

A CHILD PROTECTION AND EDUCATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT IN SELECT COMMUNITIES OF BORNO AND ADAMAWA STATE



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

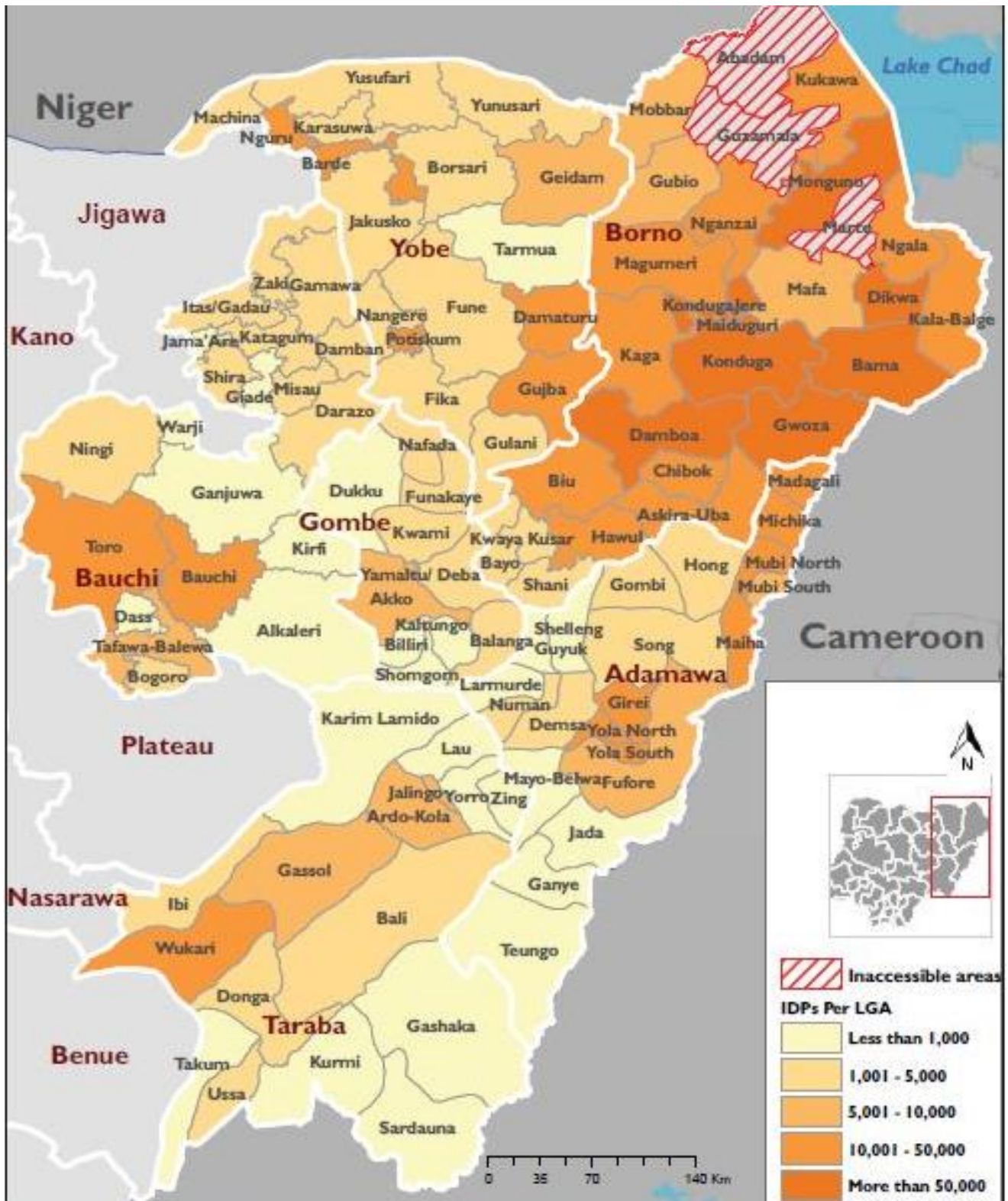
CB	Community based
CCCM	Camp Coordination and Camp Management
CFS	Child Friendly Spaces
CJTF	Civilian Joint Task Force
CMR	Clinical Management of Rape
CP	Child Protection
CPWG	Child Protection Working Group
DO	Direct Observation
FCT	Federal Capital Territory
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HH	Household
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IYCF	Infant and Young Child Feeding
KII	Key Informant Interview
LGA	Local Government Areas
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MUAC	Mid Upper Arm Circumference
NAPTIP	National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons
NCE	Nigeria Certificate in Education
NFI	Non-Food Items
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSWG	Nutrition Sector Working Group
PBIED	Person-Borne Improvised Explosive Devices
PSS	Psychosocial support
UASC	Unaccompanied and separated children
UBE	Universal Basic Education
UBEC	Universal Basic Education Commission

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Child Protection and Education Needs Assessment was led by Alexandra Shaphren under the guidance of Fabian Böckler and with substantial support from researchers who conducted interviews on behalf of Plan International Nigeria. A special thank you to the Plan International Nigeria Emergency Response teams in Borno and Adamawa State and individuals from the surge roster who supported the desk review, development of tools and methodology, and analysis of findings from both within Nigeria and remotely.

Plan International Nigeria is grateful to the Lake Chad Programme Unit, the Plan International Headquarters and National Offices who supported this initiative.

Map of Affected States with Displacement Figures
(International Organization for Migration, June 2017)



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the results of primary data collected in July–August 2017 by Plan International Nigeria and is supplemented by available secondary data on the humanitarian situation in Northeast Nigeria. The following report highlights the priority humanitarian needs in the sectors of Child Protection and Education and gathered information on the Nutrition and Economic needs of children, youth and their families to better inform the design of comprehensive multi-sector programmes that respond to the complexity of the crisis in Northeast Nigeria. Particular attention was paid to understanding the differences in risks faced by boys and girls in order to better respond to the unique needs of girls affected by the crisis.

The assessment was conducted in select communities of Borno (Maiduguri, Jere, Mafa, Kaga, Gwoza, Monguno, Askira/Uba) and Adamawa (Mubi North, Mubi South, Hong, and Michika). This report focuses on the identification and analysis of needs in these communities and is not intended to measure the level of response or the impacts of the crisis in other affected North-eastern States. It is also important to note that primary data was collected through purposive sampling in communities where Plan International currently operates, and cannot be generalized to the populations of Borno or Adamawa at large.

Country Profile

Nigeria is Africa's most populous country with a population of over 186 million people (Central Intelligence Agency, 2017). Located in West Africa, Nigeria is 923,768 square km (more than twice the size of California) and is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean in the South, the Republic of Benin on its West, the Cameroon Republic on its East, and by Niger and Chad Republics in the North.

Nigeria has over 250 ethnic groups and over 500 languages. English is the official language of Nigeria – followed by Hausa (most commonly spoken in the Northeast region), Yoruba, Igbo, and Fulani. Nigerians practice majority Muslim (50 per cent) and Christian (40 per cent) faiths, however, a number of Nigerians practice the African Traditional Religion (10 per cent) (Central Intelligence Agency, 2017).

The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria was established in 1999 and provides an overall framework for policy making and power relations between the Federal and State level governments. The Constitution is complex and provides each level of government with autonomous policy, resource management, and governance structures (including a State level parliament). The government is composed of a mixed legal system of English common law and Islamic law (in the 12 Northern States), and traditional law. President Major General Muhammadu Buhari and Vice President Oluyemi Osinbajo were elected in May 2015 as the head of government. According to the Constitution, Presidents may serve two terms of 4 years to be decided by popular vote election. In addition to the head of government, the Federal Executive Council is appointed by the President. The National Assembly consists of 109 seats in the Senate and 360 in the house – elected by simple majority vote on 4 year terms. The Judicial branch is made up of the following: Supreme Court (15 justices plus the chief justice), Court of Appeal, Federal High Court, High Court of the FECT, Sharia Court of Appeal, Customary Court of Appeal, and state court systems (Central Intelligence Agency, 2017).

Administratively, Nigeria is divided into six geopolitical zones: South South, South East, South West, North East, North West, North Central, and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The 36 States across these zones are further broken down into 774 Local Government Areas (LGAs). Geographical entities are further broken down at the community level - which have been defined by both the central government categorisation and a traditional breakdown based on ethnicity and local divisions (ACAPS, 2016). As a result, there is often confusion among administrations and humanitarian actors on which communities belong to which LGA, even names of communities can sometimes be up for debate.

In 2015, the oil and gas sector accounted for about 35 per cent of GDP. The non-oil sector has been the main driver of growth, with services contributing 57 per cent, agriculture 21 per cent, and manufacturing 9 per cent (ACAPS, 2016). Inflation in Nigeria averaged 12.11 per cent in 2016 – with the Central Bank refusing to adjust the exchange rate. Therefore, most exchange of currency is conducted on the black market.

Nigeria is ranked 85th on the Climate Risk Index 2015 and is expected to experience annual temperature increase – estimated to affect 621,000 people (S. Kreft, 2014). Drought in the North of Nigeria is common, with flooding during the rainy season of May-September.

The Northeast region of Nigeria (the region most affected by the Boko Haram insurgency) has experienced chronic under-development where poverty indicators continue to rise – despite overall poverty decrease in every other region in the country (National Population Commission (NPC) [Nigeria] and ICF International , 2013).

Region	Literacy Rate	Male Unemployment (age 14-49)	Antenatal Care	Child Mortality (under 5 per 100,000)
Northeast	39.7 %	6.5	49.3 %	160
National	78.1 %	3.3	65.7 %	126

Significant gender gaps are still present in Nigeria. Adherence to Islamic and customary law reinforce practices that can disadvantage women, restricting access to education and excluding them from economic and political participation (ACAPS, 2016). In 2008, Nigeria had the highest number of Female Genital Mutilation cases in the world. While the practice was later outlawed in 2015, traditional harmful practices often are exacerbated by crisis. In addition, women are not equally entitled to inheritance, may lack freedom of movement, and do not hold equal rights in marriage.

Emergency Profile

Since 2009, the Lake Chad Basin region has been ravaged by violence and destruction by Islamist terrorist group, Boko Haram. In May 2013, as a result of increasingly sophisticated attacks (namely the 2010 prison break, suicide bombings, and the 2011 bombing of the United National building in Abuja) and the group's control of over half of Borno State's LGAs - then President Goodluck Jonathan declared a State of Emergency in the States of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa (Sahara Reporters, 2013). Now in its eighth year, the crisis shows no sign of abating and is adding to the long history of marginalization and chronic under-development as well as high rates of poverty, illiteracy and unemployment. Borno, Adamawa and Yobe States are the most affected by the conflict, related military counter operations, and mass displacement – as well as mass internal displacement within each state, Bauchi, Gombe and Taraba also host many of the displaced (International Organization for Migration, June 2017). Over 26 million people living in Northeast Nigeria have been affected by the crisis – and an estimated 8.5 million are in need of humanitarian assistance (UN OCHA, August 2017). Today more than 1.62 million people are internally displaced (IDPs) across the three states in the Northeast region – 80 per cent of the IDPs living in Borno State, the epicentre of the crisis (UN OCHA, August 2017).

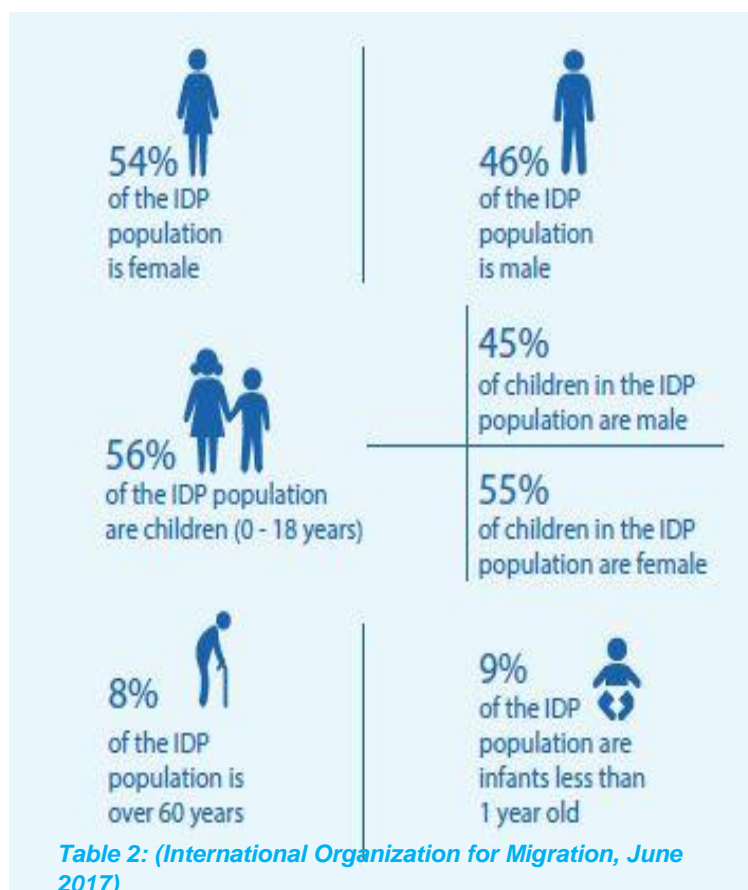
State	Round XVI Total (May 2017)	Round XVII Total (June 2017)	Change
ADAMAWA	143,209	140,875	-2,334 ↓
BAUCHI	56,916	56,359	-557 ↓
BORNO	1,496,995	1,439,940	-57,055 ↓
GOMBE	28,183	27,985	-198 ↓
TARABA	50,259	52,961	+2,702 ↑
YOBE	108,769	107,201	-1,568 ↓
Total	1,884,331	1,825,321	-59,010 ↓

Table 1: Change in IDP figures by state

Nearly 80 per cent of IDPs in the Northeast live in host communities, with under 8 per cent residing in formal or informal camps and settlements. Over 1.2 million Nigerians have sought refuge in neighbouring countries and are just now beginning to return to Nigeria. As of June 2017, 95,174 returnees were documented from neighbouring countries, and displacement data continues to change as individuals displaced within and outside of Nigeria return to their place of origin (International Organization for Migration, June 2017).

Insecurity, leading to lack of humanitarian access to Boko Haram controlled territory has characterized the emergency response in the Northeast. Since January 2016, Nigerian security forces have significantly reduced Boko Haram's control - enabling access to the main towns in all but three LGAs in Borno and all but one LGA in Adamawa. However, access to many areas requires military escort and only in certain areas is access possible beyond the main roads and towns. Although pockets of residents remain in rural locations, most are located in the main cities, which overwhelm public services. It is unknown how many people remain trapped in areas still held by Boko Haram (ACAPS, 2016).

On August 23, 2016 IOM declared Nigeria a Level 3 emergency saying, "Conditions in the region have now deteriorated to a point where it meets the criteria required to activate Level 3 emergency status, the highest level of humanitarian crisis," according to IOM Director General William Lacy Swing (International Organization for Migration, 2016).



Although the government has made significant military gains against the group in recent time, the humanitarian situation is deep and still raging. Boko Haram-related violence continues to cause death, injury, forced displacement, abduction and conflict-related psychological distress (UN OCHA, 2016). Activities of the Boko Haram terrorist group have paralyzed most trade activities, deepened poverty and continue attacks, abductions, and killings threaten peace in the area. Already poor communities have overstretched food, water and basic services to accommodate IDPs. Lack of access to agricultural land and the disruption of markets has led to exhausted household and community resources. As some IDPs return to their communities of origin, they are finding devastation and completely demolished infrastructure, mined roads and agricultural land and homes

and facilities burned. This secondary displacement is further exacerbated by flooding, eviction from IDP camps and forced return from neighbouring countries, cattle rustling, and competition for local resources.

In addition to the above vulnerabilities, the rainy season is expected to bring a resurgence in Boko Haram violence as increased bush cover and limited visibility provides opportunities for the armed group to attack more discreetly than in the dry season.

Access to Goods and Services

There are 2.1 million children affected by the armed conflict, and 1 million (55 per cent) of the displaced population are children (UN OCHA, 2016). Access to goods and services are continuously obstructed by violence of both Boko Haram and counter-insurgency measures by the Nigeria military. In July 2016, a humanitarian food convoy under military escort was attacked by suspected Boko Haram. As of November 2016, 13 LGAs in Borno, five LGAs in Yobe and one LGA in Adamawa were partially accessible through military secured main routes and at LGA headquarters (UN OCHA, 2016). In June 2017, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) was able to access 24 of the 27 LGAs in Borno – three more than in the previous round conducted in May. Abadam, Guzamala and Marte LGAs in Borno and Madagali and parts of Michika LGAs in Adamawa continue to be inaccessible to the humanitarian community (International Organization for Migration, June 2017). Access to LGAs has improved tremendously in the last 1-2 years thanks to counter-insurgency measures conducted by the Nigeria military, Cameroonian and Nigerien counterparts, and the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF). The CJTF is an organized

group of militants that was formed in Maiduguri, Borno State to fight alongside the Nigerian army in an effort to expel Boko Haram fighters from the city. The group is comprised of 26,000 male and female members. Both the Nigerian army and the CJTF have been accused of abuses, including slaughtering men beside a mass grave, diverting food destined for starving families, beating men, and subjecting women and girls to systematic sexual violence in camps (The Economist, 2016). The CJTF enforces the Borno State curfew (6:00 AM – 10:00 PM) and organizes checkpoints to screen all vehicles and pedestrians. IDP sites have reported insecurity and incidents of arrest/detention and restrictions on freedom of movement by Nigerian Army forces who are providing security in camps and camp-like settings (UN OCHA, 2016).

In addition to general insecurity, some households practice the Islamic tenet of Kulle, which prevents women from leaving their home, which impedes their access to humanitarian assistance and to new livelihood opportunities (UN OCHA, 2016). Women struggle to access services due to the following reasons: priority is given to men, lack of sufficient reproductive health medicines, girls and women are not permitted to access services by their families, location of services is not convenient or considered safe for girls/women, and hours of services are not convenient (International Rescue Committee, 2016).

IDPs access water through piping, hand pumps, and water trucking. In both camp and camp-like settings and host communities, water is said to be 70 per cent potable with no more than a 10 minute walk to access. Conditions of toilets are consistently reported as being un-hygienic across camps/camp-like settings and host communities. There are often no separate toilets for males and females, no soap for hand washing, no separate bathing areas and majority of bathrooms/toilets do not lock from the inside (International Organization for Migration, June 2017).

Cash transfer, food distribution and cultivation are the most common sources for obtaining food in camps and camp-like settings - while cultivation is more common among IDPs in host communities. Borno and Adamawa are predominantly sustained by subsistence farming and small scale seasonal dependent agriculture, and as such 66 per cent of IDPs report food as their most unmet need. Households do not have the purchasing power or access to food causing an estimated 55,000 people to be currently experiencing famine-like conditions (IPC Phase 5). The number of people experiencing famine-like conditions is projected to grow to 120,000 people in the lean season June-August 2017 (Famine Early Warning System Network, 2016). Consequently, up to 450,000 children are facing Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) in 2017 and 20 per cent are likely to die without immediate intervention and scale up of service delivery points, especially girls and boys with medical complications (Famine Early Warning System Network, 2016). The majority of camp/camp-like settings and host communities have not received blanket supplementary feeding, distribution of micronutrients, or support to pregnant and lactating women – including counselling on infant and young child feeding practices.

As of June 2017, the majority of IDPs residing in host communities and returnees live in homes without damage (75 per cent). However, 25 per cent continue to live in makeshift shelters, partially burnt or abandoned houses (International Organization for Migration, June 2017). The outcome is worse for IDPs in camps or camp-like settings where 32 per cent of IDPs reside in self-made tents. "In Borno, 36 per cent of IDPs were residing in self-made tents, 31 per cent in tents, 12 per cent in school buildings, 9 per cent in individual houses and 6 per cent in government buildings (International Organization for Migration, June 2017)." The remaining 12 per cent of IDPs live without shelter.

Blankets and mats are the most commonly needed non-food item, followed by kitchen sets, plastic sheeting, mosquito nets, buckets and jerry cans. NFI kits are regularly disseminated by Shelter, CCCM and NFI partners – however, there is not enough NFIs provided to meet the needs.

The name Boko Haram is usually translated as *Western education is forbidden*. Rooted in opposition to education, Boko Haram has targeted schools and universities for bombings and attacks (Human Rights Watch, 2016). Boko Haram has murdered over 600 teachers and displaced 19,000 teachers (UNICEF, 2017). Over 1,200 schools have been damaged or destroyed, and even more have been closed. Nearly 600,000 children have lost access to education since 2013. Children returning to their areas of origin are returning to communities without schools and teachers. Education services that have partially re-opened are insufficient to meet the needs and a range of reasons prevent children from going to school including; infrastructure damage, insufficient teachers, fear of attack, lack of educational materials and school fees.

Access to health services has deteriorated as a result of the crisis. There is a high prevalence of severe malnutrition, morbidity and mortality. Over 40 per cent of health facilities have been destroyed, and many of the facilities were burned and looted during the armed conflict (UN OCHA, 2016). As a result, children face increased risk to diseases previously eradicated in Nigeria, such as Polio (4 cases in Borno identified in 2016). Women have also been disproportionately affected with a reduction of family planning, ante/post-natal care, obstetric care, prevention and treatment of STIs and HIV, rape treatment and other services have been found inadequate (UN OCHA, 2016).

Many IDPs have reported a general lack of information about the changing security situation, information regarding returnees and their places of origin, and availability of services. In Plan International Nigeria's assessment, 75 per cent of sites (15 of 20) reported receiving the majority of key information about their community and available services from community and religious leaders. Sixty per cent of sites (12 of 20) use mobile phones to share information with their friends. An unstable network connection and lack of phone credit debilitate the use of mobile phones to share information. Fifty per cent (10 of 20) sites share information by visiting friends, family and community leaders on a daily basis. When asked specifically about how people share feedback on the work of organizations and other services providers, 20 per cent of the assessed sites (4 of 20) reported sharing with their community leaders or through group discussion and 25 per cent (5 of 20) reported sharing feedback with community leaders.

Excluded Groups

The Boko Haram-related violence and military counter operations have severely increased the protection risks faced by affected children and youth – particularly those with special needs and vulnerabilities (ex: chronically sick children, children with disabilities, child-headed households, unaccompanied/separated children, etc.) and adolescent boys and girls (UN OCHA, 2016). Women and girls abducted by Boko Haram, survivors of rape, and children born out of sexual violence face stigmatization and often rejection from their communities upon their return (UNICEF/International Alert, 2016). These girls, women and their children are often feared by communities and ostracized from society as they are often suspected as Boko Haram sympathizers (UN OCHA, 2016). Unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) that are not identified and provided with safe alternative care struggle to access basic needs, and are at an increased risk to exploitative labour and sexual abuse.

In Plan International Nigeria's assessment, 50 per cent (10 of 20 sites) of the communities reported that children from poor households and children with disabilities (35 per cent, 7 of 20 sites) are the most excluded group from humanitarian services. When asked if the risks and needs of girls and boys are addressed equally, 50 per cent (10 of 20 sites) of communities assessed reported that girls' needs are not addressed equally to boys' needs. Forty per cent (8 of 20 sites) reasoned that girls are not as valued in their society as boys.

In some communities, the absence of men and adolescent boys revealed serious threats of arrest or forced recruitment (UN OCHA, 2016). Both Boko Haram and the CJTF have been listed under Security Council Resolution 1612 for the recruitment and use of children. These children are exposed to harsh working conditions and are often forced to commit violence. Similar to girls and women who have escaped or been rescued from Boko Haram, these boys and young people are met with hostilities in their communities and their families upon returning – whether or not they “willingly” participated in hostilities.



In the Gender Based Violence sub-Working Group's recent Vulnerability Screening, 99 per cent (17,483 HHs) of the surveyed respondents reported they lack legal documentation – decreasing their access to humanitarian services such as food distribution and medical care. Birth registrations in the Northeast have dropped from 35 per cent in 2007 to 22 per cent in 2011. In Adamawa, 56 per cent to 48 per cent and in Borno, 30 per cent to 15 per cent.

The chances of registration are statistically more likely if you are a boy, live in an urban area and come from a Christian household. Children are also more likely to be registered after the age of one (Olusesan Ayodeji Makinde, 2016).

METHODOLOGY

Plan International Nigeria has been responding to the needs of affected children, youth and their families since 2016, and has been using a wide range of existing secondary data to inform its project design. As new areas become open for humanitarian assistance, and additional humanitarian actors increase their presence on the ground, Plan International Nigeria wanted to better understand the changing needs of affected children and their families, how humanitarian and government actors have responded to these needs, and current gaps existing in communities in which it works. Plan International Nigeria conducted a needs assessment between July and August of 2017, to ensure smooth access to communities, and to provide additional evidence for program expansion/amendment to the current approaches. The assessment was conducted in Borno and Adamawa State – two of the most conflict-affected states – covering 20 communities in 11 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Plan International Nigeria’s emergency response operations. Plan International Nigeria used purposive sampling methodology to select these locations. The followings steps were taken:

- **Step 1:** Plan International Nigeria listed all the LGAs, Wards and Communities in which it works and mapped where specific Plan International Nigeria interventions were being implemented.
- **Step 2:** Plan International Nigeria developed criteria to differentiate between the various characteristics of the communities in which they work. Criteria was slightly different for Borno and Adamawa State, and given that the affected communities in Southern Borno and Northern Adamawa have similar characteristics, Southern Borno was instead included in the Adamawa sampling. The following criteria was used:

Borno	Southern Borno/Northern Adamawa
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Newly Accessible to Humanitarian Actors vs. Accessible to Humanitarian Actors - Urban vs. Rural - Camp vs. Informal Camp - Functioning Market vs. No Market - Lots of Humanitarian Actors Present vs. No Actors* <p>* A location with more than 5 Actors was considered to have “lots of Actors”.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Newly Accessible to Humanitarian Actors vs. Accessible to Humanitarian Actors - Urban vs. Rural - Camp vs. Informal Camp - Functioning Market vs. No Market - Functioning Health Facility vs. No Health Facility - Functioning School vs. No School - Lots of Humanitarian Actors Present vs. No Actors* <p>* A location with more than 3 Actors was considered to have “lots of Actors”.</p>

- **Step 3:** Based on the above criteria, various scenarios were developed from a list of 63 sites. Plan International Nigeria teams randomly selected 20 communities from these scenarios to ensure a confidence level of 95 per cent. The following sites were chosen for assessment:

State	LGA	Ward	Community
Borno	Gwoza	Gwoza Wakane	Bulabuli
Borno	Gwoza	Gwoza Town	Gadamayo
Borno	Jere	Old Maiduguri	Fariya
Borno	Jere	Mashamari	Dogon Masalci
Borno	Kaga	Benisheikh	Benisheikh
Borno	Kaga	Mainok	Mainok A
Borno	Mafa	Mafa Town	Mafa Central Primary School
Borno	Mafa	Tamsunganda	Kaleri
Borno	Maiduguri	Bulumkutu	Bulumkutu Salake
Borno	Maiduguri	Bolori 1	Malam Umairi
Borno	Monguno	Monguno Town	Moguno Town
Borno	Askira/Uba	Askira	Mufa
Borno	Askira/Uba	Hussara	Tampul
Adamawa	Hong	Hong	Hong
Adamawa	Michika	Mahdzi	Watu
Adamawa	Michika	Kwaramgbe	Warambuge
Adamawa	Mubi North	Betso	Betso
Adamawa	Mubi North	Muchalla	Muchalla
Adamawa	Mubi South	Bahuli	Bahuli
Adamawa	Mubi South	Mujara	Manawachi

Researchers used Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Key Informant Interview (KII) and Direct Observation (DO) to conduct the assessment. Each tool covers areas of child protection, gender based violence, education, nutrition and livelihoods. The tools have slight variance in scope and language depending on the age and sex of participants, and their expected level of knowledge on a given subject. For example, the Community Nutrition Volunteer was asked specific questions about Infant and Young Child Feeding, while the Head Teacher was asked specific questions on class size and safety in schools. The development of these tools was informed by a comprehensive desk review that covered more than 60 needs assessment from government and humanitarian actors, research reports, evaluations, lessons learnt, security reports, and news articles that were mostly published between 2013 and 2017. The following were conducted as part of the assessment:

Key Informant Interviews (KII) at State Level	Key Informant Interviews (KII) at Ward Level	Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with IDPs and Host Communities	Conduct Field Observations at Ward Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International Organizations: (UNICEF, UNHCR, UNFPA, IOM, ICRC) - Ministries: Social Welfare, Women's Affairs, Education, NAPTIP, Health, Non-formal Education - Financial Service Provider (for cash distribution) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LGA Chairman - Community Leader(s) - Religious Leaders (Muslim and Christian) - Health Worker - Head Teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children (9-13) in and out of school, Adolescents (14-17), Youth (18-24) - Parents and Foster Caregivers - Members of relevant community structures (CBCPs, Youth Groups/Networks, CBOs, etc.) - Parent Teacher Associations and/or School Based Management Committees <p>*All sex disaggregated</p>	To see the general state of child protection, education, nutrition and livelihood services.

The FGDs were supported by participatory approaches and visual exercises to encourage participants to share different experiences, activities, and challenges in their lives. For the Children, Adolescent and Parents/Caregivers FGDs, Time Line of a Child's Life was used as an exercise. Participants were asked to think about different ages of children (0-5, 6-12, and 13-17) and brainstorm their activities from morning until night. Thoughts were shared on flip chart paper in words and drawing on flip chart paper. This activity encouraged participants to consider each age group separately and to share key information such as working hours, household responsibilities, meal times, and hours of education. In the FGDs for Community Based (CB) mechanisms and Youth, participants were asked to do Prioritization Ranking. These groups brainstormed needs and risks facing children in their community and assigned them an object. After all needs had been revealed, the participants ranked them according to their importance. This served as an ice-breaker and provided an opportunity for participants to discuss amongst each other the different needs and risks facing children and youth in their community and prepared them for the follow-up FGD questions.

Assessment Teams

Assessment teams were made up of four individual researchers: one Team Lead, and three Assessors.¹ Assessors were required to speak Hausa and Kanuri, and where possible, additional language needs for certain communities were matched with the appropriate researchers.

All tools were provided in English, Hausa and Kanuri to aid in translation during assessments. Researchers were selected based on their previous work experience with Plan International Nigeria and their training in Child Protection. In addition, researchers were provided with a one day orientation to the tools and methodologies used in the assessment. Researchers conducted 224 FGDs, 140 KIIs, and 19 DOs. They spoke with 2,097 individuals (565 children, 273 adolescents, 287 youth, and 972 community members). These individuals were selected by community leaders and community volunteers and pre-screened by Plan International Nigeria community partner staff.

State	Male				Female				Total
Age:	9-13	14-17	18-24	25+	9-13	14-17	18-24	25+	
Borno	196	86	87	314	189	86	86	256	1300
Adamawa	90	51	58	220	90	50	56	182	797

In addition to the researchers, each location received technical support from Plan International Nigeria staff who were familiar with the context and needs of the affected populations. These staff were responsible for providing introductions to key informants and stakeholders in the communities of assessment, conducting state level interviews, liaising with coordination mechanisms and partner INGOs for various humanitarian sectors, and providing support for Urgent Action cases. The Urgent Action process was put in place to ensure that any disclosures of protection concerns by children or families participating in the assessment were reported directly to Plan International and/or partner staff. Urgent Action ensured immediate response by trained Case Management professionals maintaining the do no harm principle.

Analysis

Analysis of key findings was conducted with technical experts from Plan International Nigeria. All Site Reports were entered into an electronic database and used to present quantitative data in the following assessment report.

These key findings were presented to select community members from the assessed locations to verify the accuracy of the findings and to get localised recommendations for what should be done at community, government and NGO, and INGO level. These recommendations, coupled with

¹ On average, assessment teams had four researchers. However, due to security and availability of in-country flights, only two teams of three (total: 6) individuals were able to travel to Gwoza LGA. Therefore, the assessment teams in Gwoza only had three people each.

recommendations from Plan International Nigeria technical experts have been presented in the recommendations section within this report.

Limitations

- FGD participants were mobilized by Community Volunteers and Community Leaders working with Plan International Nigeria. Therefore, it is likely that participants were selected with a certain level of bias, likely already participate in humanitarian services/activities, or may not be the most vulnerable. The KIIs and Direct Observation in combination with the Desk Review are meant to counter-act this possible bias.
- Due to time constraints the scope of the assessment did not cover Quranic schools (non-formal Integrated Quranic schools also known as Islamiya) and informal Quranic schools called Sangaya and Al-Majiri). Plan International Nigeria recommends that any future Child Protection and Education assessments cover informal facilities, teachers, and students as it is widely understood that separation, hawking, and prioritization over formal school happens around Quranic education.
- In one location in Borno State, Shuwa and Bura languages were spoken by participants and key informants – rather than the most common languages of Hausa and Kanuri. In some groups, researchers were able to translate the tools for participants, but had difficulty understanding their responses. A community volunteer supported translation of tools into Shuwa and Bura languages. The analysis of key findings accounted for the language barrier challenge. All tools used with community members were translated into Hausa and Kanuri, however, enumerator teams reported that the Hausa was too “professional” for this context, and only referenced translations when there was difficulty in certain concepts.
- A comprehensive nutrition assessment would have covered MUAC screening of children under 5. While this was not possible given time and scope of the assessment, the Nutrition Sector Working Group (NSWG) was conducting a SMART survey during the same time frame as this assessment.



Although the findings cannot be generalized beyond the wards in which these communities exist, they provide valuable insights into the needs and capacities of conflict-affected children, young people, and their families and provide a level of detail invaluable to designing needs-based projects that respond to the varied needs of communities in Plan International Nigeria’s areas of operation.

KEY FINDINGS

The following presents key findings from the Child Protection and Education Needs Assessment. While it was expected that needs and risks would be different based on geographical areas (Borno and Adamawa State), primary data collected did not reveal this to be true. Therefore, the following Key Findings are reported for communities assessed in both Borno and Adamawa State.

Child Protection

Nigeria domesticated the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child through the Child's Rights Act in 2003. This act defines a child as below the age of 18 years. However, in many states of Northeast Nigeria, including Adamawa and Borno State, the Child's Rights Act has not yet been promulgated into law (passed by the state assembly and assented to by the state governor) (UNICEF, April 2011). Similarly, the age of criminal responsibility is seen as under 18 by most States – however, in States adopting Sharia Law (ex: Borno State) the age can be as low as 7 (Child Rights International Network, 2017). It is important to note, that while risks to dangers and injuries did not come out as a major child protection finding, the desk review found that unintentional injuries are the leading cause of death among children and adolescents in Nigeria (Child Protection Working Group, 2012). Dangers include road-traffic accidents, fire-related injuries, natural hazards (such as fast moving rivers), and other risks. The conflict in Northeast Nigeria has put children at particular risk to explosive remnants of war (ERW) and landmines. Borno and Adamawa state are the most impacted by the presence of ERWs (ACAPS, 2016). In such areas, IDPs have noted that there are certain places that the population won't go due to fear of landmines planted in those areas. (Protection Sector Working Group, 2016).

Girls and young women are facing increased risk to gender based violence (GBV), including sexual violence, exploitation, early pregnancy and forced marriage.

The age of consent in Nigeria (the minimum age at which an individual is considered legally old enough to consent to participation in sexual activity) is 11 years old. Individuals aged 10 or younger in Nigeria are not legally able to consent to sexual activity, and such activity may result in prosecution for statutory rape or the equivalent local law. As the Child's Right Act hasn't been adopted by all States, there is a variation for the legal status of children on issues like the age of marriage (in the Northeast there is no legal minimum age, however, it is generally understood to be around the age of 13) (Right to Education Project, 1999). Nigeria's statutory rape law is violated when an individual has consensual sexual contact with a person under age 11 (Age of Consent, 2017). In Northeast Nigeria, the protective environment around the child (such as the family and community) are strained and weakened as a result of mass displacements and loss of social cohesion and trust (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2016). This has resulted in women and girls being at increased risk to various forms of sexual violence, exploitation and abuse, forced or early marriage, denial of resources and harmful traditional practices.

Scale of the Issue

A wide range of **sexual violence** has taken place in Northeast Nigeria. People abducted by Boko Haram and survivors of rape and children born out of sexual violence face stigmatization and are subsequently ostracized. In many communities, the absence of men and adolescent boys and an increase in female-headed households reveals the prevalence of arrest and forced recruitment -

which heightens the risk of GBV and other protection risks (UN OCHA, 2016). In a needs assessment conducted by UN OCHA, women and girls in nearly all camps reported issues of sexual exploitation and survival sex occurring in exchange for food assistance and to negotiate movement in and out of camps. There have also been allegations of rape perpetrated by security personnel and the CJTF (UN OCHA, 2016). Sexual exploitation, rape, assault, and threats of GBV while going out to conduct daily activities such as collecting firewood, water, going to

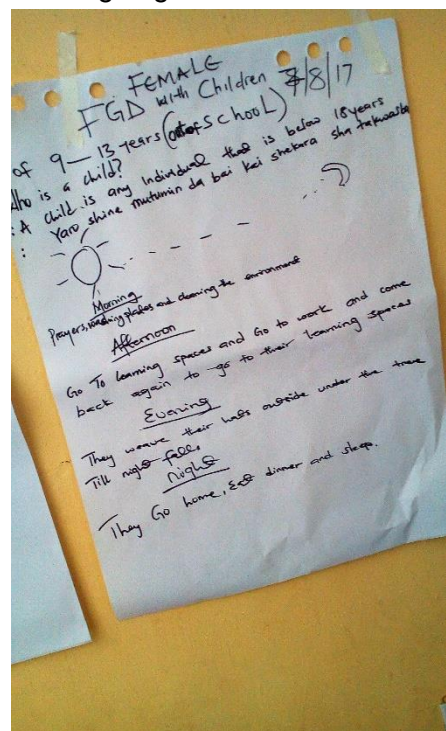


Image 3 : Work from a FGD with Girls aged 9 – 13 years old

to communities, using latrines, etc. has been reported by women and girls to be a time when they are most at risk to physical and sexual violence (Protection Sector Working Group, 2016). Sites assessed by Plan International Nigeria confirm these findings - 50 per cent of sites (10 of 20) reported that, sexual violence occurs while collecting firewood. Other common responses reported sexual violence while fetching water, while walking to school, and to their farm; and at home.

Harmful traditional practices exist, particularly at the community level. Female Genital Mutilation, early and forced marriage, female disinheritance, tribal marks and tattooing are common practices (Right to Education Project, 1999). 100 per cent (20 of 20) sites that took part in Plan International Nigeria's assessment reported that traditional medicine is practised in all communities despite many of them having access to primary health facilities. Sexual violence and GBV prevalence in the Northeast Nigeria has increased by almost 8 per cent since the conflict began – rape accounting for 85 per cent of violations for which survivors sought care (between June-August 2016) (GBV Sub-Sector Working Group, 2016). Every six out of ten females reported to have experienced one or more forms of gender-based violence (UN Population Fund, 2016). A recent vulnerability screening

in the Northeast identified 25 per cent of IDPs as vulnerable women and girls with varied protection concerns including 20 per cent who were survivors of GBV. This included nearly 4,000 incidents of early/forced marriage; 1,538 engaged in survival sex, and 1,174 reported rape/sexual assaults (UN Refugee Agency, 2016). During Plan International Nigeria's assessment, 75 per cent of sites (15 of 20) reported girls being the most affected by sexual violence. Transnational sex by girls and young women was mentioned throughout the assessment as a coping mechanism for lack of income at the household level and represents a change in girls' behaviours since the crisis began.

Girls have identified issues of **forced marriage** by parents and host community members to support their families. A quarter of all girls in Nigeria are married as adolescents, causing negative implications for their human capital development as well as their intra-household bargaining power and access to resources. Girls have reported to be forced by their parents into marriage because they could not afford school fees, food, shelter and other basic necessities. Girls abducted by Boko Haram are reportedly married to fighters as trophies (ACAPS, 2017). There are also cases of forced marriage reported for girls who were pregnant as a result of sexual

assaults or exploitation (Protection Sector Working Group, 2016). In Plan International Nigeria's assessment, 80 per cent (16 of 20) sites reported marriage before the age of 18 to be a common practice for girls. Eighty-five per cent of sites (17 of 20) reported that parents, caregivers and religious leaders arrange early marriages and make little distinction between arranged marriages and forced marriage. A fifth of the reports indicated forced marriage (20 per cent or 4 of 20 sites) as an arranged marriage against the will of the girl child, because of **pregnancy**, or for economic reasons (75 per cent or 15 of 20 sites). Girls expressed fear of sexual assault as a reason for getting married (25 per cent or 5 of 20 sites) and use it as a coping mechanism to prevent both assault and early pregnancy. When asked about the reasons for becoming pregnant before marriage, 25 per cent (5 of 20 sites) of girls mentioned rape or transnational sex as a main reason, 30 per cent (6 of 20 sites) reported poverty and lack of job as the main causes of early pregnancy. Pregnancy and sexual violence was reported as a common risk that can lead to death or injury of children in the community by 20 per cent of sites (4 of 20). In one community, researchers recorded a community leader's example of a girl who was promised to a man she do not love. To avoid the arranged marriage, she got pregnant by her boyfriend and forced her parents to accept his proposal for marriage over the arrangement. The informant reported that this situation happens often and can lead to girls being forced to marry regardless of the pregnancy, or create family breakdown due to conflict between the parents and child. Nearly half of all sites assessed reported early marriage as a common practice and explained that families are less likely to encourage early marriage if they are more educated or literate.

Societies in Northeast Nigeria, are patriarchal and gender norms and socio-economic inequalities severely undermine the role of women. Lack of livelihoods and food have contributed to household violence - men severely battering their wives and fighting between spouses (Protection Sector Working Group, 2016). Existing reports on **GBV** incidents are highly influenced by the culture of silence - especially regarding sexual violence (UN OCHA, 2016). When asked if married girls would be able to participate in any activities outside the home, 60 per cent (12 of 20 sites) reported that married, girls are not able to continue education without approval from their husbands. Respondents cited household chores, taking care of children, and farm work as reasons why married girls are not able to engage in many activities outside the home. Boys however, are encouraged to wait until the age of 25-30 or when they have finished education, secure a job, and can afford to pay dowry. When boys get married before the age of 18, 70 per cent (14 of 20) sites report societal pressures (parental, peer and traditional culture) as reasons for doing so. Although reports on vulnerabilities and violence including abduction, exploitation and rape, towards boys and men are emerging (UN OCHA, 2016), only 1 of 20 sites reported boys as survivors of sexual violence. There is silence around violence towards boys and men due to cultural beliefs and negative societal attitudes towards masculinity.

Capacities, Coverage and Gaps

IDPs and host communities can report incidents of physical and sexual violence to police, security, vigilante groups, church, camp management or community/traditional leadership, but they also expressed lack of trust with the current systems. According to a group of elderly women in Mubi South, "Who do we report to when it's the people who are supposed to protect us that are the ones taking advantage of us?" (Protection Sector Working Group, 2016). Police and/or military forces have put in place mechanisms to minimize potential risks to girls and women including: an increase in number of police, female police officers, police/peacekeeping patrols around the

community, community safety groups, firewood collection patrols, and educating girls/women on how to report incidents (International Rescue Committee, 2016). In an assessment by UN OCHA, over 50 per cent of GBV survivors declined referrals to legal and security/protection services where they were available because of lack of trust in the systems (UN OCHA, 2016). Life-saving response to survivors of GBV includes psychosocial support (PSS), specialized health care - including clinical management of rape (CMR), access to justice, safety and security. Ninety per cent of sites assessed (18 of 20) reported no formal services available to support survivors of sexual violence. While these are included in the humanitarian response in general, services are lacking or non-existent in many LGAs (UN OCHA, 2016).

Boys and girls are used as Boko Haram insurgents and as members of the Civilian Joint Task Force.

The Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts (2001) was adopted in Nigeria in September 2012. To participate in the Nigerian Army you are required to be between the ages of 18-22 (Nigerian Army, 2017). In addition, the Federal Republic of Nigeria has established safeguards to ensure that such recruitment is not forced or coerced, including a requirement in Part III, Section 34(1) of the Child's Rights Act, 2003, which stipulates that no child shall be recruited into any of the branches of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Part III, Section 34(2) of the Child's Rights Act, 2003 states that the Government or any other relevant agency or body shall ensure that no child is directly involved in any military operation or hostilities.

However, despite international attention and whistle-blowing on the recruitment and use of children in conflict, children in Northeast Nigeria continue to be associated with armed forces and groups. The Nigerian Army, CJTF and Boko Haram have all be cited and listed as using children in a number of roles including as combatants, porters, informants, domestic, and for sexual purposes. According to a report by Child Alert and UNICEF, children as young as four years old are being used within the ranks of Boko Haram – as cooks, porters and look-outs. According to accounts by escapees, abducted young women and girls are subjected to forced marriage, forcible religious conversion, physical and psychological abuse, forced labour and rape. Children have also reportedly been recruited by vigilante groups fighting against Boko Haram in Northeast Nigeria (Child Alert/UNICEF, 2016). In some communities, children as young as seven have been trained to use sophisticated machine guns (Protection Sector Working Group, 2016)

Scale of the Issue

Communities cited that the presence of civilians who were released or escaped from Boko Haram as one of the biggest risks in the Northeast (Protection Sector Working Group, 2016). Safety risks includes the following incidents: attacks or bombings, killings of civilians by military/armed groups, other physical violence (abuse, torture, mutilation), tensions/hostility between IDPs and host community members, tensions/hostility, between IDP groups, destruction of property or theft/looting, arbitrary arrest/detention, forced recruitment by CJTF/vigilantes, civilians released from abduction (under Boko Haram), presence of landmines/unexploded ordinances, discrimination in access to assistance, incidents of trafficking and incidents of drug sales/abuse (Protection Sector Working Group, 2016).

Recent security bulletins, a 2017 secondary desk review by ACAPS, and the Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting confirm at least 41 children, mainly young girls (3 boys, 38 girls, and 54 people of an unknown age), have been used in suicide attacks by Boko Haram since 2014. In August 2017, researchers at the Combating Terrorism Centre at West Point and Yale University analysed 434 suicide bombing carried out by Boko Haram since 2011 and found 72 per cent (244 if the 388 incidents where gender could be identified) were carried out by women – 60 per cent were teenagers or children (53, where age could be identified) (Kriel, 2017). Babies are also being used as cover for person-borne improvised devices (PBIED) (ACAPS, 2017), (Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting, 2016). The Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism of Grave Violations Against Children, estimated that 4,000 women and girls have been abducted and many thousands more are living in areas under the control of Boko Haram since 2013 (United Nations Security Council, 2017). Despite regular public reports of children currently and formerly associated with armed groups, communities are reluctant to speak about it openly. Twenty per cent of assessed sites (4 of 20) reported “yes”, when asked if there were strangers who took or want to take, children away from their community. Some respondents who indicated “no” said abductions occur on the “outskirts” of town.

Thirty per cent of sites (6 of 20) reported to know children (mostly boys) who work with or are used by armed forces or other groups. Although communities reported that the Nigerian military, the CJTF and community leaders are working to prevent recruitment of children into armed forces or groups, these same entities were also reported as the highest recruiters of children.² Twenty-five per cent of sites (5 of 20) reported children committing acts of violence since the crisis. However, types of violence reported includes stealing, selling drugs, and drug abuse which may or may not be related to affiliation with armed groups.

Capacities Coverage and Gaps

Plan International Nigeria’s assessment revealed that promises of money, business loans, skills building, and education have falsely lead children and teenagers to join Boko Haram.³ Difficulties of reintegration for girls and boys include the risk of violence, regardless their participation in hostilities, in both communities, and their families strongly resisted their return (UN OCHA, 2016). When asked if children in armed groups or forces can be welcomed back into



Image 4 : During the Needs Assessment in Mafa

² Question asked: Where do you think most recruitment happens? Answers include: within the community, at the village center, at military checkpoints

³ Site Report from Jere, Old Maiduguri, Fariya

community/daily life, 35 per cent (7 of 20) of the sites reported yes, 1 of 20 sites said no, and all the remaining sites refused to answer the question. Respondents who answered “yes” commented that only children formerly associated with the CJTF can be accepted back into the community, ex-combatants (insurgents) cannot be allowed to return.

A study on violent extremism by Mercy Corps from 2016 found that connections with friends, family members, business colleagues, and other key individuals heavily influenced whether youth participated in Boko Haram (Mercy Corps, 2016). For example, youth who avoided recruitment into Boko Haram cited strong parental and family influence as their reason for not joining. Parents and respected figures who talk openly about Boko Haram with their children can influence their child’s decision not to join (Mercy Corps, 2016). Youth with strong social connections that resist recruitment or engage in community activities such as school or religious groups can also influence resistance.

In Plan International Nigeria’s assessment, respondents reported that they engage in community prevention strategies. Strategies included counselling children to avoid strangers, encourage movement in groups, restrict movement – especially girls – to close to the home, and enforce a curfew for girls of 7:00 PM.⁴

Boys and girls are affected by increased child labour practices.

Lack of sufficient capital to start-up or run small businesses is a reason for youth to join Boko Haram. Entrepreneurs range from small-scale petty traders to larger inter-city traders, including shop-owners, tailors, salon-owners, butchers, and more. Youth who struggle to start-up businesses report accepting loans prior to joining Boko Haram (Mercy Corps, 2016). Children are recruited for exploitative labour. A recent secondary desk review by ACAPS indicated that 4,901 children in eight newly accessible areas in Borno State were engaged in hawking or begging, some as young as five. Others collect firewood for sale, an activity that puts girls at particular risk of assault (ACAPS, 2017). Children are engaged in the following activities: farm work, domestic labour, factory work, mining, transporting people or goods, building or construction work, selling of water, and transactional sex (International Rescue Committee, 2016).

The Nigerian Labour Act of 1990 states that no young person under the age of fifteen years shall be employed or work in any industrial undertaking. A young person under the age of fourteen years may be employed only: (a) on a daily wage; (b) on a day-to-day basis; and (c) so long as they returns each night to the residence of their parents, guardian or a person approved by their parents or guardian, but does not apply to a young person employed in domestic service (Library of Congress, 2013). The lack of inclusion of harmful or exploitative labour beyond industrial work leaves a gap in Nigeria labour policies. The exception made for domestic services places children, especially adolescent girls at an increased risk to sexual exploitation and abuse, as most domestic labourers are girls. This exception does not encourage family unity, or promote continued education for girls and young women.

⁴ Multiple Site Reports, Plan International Nigeria’s Multi-sector Needs Assessment (2017)

Scale of the Issue

Customary laws and cultural practices in Nigeria fail to protect the rights of women and girls, and cause girls to be particularly vulnerable to child protection deficits (Holmes, 2012). Child fosterage is a traditional practice initiated by parents as a means to provide educational or other opportunities to their children. Parents can send children to an alternative residence, for example, with extended family members. However, some agents promise a family to foster their child, but traffic the child for domestic work instead (World Health Organization, 2011). In a recent report by ACAPS, 4,901 children in eight newly accessible areas in Borno State were engaged in hawking and begging (ACAPS, 2017).

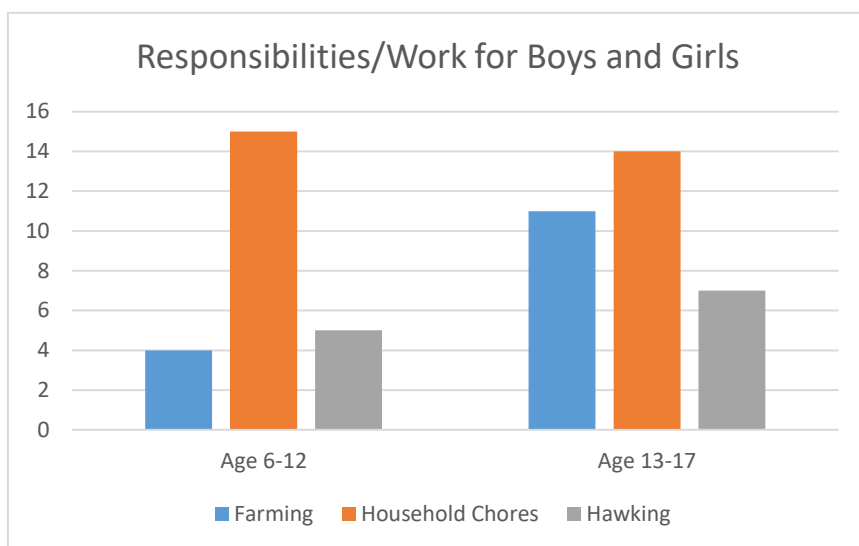


Table 3: Responsibilities/Work for Boys and Girls

Many adolescent IDP girls are engaged in farm and livestock work, tailoring and petty trading. Boys and girls are reportedly engaged in high-risk livelihood strategies. There is an increasing prevalence among this demographic of being forced to use extremely high risk coping strategies, notably engaging in transactional sex. Transactional sex has been reported by girls as young as nine (Mercy Corps, 2016). In Plan International Nigeria's assessment, 75 per cent of sites (15 of 20) reported children in the community to be involved in types of work that are harsh or dangerous to them. 24 per cent (9 of 20) sites reported children engaged in hard wage labour including breaking stones, brick making and laying, carrying heavy equipment and loads from trucks, driving *keke napep* (tricycle taxis) and repairs (mechanic/bicycle). 65 per cent of sites (13 of 20) report harmful labour as a leading cause of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation to children. One site reported strangers coming to their community to encourage children to work on nearby farms⁵ and 35 per cent of sites (7 of 20) report children engaged in farm labour, including cattle rearing and grazing. The most common responsibilities/work done by girls are: tailoring and cap making, hawking and petty trade, farming and household chores. The most common for boys are: farming, bricklaying, waged labour and trade.⁶

The Almajiri religious concept of educating young children away from home in Quranic studies has been a practice long before the crisis. Unaccompanied, separated or orphaned children are increasingly given into the care of religious teachers - 'mallams' - who run these learning centres.

⁵ Site Report: Mafa, Tamsunganda, Kaleri

⁶ Trade for boys includes: carpentry, mechanics, and petting trading

Use of students by religious teachers for child labour is common. It is also a fertile ground for recruiting young boys to carry out violent and politically motivated crimes (ACAPS, 2017).

Capacities, Coverage and Gaps

The Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition), Enforcement and Administration Act, 2015 (Act No. 4 of 2015) established the National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons (NAPTIP). NAPTIP works in partnership with UN agencies and other government institutions at both federal and state level. The Nigerian Federal Ministry of Employment, Labour and Productivity Inspectorate Department, which includes the Child Labour Unit, coordinates efforts to combat child labour, including training, awareness raising and inspections in high-risk industries, such as agriculture and mining. Despite NAPTIP efforts, 55 per cent (11 of 20) of sites reported that the number of children engaged in harsh and dangerous work has increased since the crisis, particularly for domestic work, hawking/begging, and the sale of drugs. In at least one assessed site, a whore house was identified during direct observation by a research team. After inquiring with community members, researchers learned that transnational sex is often done under the disguise of hawking. Community members explained that it is common for young women to hawk ground nuts at night, using abandoned buildings to carry out transnational sex when interested men approach them for sex.⁷

Traditional practices of separation have been exacerbated by crisis and relocation.

Thousands of children in Northeast Nigeria have been separated from their primary caregivers as a result of the conflict. These children are increasingly vulnerable to violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect because they lost care and protection from their families. Separated children are separated from both parents or their primary caregiver, but not necessarily separated from other relatives. As a result, separated children includes children accompanied by other adult family members. Unaccompanied children are children who have been separated from both parents and other relatives, and who are not being cared for by an adult (Child Protection Working Group, 2012). Causes of separation in Northeast Nigeria include: loss of caregivers/children due to medical evacuation or during relocation, caregivers voluntarily sending children to institutional care, to live with extended family/friends, to work far away, abduction by Boko Haram, and separated while fleeing Boko Haram (International Rescue Committee, 2016).

Scale of the Issue

Seventy-eight per cent of UASC are orphans who have lost both of their parents due to the conflict. Unaccompanied children have banded together in small groups to fend for themselves (UN Refugee Agency, 2016). On average, 18 per cent of households are sheltering one or more unaccompanied children (UN OCHA, 2016), (UN Refugee Agency, 2016). The estimated number of unaccompanied and separated children is 32,000 with 9,600 (30 per cent) of them unaccompanied (UN OCHA, 2016). In Plan International Nigeria's assessment, nearly all communities assessed reported UASC. When asked which age groups of UASC were most

⁷ Site Report: Monguno, Monguno Town

common, 80 per cent of assessed communities (16 of 20) reported UASC aged 6-17, with 40 per cent reporting the presence of UASC aged 0-5.

Sixty-five per cent (13 of 20) of communities reported losing caregivers/children during relocation and during the immediate aftermath of the insurgency. Fifty per cent (10 of 20) of sites reported the same number of UASC boys as girls. Forty per cent (8 of 20) of sites reported the presence of unaccompanied children who lived without caregivers more boys were reported than girls. Assessed communities assessed reported UASC care arrangements are displayed in the following chart:

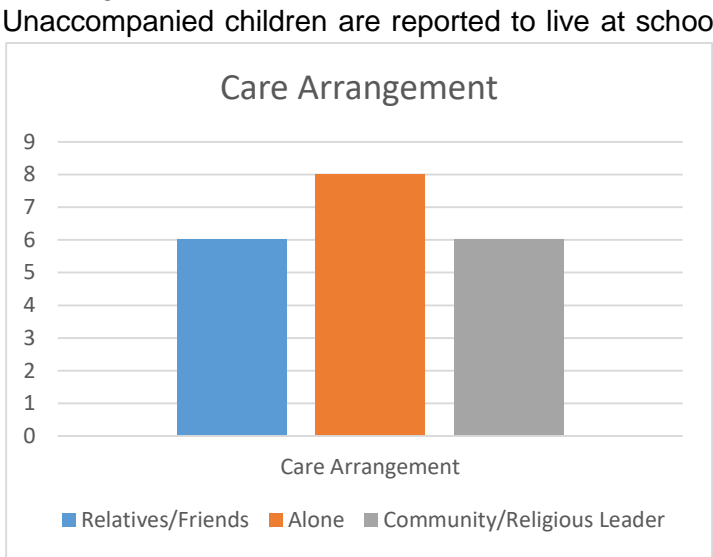


Table 4: Care Arrangement

Capacities, Coverage and Gaps

The provisions of the Child Right’s Act in part XII relates to child adoption and primarily seek to harmonize adoption process in Nigeria. The Act stresses a uniform institutional framework for

adoption throughout the country and mandates establishment and maintenance of adoption services and facilities (Chukwu, 2012). Sadly, most states have continued to regulate adoption practices with state legislations, making it nearly impossible to achieve the uniformity desired by the Act. Child Right Act 2003 prohibits inter-country adoption to curtail such act as ‘baby factories’ and to prevent child trafficking, except where adopters are Nigerians (Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, 2005) (Olanike A. Ojelabi, 2015). The Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) Dashboard from January – May 2017 reports that 5,876 UASC and children at risk have been identified, 277 reunified with their families, and 1,306 UASC placed in alternative care by child protection agencies working in the Northeast (Child Protection Sub Working Group, 2017). However, Plan International Nigeria staff have faced difficulty in finding suitable alternative care solutions for unaccompanied children, citing that foster caregiver often take in children to gain domestic or farm labour, and do not provide a protective environment for children. In addition, they become reluctant to cooperate with tracing activities once they learn they may lose this domestic labour support.

⁸ These two centers were recorded in Adamawa State.
⁹ The one site reporting the availability of institutional care was in Jere, Old Maiduguri, Fariya.

Psychosocial distress among parents and children is linked to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Many Children in Northeast Nigeria have seen parents, siblings, relatives or neighbours killed, tortured or abducted. Children ran for their lives and walked for days to reach safety. In a joint assessment conducted by the Protection Sector Working Group, an IDP woman shared her story of abduction, rape, and loss of her child – leaving her feeling a sense of worthlessness. Similar stories told by other women and girls demonstrates an urgent need for psychosocial support (Protection Sector Working Group, 2016). Traumatizing experiences are compounded by stigmatization and rejection from their families and communities. Fear, mistrust and hopelessness among children and caregivers is fuelled by the breakdown of society and the ongoing armed conflict (UN OCHA, 2016).

Scale of the Issue

UNOCHA has reported that two million children aged 3 to 17 are estimated to be suffering from psychosocial distress from the constant threat of violence (UN OCHA, 2016). In a Child Protection and Education needs assessment conducted by the International Rescue Committee, respondents in Adamawa and Borno reported a change in the behaviour of their children since the insurgency began. Reported changes to children include less willingness to help caregivers, siblings and community members; occurrence of nightmares; lack of sleep; sadness (e.g. not talking, not playing etc.); unwillingness or reduced interest in going to school; increased violence against younger children and committing crimes; substance abuse; and isolation (International Rescue Committee, 2016). In Plan International Nigeria's assessment, 90 per cent of sites (18 of 20) reported a negative change in children's behaviours since the crisis. Girls are reportedly crying more often, dropping out of school, and engaging in sexual promiscuity and risking early pregnancy. Boys are reportedly more disrespectful to elders, aggressive, and using drugs. Many camps and host communities reported that Children abuse drugs to cope with their issues. Respondents reported that youth and adults use a cough syrup known as Tramol to become intoxicated (Protection Sector Working Group, 2016), (UN OCHA, 2016). An investigation by Refugees International found that drug abuse to be a new coping mechanism amongst women and girls. Cough syrup has become scarce in camps due to increased demand, driving up the price from 60 Naira per bottle to 150-200 Naira (Refugees International, 2016). Drug abuse was reported by 20 per cent of assessed sites (4 of 20) as the most common risk leading to death or injury of children in the community.

Children reported that hard labour (40 per cent, 8 of 20 sites) and poverty (40 per cent, 8 or 20 sites) are the most common stress inducers. Parents and caregivers listed poverty or lack of a job as the most common causes of stress at 90 per cent of the sites (18 of 20), and 35 per cent (7 of 20) of sites also reported psychosocial distress and fear of insurgency as common causes of stress.

Thirty per cent of sites (6 of 20) reported a negative change in caregivers' attitudes toward their children since the crisis. Reports changes included maltreatment, neglect, and emotional and physical abuse. Sixty per cent of sites (12 of 20) report psychological and emotional stress as a leading cause of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation to children. Sixty-five per cent of assessed communities (13 of 20) reported that children are most at risk to abuse, violence,

neglect and exploitation at the home. Parents and caregivers are reported to cope with stress by speaking to friends (20 per cent, 5 of 20 sites) and praying (5 per cent, 5 of 20 sites).

Capacities, Coverage and Gaps

Boys and girls reportedly cope by speaking to friends, family or religious leaders (boys and girls: 55 per cent or 11 of 20 sites) while boys also cope using drugs (40 per cent, 8 of 20 sites). Respondents also reported that girls are likely to cry or become silent when stressed (25 per cent, 5 of 20 sites). When they have a problem, both boys and girls (children and youth) primarily seek support from parents, caregivers, community and religious leaders (85 per cent, 17 of 20 sites). When asked what children do when they are worried about their friend or another child, 50 per cent (10 of 20 sites) reported seeking the support of parents and caregivers. Forty per cent (8 of 20 sites) of sites reported they would try to visit their friend and provide advice.

Education

Boko Haram's attacks on education, and the government security forces' misuse of school for military purposes, has had a devastating effect on the right to education in the Northeast. It has dramatically affected hundreds of thousands of children at all levels of education, and thousands of teachers and education administrators. Recent estimates suggest that over 1400 schools have been destroyed since the insurgency began in 2009 and at least 1,500 were forced to close (Human Rights Watch, 2016). UNICEF now reports that at least 2,295 teachers have been killed and 19,000 have been forced to flee (UNICEF, 2017). More than 2,000 people, many of them female, have been abducted by the group, many from their schools, since the beginning of the conflict. Thousands more students and teachers have been injured, some in deadly suicide bombs in the same period. It is estimated that almost 1 million school-aged children fled the violence between 2009 and 2015 (Human Rights Watch, 2016) and around 80 per cent of IDP children living in host communities receive little or no education, particularly in areas where schools are already congested (Save the Children, 2016). In Borno, schools at all levels have been closed in 22 out of 27 local government areas for at least two years, and public secondary schools in the state capital, Maiduguri, only reopened in February 2016 after internally displaced people, or IDPs, who occupied most of the schools, were relocated elsewhere (Human Rights Watch, 2016).

Lack of infrastructure and resources, damaged buildings, overcrowding, and misuse of education facilities have negatively impacted the quality and safety of educational environments.

For decades, Nigeria has had an inadequate number of classrooms, furniture, toilets and water facilities due to underfunding in the education sector. Schools rarely meet national or international minimum standards (David Theobald, 2007). The conflict in Northeast Nigeria has further weakened an already fragile education system, pushing more children out of school. While the number of education actors and funding to the education sector in northeast Nigeria are increasing to mitigate the impact of the insurgency, out of an estimated \$56.3M USD required to meet urgent educational needs, only 8.8 per cent had been funded as of May 2017 (UN OCHA, May 31, 2017). In the Child Protection and Education needs assessment conducted by Plan International Nigeria, 95 per cent (19 of 20) of assessed schools reported the emergency had severely affected the education sector - damage of infrastructure were the most commonly

reported issues. In addition to the effects of the insurgency, damage to temporary infrastructure from heavy wind storms, rain and over use has exacerbated infrastructure needs (UN OCHA, 2017).

Scale of the Issue

Since the crisis began in Northeast Nigeria, the availability of education infrastructure and resources have dramatically deteriorated. In some areas, the conflict caused schools to close for more than two years and, in many of the newly accessible areas, infrastructure was destroyed



Image 5 : During the Needs Assessment in Mahsamari

during the conflict. The lack of available schools has compromised education quality. According to recent data shared by UNICEF, there are 1,627 government run schools in Borno and only 684 are open. In the non-formal sector, the Borno State Agency for Mass Education recently indicated that 155 state run learning centres remained closed because of the insurgency (UNICEF, 2017). One-hundred per cent (20 of 20) of the school facilities assessed in Plan International Nigeria's assessment were closed during the insurgency

and 90 per cent (18 of 20) of school infrastructures/learning spaces were destroyed or damaged. Twenty per cent (5 of 20) of sites reported that some of their schools or learning spaces were at one point used as collective shelters for IDPs. Out of the 20 schools assessed, only one school reported to have all permanent infrastructures in place (although every respondent reported damage). Thirty-five per cent (7 of 20) of assessed schools lacked a source of water, functioning toilets, hand washing facilities, basic first aid kits, and sanitary towels for girls.

Overpopulation in host schools has placed an additional strain on education resources. Large class sizes and insufficient classrooms are the main challenges that impact the quality of formal education (UN OCHA, 2016). Refugee students who return to their community and IDP students cause classrooms to be overcrowded and underfunded. Sixty per cent (12 of 20) of assessed schools reported an increase in students due to the presence of IDPs. Schools in some parts of Borno and Adamawa are strained by an excess of students who trek long distances from communities without schools (Plan International, 2016).

Capacities, Coverage and Gaps

The institution of School Based Management Committees contribute to the improvement of school infrastructures and materials. During community feedback sessions, community members committed to support schools by repairing broken furniture, roofing, constructing water catchment

structures and providing chalk for teachers.¹⁰ Fifty-five per cent (11 of 20) of assessed schools have temporary learning spaces. To further understand the gap, the sheer lack of funding is sufficient. As of 30th June 2017, only USD 6 million (11 per cent) of the USD 56 million required have been received (UN OCHA, May 31, 2017).

Teachers have been affected by violence, displacement and lack of training leading to a reduction in the quality of education provided.

The minimum teaching qualification in Nigeria's primary and junior secondary schools is the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE). However, in some areas teachers with the NCE are in short supply, particularly in the northeast, impacting on the quality of education available. Poor teacher quality is fortified by the poor quality of entrants to pre-service education, outdated and heavily theoretical pre-service training, inadequate in-service training, a lack of qualified and experienced teachers, and a poor fit between the education of teachers and the curriculum taught in the classroom (World Bank, 2017). In many cases, NCE in-service training does not provide sufficient instruction in child-centred, gender-responsive teaching methods, psychosocial support, or specific techniques to improve student learning (for example, in reading techniques suitable for large class sizes). The insurgency, and subsequent violence and displacement has further exacerbated the issue of limited availability of qualified and trained teachers (Plan International, 2016). Direct attacks on schools, teachers and students has paralysed the education system. Children returning to their areas of origin are often returning to communities without schools or teachers. Many children are also finding themselves in secondary displacements because their areas are still inaccessible or their houses have been occupied by IDPs, further hampering access to education (UNHCR, 2017).

Scale of the Issue

In Borno and Adamawa, the poor quality of the government schools causes children to not attend class. For example, only one-quarter of time in class is reportedly used for instruction (UNESCO, 2016). Topics to support teachers and children who are recovering from the crisis have not been systematically introduced in schools. Twenty-five per cent (5 of 20) of sites reported that none of the following recovery actions were introduced: peace education, conflict mitigation/resolution, natural disaster preparedness and risk reduction, health and hygiene, violence prevention, HIV prevention, landmine awareness, or early pregnancy.

The Nigeria Union of Teachers; reported that many teachers left the profession due to personal death threats (UN OCHA, 2016). More than 2,295 teachers have been killed during the conflict and 19,000 displaced (UNICEF, 2017). In Plan International Nigeria's assessment, 30 per cent of assessed schools (6 of 20) had unqualified teachers working for them. Forty-five per cent (9 of 20 sites) reported that all teachers formally registered at the school (qualified, hired teachers), while the remaining sites reported anywhere from zero to 60 per cent of teachers registered. The gap can be explained through the system of which to become a registered teacher in Nigeria. The

¹⁰ Recommendation from community feedback session in Borno State. 12 participants (seven males and five females) from MMC, Jere, Mafa and Kaga LGAs.

Nigerian Teachers Registration Council, a 3 year program, is expensive and most often unobtainable for most teachers. Fifty per cent (10 of 20 sites) reported teachers receiving less than 10 days of training. Of the training received, topics covered have included teachers behaviour, conduct, and responsibilities, teaching and learning, skills, psychosocial support, disaster preparedness, health and nutrition, hygiene, mine awareness, curriculum development, how to prepare lectures, lesson plans and school management, Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), Universal Basic Education (UBE) and UBE Microsoft Certified Educator (MCE) and Millennium Development Goals (MDG). 19 of 20 sites mentioned they need additional trainings, with half of the sites mentioning the need for computer class training and the other sites wanting both health and nutrition or peace education training.

Delayed salary payments of government teachers is causing high rates of teacher absenteeism (UN OCHA, May 31, 2017). In 30 per cent (6 of 20) of the sites assessed it was reported that teachers received their last payment as more than 2 months ago, while in 50 per cent (10 of 20 sites) teachers had only recently received payments for the previous month. All other teachers (4 of 20 sites) have expressed that they received their payments on time. Plan International Nigeria's assessment revealed improvements in salary payments, although many teachers are still experiencing payment delays. Twenty per cent (4 of 20 sites) reported that there are only minor repercussions for teacher absenteeism, where teachers may be asked to explain their absence and, only in rare cases, are they issued a warning. In 25 per cent (5 of 20) of sites, teachers reported that other teachers or the head teacher will cover the class in the case of a teacher absence.

Teachers resort to using local materials while teaching because they do not have basic learning materials. Seventy per cent (14 of 20) reported that they only use local materials to teach. Thirty per cent (6 of 20) of sites reported that they do not use any teaching materials.

Capacities, Coverage and Gaps

Teachers are untrained and need psychological support. Recent evidence shows that many children are experiencing psychosocial distress because of the insurgency (UN OCHA, 2016). However, Plan International Nigeria's assessment found that 85 per cent (17 of 20 sites) reported that there are no psychosocial support services available for teachers at school.

Excluded and out of school children have reduced access to quality education.

To meet Nigeria's global commitments and the learning needs of all children, youth and adults, the Government developed several policies (the National Policy on Education 2004, the National Policy on Gender in Basic Education 2007, and the National Policy on Early Childhood Development 2007), and enacted the Universal Basic Education (UBE) into law in 2004. While enrolment at pre-primary and primary levels have increased nationally, lack of adequate funding across the education sector continues to hamper progress (Adediran, 2015).

Prior to the conflict in Northeast Nigeria, enrolment and attendance rates in formal schools in the northeast were among the lowest in Nigeria, with girls particularly lagging behind (UN OCHA, 2016). The Nigerian Education Data Survey, supported by USAID indicates that net attendance rates for primary education in the northeast are 43 per cent for girls and 46 per cent for boys, compared with 67 per cent and 68 per cent nationally. In several states in the Northeast the figures are significantly lower. In Borno, data from 2015 showed that 17 per cent (15 per cent girls and 19 per cent boys) of school aged children were attending primary school and 13 per cent (15 per cent girls and 13 per cent boys) were attending Junior Secondary School. Figures are higher in Adamawa, where around 80 per cent of boys and 78 per cent of girls are attending primary school. However, only 35 per cent of boys and 25 per cent of girls go on to attend junior secondary school



Image 6: Girls taking part in the Needs Assessment in Kaleri

(USAID, 2015). In the Child Protection and Education needs assessment conducted by Plan International Nigeria, 95 per cent (19 of 20) of assessed schools reported the emergency had severely affected the education sector resulting in the closure of schools, children who have missed out on education for 7 months to 3 years, school drop-out (especially of girls).

For children living in areas recently targeted by insurgents, there are few educational opportunities. It is estimated that around 80 per cent of IDP children living in host communities receive little or no education, particularly in areas where schools are already congested. Children with special needs and disabilities, who even before the insurgency were poorly catered for in schools, have received no additional support (David Theobald, 2007). Lack of access to education can leave children more susceptible to abduction and recruitment into armed groups and can expose children to trauma (UNESCO, 2016).

Other barriers to education include: responsibilities in the home; earning an income; school fees, uniforms and textbooks; early marriage; stigma against those associated with Boko Haram and fear of returning to school; dangers in and around schools (for example, lack of school fences and the safety of female teachers and girls on route to school); and damaged schools (Plan International, 2016). The burden of finance is a barrier to access pre-primary formal education—parents are required to pay for uniforms, meals, transportation and PTA fees. Fifteen per cent (3 of 20) of sites reported that there were no fees for pre-primary and primary grades. Eighty-five per cent (17 of 20) of sites reported that schools collected fees ranging from 50 to 11,000 Naira.

Scale of the Issue

UNICEF estimates that more than 10.5 million children are out of school in Nigeria – the highest amount of children in the world who are not being educated (UNICEF, 2017). Plan International

Nigeria's assessment confirmed findings from other educational partners regarding non-attendance, drop out, and children out of school in the Northeast. Parents are reluctant to send their children, especially girls, to school. Seventy-five per cent (15 of 20) of assessed schools reported that young pregnant women and child mothers are most likely demographic to be excluded from education. Sixty per cent (12 of 20) of sites reported that girls are the least likely to participate in formal education.

Despite efforts by INGOs to reintegrate children back into formal schooling, 10 per cent (2 of 20) of assessed schools did not engage in any activity to encourage girls and boys to return to school. Communities are unable to identify the amount of out of school children. Fifty per cent (10 of 20) of sites were not able to estimate the number, or reported "many" children out of school. Classroom sizes are still overcrowded regardless of an increase in children who drop out of school. An influx of IDP children, school closures, and restricted movement cause the few functioning and accessible schools to be overcrowded. Accurate attendance data is difficult to gather in this context. Data shows that there is a range of nine to 340 students and one to six classes per grade.

The Nigerian Education Data Survey concluded that long treks to and from school in the Northeast causes non-attendance (USAID, 2015). Ten per cent (2 of 20) assessed sites reported that they do not have a school in their community and children must trek to another community for school. The assessed schools reported to be located 1 - 7 kilometres to a school (from 10 minutes to 1 hour walk).

Capacities, Coverage and Gaps

There is no vocational training in 65 per cent (13 of 20) of the assessed sites. Twenty-five per cent (5 of 20) of sites listed that they would like to learn business skills acquisition if they had access to training. Other options were immediate income generating activities like tailoring, knotting, mechanics, farming, and animal rearing. Girls reported that parents and husbands act as a barrier to accessing vocational training (20 per cent, 4 of 20 sites).

Non-formal education programmes that target out-of-school adolescents and youth unable to complete primary school are available in Nigeria. The programmes are managed by the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education (UNESCO, 2012). Support for these non-formal education programmes comes from UN agencies, federal and state institutions and non-governmental organisations. However, the programmes are underfunded, there is a lack of sufficient equipment, enrolment rates are low, and integrating learners from NFE to the formal system is challenging (Adediran, 2015). Non-formal education has been dramatically impacted by the conflict. The State Agency for Mass Education in Borno recently reported that 155 government centres out of 259 were still closed due to the insurgency (Human Rights Watch, 2016). In Plan International Nigeria's assessment, non-formal education was most often understood as Islamic studies by participants. Fifty-five per cent (11 of 20) of sites reported that they do not have access to non-formal education.

Parents are reluctant to send their children to school because they fear that their children will be abducted and have safety concerns (UN OCHA, 2016). Despite signing the Safe Schools Declaration in 2015, security forces cause children to be at risk due to their use primary and secondary schools (Bill Van Esveld, 2016). Seventy-five per cent (15 of 20) of assessed schools reported the presence of military forces in the area - but not inside schools

In addition to formal government run schools, there are also private schools available. While private schools attended by children from wealthy families are usually registered with the state and provide better quality education, many private schools operating in poorer areas are unapproved and often employ unqualified teachers (Adediran, 2015). In the Northeast, where 85 per cent of children are Muslim, private Islamic education is often chosen by parents over formal government schooling (USAID, 2015). While integrated schools exist that are recognised by the state, and combine Islamic education with the basic school subjects, the majority of Islamic schools are Tsangaya or Quranic - largely focused on Quranic recitation. Literacy, numeracy and life skills are rarely included. Many parents reject formal government education because it is sometimes seen as an attempt to “Christianize” populations in the north (Bill Van Esveld, 2016). Some parents place little value on formal education and chose not to send their children due to issues of quality (Moser, 2014). In Borno, Tsangaya/Quranic schools make up the majority of Islamic schools (Avelino, 2017). According to a study carried out in 2015, the total enrolment at these schools is estimated at over 9.5 million, concentrated in the mostly Muslim North (Creative Associates Case Study – Quranic Schools, 2015).

There is a high prevalence of violence against children in education.

Children enrolled in basic education in Nigeria are often victims of violence in schools that is physical, psychological, sexual, gender and health based. Physical violence (85 per cent) and psychological violence (50 per cent) accounted for most of the violence against children in schools (UNICEF and Federal Ministry of Education, 2007).

Scale of the Issue

In Plan International Nigeria’s needs assessment, multiple methods of punishment were reported in schools (see graph to the left). The only non-violent discipline reported is sweeping the school compound and cutting grass, but respondents indicated that children do these tasks in the hot sun for long periods of time. Eighty-five per cent (17 of 20) of sites reported bullying by teachers in school. The assessment revealed that children feel about positive female teachers and have negative feelings for male teachers. Ninety-five per cent (19 of 20) of children reported that they feel positive about their female teachers. One site reported negative feelings towards their female teachers, saying they felt “scared, they sometimes abuse and beat us.”¹¹ Children reported negative feelings towards male

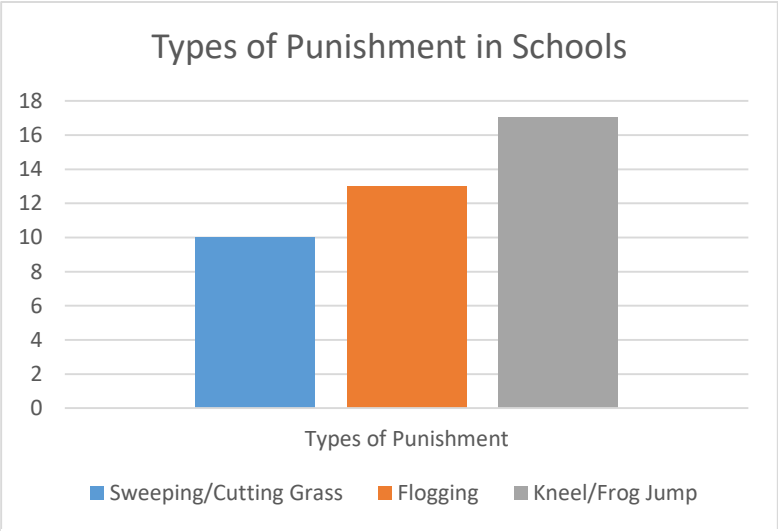


Table 5: Types of Punishment in Schools

¹¹ Site Report: Adamawa, Michika, Mahdzi, Watu

teachers, citing fear, harsh punishments, and bullying as the main causes. In a different survey, forty per cent (8 of 20) of sites reported feeling positive about their male teachers, citing that males are friendly and better teachers than females.

Capacities, Coverage and Gaps

The Ending Violence against Children in Schools report found that most learners will report cases of physical violence to school teachers (45.1 per cent) or to the head teacher (34.5 per cent). Students do not report cases of violence, especially physical and gender based violence, because they felt that nothing will be done to solve the issue. Most cases of rape are not reported, causing teachers to be unaware of incidents of rape (UNICEF and Federal Ministry of Education, 2007).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The historical under-development of Northeast Nigeria and government spending on military operations cause child protection, education, nutrition, and economic needs to be unmet. The current crisis caused these issues to intensify with poverty and food security as underlying factors.

Violent terrorist attacks and counter-insurgency military operations are not ceasing despite significant gains against Boko Haram. Tireless efforts by humanitarian actors to support IDPs, host communities and returnees cannot solve the persistent and changing needs. As the Northeast region is threatened by a drought, a holistic and integrated approach is needed to sufficiently respond to the disaster. Plan International Nigeria recommends that agencies integrate their programs to coordinate child protection, education, nutrition, and economic strengthening activities.

This assessment revealed the urgent need for **more targeted, holistic and long term programming** to effectively address the compounding vulnerabilities of children and their families in Borno and Adamawa States. Interventions should be delivered in more innovative ways in order to reach the most vulnerable children and tackle complex problems such as early pregnancy and child marriage. It is therefore recommended to adopt an integrated and flexible programming approach which brings together child protection, education, nutrition, and economic strengthening actions.

The key recommendations listed in the following paragraphs are suggested by assessed communities and technical experts at Plan International Nigeria after careful analysis of primary and secondary data. The recommendations are intended for communities, policymakers and humanitarian actors seeking to respond to the complex needs of children, youth, and their families affected by the Boko Haram crisis in Northeast Nigeria. The recommendations should integrate sectors to respond holistically, and not as standalone interventions.

Strengthen the protective environment around children at the home and within the community. The key findings show that children and youth seek support from parents, caregivers, community and religious leaders and friends when they feel stressed, worried or upset. A key strategy to preventing violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation is to reinforce positive social connections between parents/caregivers, community and religious leaders, and to equip children and youth with information to support their friends and connect them to the people and services they need. This intervention could include the following activities:

- Provide parenting skills and psychosocial support¹² to help parents and caregivers understand how stress affects their ability to care for their children and how to develop positive coping mechanisms for their own stress and that of their children's.
- Integration of nutrition education into parenting skills is essential. 100 per cent (20 of 20) sites assessed reported lack of awareness of good Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices and asked for more awareness raising to education families about how to detect signs of malnutrition in children.

¹² Recommendation from community feedback session in Adamawa State. 12 participants (seven males and five females) from Michika, Askira/Uba, Mubi North, Hong, and Mubi South LGAs.

- Education and awareness raising on the risks of child marriage and early pregnancy and the importance of continued education for adolescent girls.
- Education and awareness raising on decent work for children that is appropriate to their age, ability and level of maturity, and that does not interfere with education or their development, but in fact fosters responsibility and a sense of self-worth.
- Work with community and religious leaders to raise awareness on girls' and boys' protection rights with a special focus on GBV (including child marriage) and child labour. Support these leaders to lead local initiatives on peace building and social cohesion to prevent discrimination, stigmatization and exclusion.
- Support children and youth to develop skills in positive coping mechanisms and strengthen peer support groups, networks and youth-driven local initiatives.
- Provide a safe environment for children and young people to play, meet and interact with each other (separate safe spaces for children and youth).¹³

In Plan International Nigeria's assessment, communities reported significant risks to children of violence, abuse, and exploitation when walking to school and the market. Agencies need to work with education and market stakeholders to strengthen child safeguarding practices and ensure children are not put at increased risks when they are moving. For example, discussing road safety with children and putting up signs to "slow down" near schools, encouraging children to move in groups to and from school, and to stay away from markets unless accompanied by an adult.

Build capacity of community based structures to respond safely and confidentially to child protection and sexual violence survivors, and refer to appropriate service providers. A culture of silence and fear of stigmatization prevents survivors of sexual violence from seeking support and services. When they do choose to report, children and youth (both male and female) report sexual violence to security personnel (ex: police and military), community leaders, and parents and caregivers. Interventions responding to survivors of sexual violence should integrate capacity building and accountability mechanisms to these community level responders. This community-driven behaviour to seek help should be reinforced, and key stakeholders within the community need to be trained to identify signs of abuse and violence; actions to take when an individual reports sexual violence; key principles and standards for gender based violence prevention and response; referral pathways and available services; the importance of medical care; confidentiality and respect.¹⁴ Community stakeholders and humanitarian actors particularly need to be trained to care for child survivors of violence.

In addition, accountability measures should also be put in place to monitor community based responses to GBV and CP issues to ensure key principles such as taking a survivor-centred approach, safety of the survivor and their children, confidentiality, respect, non-discrimination, and strengthening of existing formal and informal systems are upheld. Community stakeholders

¹³ Recommendation from community feedback session in Borno State. 12 participants (seven males and five females) from MMC, Jere, Mafa and Kaga LGAs.

¹⁴ Recommendation from community feedback session in Borno State. 12 participants (seven males and five females) from MMC, Jere, Mafa and Kaga LGAs.

should be integrated into the referral pathway to validate their role in prevention and response mechanisms, and to ensure they are engaged as partners in developing strategies related to GBV prevention and response – as long as this can be done without causing additional harm to the community or survivors.¹⁵

Provide more comprehensive GBV response services. In the Plan International Nigeria Assessment, every community was unable to name formal mechanisms used to respond to GBV. In 2016, 5,698 women and girls were trained in skills acquisition and livelihood support, 24,860 dignity kits were provided to vulnerable women and girls, and 66,632 persons were sensitized on key GBV and RH topics (GBV Sub-sector Working Group, 2017). Life-saving responses for survivors of GBV includes psychosocial support (PSS), specialised health care - including clinical management of rape (CMR), access to justice, safety and security, but are lacking or are non-existent in many LGAs (UN OCHA, 2016). Therefore, agencies should increase GBV responses and strengthen existing actions. GBV interventions should include the following: (UNFPA, 2015)

- Life-saving healthcare services, with an emphasis on clinical management of rape
- Mental and psychosocial support focused on healing, empowerment and recovery.
- Strengthened safety and security measures to prevent and mitigate GBV and protect survivors.
- Partner with legal and justice sectors to protect survivors' rights and support their access to justice.
- Distribute dignity kits to affected populations to reduce vulnerability and connect women and girls to information and support services.
- Target women and adolescent girls (especially survivors) with socio-economic support to mitigate the risk of GBV as part of a multi-sector response.

In addition, agencies should work to strengthen the referral system at the community and ward level to ensure Standard Operating Procedures are in place to respond in a timely, safe and confidential manner. This should apply in cases of both child protection and GBV.

According to a community feedback session in Adamawa State, participants recommended humanitarian agencies provide basic sensitization on gender stereotypes, traditional harmful practices like female genital mutilation and forced marriage, and rape/sexual assault.¹⁶

The validation exercise in Mubi with Child Protection agencies noted the need to mention whilst responsive action to GBV is necessary, it is important to also consider areas of prevention, for example training of actors (community leaders, health and legal service providers, etc.) on GBV Core Competencies. Protection needs to main streamed to other activities such as WASH during planning to ensure both GBV prevention and response.

Promote access to gender and age appropriate integrated services for at-risk children and youth. UASC and children involved in the worst forms of child labour (ex: children

¹⁵ Recommendation from community feedback session in Adamawa State. 12 participants (seven males and five females) from Michika, Askira/Uba, Mubi North, Hong, and Mubi South LGAs.

¹⁶ Recommendation from community feedback session in Adamawa State. 12 participants (seven males and five females) from Michika, Askira/Uba, Mubi North, Hong, and Mubi South LGAs.

currently/formerly associated with armed groups and forces, children engaged in transnational sex, and hard wage labour) should be identified and provided with holistic services to mitigate stigmatization and exclusion and to support their social, educational and economic reintegration into their communities.

- Communities, with the support of humanitarian actors, should conduct awareness raising on risks of children engaged in hawking and street begging and actively restrict opening of brothel houses. Community and religious leaders should educate community members on the importance of accepting children formerly associated with Boko Haram.¹⁷
- Child protection agencies should provide comprehensive case management inclusive of family tracing and reunification services and provision of alternative care. Alternative care should be focused on what is best for the child – not every child will be able or willing to enter into formal foster care arrangements. Alternative solutions, such as supervised independent living should be considered in responses to children, in particular, former combatants who find immediate integration into communities and families difficult.
- Explore strategies with foster caregivers, community members, and the Ministry of Social Welfare and Women's Affairs on strengthening foster care arrangements and preventing exploitation of fostered children.



Image 7: Boys during the Needs Assessment in Mafa

- Link vulnerable children, youth and their families to livelihood activities such as income generating activities, business skills, literacy/numeracy classes, and case transfer.
- Support children and their families to reintegrate children back into formal education – and when not possible, link with informal education and accelerated learning programs, catch-up and/or bridging classes to provide a chance for over age children who have missed out on education to integrate back into formal education. Incorporate life skills education subjects and psychosocial support to help children cope with their difficult situation.
- Work with employers and community based structures to improve working conditions for child labourers and improve the monitoring and reporting mechanism of these children, and providing case workers to work with street children and night-workers at night and early morning.
- Support the coordination of national, sub-national and local efforts to prevent and respond to the worst forms of child labour (including recruitment into armed groups and use by CJTF). Where possible, link with advocacy efforts to influence policy reform.

¹⁷ Recommendation from community feedback session in Borno State. 12 participants (seven males and five females) from MMC, Jere, Mafa and Kaga LGAs.

- Support unaccompanied children and child-headed households to link to nutrition services that can educate on food preparation the importance of a balanced diet.

Create a safe, conducive and non-violent teaching and learning environment. An investment in the safety of the teaching and learning environment is essential to contribute to increased access to and retention of students and teachers in education. This must start from the education infrastructure, that must meet the minimum Safe School Guidelines, but must also be complemented with soft interventions including through school safety plans, codes of conduct, school related gender based violence prevention strategies and reporting mechanisms, strengthening linkages with child protection community based services and structures, and child protection including GBV training of military and police personnel deployed inside and nearby schools.

Support school feeding programmes that are linked with local small-scale farmer production, schools gardens and nutrition, health, and hygiene education. School gardens can contribute to increasing the relevance and quality of education, improving the children's and their parents' knowledge of food production techniques and nutrition, and stimulate the development of home gardens. Sustainable school feeding approaches can improve child nutrition and education and increase retention of students.

Increase support for teachers and education personnel. Teachers and education personnel play an important role in enabling children's educational access and psychosocial wellbeing. Key education interventions should include the provision of certified professional development courses covering the skills required to deliver quality education adapted to the diverse learning needs of children caught in the middle of crisis, as well as to respond to their psychosocial concerns. Specific measures should be identified and implemented in order to encourage the participation and retention in schools of female teachers and education personnel who are at greater risk of GBV. Those measures can include: psychosocial support through peer to peer support groups and/or referral, teacher mentoring programmes, additional support for deployed teachers such as allowance for accommodation, transportation, early childhood care and development.¹⁸ The validation assessment with Education partners in Mubi furthermore stress the need for the State Ministry of Education to take responsibility of recruiting, promoting, and disciplining teachers thereby also take responsibility in setting policies to train teachers on good behavioural practices.

Provide alternative and non-formal education opportunities for out of school children, adolescents and youth and support girls' participation and enrolment in school. Flexible and age appropriate non formal and alternative education programmes opportunities including accelerated education, vocational training and apprenticeships complemented by life skills, literacy and numeracy can provide learning opportunities for children

¹⁸ Recommendation from community feedback session in Adamawa State. 12 participants (seven males and five females) from Michika, Askira/Uba, Mubi North, Hong, and Mubi South LGAs.

who have missed out on education because of the crisis and for out of school adolescents and youth. Measures to address the barriers to girls' education should be identified and implemented.¹⁹ This includes increasing the community awareness on and for girls' education, establishing school based GBV focal points, gender separated WASH facilities, feminine hygiene kits, girls' clubs, and the recruitment and deployment of female teachers/educators.²⁰ Specific measures to encourage the participation of adolescent girls including adolescent mothers associated with armed groups should include early childhood care and development, parenting education programmes and referral to specialised services.

Particular attention should also be paid to children located in remote areas with schools that accommodate large numbers of students as a result of displacement. Agencies should train community teachers if available or deploy motivated and qualified teachers to remote schools, providing textbooks and learning and teaching materials, and construct temporary learning spaces and/or classroom rehabilitation. The Ministry of Education should also be wary of finding mitigation solutions against the form of abuse against adolescent girls as a result of high intake of students with regard to non-availability of accommodation.

Advocate with state level stakeholders and community leaders to adopt policies, legislations and practices that address violence, abuse and neglect against children and to protect education from attack. Nigeria domesticated the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child through the Child's Rights Act in 2003. However, as the Child's Right Act hasn't been adopted by all States, there is a variation for the legal status of children on issues like the age of marriage (in the Northeast there is no legal minimum age, however, it is generally understood to be around the age of 13) (Right to Education Project, 1999). The practice of child marriage is deeply influenced by religious and cultural beliefs especially in the Islamic dominated Northeast of Nigeria. Thus, it is recommended that programs aimed at addressing child marriage and other GBV related concerns develop targeted advocacy messages and capacity building interventions targeting religious and traditional leaders at the community level to influence their constituencies. Humanitarian actors should also work with the State Assembly and the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development to develop policies and legislations that outlaw child marriage and provide protection for children.²¹

On August 22nd, 2017 UNICEF released a report entitled "Use of children as 'human bomb' rising in north east Nigeria." The report expressed concern about the "cruel and calculated" use of children as PBIEDs.

"Since 1 January 2017, 83 children have been used as 'human bombs'; 55 were girls, most often under 15 years old; 27 were boys, and one was a baby strapped to a girl" (UNICEF, 2017).

¹⁹ Recommendation from community feedback session in Adamawa State. 12 participants (seven males and five females) from Michika, Askira/Uba, Mubi North, Hong, and Mubi South LGAs.

²⁰ Recommendation from community feedback session in Adamawa State. 12 participants (seven males and five females) from Michika, Askira/Uba, Mubi North, Hong, and Mubi South LGAs.

²¹ Recommendation from community feedback session in Adamawa State. 12 participants (seven males and five females) from Michika, Askira/Uba, Mubi North, Hong, and Mubi South LGAs.

While reports like this are important awareness raising efforts, little has been done to prevent children from being used in PBIED attacks. In July 2017, a young boy (10) and his brother (7) were grazing cattle near Jere, Borno State when Boko Haram insurgents captured the oldest boy



Image 8: Community Feedback session

and strapped him with explosives. He was then sent home, where when his parents attempted to remove the explosives, the bombs were detonated, leaving the older child dead and the brother severely injured. Improvements must be made toward active prevention messaging, including information and coordination with military on what you should do – how and where - to seek help should your child become a victim.

Further advocacy measures should also be taken to influence the Ministry of Education and other government

bodies to support protective measures - including the implementation of the Safe Schools Declaration and the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use During Armed Conflict – and to identify and support measures being implemented at the school-level to protect education from attack, including ensuring funding for safety and security plans is in place. Humanitarian agencies can also support the collection of reliable data on attacks and military use of schools and universities and make these violations known to the public.

Improve access to child protection and education services through provision of integrated mobile programming.

Accessibility and insecurity have characterised the crisis. Many areas require military escort to reach and only in certain areas is access possible beyond the main roads and towns. Insecurity can prevent individuals from moving freely to and from hubs or central areas where services are delivered. Military checkpoints and curfews (both morning and evening) restrict movements, and fear of attack/ambush and land mines can also discourage travel. Lack of accessibility in the Northeast has led many humanitarian actors to focus their response actions in IDP camps and host communities where accessibility is predictable and operations can be carried out with a relative degree of safety and security. Static programs rely on this level of stability – particularly for actions that require construction or that bring large groups of people together (ex: classrooms, Child Friendly Spaces (CFS), stabilization centres, etc.). However, more than 80 per cent of IDPs reside in host communities. Static approaches typical to camp and refugee contexts fail to reach affected individuals across urban and rural communities and leaves large areas un-reached by humanitarian aid. Individuals who find themselves far away from static service provision and unable to walk far distances due to insecurity or ability, may be missed entirely. As of June 2017, 95,174 returnees were documented from neighbouring countries, and displacement data continues to change as individuals displaced within Nigeria return to their place of origin (International Organization for Migration, June 2017). Upon return, affected populations find homes burnt, services unavailable, non-functioning markets and health facilities, mines in agricultural lands, and increased vulnerability to attack. Many returnees are displaced multiple times in search of shelter.

Mobile services can provide life-saving protection, education, nutrition and health response to affected children, youth and their families residing beyond the typical areas of operation for NGOs. Plan International Nigeria has begun implementing this approach in Southern Borno and Northern Adamawa and has received very positive feedback from affected communities. Not only are more children reached through this approach, but humanitarian agencies can avoid spending large amounts of money on construction and infrastructure in areas that are at continued risk of attack.

Conduct additional research on risks faced by children and youth in the

Northeast. The following paragraphs detail potential areas for research given the key findings and recommendations above.

- Issues of **child labour**, including the worst forms of child labour (use in armed groups and forces and for sexual exploitation) are consistent threats to children and youth in the Northeast. As children, youth and their families continue to return to Nigeria from neighbouring countries, and as IDPs are encouraged to return to newly accessible areas, it will be prudent to understand how forced migration (including within Nigeria in relation to child separation to attend unregistered Quranic schools) influences child labour practices for girls and boys uniquely, and what can be done to prevent and respond to it in both the short and long term.

In relation to this, sexual violence and association with armed groups (in particular, Boko Haram) has resulted in exclusion and stigmatization. A research could reveal the linkage between the culture of silence behind sexual violence and association with armed groups.

- The assessment revealed links between poverty and household income, and child protection and education outcomes. In all 20 sites assessed, children work before and after school (if they attend school at all). Sixty per cent (12 of 20 sites) of children in assessed sites reported feeling negatively about their work.

“We don’t like it. It is stressful. We feel sad. It is not safe. It is not satisfactory. It is hectic. It is bad, because it takes away our education opportunities. We feel stressed and upset. We feel stressed but there are no other options.”

Children report that they work to help the family to meet their basic needs, but are engaged in harsh and dangerous work. There was not enough data collected on viable economic strengthening interventions and opportunities to establish clear findings in the assessment. Therefore, Plan International Nigeria recommends that a study on sustainable livelihood interventions – including cash transfer - be conducted. This study should be conducted at the **community** level because access to markets, money transfer modalities, and demand/supply of various trades varies greatly at the community level. The study should also examine any potential harm to vulnerable households and communities because of cash injections.

Youth Economic Empowerment is a pillar of Plan International Nigeria’s sub-regional response to the Lake Chad crises. The study should look specifically at the feasibility of targeting only youth with an intervention, and to gauge whether broader livelihoods strategy can have a greater impact on child protection and education.

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KEY LINKS

The tools used in this assessment have been made available to support all government and humanitarian actors responding to the crisis in the Northeast to access helpful resources and methodologies. The tools can be accessed on the following [Link](#). For any questions and feedback please contact [Katharina Witkowski](#), Emergency Response Manager for Plan International Nigeria.



About Plan International

Plan International is an independent child rights and humanitarian organisation committed to children living a life free of poverty, violence and injustice. We actively unite children, communities and other people who share our mission to make positive lasting changes in children's and young people's lives. We support children to gain the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to claim their rights to a fulfilling life, today and in the future.

We place a specific focus on girls and women, who are most often left behind. We have been building powerful partnerships for children for more than 75 years, and are now active in more than 70 countries.