

2023

# PROJECT IMPACT REPORT

Exploring the Impact of Conflict on Livelihoods of IDPs  
Through the Use of Participatory Theatre



# Introduction



This report presents the findings and recommendations of an impact assessment of a participatory drama workshop conducted for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in New Kuchingoro and Durumi IDP Camps by Playback Nigeria. 18 selected persons (10 women and 8 men) from the 2 IDP camps participated in storytelling, drama creation, and public performances.

The workshop was part of a research network project funded by the AHRC, which aimed to explore how the innovative combination of participatory drama and risk management can contribute to the inclusive development of IDPs' livelihood recovery measures.

Participants were selected from two IDP camps in the Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, and trained by a team of experienced Applied Drama trainers from Playback Nigeria. The training sessions focused on the development of communication and leadership skills, as well as the ability to identify and assess the impact of conflict on the livelihood of the targeted population.

The impact assessment, which was conducted using reflective process and qualitative approach, revealed that the drama workshop had a significant positive impact on the participants' ability to manage conflict, develop community based strategies to addressing conflicts and communicate effectively. Participants reported feeling more confident in their ability to identify and respond to conflicts, and were able to develop a risk management strategy that was tailored to their specific needs.

Based on these findings, we recommend that similar participatory drama workshops be conducted in other IDP camps across Nigeria. The report also recommends that the government and other stakeholders invest in the development of participatory drama programs as a means of promoting inclusive development and livelihood recovery measures for IDPs.

# Relevance of the Project

Overall, the project addressed how conflicts affects the livelihood of communities using an innovative, inclusive, and multidisciplinary approach. It not only achieved to improve the conditions of IDPs but also contributed to the broader goals of sustainable development and peace in the following ways:

## 1. Addressing IDP Challenges

It aimed to develop innovative solutions for the challenges faced by Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Nigeria. These individuals have been forced to leave their homes but remain within their country's borders, often living in extreme poverty and facing social exclusion.

## 2. Inclusive Development

The project used participatory drama and risk management to contribute to the inclusive development of livelihood recovery measures for IDPs. This approach ensured that the measures developed are culturally informed and consider the specific needs and contexts of the IDPs.

## 3. Knowledge Exchange

The project engage with local cultures, histories, and communities to understand conflict dynamics and the role of arts in improving visibility to the IDP plights.

## 4. Storytelling and Drama

The project explored the tradition of storytelling and used participatory drama performances to capture lived experiences, conduct livelihood studies, provide visibility to vulnerable IDPs, and develop a pathway to sustainable livelihoods.

## 5. Policy Development

The outputs from the participatory drama performances was combined in a risk management framework. A high-level workshop with policymakers was held to explore capacities for the development of livelihood recovery measures.

# Methodology

The workshop used various tools and activities to facilitate the interaction and dialogue among the participants, such as:

- Applied Drama Games and Warm-ups
- Story circle
- Appreciative Enquiry
- Pair sharing
- Reflection



The impact assessment was conducted using reflection sessions and qualitative data collection and analysis approach. The data sources included:

- Observation notes
- Focus group discussions
- Participants' artifacts (letters, poems, drawings, songs, etc.)

## Project Impact

The workshop had positive impacts on the participants' livelihood capabilities, self-reliance, and well-being, as evidenced by the following results:

The participants reported an increase in their knowledge, skills, and confidence to pursue their livelihood goals, such as starting a business, accessing education, or finding employment.

They further expressed a greater sense of empowerment, and hope for the future, as they were able to share their stories, voice their concerns, and co-create solutions with their peers and stakeholders.

An increased improvement in their mental and emotional health was noted, as they were able to cope with trauma, stress, and isolation, and build trust, solidarity, and resilience with their fellow IDPs

The workshop also had positive impacts on the stakeholders and the wider community, as evidenced by the following results:

The stakeholders gained a deeper understanding of the IDPs' situation, needs, and aspirations, and recognized the value of participatory drama and risk management as innovative and inclusive approaches to IDP policy development and management.

The wider community was exposed to the IDPs' stories, challenges, and potentials, and developed a more empathetic, respectful, and supportive attitude towards them, as well as a more critical and constructive dialogue on the issues of conflict, displacement, and development.



## Lessons Learnt

01

### Enhancing sense of belonging and trust

Participatory theatre workshops create a safe and supportive space for the participants to express their emotions and opinions.

02

### Increasing awareness and knowledge

Workshops designed to expose IDPs to new information and perspectives about the causes and effects of conflicts and displacement, as well as the existing and potential livelihood opportunities are important and should be held regularly.

03

### Empowerment to take action

Participatory workshops demonstrated an increase in confidence and motivation to co-design the process of livelihood recovery measures. This also stirred the interest and willingness to collaborate with other stakeholders, such as researchers, policymakers, and service providers.

# Recommendations

Based on the assessment findings, the following recommendations are proposed to sustain and enhance the impacts of the workshop and the project:

01

## Continued Collaboration

Continue the collaboration and communication among the workshop participants, the research network, and the stakeholders, and to monitor and evaluate the progress and outcomes of the workshop and the project.

02

## More outreach

To scale up and replicate the workshop and the project in other IDP camps and contexts, and to involve more IDPs, stakeholders, and partners in the participatory drama and risk management activities and outputs.

03

## Increase awareness

To disseminate and share the workshop and the project findings, outputs, and impacts with relevant audiences, such as policymakers, practitioners, researchers, and the public, through various channels, such as publications, conferences, media, and social media.

# Conclusion



The workshop was a tremendous success, accomplishing its objectives of mobilizing, engaging, and fostering trust among the participants.

Additionally, it provided an opportunity for reflection on conflicts and livelihoods, allowing for a positive impact on the well-being, learning, and empowerment of those involved.

Building upon this strong foundation, the co-design process will now move forward, with a more detailed and iterative engagement with participants and other stakeholders.



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*We thank you for your continued support  
in our efforts to transform lives.*

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## CONTACT

**Playback Nigeria**  
Guzape, FCT  
+234 907 280 8091

[www.playbacknigeria.com](http://www.playbacknigeria.com)  
[office@playbacknigeria.com](mailto:office@playbacknigeria.com)