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An Analysis of the Humanitarian Network of Assistance Coordination in Improving Internally Displaced Persons' Situation in Gulu District: A Case Study of Internally Displaced Persons in Koch Ongako Sub-county.

The purpose of the study was to examine how well-coordinated humanitarian network assistance contributed to the improvement of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) situation in Koch Ongako sub-county, Gulu district, with the operating environment as the intervening variable.

The study was guided by four research objectives, that is, to find out whether the humanitarian network assistance coordination had improved the provision of education services to the IDPs in Koch Ongako sub-county. Secondly, to find out the impact of humanitarian network assistance coordination on the provision of agriculture services in Koch-Ongako sub-county. Thirdly, to find out whether the humanitarian network assistance coordination has improved the provision of health services to IDPs in Koch-Ongako sub-county. Lastly, to assess the combined impact of humanitarian network assistance coordination and the operating environment on the IDPs' situation in Koch Ongako sub-county. The study reviewed various literature on works that had been done and written by scholars and researchers, locally and internationally, on the thematic areas of the study. It presents the review of related works on humanitarian network of assistance coordination and IDPs' situation in Koch Ongako sub-county, Gulu district. It also reviewed literature on the provision of health, education and agriculture-support services as well as on the operating environment of the humanitarian agencies. Using cross-sectional survey research design, 99 respondents of different categories were sampled from a population of 130 people of Koch Ongako sub-county. A combination of purposive sampling and simple random sampling techniques were employed to select the 99 respondents. Of these, 93 responded by providing the necessary data. This represents a response rate of 93.9%. Questionnaire-based survey and interview guide methods were used for collecting data from the respondents. Both descriptive and inferential statistics (correlation and regression) were used in data analysis and presentations. It was found that a strong positive relationship existed between humanitarian network assistance coordination and each of the themes of the IDPs' situations (education, health and agriculture). It was also found that a combination of humanitarian network assistance coordination and operating environment accounted for up to 64.1% of the variation in IDPs situations. The study recommends that, there is a high need for these humanitarian agencies to coordinate their activities in the areas of; needs assessment, sharing of baseline survey information, organising joint workshops for their staff and volunteers or even forming a district platform committee, joint advocacy campaign for community awareness, joint fund raising campaign from donors, joint monitoring and evaluation on the impact of their programme, stock taking of lessons learnt and sharing of information. It is also recommended that, the sub-county authorities need to improve on the working environment for the humanitarian agencies. This could be achieved through allowing humanitarian agencies free access to the IDPs; ensuring the safety and security of staff, volunteers and property of humanitarian agencies; putting in place bylaws which favour the operation of humanitarian agencies; participating and endorsing the lobbying tools (strategic plan documents) of humanitarian agencies for funding.

Key Words: Humanitarian Network, Coordination, Displaced Persons' Situation, Gulu District