



KEY PRIORITIES

8.3M

PEOPLE IN NEED

6.6M

PEOPLE PROJECTED
TO EXPERIENCE ACUTE
FOOD INSECURITY
(IPC 3 OR WORSE)

2.9M

IDPS

CRISIS IMPACT OVERVIEW

In 2023, violence against civilians has continued in the northeast and northwest of Nigeria and intensified in the past few months, causing several casualties and additional forced displacement (WFP 29/11/2023; ECHO 07/11/2023). Violent incidents reported include attacks, kidnapping, and extortion by non-state armed groups (NSAGs), such as Boko Haram and the Islamic State – West Africa Province (ISWAP), as well as militias known locally as bandits. In the northwest, mass and individual kidnappings for ransom increased between August–September, with armed groups relying on these measures to generate income amid the escalating macroeconomic crisis (FEWS NET 01/10/2023). In the northeast, at least 55 people have been killed in recent months (ECHO 07/11/2023; WFP 29/11/2023).

As at February 2023, over 8.3 million people needed humanitarian assistance in the states of Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe in the northeast and Katsina, Sokoto, and Zamfara in the northwest because of armed conflicts, compounded by environmental and climatic factors. In the northeast, there were around 2.3 million IDPs, 94% of whom because of NSAG violence against civilians. Around 5% of the IDPs were displaced by intercommunal clashes as at June 2023 (IOM 19/09/2023). In the northwest, bandit attacks and intercommunal violence triggered the displacement of over 609,000 people as at December 2022 (UNHCR 30/11/2023; WFP 29/11/2023; The Conversation 15/08/2023). The most urgent needs of affected people include protection, food, WASH, health services, education, and shelter (OCHA 20/03/2023; ECHO 07/11/2023).

As at September 2023, more than 363,000 Nigerians had fled the northwest and northeast of the country and registered as refugees in Cameroon, Chad, or Niger (UNHCR 30/11/2023).

Anticipated scope and scale

- The intensification of violence against civilians observed in recent months will likely significantly increase the number of displaced people and further limit access to food, health services, and clean water (WFP 29/11/2023; FEWS NET 01/10/2023).
- Although mass kidnappings for ransom have remained among the armed groups' and bandits' main strategies to generate income for several years, the current economic crisis could increase the use of this measure in the northeast and northwest of Nigeria (FEWS NET 01/10/2023; ECHO 07/11/2023).
- The continuing closure of IDP camps in Borno state by the local government and the relocation of IDPs to areas where they could be exposed to NSAG presence could increase protection incidents (OCHA accessed 22/12/2023).
- Below-average rainfall between July–August 2023 in the northeast and the northwest of Nigeria is expected to have affected the country's production prospects and further reduced food access in conflict-affected areas (FEWS 28/09/2023).

Humanitarian constraints

- Insecurity constrains access and limits the provision of humanitarian services. NSAG's presence and control of large territories in northeastern Nigeria and movement restrictions caused by military operations considerably limit access to certain conflict-affected areas in the northeast and the northwest (GCR2P 30/11/2023). In the northwest, the widespread presence of bandits also limits humanitarian organisation's movements (OCHA 20/03/2023; VOA 15/12/2023).
- NSAG and bandit violence often target humanitarian staff, especially in the northeast. In 2023, one aid worker was killed, one injured, and five kidnapped in Borno and Yobe states (AWSO accessed 06/12/2023).
- In conflict-affected areas, aid delivery is sometimes limited by delays in obtaining clearance for commodity movement with military escorts (OCHA 20/03/2023).
- Poor road conditions, especially during the rainy season (May–October), often delay the delivery of assistance in remote areas (WFP 24/08/2023).

CRISIS IMPACTS

Health

Insecurity linked to NSAG and bandits activity has reduced access to healthcare services in conflict-affected areas. Attacks targeting healthcare facilities and threats against health personnel discourage the arrival of new health personnel (Insecurity Insight/Safeguarding Health in Conflict 31/12/2022). In the northeast, over 5.7 million people required healthcare assistance as at September 2023, while only 57% of the health facilities were fully functioning (Govt. Nigeria, Health Cluster, WHO 06/11/2023/Health Cluster 05/09/2023).

In the northeast, more than 40% of health facilities are fully damaged, non-functional, or partially functional, eroding the population's access to healthcare (Health Cluster 05/09/2023). In the northwest, the limited movement of people and the attrition of healthcare workers affect access to healthcare facilities (IPC 17/10/2023). There is no data available on the actual number of healthcare facilities operating in the northwest.

Food security

Food security continues to deteriorate, leading to the declaration of a state of food emergency in July 2023 by the Nigerian President (IRC 17/07/2023).

Between October–December 2023, an estimated 2.8 million people experienced acute food insecurity – i.e. Crisis (CH Phase 3) or worse – in the northeastern states of Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe. This figure is expected to rise to 3.9 million between June–August 2024. In the states of Katsina, Sokoto, and Zamfara in the northwest, the number of people expected to be experiencing acute food insecurity is projected to increase from 3.8 million between October–December 2023 to more than 5.3 million from June–August 2024 (WFP 14/12/2023; FAO et al. 03/11/2023). Conflicts, climate change impacts, high inflation, and the rising prices of food and NFIs are the main factors driving food insecurity (FAO et al. 12/12/2023).

Inflation reached 28% by November 2023, a significant increase from the 21% annual inflation rate for the same month in 2022 (NBS 12/2023). Food inflation is particularly felt in conflict-affected states, such as Borno and Yobe, where inflation reached 30% in November, further hampering food access for the population (WFP 29/11/2023).

Protection

In northeastern Nigeria, the most critical protection risks are attacks on civilians and their infrastructure, kidnappings and forced disappearances, and psychological or emotional abuse (UNHCR 06/10/2023 and 13/12/2023). Children face challenges to their liberty, especially those recruited by armed groups; rape; and other forms of gender-based violence (UNSC 29/09/2023).

The lack of livelihood opportunities amid high inflation while food assistance is limited exposes affected populations to several protection risks. Some of them resort to coping strategies with potentially harmful consequences, such as survival sex, child labour, and begging (OCHA accessed 22/12/2023).

WASH

Over three million people required WASH services across the northeastern states as at December 2023 (OCHA accessed 22/12/2023). Many areas in Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe states still lack a stable water supply and have to walk long distances to the nearest water point. In 2022, limited access to dignified sanitation and the lack of hygiene items created a diarrhoeal disease outbreak. Limited WASH access especially affected IDPs (OCHA 20/03/2023).

In 2022, the majority of households assessed in Katsina, Sokoto, and Zamfara in the northwest needed WASH assistance, with minimal differences between non-displaced and displaced households. Affected people reported using unimproved sanitation facilities and water sources and having limited access to clean water. One in four households reported relying on unprotected wells for their drinking water (REACH 21/02/2023). There is very limited up-to-date information on WASH needs in the northwest.

Education

As at March 2023, insecurity and forced displacement hindered 1.3 million people from accessing education services. The killing of more than 2,000 teachers in the northeast since the beginning of the conflict has also caused a shortage of educators (OCHA 20/03/2023). In the northeast, more than 42% of displaced children remain out of school (EIEWG 30/11/2023).

Existing schools in both regions are also overcrowded and have neither the capacity to accommodate the required number of students nor the facilities to provide basic services, such as WASH (OCHA 20/03/2023).

In 2022, most households assessed in the northwest had education needs. 51% of the children between 3–17 years were not attending any type of formal school. Zamfara state faced the highest school non-enrolment rate, with 67% of children not attending. The drivers behind the precarious school situation were chronic poverty, limited investment in school infrastructure, and growing insecurity. Some children encountered protection incidents on the way to their schools, making some parents reluctant to let their children attend school (REACH 21/02/2023). More up-to-date information on education needs in the northwest is not available.

Shelter

As at March 2023, over 3.2 million people were estimated to need shelter assistance in the northeast because of conflict and the destruction of homes, displacement, and weather-related damage (OCHA 20/03/2023). Some displaced people lived in inadequate temporary shelters, such as makeshift or emergency shelters or unfinished buildings, exposing them to numerous protection risks. The poor preparedness of the shelters in the event of heavy rains or floods worsens the situation (OCHA accessed 22/12/2023).

There is limited information regarding shelter needs in the northwest.

DRIVERS OF THE CRISIS

Socioeconomic instability

The humanitarian crisis in the northeast began in 2009 with the start of the activity of Boko Haram, particularly in the states of Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe. Boko Haram, ISWAP, and other armed factions have killed thousands of people since the beginning of the conflict. The conflict had caused an estimated economic loss of around USD 100 billion as at 2022 (UNICEF 09/06/2023).

Bandit activities have generated an armed response from the State, which has led to a reported violation of human rights, including the excessive use of force and indiscriminate air strikes and killings (G2CRP 30/11/2023; HumAngle 10/12/2023).

Lack of income, job opportunities, and livelihoods is among the main reasons people join NSAGs and bandits. Financial gains are contributing to the conflict dynamic in Nigeria (ECOWAS 28/11/2023; AP 24/08/2023; UN 07/02/2023).

Rampant corruption and the limited offer of state services also contribute to the insecurity crisis (ECOWAS 28/11/2023).

Resource scarcity

Climate and weather extremes have caused increased competition over access to and the exploitation of natural resources in the northwest. Conflict between herders and farmers has given rise to the formation of armed groups and gangs, including so-called bandits. These armed groups initially occupy fertile land and steal cattle, continuing the conflict over access to natural resources (G2CRP 30/11/2023).

Access to natural resources has also been one of the drivers of the conflict in northeastern Nigeria and Lake Chad in general. For example, the clashes for control of land for farming, grazing, and fishing on both sides of Nigeria's northeastern border with Cameroon have been a constant for years. Land conflicts allow the winner access to areas (UNDP 04/11/2022; IOM 19/09/2023).

COMPOUNDING/AGGRAVATING FACTORS

Disease outbreaks

Nigeria is prone to disease outbreaks, worsening the condition of crisis-affected people.

As at 28 September 2023, 12,041 suspected diphtheria cases had been reported and more than 7,000 confirmed in Nigeria, resulting in 471 deaths since December 2022 (IFRC 02/11/2023; WHO 19/11/2023). Diphtheria cases put great pressure on health services in the conflict-affected states of Kano, Katsina, and Yobe, the most affected states in Nigeria as at 19 November 2023 (WHO 06/12/2023). High insecurity levels compromise the diphtheria response in Kano (UNICEF 19/09/2023; WHO 04/12/2023).

The 7,352 suspected cases of Lassa fever and 834 confirmed cases of monkeypox in 2023 have also created pressure on the Nigerian health system, further hampering health service delivery in the country (WHO 19/11/2023).

Displacement and camp closures in the northeast

In 2021, the government of Borno state in the northeast started to implement its plan to gradually close IDP camps. Over 200,000 displaced people have been forced to leave camps since November 2022. Further camp closures are expected to occur in the coming months. The conditions for relocating IDPs are not being met. Return areas lack rudimentary healthcare, education, and other basic services. IDPs also face difficulties in accessing land and livelihood opportunities. The situation increases IDPs' need for shelter, food, and clean water (HRW 02/11/2022; OCHA accessed 22/12/2023).

IDPs also report the presence of NSAGs near the relocation areas. Some have been killed in attacks by armed groups, and physical attacks and looting have already been reported. Such incidents heighten protection concerns in these areas (TNH 15/12/2022; HRW 02/11/2022).

Economic crisis

High food prices, the devaluation of the Nigerian naira, and low household purchasing power carried on from previous years deepen the humanitarian crisis, creating more barriers to accessing food and housing (FEWS NET 01/08/2023). By 2022, Nigeria was one of the countries where food access was the most limited (The Economist Group 2022).

Inflation in Nigeria reached 28% in November 2023, a 6% increase from the same month in 2022 and also a rise from the October 2023 inflation rate, which in turn was reported to be the highest in 18 years (NBS 12/2023; Reuters 15/11/2023). High food prices have been one of the main drivers of inflation, which has risen by more than 30% year-on-year. The states of Kano and Borno topped the list with the highest month-on-month inflation increases (NBS 12/2023). Another factor hitting the purchasing power of Nigerians is the ending of the fuel subsidy by the new administration from June 2023 (UN 17/08/2023).