Key messages

- The INGO Forum is concerned that not enough attention is being paid to the ongoing and deepening humanitarian crisis in North-East Nigeria, where 4 million people are experiencing acute food insecurity and 1.5 million people have been displaced by the conflict and are in need of immediate humanitarian assistance.
- The ongoing conflict is continuing to displace people. Conditions in most areas of displacement are not suitable for supporting safe and voluntary returns due to insecurity, lack of basic services and absence of humanitarian actors in these areas.
- The most urgent needs identified are: Food, Protection, Livelihoods
- While needs at critical stage include Health, Nutrition, Shelter/NFIs, Education, WASH and Psycho-Social Support
- Returns are happening to a limited extent only in some parts of Adamawa State where 15% of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) come from.
- There is extremely limited coverage and funding of the humanitarian response.
- The INGOs have scaled-up their assistance and are ready to continue supporting Nigeria in tackling the humanitarian consequences of the conflict in the North-East, in cooperation with the Government of Nigeria, Nigerian civil society and other partners.
Current humanitarian response and priority needs

- There are very few humanitarian actors responding to the needs of the population affected and displaced by the ongoing conflict in North-East Nigeria. Despite the arrival of several new humanitarian-focused INGOs in the country and the moderate scale-up of the UN, the coverage of the response is still extremely limited. The Government’s response targets only government camps (10% of the IDPs\(^1\)), while the assistance being provided to IDPs staying in host communities and informal settlements remains largely incomplete\(^2\). Given funding and access limitations, INGOs are providing assistance in certain sectors, but not able to reach all IDPs nor cover all needs.

- Most of the IDPs rely on their own limited resources, on the charity of private individuals and on harmful coping mechanisms\(^3\) to rent a place\(^4\) and feed themselves every day.

- At this point, most basic needs are still uncovered, including first and foremost food security, safe spaces and livelihoods. Other basic needs are at a critical stage including access to health care and treatment for malnutrition, shelter and household items, education, access to potable water and sanitation, and most importantly grounds for recovery from the trauma resulting from having experienced extreme violence.

- Therefore, based on the analysis of the various assessments conducted in the North-East thus far in 2015\(^5\), the INGO Forum in Nigeria identifies the following priority needs:

**Most urgent needs: Food, Protection, Livelihoods**

**Critical stage: Health, Nutrition, Shelter/NFIs, Education, WASH, Psycho-Social Support**\(^6\)

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\(^1\) Mainly women and children joining camps as a last resort

\(^2\) As an example, only 19% of the IDPs in Adamawa express having received food aid at some point either from the Government or from private individuals/communities (churches, etc).

\(^3\) Based on INGO assessments, the IDPs react by reducing the number of meals to less than 2 per day, stopping any form of educational activities, including sending children to work, and resorting to many forms of petty trade like wood fetching/selling, tailoring or motorbike repair. Such lack of livelihood opportunities and food needs might lead to increased criminality and insecurity in these areas.

\(^4\) Around half the IDPs (63% in Yobe, 46% in Adamawa) pay a rent to stay in host communities and informal settlements in communal buildings.

\(^5\) INGO and UN/IOM assessments

\(^6\) In Maiduguri, where the situation is slightly different from other locations, because of the already overcrowded urban setting, the most urgent needs are: Food, Health and WASH, while Nutrition, Protection, Shelter, Education, PSS and Livelihoods are in a critical stage.
INGOs current intervention and perspectives

- The immediate and urgent needs of the affected displaced populations, especially children and women, should be addressed as a priority. INGOs recognise that the primary responsibility to respond to such a humanitarian situation lies with the Government, but complementary support from national and international actors, with expertise in humanitarian assistance, is available.

- The Members of the INGO Forum in Nigeria would like to assure the Government of Nigeria that they are ready to continue supporting the humanitarian response in the North-East by:
  - Complementing the Government’s response to answer the needs of the most vulnerable affected by the conflict;
  - Putting forward humanitarian expertise on humanitarian principles and standards, sharing best practices and lessons learnt;
  - Advocating for the improvement of the humanitarian response, both in terms of coverage and quality.

- Together, the Members of the Forum currently work in the following humanitarian sectors: Health, Nutrition, WASH, Shelter/Non-food items, Food security, Education, Livelihoods and Protection (including gender-based violence and child protection). The INGOs are promoting and advocating for an integrated approach, so IDPs can have their most basic needs covered in all sectors.

- INGOs face various constraints in delivering assistance, including: security concerns and limited funding, leading to a constrained scale of operations and human resources capacity, restricted access to many affected areas due to insecurity and difficulty of deploying humanitarian staff and relief materials, low levels of in country humanitarian expertise and experience, limited understanding of humanitarian and civil society mandates and yet to be developed humanitarian information and coordination capacity.

- To answer these challenges, the INGOs are individually and collectively engaging in capacity reinforcement of their local staff, by conducting trainings in country, as well as increasing monitoring by experienced international staff. They are also engaging with local partners, including NEMA, SEMAs and local NGOs to build their capacity and provide expertise on humanitarian standards of assistance through technical support and advocacy. In addition, the INGOs and the Forum support coordination and information sharing by organising INGO working groups at management and technical levels and by participating in and advocating for an improvement of the coordination mechanisms co-led by the Government and the UN both at Federal and State levels. The INGOs are also preparing a joint assessment of humanitarian needs in the North-East in areas affected by displacement.
The INGOs have scaled up their assistance significantly over the past 6 to 12 months. They are ready to continue their support to the deployment and improvement of a stronger and better coordinated humanitarian response to address the needs in the North-East, provided funding is made available for a reasonable period of time, allowing them to program their activities effectively and efficiently. They are also calling on all actors, including the Government of Nigeria, Nigerian civil society and the international community to remain engaged in addressing the humanitarian consequences of the conflict in the North-East.
Inaccessible Areas, Security, Returns and Early Recovery in Areas of Return

- Some communities that include very vulnerable individuals (women, children, elderly and people with disabilities), who are or were formerly under the control of Boko Haram in remote areas, are still inaccessible and remain untouched by humanitarian assistance, although in dire need of help. **More secure and stable conditions are required for humanitarian actors to deploy assistance in these areas in a demilitarized context.**

- **Security incidents continue** throughout the North East, specifically in Borno, Adamawa, Yobe and Gombe States. **Since the end of May 2015**, more than 100 people have been killed in gun attacks and suicide blasts by suspected Boko Haram members, resorting to terrorist attacks targeting public places or gatherings.

- Although some returns have been reported among the IDPs, the **overwhelming majority of the displaced are not yet going back to their areas of origin**, except in some parts of Adamawa.

- In their areas of intervention, the INGOs note:
  - Borno (Maiduguri): no visible returns. Project beneficiaries are there. More arrivals coming into Maiduguri following liberation of territories in Borno State.
  - Yobe (Damaturu and rural areas): no visible returns. IDPs are remaining in the locations where they have been identified.
  - Gombe (city and surrounding areas): IDP communities stay despite a few “test trips” home: most IDPs are remaining.
  - Bauchi (city and surrounding areas): IDP communities stay despite a few “test trips” home: most IDPs are remaining.
  - Adamawa (Yola and surrounding areas): many movements of IDPs towards their regions of origin in northern Adamawa, mostly to urban areas closer to their homes. Most of the “returnees” are women and children, as many men are blocked at checkpoints, suspected to be Boko Haram members, or remain behind in the IDP sites. Returns are an epiphenomenon limited to four LGAs and widespread destruction of homes and

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7 Two weeks at the time of report.
8 15% of the total official number of IDPs are coming from Adamawa. The concerned return areas are Mubi South, Maiha, Hong and Girei LGAs.
infrastructure in areas of return is preventing people from returning to their original homes.

- Most of the IDPs express that they would obviously like to go home, but cannot because of 1) lack of security and 2) lack of livelihood opportunities in the affected areas (extensive damage to their land, infrastructures and private properties, which leads to a general sense of “nothing to go back to”).

- When and where returns do take place, livelihoods and reconstruction support will be necessary (seeds, tools, building materials, provision of basic services and so on). Given the acute food insecurity (IPC 3 and 4), most of the IDPs will consume the seeds if given any at this point, so supplying food to cover needs at least until the next harvest is also critical.

- Additionally, conflict sensitivity, dispute resolution and natural resource management will be a key aspect of any future interventions in the area: in some areas of return, there is a high likelihood of tensions and reprisals between and within communities. This is due to perceptions and accusations of collaboration with parties to the conflict, takeover of land and property, etc.

- Based on their work with the affected communities and on the observed violence of the continuing conflict, the INGOs do not expect a rapid movement of return of the IDPs to their places of origin for people originating from Borno (68% of the official 1.5 million IDPs) and Yobe (11%).

- According to international standards, the return of displaced persons to their places of origin must be voluntary, well-informed, safe, respectful of human dignity and sustainable. The humanitarian community should ensure such minimum standards are met and that returnees have access to services and livelihood opportunities in areas of return. Additionally, the fact that the vast majority of the displaced cannot cover their most basic needs by accessing basic services where they are displaced, due to the extremely limited response, is, in itself pushing people to return, even if the above conditions are not met.

- Humanitarian actors should have realistic expectations about the end of this conflict and the necessity to provide a safe environment and sustainable solutions to the displaced populations.
Some INGOs are already supporting IDPs who have moved back to their regions of origin in Adamawa. In other locations, INGOs are ready to follow the movement of their beneficiaries and of the most vulnerable people as needed when they do decide to return. Nevertheless, INGOs are mindful of Do-no-harm principle and of their humanitarian responsibility to protect civilians already made extremely vulnerable by the ongoing conflict. Therefore, INGOs will not engage in any process that could be perceived by the affected populations as an encouragement to go back to areas considered unsafe for humanitarian assistance, hence for civilians to return.

Humanitarian situation: a few facts

IDP and host community profiles

- **1,491,706 internally displaced persons** (194,145 households) identified in north-eastern Nigeria, spread across the states of Borno (63% of the total IDP population), Adamawa (15%), Yobe (9.4%), Gombe, Bauchi and Taraba. New IDP communities, settlements and scattered families continue to be identified; the third round of the International Organisation of Migration’s Displacement Tracking Matrix does not yet represent the total number of IDPs in the north-east.
  
  o **Source:** DTM IOM/Government, 3rd Round, April 2015, INGO assessments

- **57% of the IDP population are children** and 28% are less than 5 years old, which means that around **855,000 children have been displaced, with half of them less than five years old.**
  
  o **Source:** DTM IOM/Government, 3rd Round, April 2015

- The IDPs’ areas of origin are Borno (68%), Adamawa (15%) and Yobe (11%).
  
  o **Source:** DTM IOM/Government, 3rd Round, April 2015

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9 In Borno, Maiduguri LGA is hosting the highest number of IDPs (592,272) whereas most of the internally displaced persons in Adamawa have been identified in Girei (36,921), Yola North (33,517) and Yola South (24,463). In Yobe the majority of IDPs are in Damaturu (36,743) and Potiskum (27,415). In Gombe, the Gombe LGA is hosting the highest concentration of internally displaced persons (12,240). In Taraba, most IDPs have been identified in Wukari (10,638) and Gassol (9,566) LGAs. 78% of IDPs identified in Taraba have been displaced by communal clashes that had taken place in Taraba or in the neighboring states of Plateau and Nasarawa.
- **168,100 Nigerian refugees** in neighbouring countries (100,000 in Niger; 50,000 in Cameroon; 18,100 in Chad) and **135,900 IDPs in Niger, Cameroon and Chad** (50,000 in Niger, 81,000 in Cameroon and 4,900 in Chad).
  - Source: UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Nigeria Situation: Operational context map (29 May 2015), 1 June 2015

- In Yola, IDPs from Borno and the border communities of Adamawa have been **displaced since late 2013 or early 2014**, while over 45% of IDPs have been displaced more than twice.
  - Source: Oxfam, November 2014, Assessment of Escalating Humanitarian Needs Due to Increased Influx of IDPs into Yola and its Environs

- In Nigeria, **10% of people displaced** by the conflict in the north-east **live in government camps**, while **90% live in host communities and informal settlements** (IOM: 89.9% in host families / 10.1% in camps). Population movement continues and humanitarian assistance needs to adapt to a changing situation.
  - Source: DTM IOM/Government, 3rd Round, April 2015, Several reports by INGOs, numerous press articles and NEMA Facebook page

- **IDPs living within host communities rarely receive adequate support** compared to those in camps.
  - Source: Food and Agriculture Organization, Draft Food Security and Nutrition Assessment of the Conflict Affected Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the North-East States of Nigeria (Adamawa, Borno, Gombe and Taraba States), January 2015

- In Yobe, **67% of the host families have hosted IDPs for more than three months**, while **69% of the host communities are farmers**.

**Food security and malnutrition**

- **In all affected states**, IDPs identify food as their most pressing need. In at least 90% of IDP households in Adamawa State, food was universally cited as an urgent priority. More than 44% of respondents said they had just one week’s worth of food remaining, and **less than 20% had received food aid**. IDPs request food assistance (in kind or cash/vouchers) or livelihood support to make money themselves.

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10 16% are civil servants, the rest being small business.
Between 3.5 and 4 million people will face difficulty securing adequate food supplies in 2015 with food insecurity peaking in August, particularly as the vast majority of IDPs were unable to prepare and cultivate the land for this current rainy season. This means that food assistance will be necessary until the next harvest in October 2016, while complementary low-season farming will need to be strongly encouraged and supported. This inability to meet minimum food requirements is expected to result in increased levels of acute malnutrition among the worst affected households.  

Source: Fews Net, 27 March 2015, “Intense conflict limits food availability and access in regions bordering Lake Chad”

Fews Net, which has been launching alerts since 2014, reports that between April and September, more areas in the northeast will face Crisis acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3). Between July and September, areas in Borno (including greater Maiduguri), southern Yobe and northern Adamawa worst affected by conflict will face Emergency acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 4) as most poor resident households in these areas experience even larger food consumption gaps in their diet, and increased risk for malnutrition and excess mortality.  

Source: Fews Net, April 2015, NIGERIA Food Security Outlook, April to September 2015

60% of the IDPs in camps and host communities are not eating adequately nutritious foods.  

Source: Food and Agriculture Organization, January 2015, Draft Food Security and Nutrition Assessment of the Conflict Affected Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the North-East States of Nigeria (Adamawa, Borno, Gombe and Taraba States)

12% of children under 5 years old suffer from acute malnutrition in the north-east, while in Maiduguri global acute malnutrition rates reach up to 29% in some displaced communities.  

Source: Source: Action Against Hunger, April 2015, Key findings, Rapid Assessment Follow-Up, in MMC and Jere LGAs, Borno State

Protection and Education

Women report facing various risks, especially around the camps and at night, while having no safe spaces to discuss and address the risks of sexual violence, including confidential services for victims of sexual abuse. One of the reasons stated for not being willing to talk about such risks or abuses was: “we cannot say anything bad about this community. They will think we are ungrateful. Even if we are beaten, we will be seen as ungrateful.”

The conflict has resulted in the separation of children from their parents or usual care givers. **85% of the communities in Adamawa report separated children** among them, with demonstrated underestimation of their numbers by the communities.


The conflict is reported to have prompted a **change in children’s behaviour**, with all communities finding children more **sad and worried**. Girls are reported to develop **anti-social behaviour** and engaging in unequal and **potentially exploitative sexual activity**, while boys are described as committing more crimes and being aggressive.


The **majority of IDP households with children of school age in Adamawa are unable to send their children to school**, with over 70% citing lack of money as the obstacle to their doing so. Focus groups discussions with young boys and girls revealed that their **major area of concern was their education**, considered an entry-door to livelihood opportunities. Some had registered for their final year exams but feared they would be unable to take them.

- *Source: Mercy Corps, Rapid Assessment Report, Adamawa, March 2015*

### Shelter and non-food items (NFIs)

- IDPs are often settled in unfinished or communal buildings, which the majority of then have to rent. Others build temporary shelter with wood and other natural materials. **Shelter is generally assessed as in very poor condition**, frequently lacking floors, window fittings, ceilings and securable doors, which **constitutes a safety issue**.
  - *Various INGO assessments in all locations*

- Only 10% in some informal settlements in Adamawa would have received clothing or other non-food items, including shelter materials. Most IDPs lack basic household items such as mattresses, blankets, and cooking pots. Soap and hygienic materials are also extremely limited, with almost no reported mosquito nets.
  - *Source: Mercy Corps, Rapid Assessment Report, Adamawa, March 2015*

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11 often described as being quiet or not wanting to interact with people.
12 often described as girls “following men for money.”
Health and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

- **Malaria, diarrhoea, cough/cold/fever, measles, pregnancy** related issues and **malnutrition** are among the reported health challenges for IDPs in Adamawa, due to lack of mosquito nets, poor excreta disposal, poor hygiene practices and congestion in the IDP settlements. More than **90% of households** surveyed reported being **affected by malaria**.
  
  o **Source:** IRC, March 2015, Multi-sectorial Needs Assessment Report, Yola, Nigeria (Basic Needs, Environmental Health, Health, Protection)
  
  o **Source:** Mercy Corps, March 2015, Rapid Assessment Report, Adamawa

- In Maiduguri, more than **50% of households report that they do not have latrines** and the percentage of **IDPs having access to potable water ranges from 8% to 44%** depending on the settlement.
  
  o **Source:** Action Against Hunger, April 2015, Key findings, Rapid Assessment Follow-Up, in MMC and Jere LGAs, Borno State

- In Yobe, only **43% of IDPs have access to an improved source of water**.
  
  o **Source:** CRS, December 2014, Yobe State Needs Assessment Report (WASH, Food Security & Markets)

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The INGO Forum in Nigeria (INGOFN) is a group of international civil society organisations created in November 2014 and based in Abuja. It aims at fostering information exchange and cooperation among humanitarian and development actors in Nigeria, promoting and strengthening coordination of activities and encouraging the development of a conducive environment for NGOs' work in Nigeria. The Forum gathers ten leading organisations in the fields of humanitarian and development. Members’ areas of intervention include Nutrition, Education, Health, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, Food Security and Livelihoods, Youth Citizenship, Governance, Gender-based Violence, Protection and Economic Empowerment. Eight of its Members are currently providing humanitarian assistance to the populations affected by the conflict in North-East Nigeria.