

## Humanitarianism as the New Face of Religious Practice in Nigeria

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**Abstract :** The world is no more innocent as previously, as it gets more and more engulfed in both man-made and natural disasters and the call for religious intervention becomes intrinsically louder to the extent that any religious inclination that does not devolve into societal or humanitarian adventures makes no meaning. Issues such as wars, conflicts of different dimensions, natural and man made discomforts in form of environmental disturbances have thrown new challenges hitherto unknown to the doorsteps of religious groups especially faith based organizations. In the last two decades, the above speaks volumes in Nigeria such that Chinua Achebe's "things fallen apart" is real today all over Nigeria. An estimated five million people live in internally displaced camps all over the country as a consequence of various forms of social unrest as well as natural disasters. These incidences have brought to the fore the significance of religion in societal affairs as many groups who through their interventions have often shown to be the hope of the people. The crux of this paper is to examine the role of religion in not only making people to cope with difficult situations they find themselves in, but also giving hope to the many who otherwise are feeling despondent and at the edge of life. Many religious groups have well developed strategies of interventions in various humanitarian situations. Thus, this paper assesses efforts of religions such as christianity, Islam and the indigenous African religion in this respect. It is discovered that the most potent and effective means of attending to humanitarian crisis today in Nigeria is through the various religious and cultural organizations as governments at various levels have lost credibility in such exercises.

**Keywords :** humanitarianism, religion, practice, nigeria

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