

Challenges facing return and Integration of Internally Displaced Persons in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya

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Abstract

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) resulting from 2007/2008 Post-Election Violence are found in various parts of Kenya. There are those who are still in satellite camps, those who returned back to their homes, those who relocated to other places, and those who are living with relatives or in urban areas. The purpose of this study was to investigate the challenges facing the return, integration and measure to be taken to help returned IDPs in Uasin Gishu County of Kenya. The study sought to establish the level of involvement of IDPs in planning their return, evaluate the challenges IDPs face on return and finally determine the extent of integration and measures to be taken to help returned IDPs. Descriptive cross-sectional survey research design was employed in this study. Multi-stage sampling techniques were used to sample 349 returned IDPs households. Representatives from Humanitarian organizations were purposively sampled. The data for the study was collected using questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). Secondary data was obtained from published and unpublished documents, government records and newspapers. Quantitative data collected in the field was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Qualitative data from FGDs and in depth interviews were analyzed qualitatively. The study found out that the IDPs were less consulted in the best way possible to manage their needs during the resettlement process and they didn't initiate their return home either. The study also found out that the main challenge faced by the returned IDPs was acute shortage of food and water. There was low integration of returned Internally Displaced Persons due to suspicions between returnees and host communities. The study recommended that trauma healing was still needed to enable reconciliation to take place. The study further recommended that the government should speed up the process of formulating a sustainable IDP resettlement policy.