combined cap knitting with Zobo juice production, with her son assisting by hawking the drinks in the surrounding neighborhood (see Appendix 5, Observation No. 36). These examples show not only a broader scope of activity but also more decision-making power, logistical planning, and income control.

However, this was not universally the case. One 20-year-old woman sold both make-up and food, using her own contacts to source cosmetics from Kano state and arrange transport (see Appendix 5, Observation No. 30). This shows that even younger youth can take charge, and this is not exclusive to older youth. On the other hand, a 24-year-old female food vendor worked using her boss's materials and was not responsible for collecting payments, indicating a more dependent setup despite her age (see Appendix 5, Observation No. 64). These cases suggest that while age can influence how young people engage in livelihood activities, it does not operate independently. Its effects are shaped by a range of other factors, including gender roles, mobility, social networks, and access to resources. Taken together, these elements influence how displaced youth respond to and manage economic challenges in the camp.

5.4. Spatial Dimensions of Livelihood Strategies

Understanding how displaced youth in Durumi IDP Camp navigate economic hardship requires more than solely identifying the types of activities they engage in. It is equally important to consider where these activities take place and how the use of space contributes to income generation. The ways in which young people use different areas such as where they work and where they sell goods play a crucial role in shaping their livelihood strategies.

Figure 2: Map of Informal Economic Activity Along the Access Road to Durumi IDP Camp



Source: Google Maps, annotated by the researcher based on field observations and interviews at Durumi IDP Camp (2025).

One particularly significant space for economic activity is the camp entrance and the road leading into the camp, both of which emerged as dynamic zones during field observations and interviews. This area was repeatedly highlighted by key community members, including the camp chairman, as a hub for informal trade and youth enterprise. The road is not merely a route into or out of the camp; it has evolved into a lively commercial corridor where many young people seek out customers and income opportunities (Author's observation,

2025). Various small businesses are concentrated along this road, including tailoring shops, food vendors, and stalls selling provisions, snacks, drinks, medicine, and phone accessories. While young men are more commonly seen engaging in mechanical work, phone repair, car or motorcycle washing, and general trade, they often move farther down the road to find customers beyond the immediate camp area. In contrast, young women tend to stay closer to the camp entrance. Their choice to stay near the entrance is usually influenced by several factors, including a greater sense of safety, cultural norms that limit their mobility, and the practical convenience of being near the camp. This area also offers opportunities to attract customers due to the

movement of people in and out of the camp, making it a viable space for small-scale economic activity (see Appendix 5).

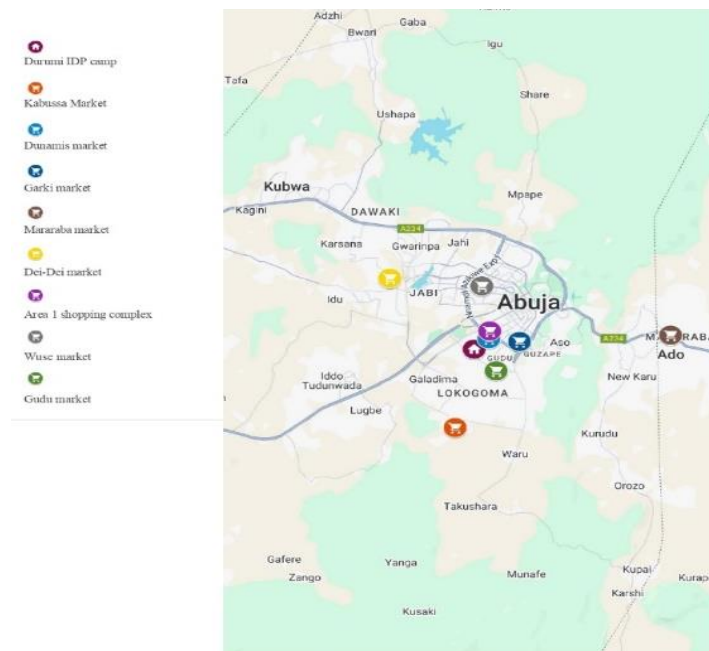
These gendered patterns in how space is used reflect the social roles and gender behaviors discussed earlier. Women tend to stay close to the camp entrance, which fits with cultural expectations that emphasize safety and being near the home or community. On the other hand, men move more widely around the camp and take on physically demanding jobs, which aligns with their socially expected role as providers. In this way, the way people use space and move around is not just about practical needs but also about expressing their gender identities according to community norms (West & Zimmerman, 1987).

It is important to note that the increasing activity at the camp entrance has created additional livelihood opportunities. Some young men, for instance, have begun working as informal constructors, building and expanding stalls and small shop spaces to accommodate the growing demand for vending areas in this visible location. These youths use their construction skills to earn income while contributing to the ongoing transformation of the camp's economic landscape (Author's observation, 2025).

Mobility is another important dimension. It, particularly when extending beyond the immediate camp environment, is shaped by a variety of factors including context, responsibilities, skillsets, and available opportunities. While some youths remain within the camp, others move between different locations depending on the season, customer demand, or type of work. For example, young men often engage in seasonal farming in areas such as Keffi or Masaka during the rainy season and return to the camp in the dry season to work as traders, motorcycle taxi drivers, or washers (see Appendix 5, Observation No. 17). This cyclical pattern of migration allows them to manage income instability and maintain economic resilience. Gender and social norms also influence patterns of mobility, shaping who moves, how, and for what purpose. It is true that some young women engage in home-based or locally situated activities, often due to domestic responsibilities or social expectations. However, mobility is not determined by gender alone. It also depends on context, responsibility, skillset, and opportunity. Some young women send their

products to external markets through trusted intermediaries such as relatives, neighbors, or even their own children, helping them access broader consumer networks. Others travel themselves to surrounding markets to sell their goods or purchase materials for their businesses (Author's observation, 2025). Therefore, mobility is diverse and dynamic, reflecting the different realities and strategies of youth navigating economic life.

Figure 3: Map of Livelihood Networks Linking Durumi IDP Camp to Major Abuja Markets



Source: Google Maps, annotated by the researcher based on field observations and interviews at Durumi IDP Camp (2025).

The significance of place is further reflected in the frequent mention of external landmarks by camp residents. These include Kabusa Market, Dunamis Market, Garki Market, Mararaba Market, Dei-Dei Market, Area 1 shopping complex, Wuse Market, Area 1 under-bridge area, and Gudu Junction. These locations function as important economic extensions of the camp, highlighting the close links between the camp and the surrounding urban economy (Author's observation, 2025). Even when youth are based within the camp, their products and services may reach markets beyond its borders, demonstrating how livelihood

strategies are shaped by broader spatial and economic connections rather than being limited to the camp itself. The markets mentioned by youth such as Dunamis, Garki, Dei-Dei, etc. are not just places where goods are bought and sold. They are also spaces where different groups of displaced youth have built their own networks that help keep their small businesses running (Author's observation, 2025). In each market, some youths have established relationships based on repeated trade, mutual trust, and familiarity, which allow them to navigate the informal

economy more effectively. These networks make it easier to find reliable customers, secure fair prices, and ensure that their goods reach a wider audience.

5.5. Accessing Materials and Navigating Informal Supply Chains

For many displaced youths in Durumi IDP Camp, the process of sustaining a livelihood begins with a simple but essential step: obtaining the materials they need. Whether they are petty traders, tailors, cap knitters, or food vendors, access to inputs such as fabrics, thread, food ingredients, or tools is essential for sustaining their economic strategies. In displacement contexts like the Durumi IDP Camp, these materials are not always readily available. Instead, youth rely on a mix of informal networks, improvised transportation arrangements, and evolving market connections to obtain what they need (Author's observation, 2025). Understanding these supply chains reveals both the resilience of camp residents and the structural barriers that shape their everyday economic decisions.

Supply chains in this context are layered and depend heavily on movement, trust, and access. As previously mentioned, the markets visited by young people play an important role (see Appendix 5). In these spaces, some young individuals purchase goods which they later resell at a higher price within the camp or in a location they have chosen. Others use these goods to create new products, such as tailored clothing or hand-knitted caps, which they then sell themselves or with the help of others.

Physical access to markets is a significant consideration. While a few markets are located relatively close to the camp, many are much farther away and cannot be reached on foot. Arranging transportation becomes essential. In this case, it is important to mention that commercial motorcycles, locally known as okadas. Many displaced youths living in the Durumi IDP Camp depend on this form of transportation both as a practical way to get around and, as previously mentioned, as a vital source of income. In practice, this often means using okadas to reach key transit hubs, such as Area 1 under-bridge and Gudu junction, at the edge of restricted

zones. From here they can then switch to other modes of transport, such as three-wheeled vehicles known locally to reach the final destinations (Author's observation, 2025). This raises the question of why it is necessary to undertake such complex trips.

Okadas are banned in the inner parts of Abuja, with the government framing the policy primarily as a matter of public safety and also linking it to concerns about crime and urban order. This approach was most clearly articulated by the then Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, Nasir El-Rufai, who introduced the ban in 2006 as part of a broader campaign to present Abuja as a modern and disciplined capital city. In his public statements, El-Rufai dismissed okada riding as “not real work” and urged riders to take up jobs on construction sites instead (Gaudio, 2023). However, this perspective failed to take into account the shortage of formal job opportunities and the complex realities faced by young men working in Nigeria's informal economy. As Rudolf P. Gaudio explains, the decision to ban okadas was not only about safety. It also reflected a broader goal of turning Abuja into a “world-class” city, shaped by ideas taken from Western and Asian cities. In reality, though, the way this policy was put into action left many working-class residents without reliable or affordable transportation options (Gaudio, 2023). Furthermore, the ban on okadas in central Abuja has created a situation in which legality and illegality coexist. As Aper E. Zava argues, rather than implementing bans, governments might achieve better outcomes by focusing on improving safety through regulation, rider training, and infrastructure adjustments. The continued use of okadas by displaced youth does not necessarily imply involvement in criminality. Instead, it reflects the structural challenges they face, such as limited access to reliable transportation and formal employment opportunities (Zava, 2021).

As observed during the fieldwork and as already mentioned, youth in Durumi IDP camp have adapted by engaging in okada riding as a practical way to get around and earn a living at the same time. For many displaced young men, working as okada drivers provides a way to earn quick income when formal employment is difficult to access. It allows them to support their households and cope with ongoing economic difficulties. Commercial motorcycling, commonly known as okada, is a popular and widely used form of transport in Nigeria. This is because motorcycles are able to navigate traffic more smoothly than cars, access narrow or difficult roads that bigger

vehicles cannot use, and offer fast and direct transportation from one location to another (Aluko, 2018). It is also important to highlight that for many riders, this work is one of the few available ways to earn a living, making it a vital source of income and economic survival. Despite its many benefits, the use of okada also comes with serious safety concerns, which need to be carefully noted and addressed. Accidents involving motorcycles are frequent, and many riders do not wear helmets, lack proper licenses, or operate their vehicles under the influence of alcohol. These problems are often linked to inadequate training and a general lack of awareness about road safety. The pressure to earn more money also plays a significant role, as riders frequently work long hours and take as many trips as possible, which increases the likelihood of risky behavior on the roads. Instead of relying solely on bans or punitive measures, Oluwasegun Aluko argues that a more effective approach would involve improved training programs, stronger enforcement of regulations, proper licensing systems, and comprehensive road safety education. Real progress depends on understanding the broader social and economic context and creating practical policies that address the root causes of unsafe riding practices (Aluko, 2018). As previously mentioned, despite these challenges, many drivers continue to operate, relying on okada as their main source of livelihood and often adopting different strategies to remain active (Author's observation, 2025). At the same time, the fear of being stopped or having the motorcycle confiscated shapes not just how youth move through the city, but also how they think about risk, time, and opportunity. During interviews, several camp residents described the stress and uncertainty that come with relying on okadas for survival. A 20-year-old male respondent explained, "I ride a commercial motorcycle. For those motorcycles we are paying daily or weekly. It is not my motorcycle. It is expensive. Also, the challenge is that the government do not want to see the commercial motorcycles. The motorcycles have been banned, but it is the only source of income for me" (Displaced Youth No. 3, 2025). Another young man, 19 years old, said, "The challenge is that Abuja Environmental Protection Board harass us. The government does not want Okada drivers within the city Centre" (Displaced Youth No. 13, 2025). A 23-year-old woman shared: "My husband, initially, was an Okada driver. Unfortunately, government was not giving him peace. The government took the bike from him. This was a challenge for us" (Displaced Youth No. 19, 2025). These stories show that this is not just a matter of inconvenience. They reveal that

government policies may shape the ways young people try to survive, often requiring them to navigate uncertain rules and shifting boundaries. Young people in the camp are constantly making choices between economic necessity and legal vulnerability. Okada riding may not be a preference for many, but it remains an available option in difficult circumstances. It is an option they rely on to cope with the challenges of life in the IDP camp (Author's observation, 2025).

In addition to physical movement, supply chains often rely on informal relationships and social networks. It is important to highlight that not all materials used in livelihood activities are sourced through direct market visits. In some cases, displaced youth may rely on informal delivery systems or peer-to-peer transactions instead. For instance, some cap knitters get their yarn and materials from friends or relatives living in other parts of Nigeria, such as Maiduguri or Kano. They usually send payments remotely using POS transfers, and the supplies are brought in by people they know who are traveling between regions (Author's observation, 2025).

Some youth rely on intermediaries within the camp. These individuals travel to markets, buy materials in bulk, and resell them to other residents at slightly higher prices (see Appendix 5). This system allows youth who are unable to travel themselves to still participate in income-generating activities. It also reduces transportation costs and physical risks. It is important to mention, that these arrangements can also lead to forms of dependency, which may create challenges especially when access to materials is interrupted or when trust within the network begins to erode (Author's observation, 2025). However, it is worth noting that within the camp itself, a small, local economy is created. Tailors often rent sewing machines owned by others in the camp, while cap knitters buy thread, needles, or finishing tools from local vendors. Food vendors purchase basic ingredients like beans, oil, or spices from small shops run by fellow residents. These exchanges not only support individual livelihood strategies but also help money circulate within the camp, making young people both producers and customers in a shared economic space (Author's observation, 2025). Undoubtedly, for displaced youth, the ability to sustain their livelihoods depends not just on economic ambition but also on maintaining access to the networks and pathways that keep their supply chains functioning.

5.6. Customer Base and Income Flows

Alongside the examination of supply dynamics, it is equally important to look at the other side of youth-led economic activities in the Durumi IDP Camp: the customers and sources of income. These aspects are not just background details, but helpful in understanding how displaced young people manage their economic lives, build networks of support, and find ways to cope in an uncertain setting.

Youth in the camp earn their income from different types of customers. Some depend primarily on fellow residents within the camp while others engage with customers outside the camp. Many combine both sources (Author's observation, 2025). These different customer groups are closely connected to how young people generate income and show how they adjust their work to manage limited resources, respond to changing demand, and balance personal or family responsibilities. Youth who primarily sell to camp residents are often involved in home-based or mobile trades such as cooking, braiding, tailoring, or snack vending (see Appendix 5). These activities make it easier to stay close to home while earning, especially for those responsible for childcare or household tasks. However, even for youth who work inside the camp, their customer base can be wider depending on the nature of their work and how they position themselves (Author's observation, 2025).

some youth, often young men, work with customers from outside the camp. These customers include people living in nearby neighborhoods or those found at informal job sites across Abuja. Youth involved in motorcycle taxi driving, mechanical repairs, or construction often earn a large part of their income from these external contacts. The extent to which they rely on outside customers often depends on the specific nature of their work and the areas where they operate. However, not all youth in these trades rely solely on outside customers. Many move between internal and external clients, adjusting their work depending on the day, the level of demand, and their ability to travel (Author's observation, 2025). A mechanic might repair generators for fellow camp residents while also working on cars for people from outside. Drivers may carry passengers from the camp as well as customers they find on city roads. The entrance road to the camp is particularly important, as it serves as a shared space between camp residents and

outsiders, including visitors, workers, drivers, and regular passersby. For example, snack vendors and food sellers often choose to stand near areas where, for instance, mechanics are working. These vendors understand that demand is high in those spots, so they intentionally stay close by to increase their chances of selling. This is not just a matter of convenience but a purposeful strategy to attract customers. While most of their sales may come from fellow displaced people, the location also allows for occasional purchases from outsiders passing through. In this way, vendors are able to serve both familiar and new customers.

As observed, the most common pattern, in fact, is a mix of both camp-based and external customers. Many youths navigate between these two customer bases as part of their everyday strategy to sustain their livelihoods (Author's observation, 2025). I have already mentioned a few examples that show how youth manage this balance, but several other cases are also worth highlighting, as they offer particularly interesting insights. For example, a young woman may cook meals at home and send her daughter to sell them near construction sites outside the camp, while she continues selling food within the camp. Another might braid hair for neighbors but also advertise her makeup services on WhatsApp, traveling to clients in nearby neighborhoods when needed (see Appendix 5). In such cases, the income is drawn from a wider network that includes both internal and external sources. These mixed patterns are shaped by both opportunity and necessity, rather than fixed or predictable customer groups.

An interesting element that deserves closer attention is the use of digital tools such as WhatsApp and Facebook to attract and communicate with customers. For many youths, especially those working as henna designers, makeup artists, and hair braiders, these platforms provide an important means of promoting their services beyond the camp setting (Author's observation, 2025). These platforms allow them to informally showcase their services, maintain relationships with existing clients, and attract new ones. Although their use of social media was often limited to basic features, it served as an effective and low-cost method of expanding their customer base. The success of this approach, however, relied on access to mobile phones and internet connectivity. While some youth owned personal phones, others shared a single device among

several users. Despite these limitations, the use of digital tools demonstrates adaptability and resourcefulness, as youth find ways to support and grow their livelihoods.

5.7. Informal Cooperation and Group-Based Livelihood Strategies Among Displaced Youth

In the context of displacement and limited opportunities, displaced youth in the Durumi IDP Camp have developed diverse forms of informal cooperation and mutual support to sustain their livelihoods. Based on both observations and interviews, this subchapter explores how group-based strategies function as important coping mechanisms in a situation where resources are limited.

A notable pattern observed among the young people in the camp is the formation of small-scale businesses in collaboration with peers or family members. These joint ventures often arise out of practical necessity, shaped by limited access to capital, scarce resources, and the high risk of economic failure. By working together, youths are able to share risk, ensure mutual accountability, and access both emotional and financial support (Author's observation, 2025). A 20-year-old male explained: "Presently, together with my friend, I am provision seller. We sell sweets, sugar, chocolate, all these little-little stuff" (Displaced Youth No. 11, 2025). His reflection illustrates not only the economic function of such partnerships but also their social foundations, often built on trust and shared experiences of displacement. Similarly, in another case, a car wash business is co-managed by two young men who coordinate work schedules and manage income collaboratively. While disagreements over money may occasionally arise, the durability of these partnerships underscores both the absence of more secure economic alternatives and the important role that trust-based cooperation plays in sustaining youth livelihoods (Author's observation, 2025).

These cooperative dynamics also shape the broader structure of work within the camp. In one case, a young woman who runs a small shop and food business depends on her neighbors to take care of the stall when she is unavailable. These cooperative labor arrangements are not based on formal agreements but rely on social expectations of mutual help and trust. They are sustained

by informal reputation within the community and help individuals manage different responsibilities such as childcare, illness, or household duties without losing their source of income. Observations from the field suggest that this kind of mutual support is common across various types of work including tailoring, cap knitting, cooking, and vending (Author's observation, 2025). In these settings, tools are often shared, tasks are rotated, and responsibilities are divided among trusted peers, allowing work to continue even in challenging circumstances.

Another example of flexible partnerships emerges from two parallel cases involving a 24-year-old woman and a 20-year-old woman, each working in food businesses within the camp. In both instances, they collaborate with older, more experienced women who were also internally displaced and living in the camp. One of these women later got married and relocated outside the camp, but the partnership continued despite the change in residence. The young women are responsible for meal preparation within the camp and jointly sell the food with their respective partners. These older women, who possess more capital and business experience, effectively function as business leads in the arrangement. The collaboration is structured in such a way that the business lead collects payment from customers and then compensates the younger women based on a pre-agreed division of income. Despite being two separate cases, the structure of the partnership is notably similar (see Appendix 5, Observation Numbers 94 and 95).

These cases reflect how informal economies within displaced settings foster intergenerational collaboration, where youth gain livelihood opportunities through mentorship-like arrangements. They also illustrate emerging hierarchies and entrepreneurial dynamics within the camp, shaped by access to capital, experience, and social positioning.

5.8. Livelihood Formation Through Skills Acquisition: Formal and Informal Learning in Durumi IDP Camp

In displacement settings such as the Durumi IDP camp, where formal job opportunities are limited and the overall economic situation is unstable, learning and using practical skills has become an essential way to survive. Over time, as mentioned before, several non-governmental

organizations have set up skills training programs in the camp to help internally displaced persons create small sources of income. These programs offer training in different trades such as tailoring, soap making, preparing specific local foods, makeup skills, baking with flour, barbering, knitting caps, and making earrings from plastic materials (Author's observation, 2025). Building on the discussion of how these programs are structured and delivered, this subchapter now focuses on the ways individuals have applied their acquired skills and the extent to which these skills have led to income-generating activities. Although many participants in NGO training programs cite challenges such as lack of start-up capital, tools, or market access, a small number of youths have succeeded in integrating the skills they learned into their everyday economic practices. Their stories reveal the transformative potential of skills acquisition and the interplay between learning and resilience.

Trainings within the camp are often divided by gender, with certain skills offered specifically to women, others to men, and some designed to be accessible to both. It is important to note that among the 25 individuals interviewed, only women reported using their acquired skills to generate income. This may be partly due to the types of trainings women participated in, which often reflect traditionally feminized roles. It also underscores women's central role in sustaining household economies through informal work. Their responsibilities in caregiving, domestic tasks, and food preparation may facilitate engagement in income-generating activities that can be carried out within or near the home.

Several respondents explained how they transformed the skills acquired through NGO training programs into ongoing income-generating activities. Women trained in makeup application, for example, now provide beauty services for specific social events such as weddings and naming ceremonies. These services are typically offered at accessible prices and promoted through informal channels, relying heavily on personal networks and recommendations from others within the camp. One respondent noted, "My friends advertise my work. If anybody asks about who is the makeup artist, they say that it's me" (Displaced Youth No. 8, 2025). A separate interviewee indicated that she occasionally received customers from outside the camp,

suggesting that such skill-based activities have the potential to extend beyond the immediate boundaries of displacement (Displaced Youth No. 7, 2025).

Similarly, food preparation skills gained through training have supported the development of small-scale snack businesses within the camp. These activities often involve selling items such as fried bean cakes or groundnuts and are typically run from home. As mentioned by a young woman living in the camp, “I was taught here and I turned this into the business” (Displaced Youth No. 16, 2025), highlighting the direct link between training and income generation. Although modest in scale, these businesses frequently provide a source of daily income and play a meaningful role in supporting household needs.

Despite these promising examples, many participants highlighted challenges that made it difficult to start or build income-generating activities using the skills they had learned through the training programs. In particular, the lack of start-up capital, equipment, and ongoing support from the NGOs that provided the training made it hard to put those skills into practice. As one respondent noted, with additional financial assistance, she would have been able to diversify her economic activities and make use of other competencies gained during the training. In the absence of such material support, it became difficult to achieve meaningful economic advancement. Concern was raised by a 21-year-old male participant who had taken part in a barbering training program. While the training itself was useful, he explained, “When the program ended, nobody assisted us with the capital or supplies to continue with this work” (Displaced Youth No. 2, 2025). His experience highlights a broader issue within vocational training programs: the gap between training and implementation. Even when participants are motivated and eager to apply their new skills, they are often held back by a lack of tools, materials, and financial support needed to take the next step.

Insights from the Durumi IDP camp suggest that while NGO training programs may not lead to fully sustainable livelihoods, they can still play an important role in helping individuals take small steps toward economic independence. The impact of these programs depends not only on how useful and well-taught the skills are, but also on the wider environment in which they are used.

Support, in this sense, is important for the youth living in the camp. Even highly motivated individuals may struggle to move forward. Still, the fact that many people continue to use these skills to earn income, even years after completing the training, highlights their value as a source of resilience in a setting marked by ongoing hardship.

While NGO-led training programs in Durumi IDP camp offer a structured pathway into income-generating activities, many displaced youths turn to informal methods of skills acquisition. This informal system develops through peer-to-peer learning, family mentorship, observation, and experiential learning. It is shaped by cultural practices and everyday survival needs, rather than institutional frameworks. It is important to mention that informal learning networks are often more accessible and adaptable to the uncertain and changing conditions of displacement.

Several young men reported gaining skills and work experience through informal apprenticeships with slightly older and more experienced individuals, commonly referred to as “godfathers”. These figures often play a central role in helping others access income-generating opportunities. It is important to mention that they typically own the necessary tools or have established networks of clients and suppliers, which allows them to support others within these informal work arrangements. For instance, one 21-year-old male explained that he learned tailoring before displacement but has continued to develop his skills under the guidance of his godfather in the camp. Although he does not work completely on his own, the relationship allows him to keep practicing his trade while also earning some income (Displaced Youth No. 1, 2025). The godfather not only helps him sharpen his tailoring skills but also teaches him how to adjust his work to the specific challenging conditions of camp life. This model of informal learning was common across different types of work. A young male became a skilled furniture maker through daily practice under the guidance of a boss who was already working in the trade. It is important to note that he already had some basic skills in furniture making, but these improved significantly through this relationship in the camp (Displaced Youth No. 17, 2025). Another young man described how he built a livelihood by selling fuel. What began as an apprenticeship at a local filling station eventually grew into his own small business. Today, he owns between five and ten jerry cans and is well known among motorists who often come to him for fuel, even during

emergencies at night. Through hands-on experience, he has developed both entrepreneurial and logistical skills. He learned the trade from experienced fuel vendors who acted as his godfathers and mentored him when he first arrived at the camp (Displaced Youth No.12, 2025).

A closer look at learning in the camp setting reveals the role of peer-to-peer knowledge sharing. The previously mentioned example of the young furniture maker stands out as particularly compelling. He arrived at the camp with basic skills in furniture making, which he had started to develop before displacement. With the guidance of a more experienced mentor, these skills advanced significantly. What had initially been a beginner-level ability grew into a well-developed craft within the camp environment. Notably, this young person has now taken on the role of mentor himself, guiding five younger boys from the camp (Displaced Youth No. 17, 2025). This example illustrates how displaced youth, once learners, can become teachers. Such a cyclical process not only fosters the sharing of knowledge but also strengthens community resilience in settings where formal resources are limited. Peer learning, without a doubt, plays a vital role in this dynamic.

In the absence of stable employment, the stories from Durumi Camp show how both formal training and informal learning have become crucial pathways to survival and self-reliance. Whether through NGO-led programs or informal mentorship, displaced youth are finding ways to turn knowledge into opportunity. These efforts, though often modest, reflect a resilience and a commitment to building meaningful livelihoods, even in difficult circumstances.

6. Future Aspirations of Displaced Youth

In the context of violence and forced displacement, aspirations often take on new and deeper meanings. For the young people living in Durumi IDP Camp in Abuja, the future is not only about rebuilding their lives, but also about reclaiming their sense of identity, dignity, and purpose. These youth, aged 18 to 24, find themselves in a space marked by uncertainty. They are caught between the painful memories of the past and the fragile reality of the present. Despite the difficult conditions these young people face every day, many of them hold strong hopes and goals for the future. In their daily routines and conversations, there is a strong desire to move forward and to create something meaningful for themselves and their communities. Their aspirations indicate a desire for stability and persistence in facing ongoing challenges.

Most displaced youth in Durumi IDP Camp share a strong hope of leaving the camp and move to safer, more stable places. Many dreams of returning to their home regions, but only if the security situation improves. Others prefer to settle elsewhere in Abuja or in new areas where better opportunities and living conditions might be found. This hope extends beyond physical safety. It should be mentioned that it reflects a deep desire to regain a sense of normal life, dignity, and stability outside the camp's uncertain confines. The temporary nature of life in the camp, combined with worries about forced evictions and poor living conditions, only strengthens this longing to move on and rebuild. As one young man explained, "My prayers and plans for the next 5-10 years is to leave this place. Here are a lot of mosquitos and also, this place is not permanent. One moment someone will come and say to leave. My prayer is to leave and take my family somewhere where we can have a peaceful life" (Displaced Youth No. 2, 2025). Similarly, a young woman shared, "My own priority is to see myself married, living in an accommodation outside the camp, go back to Gwoza, if it is safe. I do not want to stay here in the camp" (Displaced Youth No. 5, 2025). For these youth, the hope to move on symbolizes the aspiration for a life marked by stability, opportunity, and dignity, conditions that the camp, by its very nature, struggles to provide.

These aspirations are influenced by material circumstances, social relationships, and gender roles, as well as by the personal beliefs that provide many with a sense of guidance and strength. This chapter examines how displaced youth imagine their futures and how their faith often serves as both a moral guide and a source of resilience during difficult times. To fully understand the meaning of these hopes, it is important to consider them within broader theoretical ideas that help explain how hope, aspiration, and personal agency develop in situations of displacement.

Arjun Appadurai's concept of "The Capacity to Aspire" provides a helpful way to understand the hopes expressed by displaced youth in Durumi. According to this idea, aspiration is a cultural ability that is unevenly shared and deeply influenced by social conditions and access to resources. Aspiration is not just an individual wish or dream but something shaped by the social environment, something people learn, develop, and experience differently depending on their circumstances. Even in the face of displacement, uncertainty, and hardship, young people in the camp create hopeful visions for their futures. These include goals such as starting their own businesses, continuing their education, joining the military, returning to their hometowns, and improving their living conditions. These hopes are connected to daily struggles and shaped by their local experiences, beliefs, and the social world around them. This perspective allows us to see how displaced youth respond to uncertainty. Rather than being simply passive or powerless, they find ways to use their hopes to guide themselves and make sense of their lives, even within the limits they face (Appadurai, 2004).

Economic self-reliance emerged as an important theme in discussions about the future. As discussed in earlier chapters, a large number of displaced youths are already involved in informal work such as tailoring, furniture making, mechanics, hairstyling, knitting, or small-scale trading. As mentioned, the skills related to these types of work are sometimes learned through apprenticeships, either with fellow camp residents or mentors from outside the camp. A young man, living in the Durumi IDP camp, spoke of his hope to open a large mechanic workshop where he could also employ other young people who are in need of work (Displaced Youth No. 10, 2025). These kinds of comments not only show the material goals that displaced youth are working toward but also reveal a strong desire to create opportunities for themselves and others. This

drive for self-employment and independence can be understood as being closely linked to a sense of agency and personal dignity.

It's also important to consider Amartya Sen's idea from *Development as Freedom*, where he explains the difference between having certain abilities and actually being able to use them in meaningful ways (Sen, 1999). Some displaced youth in Durumi know how to sew clothes, build furniture, or grow crops. These are practical skills they already have. However, their ability to put these skills to use and improve their lives is often limited by poverty, insecurity, and a lack of financial or institutional support. They might have the knowledge, but not the freedom or supportive environment to act on it. This gap is clearly visible in the camp. Many young people speak about their hopes and ambitions with sincerity, but the tools they need to achieve them are often out of reach. Recognizing this helps us understand the frustration they face as they try to create a better future.

During the interviews conducted in Durumi IDP camp, a 21-year-old male shared that his dream is to have his own large tailoring shop or find success in the field of information and communication technology. He explained that he has already started learning basic computer skills (Displaced Youth No. 1, 2025). This example connects well with Appadurai's idea that people's aspirations are shaped by the stories and possibilities they are exposed to (Appadurai, 2004). Even though displaced youth may not have the same opportunities or resources as others, they still imagine different paths to success. For them, careers in tailoring, technology, or trade seem meaningful. There are also dreams that reflect young people's aspirations for a better life and the desire to survive and move forward. These kinds of dreams also reflect what Hope Theory describes as a mix of two important ways of thinking. One is the belief in their ability to reach a goal, and the other is the ability to think of different ways to get there. These young people try to set goals and explore possible ways to work toward them. Hope is not just a feeling. It can be seen as a practical way of dealing with difficult circumstances and planning for the future (Snyder, 2002).

It is important to mention that, while talking about the future, joining the military was a common dream among many young men living in Durumi IDP Camp. These aspirations may go beyond simply finding a job. They carry deep symbolic meaning, especially when viewed through Pierre Bourdieu's concept of symbolic capital. For example, wearing a military uniform is not just a sign of employment. It also represents respect, moral value, and a sense of belonging within the nation. For displaced youth who often lack money and strong social connections, this kind of symbolic capital, meaning the honor and status that come with serving in uniform, becomes a very important goal. It offers them a chance to be seen not just as refugees or victims but as protectors, leaders, and respected members of society (Bourdieu, 1986). However, as mentioned in previous chapters, many young people face significant barriers to achieving these dreams. These include gaps in their education, difficulties obtaining necessary medical certifications, and the lack of powerful contacts or godfathers who can help them gain entry into formal institutions.

When considering future aspirations, it is important to recognize the significant role that faith plays as a deeply rooted source of strength for many young people. During interviews, youth living in the Durumi IDP Camp frequently mentioned God when discussing their hopes for the future. Phrases such as "By the grace of God," "If God wills," and "With God's help" were not simply expressions or habits of speech, but genuine reflections of their belief in divine guidance and protection. In a context where institutions have often failed them and where the future is uncertain, faith in God provides a steady and comforting presence. This faith is also connected to the idea of redemption, where success is not seen only as a personal achievement but as a way to honor their families, uplift their communities, and fulfill what they believe is God's purpose for their lives.

7. Discussion

This chapter reflects on the findings through the lens of the theoretical framework and relevant literature. It explores how displaced youth in Durumi IDP Camp manage the challenges of economic hardship and sheds light on the significance of the livelihood strategies they adopt. By examining these coping mechanisms, the chapter offers a deeper understanding of youth resilience and survival in displacement settings. Specifically, it addresses the central research question of this thesis: How do displaced youth in Durumi IDP Camp navigate economic hardships, and what strategies do they use to sustain their livelihoods? The discussion brings together key concepts to interpret the complex ways in which resources, coping strategies, and social relationships shape the economic lives of youth in the camp. It examines how young people make use of what is available to them, build networks of support, and find ways to adapt and survive in a challenging environment.

In addition to analyzing the findings, the chapter also considers the broader implications for policy and humanitarian practice, offering insights into how support systems might be strengthened to better meet the needs of displaced youth.

7.1. Navigating Informality: Livelihoods in the Absence of Formal Structures

The research shows that the livelihoods of displaced youth in Durumi are rooted mainly in the informal economy. Young people engage in a wide range of economic activities such as tailoring, hairdressing, food vending, phone charging, and shoe repair, all carried out outside formal employment systems. This highlights the relevance of the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework, especially its focus on how people use the resources available to them to develop survival strategies in situations where access to formal jobs, reliable infrastructure, and financial support is limited (Department Of International Development, 2001).

Most youth depend on their skills, personal relationships, and access to basic tools and shared spaces. Their efforts are shaped not only by a lack of resources but also by deeper structural challenges, including the absence of legal work permits, experiences of discrimination, and

inconsistent support from humanitarian organizations. Yet, this adaptation is far from passive. These young people actively look for opportunities, apply their skills in creative ways, and respond to market demand both within and beyond the camp.

Through these actions, the informal economy serves as a practical means for youth to meet their basic needs and manage daily life in displacement. It becomes a space where youth exercise agency and demonstrate resilience, even though the work remains fragile and lacks adequate support.

7.2. Everyday Resilience and Youth Agency

Resilience theory offers a deeper understanding of how displaced youth in Durumi cope with the pressures of everyday life. The findings show that resilience is not simply about recovering from past hardship. It also involves adapting to new challenges and finding ways to move forward. Young people in the camp do this by showing persistence, creativity, and flexibility.

One important finding is that experiences of resilience can vary from person to person. Gender influences this in subtle but significant ways. Young men and women tend to take part in different kinds of activities, shaped by social norms and expectations. As a result, access to opportunities, even within informal work, can vary. While young men are often involved in mobile or public facing jobs, it is more common for young women to be engaged in activities that take place closer to home. These patterns reflect the ways in which gender roles influence everyday life and shape the paths available to young people. It is also worth noting that vocational training programs provided by NGOs can sometimes reinforce these patterns by offering certain types of skills to women. As a result, young women may find it more difficult to explore a wider range of economic opportunities or pursue work beyond the camp.

Drawing on Michael Ungar view of resilience, the findings suggest that young people's ability to adapt is supported by access to meaningful resources, recognition from peers, and shared ways of coping. Their capacity to manage ongoing uncertainty, such as irregular aid, insecurity, and rising food prices, is not just a matter of personal strength. It also reflects how they make use of

the systems and routines around them to maintain a sense of direction (Ungar, 2008). In this case, it is important to mention Social relationships that are not just the support systems. The findings show that youth in Durumi often depend on close relationships with family, friends, and fellow residents to support their livelihood efforts. These connections help them access materials, attract customers, and develop new skills. For example, many young people borrow items from others in the camp or run small businesses together with trusted peers. This supports Bourdieu's idea that social connections can provide access to valuable resources through lasting relationships. In the context of the camp, these networks take the place of formal institutions that are often absent. With limited financial resources, social ties become a source of support, offering not only informal credit and skill-building but also encouragement during difficult times (Bourdieu, 1986). This kind of support plays a particularly important role in a setting such as Durumi IDP Camp. However, relying mainly on close personal ties also comes with certain limitations. It can lead to a sense of isolation, reduce access to new ideas or opportunities beyond the immediate community, and sometimes create patterns of economic dependence. Even so, the way youth make use of their relationships to create small income-generating opportunities in a setting with few resources demonstrates a strong form of social resilience.

7.3. Policy and Practice Implications

The findings of this study present key implications for humanitarian actors, non-governmental organizations, and policy-makers engaging with displaced youth in urban informal settlements such as Durumi IDP Camp.

First, urban inclusion is essential. Displacement tracking systems and humanitarian databases must expand their scope to recognize and include urban informal settlements. This would enhance the visibility of displaced populations in these areas and improve equitable access to resources and support. Of course, it also should be highlighted that Legal recognition and protection of urban IDP camps remains a crucial issue. In the absence of formal status or safeguards, displaced communities remain vulnerable to eviction and insecurity, which undermines both personal agency and long-term development planning. In addition, it is important to focus on sustainable livelihood support that should go beyond basic skills training.

Programs must incorporate follow-up assistance such as access to tools, mentorship, and connections to markets in order to ensure lasting impact and economic autonomy for displaced youth. The integration of psychosocial support into humanitarian and development interventions is also essential. Given the trauma and instability many displaced youth face, mental health services should be embedded within broader livelihood and resilience-building efforts. In addition, Fostering bridging social capital is equally important. Programs that connect camp-based youth with external institutions, markets, or professional networks can expand their opportunities beyond the informal economy and contribute to more stable and sustainable livelihoods.

Taken together, these implications point to the need for a comprehensive and inclusive approach that addresses the underlying challenges of displacement while also supporting the resilience, aspirations, and daily efforts of displaced youth living in urban areas.

Conclusion

This thesis explored how displaced youth aged 18 to 24 in Durumi IDP Camp, Abuja, cope with economic hardship and build their livelihoods in an environment marked by uncertainty, limited resources, and weak institutional support. Through interviews, observations, and economic mapping, the study captured a variety of ways in which young people respond to difficult living conditions. The findings show that despite ongoing struggles, many youths in Durumi Camp are actively working to improve their situations through informal work, social networks, skill-building, and personal determination. Rather than being passive victims, they show strength, creativity, and resilience as they try to survive and move forward with their lives.

One of the key ways displaced youth cope with economic hardship is by engaging in informal income-generating activities. With limited access to formal employment and few official job opportunities available to them, many young people turn to small-scale businesses either within the camp, in nearby areas, or in other parts of Abuja. Such activities often require only a small amount of capital and are based on skills the youth had acquired either before or after their displacement. Some also provide services outside the camp, which reflects not only their ability to move between different spaces but also their connection to the wider urban economy. Although these informal jobs may not guarantee long-term security, they help young people meet their daily needs and maintain a sense of independence, routine, and purpose.

Learning new skills is another important way displaced youth try to build better livelihoods. Several NGOs have introduced vocational training programs in the camp, which include courses in soap making, sewing, ICT, food preparation, etc. For many youths, these programs offer hope and the possibility of starting a business. Some participants spoke about how these skills helped them become more confident or allowed them to earn some money to support their families. However, the research also shows that skill training alone is not enough. Without access to materials, tools, or startup capital, it is difficult for youth to fully use what they have learned. Even so, the decision to attend training and look for ways to improve shows a clear effort to adapt to displacement and take control of the future.

Undoubtedly, it should be highlighted that social relationships play a crucial role in how youth cope with hardship. In the absence of formal systems, young people rely heavily on informal networks of support. Friends, neighbors, and family members often share tools, customers, or knowledge to help one another survive. In some cases, youth run small businesses together, borrow supplies from each other, or trade services. These social connections create a kind of safety net, where trust and cooperation replace missing institutions. This network-based support is especially important in a camp such as Durumi, where resources are limited and youth must depend on those around them to overcome daily challenges.

At the same time, gender roles shape how youth experience economic life in the camp. Young men and women tend to participate in different types of work, often based on safety concerns and cultural expectations. While boys may engage in more mobile activities outside the home, girls are often limited to businesses that can be done from their homes, within or nearby the camp, such as selling food or making clothes. This limits the opportunities available to young women and reflects deeper patterns of inequality. Even within NGO training programs, girls are sometimes only offered certain kinds of training, reinforcing narrow gender roles. Despite these limitations, many girls still show great initiative, finding ways to work, contribute to their families, and build supportive peer groups.

During the fieldwork, it became evident that displaced youth, despite living in difficult and often harsh circumstances, are engaged in shaping their lives. Faced with limited resources, insecurity, and a lack of formal support, many young people still find ways to support their families, meet their daily needs, and hold on to a sense of hope. At the same time, it should be highlighted that youth in Durumi IDP Camp face constant stress due to food insecurity, poor living conditions, and the fear of eviction. Many are still dealing with trauma from the conflict that forced them to flee their homes. Their coping strategies reflect a combination of personal determination, collective effort, and the creative use of opportunities that are available to them. Some youth shared their aspirations to continue their education, start small businesses, or move out from the camp. These dreams demonstrate that, even amid hardship, young people continue to imagine better futures.

for themselves. This forward-looking mindset plays an important role in how they cope, helping them maintain emotional strength and a sense of purpose in their daily lives.

Supporting youth in camps such as Durumi IDP Camp is essential for fostering resilience and long-term recovery. To be truly effective, future interventions should go beyond short-term aid and focus on creating lasting opportunities. This involves improving access to quality education, providing ongoing vocational training, supporting youth-led businesses, and ensuring legal recognition of the camp. It also requires more inclusive urban policies that take into account the realities of displaced communities. Equally important is the provision of mental health services and community-based counseling, particularly for young people who have experienced trauma, violence, or the loss of loved ones. Policymakers and humanitarian actors need to engage more directly with displaced youth, listening carefully to their perspectives, needs, and aspirations. Their voices and lived experiences are central to developing responses that are both relevant and sustainable.

Importantly, this study highlights several possible paths for future research that could strengthen understanding of youth livelihoods in displacement settings. Long-term studies would be useful to explore how livelihood strategies and coping mechanisms change over time, especially as young people grow older. Examining relationships between younger and older IDPs could also offer insights into how different generations influence livelihood choices and share resources. It would also be valuable to study how digital tools and social media shape entrepreneurial efforts among displaced youth, particularly in urban areas where technology access is more common. Comparing experiences across urban and rural IDP camps could help reveal how location affects economic opportunities and youth aspirations. Another important area for future research is understanding how camp residents are perceived by the surrounding communities. Exploring these perceptions could provide important insights into social integration, stigma, and the possibilities for building more inclusive urban environments.

In conclusion, the youth in Durumi IDP Camp cope with economic hardships by working informally, learning new skills, relying on social support, and using mobility and creativity to

navigate daily life. Their strategies reflect not only the challenges they face but also their strength, determination, and adaptability. Even in an environment where essential services are limited and legal recognition remains uncertain, these young people continue to act, adapt, and plan for their futures. This research highlights the importance of recognizing their agency, addressing the structural inequalities that shape their lives, and creating conditions that allow their efforts to lead to meaningful and lasting change. Supporting their resilience requires more than acknowledgment. It is important to focus on the practical investment that is informed by their voices and responsive to the realities they face.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Consent Forms

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN ACADEMIC RESEARCH

Title of Study: Examining Youth Livelihoods: Navigating Economic Hardships Among Displaced Youth in Durumi IDP Camp, Abuja, Nigeria.

Researcher: Nino Tandilashvili

Affiliation: European Interdisciplinary Master African Studies, University of Porto.

Participation:

Your participation in this study involves one-on-one interview. A translator will be present to assist with language interpretation, ensuring clear communication. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time.

Confidentiality:

Your identity will remain confidential in this thesis and in any publications or presentations based on this research.

I consent to participate in this research:

Participant's Name : _____

Participant's Signature: _____

Researcher's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please retain a copy of this consent form for your records.

CONSENT FORM FOR AUDIO RECORDING IN ACADEMIC RESEARCH

Title of Study: Examining Youth Livelihoods: Navigating Economic Hardships Among Displaced Youth in Durumi IDP Camp, Abuja, Nigeria.

Researcher: Nino Tandilashvili

Affiliation: European Interdisciplinary Master African Studies, University of Porto.

Purpose of Audio Recording:

This study involves one-on-one interviews. A translator will be present to assist with language interpretation, ensuring clear communication. With your consent, the interview will be audio recorded to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the information collected. These recordings will only be used for research purposes.

Confidentiality:

Your identity will remain confidential, and the recordings will be securely stored. Only the researcher and authorized academic supervisors will have access to them. No personally identifiable information will be shared in any publications or presentations based on this research.

Voluntary Participation:

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You have the right to refuse audio recording while still participating in the interview. You may also withdraw your consent at any time without any consequences.

I consent to the audio recording of my interview for the purpose of this research study:

Participant's Name : _____

Participant's Signature: _____

Researcher's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please retain a copy of this consent form for your records.

Appendix 2 – Interview Guidelines

The following section presents the interview guide used during fieldwork with displaced youth residing in the Durumi IDP Camp, as well as with the camp chairman. These questions served as a flexible framework to explore participants' experiences, livelihood strategies, and perspectives.

Interview Guide – Displaced Youth

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. My name is Nino Tandilashvili, and I am a master's student in the European Interdisciplinary Master's program in African Studies (EIMAS). As part of my research, I am exploring the topic:

"Examining Youth Livelihoods: Navigating Economic Hardships Among Displaced Youth in Durumi IDP Camp."

The purpose of my research is to gain a deeper understanding of how displaced youth in Durumi IDP camp navigate economic challenges, the types of work they engage in, and the strategies they use to sustain their livelihoods.

Your insights and experiences are extremely valuable and will help me develop a more comprehensive understanding of this issue. I truly appreciate your time and willingness to share your perspective with me. Please know that this interview is for academic purposes only, and your identity will remain anonymous unless you choose otherwise. Your privacy and confidentiality are my priorities.

With your permission, I would like to record our conversation to ensure that I accurately capture your thoughts and experiences. The recording will only be used for research purposes and will not be shared beyond my academic work.

Do you have any questions before we start?

Interview Questions:

Demographic and Background Information

1. Please state your name, your date of birth, mother-tongue and where you grew up.
2. Could you share a little about yourself, background before coming to the camp, and what led you to settle here?
3. How long have you been living in the Durumi IDP Camp?
4. What kind of work or economic activities were you involved in before you came to the camp?

Economic Hardships

5. Do you face economic challenges in the camp? If yes, what are the main economic challenges you face in the camp?

Sub questions:

- Do you face any difficulties accessing enough food?
 - Are there challenges in accessing medical care when needed?
 - How would you describe your living conditions in the camp?
6. Are there any barriers you face in accessing work opportunities? If yes, what are these barriers?
 7. How do you think the economic situation in the camp compares to what you experienced before displacement?

Coping Strategies and Livelihoods

8. What strategies do you use to cope with the economic difficulties you face?

Sub question:

- Have you started any small businesses or informal activities to earn income in the camp? If so, can you tell me more about them?
9. How do you collaborate with others in the camp (e.g., family members, other displaced youth) to support each other economically?

10. How do you interact with the local community outside the camp? What challenges or opportunities do you face in these interactions?
11. What kind of skills or knowledge have you gained in the camp that help you with earning money or getting by?
12. Do you receive any support from NGOs, the government, or relatives to help with economic challenges? If so, what kind of support do you receive, and is it sufficient?

Aspirations and Future Plans

13. How do you see your future in the next 5–10 years? Do you think your current situation in the camp will influence your future plans?

Interview Guide – Camp Chairman

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. My name is Nino Tandilashvili, and I am a master's student in the European Interdisciplinary Master's program in African Studies (EIMAS). As part of my research, I am exploring the topic:

"Examining Youth Livelihoods: Navigating Economic Hardships Among Displaced Youth in Durumi IDP Camp."

The purpose of my research is to gain a deeper understanding of how displaced youth in Durumi IDP camp navigate economic challenges, the types of work they engage in, and the strategies they use to sustain their livelihoods.

Your insights and experiences are extremely valuable and will help me develop a more comprehensive understanding of this issue. I truly appreciate your time and willingness to share your perspective with me. Please know that this interview is for academic purposes only, and your identity will remain anonymous unless you choose otherwise. Your privacy and confidentiality are my priorities.

With your permission, I would like to record our conversation to ensure that I accurately capture your thoughts and experiences. The recording will only be used for research purposes and will not be shared beyond my academic work.

Do you have any questions before we start?

Interview questions:

Demographic Information

1. What is the estimated total population of the camp?
2. Do you have data on the number of households in the camp?
3. Do you have data on the breakdown of the population by gender (male/female ration)?
4. Do you have data on the number of youth (aged 18-24) currently living in the camp?
5. What are the main regions or states of origin of the camp residents?

Governance and Structure

6. Can you explain how the Durumi IDP Camp is managed and who are the key members of the management team?
7. What are the specific roles of the key members of the management team?
8. How were the management members selected — by election, appointment, or volunteering?
9. If there are volunteers in the camp's management team, what role do volunteers play in the camp's management team?

Sub-questions:

- What proportion of the management team consists of volunteers compared to those who were elected or appointed?
- How are volunteers selected? Do they apply, get recommended, or step in informally?
- Where do the volunteers come from? Are they residents of the camp, from the local community, or external organizations?
- Are the volunteers consistently involved in managing the camp, or do they only help occasionally or for specific tasks?

Land Ownership and Legal Status

10. Is the camp officially recognized by the government or local authorities?

11. Who owns the land where the camp is located?

Sub-questions:

- If it is a private land, is it rented, leased out or given gratis?
- Is there any official agreement with the landowner?

12. Have there been any threats of eviction or plans to relocate the camp?

Funding

13. How is the camp funded?

14. Does the management receive financial support from any organizations, the government, or individuals?

15. Has the camp ever had a way of self-funding or self-sustainability without reliance on external support?

Services and Support

16. What kind of basic services (water, sanitation, electricity) are available in the camp, and how are they organized?

17. How are educational and health services managed in the camp?

Sub-question:

- Who supports these services?

18. Do external organizations (NGOs, religious groups, government) provide humanitarian assistance to the camp?

Sub-questions:

- If yes, what kind of humanitarian assistance is provided to people – food distribution, cash support, job training, or youth friendly programs?
- How often is the assistance provided?
- Which NGOs are involved?

19. How does the camp management distribute humanitarian aid (food, cash, supplies) among residents?

Sub-questions:

- Whose responsibility is it to distribute the humanitarian aid to the camp residents (the NGOs or camp management)?
- What are the criteria used to decide who receives support?

Economic Life in the Camp

20. Are economic activities permitted in the camp?

21. Are there any specific areas in the camp designated for economic activities?

22. Do residents need permission from the management to start small businesses inside the camp?

Youth Livelihoods and Future Prospects

23. At what extent do youth livelihoods in the camp differ from other groups?

24. What kinds of economic activities are common among displaced youth in the camp?

25. What kind of sociability arises among youth members in the camp, outside the universe of their families?

26. How do you see the future of the camp and the youth living here?

Migration Patterns

27. Why do many displaced people come to Abuja, and what are the main reasons for settling in Durumi IDP Camp specifically?

Sub-question:

- Does camp administration, the Nigerian Red Cross Society or other organization provides coordination in terms of refugee distribution to this Camp, or the arrival of people is self-driven and self-organized?

28. Do you think the possibility of finding jobs or receiving humanitarian support plays a role in this decision?

Appendix 3 - Legal Opinion of the Ethics Committee of FLUP

Resolution N.º 78/CEFLUP/2025

Project reference: n.a.

Project title: Examining Youth Livelihoods: Navigating Economic Hardships Among Displaced Youth) in Durumi IDP Camp, Abuja

1. **Submission Date of the Project to the Ethics Committee:** 03.04.2025
2. **Proponent /Principal investigator:** Nino Tandilashvili, under the supervision of Dr. Maciel Santos and Dr. Amélia Polónia
3. **Research team:** n.a.
4. **Documents attached to the request** (description): Letter addressed to the President of CEFLUP requesting a legal opinion; CV; interview guidelines and script; project description; informed consent form.
5. **Nature and context of the project** (project to be developed by): Master's dissertation – EIMAS, European Interdisciplinary Master African Studies
6. **Funding:**
 - ☐ Funded
 - ☒ Not Funded
7. **Location or Places where the research will be carried out:** The study will be conducted in Durumi, Area 1 IDP camp, Abuja, Nigeria.
8. **Research objectives:** The research project aims to examine how displaced youth (aged 18–24) in Durumi IDP Camp navigate economic hardships and sustain their livelihoods, by focusing on key livelihood strategies, challenges to employment, and the role of social networks in economic survival. Furthermore, the project seeks to explore youth aspirations, interactions with external communities, and the broader structural factors shaping their economic opportunities.
9. **Activities to be carried out:** The research will combine ethnographic observations and in-person interviews.
10. **Data collection techniques:** Data will be collected through field notes, audio recordings

(with participant consent), and written surveys. The activities will be conducted with the assistance of a translator.

11. Participants: Youth residing in Durumi IDP Camp, aged 18–24 and the chairman of the camp.

12. Inclusion criteria (If applicable): N/A

13. Risks/ benefits of the research for the participants: The lead researcher does not foresee any risks for participants. The participants will be asked to signed an informed consent form, whereby their voluntary participation is acknowledged, and the confidentiality of their responses and of audio recordings is safeguarded. The applicant further states as benefits of participating in the research project the opportunity to voice their own experiences and challenges related to economic hardships

in the camp, as their insights may contribute to a better understanding of youth livelihoods in displacement settings, and potentially inform future policies or programs aimed at improving economic opportunities for displaced youth. Furthermore, the views of the chairman perspective has the potential to underscore structural issues that can be addressed to enhance support mechanisms in the camp.

14. Informed consent and confidentiality of the information: Informed consent form includes provisions on the right to anonymity and confidentiality of information, and the possibility of ceasing participation at any time during the research project.

15. Data Management: A brief statement is provided on data storage, management and disposal.

16. Project end date: 30.07.2025

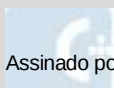
RESOLUTION: The project “Examining Youth Livelihoods: Navigating Economic Hardships Among Displaced Youth) in Durumi IDP Camp, Abuja” will be undertaken as part of the Master's Degree in African Studies (EIMAS programme) at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto. The project aims to examine how displaced youth (aged 18–24) in Durumi IDP Camp navigate economic hardships and sustain their livelihoods, by focusing on key livelihood strategies, challenges to employment, and the role of social networks in economic survival. Furthermore, the project seeks to understand youth aspirations, interactions with external communities, and the broader structural factors shaping their economic opportunities. Understanding the experiences of the participants is paramount for designing more effective policies and support mechanisms that contribute to enhancing their economic well-being and long-term stability. The Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto thus believes that the relevance of the research project is commendable.

The applicant submitted several documents with the request for the opinion of the Ethics Committee, including a letter addressed to the President of CEFLUP requesting a legal opinion, the project description, the CV of the lead researcher, the interview guidelines and script, and the informed consent form. In addition, the applicant also submitted a brief data management and storage protocol. The informed consent form, though concise, includes provisions on the right to anonymity and confidentiality of information, and the option to cease participation at any time during the research project. The participants are also explained the research objectives and methods. Hence, in this regard, the project meets the criteria required to safeguard the participants’ best interest.

The applicant answered 'yes' to question 15 of the application form, thereby stating that data to be gathered/treated in the project can be described as personal. This criterion is also met by the applicant, since the legal opinion by the Data Protection Unit of the University of Porto was provided upon request.

Given the information provided, the description of the provisions adopted, and the documents attached, the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto gives its favourable opinion on the research project submitted for analysis.

The Rapporteur:



Assinado por: Rui Manuel Sousa Silva

Num. de Identificação: 10161190
Data: 2025.07.25 10:36:03 +0100

The Head of the Ethics Committee:

Assinado por: Maria Isabel Correia Dias

Num. de Identificação: 07396720
Data: 2025.07.25 11:34:29 +0100



Appendix 4 – Opinion from The Data Protection Unit of the University of Porto

PARECER R-56/2025

Nome	Nino Tandilashvili
Nº. Mecnográfico	202309141
Entidade Constitutiva	FLUP
Título	"Examining Youth Livelihoods: Navigating Economic Hardships Among Displaced Youth in Durumi IDP Camp, Abuja"

Sumário do Pedido

Foi solicitado à Unidade de Proteção de Dados da Universidade do Porto que se pronunciasse sobre um estudo a ser conduzido pelo Requerente no âmbito do seu Mestrado em European Interdisciplinary Master African Studies da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto [doravante FLUP], intitulado «Examining Youth Livelihoods: Navigating Economic Hardships

Among Displaced Youth in Durumi IDP Camp, Abuja».

Do que foi possível apurar pela UPD, o referido estudo, proposto pela Requerente, tem como objetivo compreender as dificuldades económicas enfrentadas por jovens deslocados e identificar as estratégias por estes utilizadas para garantir a sua subsistência em contexto de deslocamento forçado.

Conclusões

Para a consecução deste objetivo, prevê-se a realização de entrevistas presenciais a uma amostra de jovens com idades compreendidas entre os 18 e os 24 anos, residentes no campo de deslocados internos de Durumi, localizado em Abuja, na Nigéria.

O estudo contempla a aplicação de dois guiões de entrevista distintos: um destinado aos jovens participantes e outro ao presidente do referido campo, havendo o intuito de facilitar a posterior transcrição e análise dos conteúdos, pelo que as entrevistas serão gravadas em formato áudio, sendo os respetivos ficheiros eliminados imediatamente após a conclusão do processo de transcrição. Complementarmente, serão captadas imagens do campo, com o propósito de contextualizar visualmente a realidade vivida pela comunidade em estudo.

Na análise efetuada pela Unidade de Proteção de Dados, foi identificado que o estudo implicará a recolha de diversas categorias de dados pessoais, nomeadamente:

Dados sociodemográficos: nome, idade, género, país de origem, língua materna e estado civil;

Dados académicos: curso frequentado pelos participantes;

Dados profissionais: cargo ocupado na gestão do campo (no caso do presidente), situação de emprego e tipo de atividade económica desempenhada;

Dados biométricos: voz dos participantes, recolhida através da gravação das entrevistas;

Imagens do campo: incluindo fotografias que poderão, eventualmente, incluir pessoas ou detalhes identificáveis;

Outras informações relevantes: desde que pertinentes para os objetivos definidos no estudo.

De acordo com o disposto no artigo 4.º, n.º 1 do Regulamento Geral sobre a Proteção de Dados (RGPD), constituem dados pessoais todas as informações relativas a uma pessoa singular identificada ou identificável. Assim, a recolha da voz dos participantes — uma característica biométrica que permite a identificação — bem como de imagens das atividades desenvolvidas no campo, enquadra-se claramente no âmbito de tratamento de dados pessoais.

O estudo cumpre os princípios fundamentais do RGPD, a saber:

Licitude, lealdade e transparência: O tratamento de dados encontra-se legitimado pela obtenção de consentimento informado dos participantes, o qual deverá ser prestado de forma livre, explícita, esclarecida e transparente, através de formulário próprio ou declaração adequada;

Limitação das finalidades: Os dados serão recolhidos exclusivamente para os fins previamente definidos e legitimados — a realização da dissertação de mestrado — não podendo ser utilizados para finalidades divergentes ou incompatíveis;

Minimização dos dados: Apenas serão recolhidos os dados estritamente necessários para a prossecução dos objetivos do estudo, em conformidade com o princípio da minimização;

Exatidão: Serão adotadas medidas adequadas para garantir que os dados recolhidos são exatos e fiáveis. Apesar de a natureza do estudo não requerer a atualização contínua dos dados, deve ser assegurada a sua recolha com rigor e responsabilidade;

Limitação da conservação: Os dados pessoais serão conservados apenas pelo período estritamente necessário à conclusão da dissertação, sendo eliminados após a sua utilização;

Integridade e confidencialidade: Serão implementadas medidas técnicas e organizativas que assegurem a proteção dos dados contra acessos não autorizados, perdas, destruições ou alterações acidentais.

Importa ainda destacar que, conforme salientado pela Unidade de Proteção de Dados, a captação da voz e de imagens pode tornar os participantes potencialmente identificáveis, sobretudo no caso de imagens em planos próximos.

Neste sentido, é fortemente recomendado que se evite a recolha de imagens onde seja possível

identificar, de forma clara, os rostos ou traços físicos das pessoas retratadas, como medida de mitigação de riscos para os direitos e liberdades fundamentais dos titulares dos dados.

Tendo em consideração que o tratamento de dados se fundamenta no consentimento informado dos participantes e que não está prevista a recolha de categorias especiais de dados pessoais (dados sensíveis), a Unidade conclui que os riscos inerentes ao tratamento são reduzidos e aceitáveis, desde que respeitados os princípios legais e éticos enunciados.

Face ao exposto, considera-se que o estudo está devidamente enquadrado no regime jurídico de proteção de dados, não se identificando, nesta fase, impedimentos legais à sua realização, desde que sejam integralmente cumpridas as salvaguardas propostas e observadas as boas práticas recomendadas nesta matéria.

A Encarregada da Proteção de Dados
da Universidade do Porto
Raquel Mendes da Rocha
Digitally signed by Raquel Mendes da Rocha
Date: 2025.06.30 10:34:16 +01'00'
Dra. Raquel Mendes da Rocha

Rectoral Decision

Nome	Nino Tandilashvili
Nº. Mecnográfico	202309141
Entidade Constitutiva	FLUP
Título	"Examining Youth Livelihoods: Navigating Economic Hardships Among Displaced Youth in Durumi IDP Camp, Abuja"

Sumário do Pedido

Foi solicitado à Unidade de Proteção de Dados da Universidade do Porto que se pronunciasse sobre um estudo a ser conduzido pelo Requerente no âmbito do seu Mestrado em European Interdisciplinary Master African Studies da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto [doravante FLUP], intitulado «Examining Youth Livelihoods: Navigating Economic Hardships Among Displaced Youth in Durumi IDP Camp, Abuja».

Do que foi possível apurar pela UPD, o referido estudo, proposto pela Requerente, tem como objetivo compreender as dificuldades económicas enfrentadas por jovens deslocados e

identificar as estratégias por estes utilizadas para garantir a sua subsistência em contexto de deslocamento forçado.

Síntese do parecer da Encarregada da Proteção de Dados

Importa ainda destacar que, conforme salientado pela Unidade de Proteção de Dados, a captação da voz e de imagens pode tornar os participantes potencialmente identificáveis, sobretudo no caso de imagens em planos próximos.

Neste sentido, é fortemente recomendado que se evite a recolha de imagens onde seja possível identificar, de forma clara, os rostos ou traços físicos das pessoas retratadas, como medida de mitigação de riscos para os direitos e liberdades fundamentais dos titulares dos dados.

Tendo em consideração que o tratamento de dados se fundamenta no consentimento informado dos participantes e que não está prevista a recolha de categorias especiais de dados pessoais (dados sensíveis), a Unidade conclui que os riscos inerentes ao tratamento são reduzidos e aceitáveis, desde que respeitados os princípios legais e éticos enunciados.

Face ao exposto, considera-se que o estudo está devidamente enquadrado no regime jurídico de proteção de dados, não se identificando, nesta fase, impedimentos legais à sua realização, desde que sejam integralmente cumpridas as salvaguardas propostas e observadas as boas práticas recomendadas nesta matéria.

Decisão Reitoral

Uma vez analisado o pedido em questão e tendo em consideração o parecer da Encarregada da Proteção de Dados da Universidade do Porto, com a referência R-56/2025,

☒ autorizo.

☐ não autorizo.

A Vice-Reitora
Assinado por: Ana Maria Cunha Ribeiro dos Santos Ponces Camanho
Num. de Identificação: 09801581
Certificado por: Universidade do Porto
Atributos certificados: Vice-Reitor/a da Universidade do Porto

Ana Maria Camanho*

Appendix 5 – Observation Checklist Table

During fieldwork in the Durumi IDP Camp, an observation checklist table was developed to systematically track key aspects of economic activities among displaced youth. This table captures observed livelihood practices and provides insight into how young people navigate daily income generation in a displacement setting. It includes categories such as gender, age, activity type such as tailoring or selling food, work and income locations, supply chains including sources of materials, customer base, and whether income is generated from within the camp, from outside, or both.

#	Gender	Age	Activity	Work Location	Money-earning location	Supply chains	Customers	Income Source (Camp/Outside/Mixed)
1	Female	23	Petty Trader	Camp entrance	Camp entrance	Buys rice, soya beans, groundnuts, sweet potatoes, white potatoes from Kabusa Market.	Mainly camp residents, sometimes outsiders passing by.	Mixed
2	Female	21	Cap Knitter	Camp territory	Dunamis Market	Buys robes, needles from Dunamis Market	Middlemen	Outside
3	Female	23	Charcoal Trader	Camp territory	Camp territory	Providers bring charcoal from Dunamis market upon request	Mainly camp residents, sometimes outsiders from nearby	Mixed
4	Female	24	Food seller (rice, beans, jollof rice, etc.)	Prepares food in the camp, at home	Daughter sells outside the camp (mechanic garages, construction sites, motorbike parking)	Buys raw food products from sellers within the camp	Outsiders	Outside
5	Female	20	Cap Knitter	Camp territory	Dunamis market	Buys threads from people in camp, sourced from northern states	Market buyers who resell at higher prices	Outside

6	Female	20	Tailor	Camp Territory	Camp Territory	Customers bring fabrics; rents a sewing machine owned by another camp resident	Camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
7	Male	24	Fuel Container Seller	Camp entrance	Camp entrance	Buys fuel from a nearby fuel station outside the camp	Camp residents with motorbikes, sometimes outsiders	Mixed
8	Male	19	Motorcycle Taxi Driver	Durumi Area	Durumi Area	Buys fuel at camp entrance; rents motorcycle from outsider via his brother	Outsiders (Durumi residents), sometimes camp residents	Mixed
9	Female	23	Food seller	Camp territory	Camp entrance	Buys rice, beans, etc. from Dunamis Market	Mainly camp residents, sometimes outsiders passing by	Mixed
10	Male	23	Tailor	Camp entrance	Camp entrance	Customers bring fabrics; paid only for labor	Camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
11	Male	20	Provision Seller	Camp entrance	Camp entrance	Buys sugar, milk, soap, water, sodas, etc. from Dunamis Market	Mainly camp residents, sometimes outsiders	Mixed
12	Female	24	Make-up artist	Camp and outside (Area 1, Area 2, Kabusa, Kamajiji, Durumi)	Same place as service	Buys make-up products from Dunamis Market	Camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
13	Male	20	Intern at gas filling station	Gas station at Area 1, Abuja.	Area 1 Gas Station (compensated with food, not money)	-	Outsiders	Outside (non-monetary)
14	Male	21	Motorbike Mechanic	Camp entrance	Camp entrance	When needed, buys motorbike parts from Mararaba Market	Camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
15	Male	20	Auto Mechanic	Durumi area	Durumi area	Supervisor provides supplies; customers pay the supervisor,	Outsiders	Outside

						who gives him an allowance		
16	Male	22	Motorbike Mechanic	Durumi area	Durumi area	Supervisor provides supplies; customers pay the supervisor, who gives him an allowance	Outsiders	Outside
17	Male	19	Farmer & Motorcycle Taxi Driver	Farming in Keffi (May–Dec), Motorcycle taxi in Durumi (Jan–May)	Keffi Market (farming), Durumi area (taxi)	Buys pesticides and farming supplies from Keffi Market, gets fuel in Durumi	Outsiders (farming) & both (taxi)	Outside (farming), Mixed (taxi)
18	Male	21	Provision seller	Camp entrance	Camp entrance	Buys sugar, sodas, bread, milk, bottles of water, sweet biscuits, spaghetti, etc. from Dunamis Market; uses motorcycle taxis for transport	Camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
19	Female	24	Food Seller (Fried Groundnuts & Soya Bean Cake)	Camp territory	Camp territory	Buys supplies from Dunamis market; travels to market via motorbike taxi	Camp residents	Camp
20	Male	20	Car & Motorcycle Washer	Camp entrance	Camp entrance	Uses water storage at camp entrance	Camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
21	Male	21	Tailor & Labor work (carrying blocks)	Camp Territory (tailoring); Outside the camp (labor work)	Camp Territory (tailoring); Outside the camp (labor work)	Sewing machine and Fabrics provided by his mentor or brought by customers	IDP residents (who resell to markets outside the camp); Employers in construction sites	Camp (Tailoring); Outside (Labor work)

22	Male	21	Auto mechanic	Durumi area	Durumi area	supplies are used from the auto mechanic place, where he works	Outsiders, mainly Durumi residents	Outside
23	Male	21	Furniture Repairer	Garki 1 (outside the camp)	Garki 1 (outside the camp)	His boss provides supplies (wood, tools, etc.).	Outsiders	Outside (works for a boss who pays him allowance twice a week; customer payments go to the boss)
24	Male	20	Farmer & Motorcycle Washer	Farming: Masaka; Washing: Camp entrance	Farming: Masaka; Washing: Camp entrance	Farming: Works on corn, beniseed; employers provide supplies needed. Washing: Pays 200 naira to chairman for water access.	Farming: Employers provide shelter, food, and pay at the end of the season. Washing: mainly outsiders (IDPs mainly do not use his service).	Farming: Outside; Washing: Mixed
25	Male	19	Car washer	Camp entrance	Camp entrance	Works under the chairman, does not pay for water use.	Outsiders	Camp (Gives all customer payments to chairman, receives a daily allowance from chairman, not from the customers)
26	Female	23	Provision Seller (sells spaghetti, sodas, sweets, etc.)	Home (also a shop); camp territory	Home (also a shop); camp territory	Buys products from Garki Market; her husband (motorcycle driver) takes her to Area 1, from where she takes public transport to the market.	Mainly motorcycle riders and passersby (camp residents & outsiders).	Both
27	Female	22	Cap Knitter & Dish Washer	Camp territory (for both activities)	Camp territory (for both activities)	Asks people coming from northern Nigeria to buy robes for knitting; pays them upon delivery	NGO representatives, outsiders for cap knitting; camp resident (her neighbor) for dishwashing	Outside for cap knitting, Camp for dishwashing
28	Female	19	Food Seller (Spaghetti, Beans Cake, Rice)	Camp territory	Near garages for motorcycles, slightly far from camp entrance	Buys products from Garki Market. Travels via motorcycle taxi to Area 1, then takes Keke Napep	Mainly outsiders, sometimes camp residents	Mixed

						to Garki Market		
29	Male	20	Farmer & cloth washer	Nasarawa state (farmer) / Camp entrance (cloth washer)	Nasarawa state (farmer) / Camp entrance (cloth washer)	Farming: Rice, beans, corn. Using own supplies + employer provides some supplies; he either rents the land or works under somebody owning the land. Cloth washing: Buys soaps and supplies from camp provision sellers + Pays money to the chairman to use the water	Farming: Outsiders (sells in Nasarawa markets, some products for own consumption); Cloth washing: Camp residents and outsiders	Farming: Outside Cloth washing: Mixed
30	Female	20	Food seller (Rice Cake) & Make-up Products Seller	Camp entrance	Camp entrance	Rice cake: Buys products at Dunamis Market. Make-up: Orders products from Kano State through personal contact (cheaper price)	Camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
31	Female	20	Petty Trader (Vegetables)	Camp entrance	Camp entrance	Buys vegetables from Garki Market. Uses Motorcycle Taxi to Area 1 Under the Bridge, then Keke Napep to Garki Market	Mainly camp residents, very rarely outsiders	Mainly Camp
32	Female	23	Hijab seller	Camp territory & Customer Locations (Outside Camp)	Camp territory & Customer Locations (Outside Camp)	Buys fabric at Area 1 Market, tailors at area 1 market Market sew the hijabs. Uses	Camp residents and customers outside the camp who contact her for delivery	Mixed

						Motorcycle Taxi		
33	Female	22	Cap knitter	Camp territory	Camp territory	Buys knitting materials from sellers who bring the materials from Maiduguri	Another camp resident (reseller)	Camp
34	Female	22	Cap knitter	Camp territory	Durumi area through hawking. Sometimes inside the camp	Buys knitting materials from sellers who bring the materials from Maiduguri	outside camp residents	Outside
35	Female	22	Cap knitter	Camp territory	Dei-Dei market	Buys knitting materials from sellers who bring the materials from Maiduguri. To get to the market, she takes a motorcycle taxi to Area 1 Under the Bridge and from there, she takes Keke Napep to Dei-Dei market.	Middlemen at Dei-Dei market	Outside
36	Female	24	Cap knitter & Zobo juice seller	Camp territory (for both activities)	Cap knitting: Kabusa market Juice selling: Camp territory and Durumi area through hawking by her son	Buys knitting materials from sellers who bring the materials from Maiduguri. To get to the market, she takes a motorcycle taxi to Area 1 Under the Bridge and from there, she takes Keke Napep to Kabusa market. For the juice, she gets the supplies and	Middlemen in Kabusa market (Caps), Camp residents and outsiders (Juice)	Camp knitting: outside; Juice selling: both

						products from Dunamis market.		
37	Female	24	Cap knitter	Camp territory	Kabusa market & Camp territory and nearby areas	Buys knitting materials from sellers who bring the materials from Maiduguri. To get to the market, she takes a motorcycle taxi to Area 1 Under the Bridge and from there, she takes Keke Napep to Kabusa market.	Middlemen in Kabusa market. Outsiders and sometimes insiders	mixed
38	Female	24	Tailor	Camp territory	Camp territory	Has a sewing machine. Customers bring their own fabric.	Both – camp residents and outsiders (outsiders through personal networks)	Mixed
39	Female	24	Charcoal seller	Camp territory and nearby outside areas	Camp territory and nearby outside areas	Buys charcoal in Area 1 market	Both – camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
40	Female	21	Lalle Henna Artist	Camp territory and outside the camp	Camp territory and outside the camp	Gets henna materials from Dunamis Market; walks to the market or takes motorcycle taxis	Both camp residents and people outside the camp. Uses WhatsApp platform chats to advertise her work by posting pictures and attracting customers.	Mixed
41	Female	18	Cooked and raw food seller (spaghetti, beans, rice, corn)	Camp territory (near the road)	Camp territory (near the road)	Gets products from Kabusa or Wuse Market; takes motorcycle taxi to Area 1 Under the Bridge, then Keke Napep to the markets	Mainly passersby, both camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
42	Male	20	Clothes Washer	Camp entrance	Camp entrance	Pays the chairman to get access to water	Both camp residents and people from outside nearby the camp. Outsiders know about his business and bring their clothes for washing.	Mixed

43	Female	20	Charcoal seller	Camp territory	Camp territory	Buys charcoal from Wuse Market; takes motorcycle taxi to Gudu Junction, then Keke Napep to the market	Mainly camp residents, occasionally nearby outsiders	Mixed
44	Female	18	Cap Knitter, Lalle Henna Artist, Hair Braider	Camp territory & customers place (Lalle henna artist)	Camp territory & customers place (Lalle henna artist)	Cap knitting materials from Maiduguri via POS transfer; Lalle henna supplies from another camp resident; Hair braiding supplies from Durumi Market (reached by motorcycle taxi)	Cap Knitting – Outsiders (Camp visitor and customers sourced through a male motorcycle driver relatives). Lalle Henna – Both camp residents & outsiders (sourced through Facebook/WhatsApp); Hair Braiding – Camp residents	Cap knitting – Outside; Lalle henna – Mixed; Hair braiding – Camp.
45	Female	24	Cap knitter	Camp territory	Outside the camp (Durumi area)	materials are sent from people from Maiduguri via POS transfer	Outsiders (sold through hawking)	Outside
46	Female	18	Cap Knitter, food seller (Groundnuts Paste Seller)	Camp territory (for both activities)	Cap knitting – sells in Kabusa market (via her sister who knows a middlemen there); Groundnuts Paste – Camp territory & Outside	She gets cap knitting materials from another camp resident; Groundnuts from Dunamis Market (reached by motorcycle taxi)	Cap knitting – middlemen in kabusa market (reached via her sister). Groundnuts Paste Selling – Camp residents & outsiders (through hawking).	Cap knitting – outside; Groundnuts Paste Selling – Mixed.
47	Female	18	Cap Knitter, food seller (Fried Groundnuts Seller)	Camp territory (for both activities)	Cap knitting – camp territory (via other camp residents who sell the caps outside); Fried Groundnuts – Camp & Outside	Cap knitting materials from another camp resident; Groundnuts bought in Dunamis Market (she gets there using motorcycle taxis)	Cap Knitting – Camp residents (intermediaries); Fried Groundnuts – Camp residents & outsiders (through hawking)	Cap Knitting - Camp Fried Groundnuts selling - Mixed
48	Female	19	Food seller (Fried groundnuts seller)	Camp territory	Camp territory	Buys raw groundnuts from Wuse Market; uses	Mainly camp residents	Camp

						motorbike taxis to Gudu Junction, then takes public transportation to Wuse Market		
49	Female	19	Hair Braider	Camp territory	Camp territory	Gets materials and supplies from other camp residents who are also involved in the same business	Camp residents	Camp
50	Female	19	Tailor	Camp territory	Camp territory	Gets sewing machine from another camp resident (profit-sharing arrangement); buys fabrics from Area 1 Market (uses motorcycle taxis or Keke Napep a depending on police presence); sometimes customers bring their own fabrics	Mainly camp residents, sometimes outsiders who know her	Mixed
51	Female	18	Food seller (cooked)	Camp territory	Near camp entrance	Buys corn, rice, spaghetti, beans, biski from Garki Market. She takes a motorcycle taxi to Area 1, under bridge, and then Keke Napep public transport to Garki Market.	Both camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
52	Female	20	Food seller (Snack seller: doughnuts, chin chin)	Cooks in the camp	Camp territory	Buys products from Dunamis Market. She takes motorcycle taxis to get there.	Camp residents	Camp

53	Male	21	Auto mechanic	Camp territory (near camp entrance)	Camp territory (near camp entrance)	Buys materials from Dunamis Market. He takes motorcycle taxis to get there	People from outside the camp (through his boss)	Outside (via intermediary - his boss)
54	Female	19	Food Seller (Spaghetti, Beans, Rice)	Camp territory	Camp territory	Buys raw products from other camp residents who sell raw food items	Camp residents	Camp
55	Female	20	petty trading (Corn Flour Seller)	Camp territory	Camp territory	Buys corn flour from Kabusa market. Takes motorbike taxis to Gudu Junction, then public transport to the market	Camp residents	Camp
56	Female	18	Food seller (Fried Groundnuts Seller)	Camp territory – near entrance	Camp territory – near entrance	Buys raw groundnuts from another camp resident	Camp residents, Outside visitors (e.g., car repair customers)	Mixed
57	Female	21	Petty trading (Dough Seller. dough made with dough roller machine)	Camp territory	Camp territory	Rents dough roller machine from outside contact. Buys flour from another camp resident	Camp residents (mainly food sellers)	Camp
58	Male	20	Auto Mechanic	Camp territory	Camp territory	Buys supplies from Gudu market. Uses motorcycle taxis to get there	Outside residents who know him and bring cars to the camp	Outside
59	Male	23	Motorcycle Taxi Driver	Durumi area	Durumi area	Buys fuel from filling stations in Durumi	Camp residents and people from outside	Mixed
60	Male	24	Drinks Seller	Camp entrance	Camp entrance	Buys drinks at Durumi Market, uses motorcycle taxis	Camp residents and people from outside	Mixed
61	Female	23	Printing Shop Worker	Gudu District	Gudu District	Gets supplies from the store; Got the job through social network; uses motorcycle taxi and Keke	Outsiders	Outside – Paid monthly by her boss (non-camp resident)

						Napep for transport		
62	Female	20	Waitress in the restaurant	Gudu District	Gudu District	Got the job through social network; uses motorcycle taxi and Keke Napep for transport	Outsiders	Outside – Paid weekly by her boss (non-camp resident)
63	Male	22	Medicine Seller	Near camp entrance	Near camp entrance	Buys medicine from Area 1 through an acquaintance; uses motorcycle taxi for transport	Camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
64	Female	24	Food seller	Camp territory	Area 1 Under Bridge territory	Materials and products provided by her boss	People outside the camp	Camp - her boss, a camp resident, collects the payments and then pays her.
65	Male	22	Tailor	Near camp entrance	Near camp entrance	Gets fabric from an acquaintance in Kano State, pays through POS; sometimes customers bring their own fabric	Camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
66	Male	20	Motorcycle Taxi Driver	operates up to the Area 1 Underbridge.	up to the Area 1 Underbridge.	Uses family-owned motorcycle bought by his older brother	Camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
67	Male	20	Tailor	Near the camp entrance	Near the camp entrance	Works under his boss (IDP), who provides materials from customers	Mainly camp residents, sometimes outsiders	Camp – Paid for labor by his boss (IDP)
68	Male	18	Phone Repairer	Near the camp entrance	Near the camp entrance	Works under his boss, who gets repair materials from Wuse Market	Camp residents and outsiders	Camp – Paid by his boss (IDP)
69	Male	22	Phone Repairer	Near the camp entrance	Near the camp entrance	Works under his boss, who gets repair materials from Wuse Market	Camp residents and outsiders	Camp – Paid by his boss (Colleague of 18-year-old male)
70	Male	24	Phone Accessories Seller	Camp entrance	Camp entrance	Buys accessories from Banex	Camp residents and outsiders	Mixed

						Plaza, travels via motorcycle taxi and public transport		
71	Male	19	Provision Seller	Camp entrance	Camp entrance	Works under his boss (camp resident), who provides goods for the small store.	Camp residents and outsiders	Camp – Paid in food and clothes by his boss
72	Male	21	Phone Accessories Seller	Outside the camp (nearby area, through hawking)	Outside the camp (nearby area, through hawking)	Buys phone cases from Area 1 shopping complex, walks there	Camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
73	Male	23	Medicine Seller	Near the camp entrance	Near the camp entrance	Buys medicine from an acquaintance outside the camp	Camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
74	Male	18	Clothes Washer	A bit far from the camp entrance	A bit far from the camp entrance	Buys water from a nearby neighbor living outside the camp	Camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
75	Male	20	Cold Drinks Seller	Near the camp entrance	Near the camp entrance	Buys drinks from Area 1 Market. Has a small store with a fridge.	Camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
76	Male	22	Constructor	Around the camp area	Around the camp area	Gets wooden-based materials from Durumi market	Camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
77	Male	22	Motorcycle taxi driver	operates up to the Area 1 Underbridge.	operates up to the Area 1 Underbridge.	Rents motorcycle from a company named "MASK"	Camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
78	Male	24	Car washer	"AA Rano" car wash	"AA Rano" car wash	Materials are provided at the car wash place	People outside the camp	Outside (He gives part of the money to his boss and keeps the rest)
79	Male	22	Constructor	Around the camp area	Around the camp area	Works under another camp resident who provides materials	Camp residents and outsiders	Camp (Paid by his boss, a camp resident)
80	Male	18	Fuel seller	Near the camp entrance	Near the camp entrance	Buys fuel from Gudu district filling station	Mainly camp residents (motorcycle taxi riders)	Mainly camp

81	Male	21	Medicine seller	On the road towards the camp entrance	On the road towards the camp entrance	Buys medicine from Garki Market; adjusts transport based on police presence	Both camp residents and outsiders	Mixed – He and his brother share earnings from both camp residents and outside customers.
82	Male	24	Medicine seller	On the road towards the camp entrance	On the road towards the camp entrance	Buys medicine from Garki Market; built his own small store with a hired constructor	Both camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
83	Male	19	Hot Drinks Seller	On the road towards the camp entrance	On the road towards the camp entrance	Buys products from Dunamis Market; walks there; owns a gas cylinder; built shop with a hired constructor	Both camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
84	Male	18	Clothes Washer	Near Dunamis Market	Near Dunamis Market	Buys water from sellers with storage tanks at Dunamis Market; walks from the camp to the workplace.	Outsiders (People around Dunamis Market)	Mixed
85	Male	21	Vulcanizer	On the road towards the camp entrance	On the road towards the camp entrance	Owns a vulcanizing air compressor for tire maintenance	Both camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
86	Male	18	Car & Motorcycle Washer	On the road towards the camp entrance	On the road towards the camp entrance	Buys water from storage tank sellers in nearby areas; shares a large water tank with a colleague but works independently	Both camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
87	Male	19	Car & Motorcycle Washer	On the road towards the camp entrance	On the road towards the camp entrance	Buys water from storage tank sellers in nearby areas; shares a large water tank with a colleague but works independently	Both camp residents and outsiders	Mixed

88	Male	18	Food seller	On the road towards the camp entrance	On the road towards the camp entrance	Buys charcoal and raw products from Dunamis Market	Both camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
89	Male	19	Barber	On the road towards the camp entrance	On the road towards the camp entrance	Owens a clipper for cutting hair	Both camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
90	Male	18	Medicine seller	On the road towards the camp entrance	On the road towards the camp entrance	Buys medicine from a seller in Garki Market; travels via motorcycle taxi to Area 1, then takes public transport (Keke Napep) to the market; built shop with a hired constructor	Both camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
91	Male	19	Provision seller	On the road towards the camp entrance	On the road towards the camp entrance	Buys products from Dunamis Market	Both camp residents and outsiders	Mixed
92	Female	24	Charcoal seller	Camp territory	Camp territory	Buys charcoal from Dunamis Market, transported by motorcycle taxi	Camp residents	Camp
93	Female	23	Tailor	Camp territory	Camp territory	Customers bring their own fabrics; she provides labor	Camp residents	Camp
94	Female	23	Food seller	Camp territory	Area 1 under bridge territory	Supplies (products, pots, pans) belong to her colleague, who was an IDP but left the camp after marriage.	People outside the camp	Outside - her colleague, ex camp resident, collects the payments and then pays her.
95	Female	20	Food seller	Camp territory	Dunamis market	Supplies provided by an older IDP colleague who manages the business	People outside the camp	Camp - her colleague, a camp resident, collects the payments and then pays her.

Appendix 6 - Photographs of the Durumi IDP camp



Figure 1: Entrance sign of the Durumi IDP Camp, Abuja.
Source: Photo by the author (2025).



Figure 2: Inside view of the Durumi IDP Camp.
Source: Photo by the author (2025).



Figure 3: Inside view of the Durumi IDP Camp.
Source: Photo by the author (2025).



Figure 4: Inside view of the Durumi IDP Camp.
Source: Photo by the author (2025).



Figure 5: Access road leading to the Durumi IDP Camp.
Source: Photo by the author (2025).



Figure 6: Access road leading to the Durumi IDP Camp.
Source: Photo by the author (2025).



Figure 7: Youth-run provision shop near the entrance of Durumi IDP Camp. Source: Photo by the author (2025).



Figure 8: Youth-run cold drink shop near the entrance of Durumi IDP Camp. Source: Photo by the author (2025).



Figure 9: Youth-run medication shop near the entrance of Durumi IDP Camp. Source: Photo by the author (2025).



Figure 10: Youth-run phone repair shop near the entrance of Durumi IDP Camp. Source: Photo by the author (2025).



Figure 11: Youth-run tailoring shop near the entrance of Durumi IDP Camp. Source: Photo by the author (2025).



Figure 12: Youth-run provision shop near the entrance of Durumi IDP Camp. Source: Photo by the author (2025).