MANAGING CONFLICT IN NIGERIA

The Managing Conflict in Nigeria (MCN) Programme aims to support Nigerians with conflict resolution, at both the state and community level. Our work focuses on reducing violence, promoting stability and strengthening resilience so that Nigerians feel more safe and secure in their communities.

We work in North Eastern Nigeria in three focal states –Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe – some of the country's most conflict-affected regions.

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This policy brief and other MCN publications are available at **www.justice-security.ng**

INTRODUCTION

Violence linked to conflict between armed opposition groups (AOGs), the state and community militias affects all areas of Borno. The conflict has strained relations between Christians and Muslims, exacerbated divisions along ethno-linguistic lines and created new identities. While conflict between farmers and pastoralists remains suppressed, civilians are increasingly concerned about gangs and community militias.

The Managing Conflict in Nigeria (MCN) programme commissioned this assessment to investigate gender relations and implications for peace and conflict. Findings presented are drawn from interviews and focus group discussions in Gubio and Maiduguri in July 2019. In Gubio, two focus group discussions with 10 women and 5 men were held while in Maiduguri, the author interviewed 32 people (11 women and 21 men) who work for government, security agencies, Borno-based and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs), UN agencies and institutions of community leadership with the mandate to bring about peace and security, human rights and/ or gender equality in the state.

This policy brief starts by highlighting key conflict and security dynamics in the state. It then outlines the main gender dynamics. It next examines policies and programmes implemented by government and non-government actors, outlining their main results, challenges and lessons. It ends with programming and policy recommendations.

CONFLICT AND SECURITY CONTEXT

Fighting between AOGs and the state: This situation continues to be highly dynamic. Wilayat al Islamiyya Gharb Afriqiyyah (Islamic State West Africa Province or ISWAP) has ability to attack military bases, with eight bases captured temporarily in June 2019. The military has withdrawn into 'super camps.' People are willingly moving to areas controlled by ISWAP believing life there is preferable. However, recent months have seen factionalism and fighting within and between AOGs that may lead to decreased effectiveness. While security forces struggle to respond, the Borno State Government has increased its support to community militias. These militia members provide invaluable assistance to security forces given their knowledge of geographical terrain and local languages, customs and people but people increasingly worry about their trajectory and complain they face impunity for actions, including human rights violations.

Displacement trends: Numbers of IDPs in Maiduguri have reduced since 2017 with camps shut down. While some people have returned home and started rebuilding lives, others have found houses and shops destroyed, farmlands inaccessible and animals stolen.

A significant number of people who live in villages remain as IDPs in their LGA capitals. In many places, the zone of safety remains the town and a radius of 2-5 kilometres outside it with the area outside this circle seeing AOG presence.

As IDP populations have swelled, humanitarian agencies reported challenges of land availability and camp congestion. Moreover, there has been significant levels of repeated displacement. Over 100,000 people were displaced between December 2018 and February 2019 within Borno and across borders to Cameroon, Chad and Niger but services were not adequately provided with IDPs continuing to sleep on streets and not receive food assistance for weeks.[1] Those who fled to Cameroon faced a government who wanted to return them as soon as possible. In some cases, displacement has been caused by military actions. Residents of Jakana in Konduga LGA were moved to Bakassi IDP camp in Maiduguri by soldiers in April 2019. The reason given was to enable military operations in response to AOG presence. A month later, over 9,000 people were moved from Sabon Gari in Damboa LGA to the LGA headquarters after AOG attacks and ambush of a military convoy. Actors scramble to provide humanitarian shelter in response to these population movements with thousands of people newly displaced sleeping in the open without shelter.[2] Finally, many areas reported significant tensions between IDPs, returnees and host communities. These terms have become identity categories with IDPs seen and seeing themselves as having fewer rights. At the same time, people who return to homes have found people who fled other areas already living there, leading to housing, land and property disputes.

Vacuum of power and authority: Despite efforts to encourage resumption of duties in LGA capitals, many areas see weak government presence with LGA chairmen and officials visiting rather than resident. Although some chairmen are seen to be trying to do their best with limited resources and power, many people are unhappy with government (in)action. Moreover, in some places, infrastructure constructed by federal and state governments has been destroyed or are in places no longer considered safe. Community and religious leaders also continue to stay away. Many community leaders, perceived as corrupt before the conflict, are seen as diverting humanitarian assistance to themselves. People express significant anger against government officials and community leaders and feel abandoned. The only state institution with presence in some areas but not mandated to fulfil governance responsibilities is the military. In this vacuum, step in women who have played crucial roles in keeping families and communities going, groups such as community militias to whom people turn for conflict resolution and AOGs. Particularly in more rural areas, ISWAP especially is fulfilling governance type functions.

GENDER DYNAMICS

Association with perpetrating conflict and violence: Women, men, girls and boys become associated with AOGs due to family, community and business links, forced abductions, religious preaching and to escape restrictive models of patriarchy. Women's power depends on their age, husbands' position and if they were abducted or joined willingly. Yet, despite this nuanced reality, many people continue to gender stereotype women as victims, devoid of agency, while men, even those forced to join, are seen as dangerous and needing to be 'deradicalised'. Government policies based on these stereotypes lead to prolonged detention without trial for

men and lack of support for women. Women also play active roles in community militias but are often marginalised by leadership and programmes of support.

Continuing physical and psychological impacts of violence: Men are more likely to be killed, held in detention and viewed with suspicion by AOGs and security agencies alike. Women and girls also face violence, particularly when fetching firewood or on farms. Women can be placed at risk to safeguard men. They test the waters when men want to leave AOGs. They are asked by husbands to return homes to collect hidden valuables. People with disabilities are also more likely to experience violence. While non-disabled people have helped them to safety, facilitating movement is not always possible. People continue to experience psychological impacts of violence and need mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services. Women and young people tend to be most traumatised, reflecting gendered patterns of violence. Many men fled violence or were killed whereas women and children experienced violence and continue to live with its consequence. Men who experience trauma are not always present in accessible areas.

Livelihoods and economic conditions: People are afraid to go to farmlands, collect firewood or trade as people are abducted, killed, mutilated and injured by AOGs or viewed with suspicion by security forces and community militias. Pastoralists have had animals stolen and struggle to feed animals that remain. Military actions that limit livelihoods have increased as soldiers improve defensive measures through digging of trenches, limiting movement of people outside town and closing markets. People perceives soldiers as benefiting from conflict through corruption by senior officers or soldiers engaging in economic activities. The burden of finding ways to provide for families falls on women who are often forced to hand over fruits of labour to husbands.

Participation and voice in decision making and peacebuilding: The 2019 elections saw one woman out of 10 legislators representing Borno in the House of Representatives, none in the Senate and none in the 28-member state House of Assembly. There are no female local council chairpersons. However, women play greater roles in building peace, rebuilding communities, promoting reconciliation investigating human rights violations and demanding peace and justice. Women have found ways to negotiate their circumstances, realised they cannot rely on others and found ways to survive. They increasingly feel that their ideas matter. They make decisions within the home and this translates to community levels. Having experienced suffering, they are determined to speak out and act to reduce the likelihood of violence erupting despite gender norms. They support other women. However, barriers to remain. While some men in power ensure women are included, in most cases women continue to be edged out of decision-making processes. Furthermore, these improvements do not apply evenly to all women. There are significant differences between older and younger women. Women with disabilities continue to be marginalised. Those chosen as representatives of groups to constitute platforms tend to be men. Consequently, women who are farmers, pastoralists, young, religious leaders, disabled and part of other groups are left out.

Gender-based violence (GBV): Most discussion on sexual violence focuses on child survivors but sexual violence against women is rarely reported as older girls and women are more likely to be blamed and sexual violence within marriage is normalised. Sexual harassment in schools, religious institutions

1 As stated in a number of humanitarian assessments and reports at that time.
2 IOM, 'Flash Report: IDP Relation from Sabon Gari to Damboa (Update 2),' 27 May 2019, available at https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/iom-nigeria-flash-report-

idp-relocation-sabon-gari-damboa-update-2-damboa-lga-local, last visited 18.08.2019.

and workplaces goes largely unreported. Women and girls who exchange sex for money, food, protection and items due to lack of livelihood options are stigmatised, discriminated against and seen as 'harlots.' Incidence of domestic violence has increased as men assert authority, power and control in response to women fulfilling all household responsibilities. Very little work has been done on challenging victim blaming. Rather than be shamed, many women and girls who become pregnant through rape terminate pregnancy, including through unsafe means. A combination of stigma, impunity and non-survivor centred institutions disincentivises pursuit of cases through the justice system. Survivors are less able to report when perpetrators have money, power and status. There are particular categories of women and girls, including those with disabilities and adolescent girls, among whom GBV incidence is higher.

Changing gender norms and realities: Men threaten divorce, preventing women from speaking out in marriages. However, women complain they have to shoulder all household responsibilities and fight to maintain control over household expenditure. There has been some backlash against aid modalities that distribute to women but many men welcome interventions that help women. Men are pleased for wives to contribute to household incomes as doing so reduces their burdens. Borno is seeing changing models of masculinity. Some men cling on to power and dominance over family members but others support women to pursue livelihoods, access education, make decisions and build peace. They have become convinced of the importance of increased opportunities for women and girls, undertake domestic work and believe 'the world is changing'.

POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

Results

Increased access and programming outside Maiduguri: Actors struggled to work outside Maiduguri in 2017 but programming is taking place in LGA capitals in most of the state now. However, an estimated 823,000 people still live in areas inaccessible and hard to reach.[3]

Rising awareness of human rights, including those of women and girls, and (some) reporting of human rights violations: As a result of sensitisation campaigns, people not only know their rights but are aware of where they can be supported when violations have taken place.

Progress made on changing attitudes and meeting MHPSS needs: Due to the widespread psychological impact of living through violence, the stigma around mental health is diminishing, leaving opportunities for actors to step into the space and take advantage of this shift.

Increase in youth engagement due to interventions: Young people improve communities, prevent gang involvement and work for peaceful elections. Interventions work best when they support young people to mobilise themselves rather than have older people lecturing them.

Increased access to education for girls and boys: Interventions provide education and change attitudes towards education. Some girls are able to convince their parents and mothers are able to speak up for their daughters to delay marriage in favour of education.

Women's increased resilience: Women have adjusted to current realities, reach out to support each other and are supported by actors with livelihoods programming.

Community leaders starting to be more inclusive and responsive: The MCN Programme trains community leaders, scribes and women relatives on conflict management, human rights and record keeping. While some leaders are resistant and ask for financial benefit, this intervention has helped improve skills even if it has yet to translate in changed perceptions and increased effectiveness.

Increased democratisation in decision making: Humanitarian, development and peacebuilding actors support fora which are more inclusive than previous community decision processes. Having this mix of people in a room where previously women and men would not sit together has been a culture shock but most communities see its benefit.

Community conflict management structures and agencies more inclusive and responsive: Some communities see practices of working together to solve issues becoming institutionalised and institutions becoming more inclusive and responsive. These changes are limited to areas where organisations have supported multi-stakeholder conflict mitigation and peacebuilding mechanisms but results are promising and could have wider impact if implemented at scale.

Reduced tensions between IDPs and host communities if humanitarian agencies put in place conflict sensitive approaches: Pilot projects that implement conflict sensitive approaches show reduced tensions.

Changed attitudes towards people associated with AOGs seen as 'innocent': Women and girls who were abducted by AOGs have increasingly, with support, been able to create social networks and reintegrate into communities when once they would have been shunned.

Some reintegration of people associated with CJTF: Agencies have helped the CJTF develop a register of members, trained members on human rights, civilian protection and laws of armed conflict, and engaged members in skills acquisition. Some members who have subsequently been able to (re)-establish livelihoods have left the CJTF. However, many interventions do not include women members or engage other community militias.

Some changes in practices and attitudes around women's participation and voice: In many communities, women are more able to contribute to family and community decision making than was the case previously. Women are more involved and visible in different arenas.

(Limited) progress on GBV access to services and reporting: Although many challenges remain, more survivors are now reporting violations and accessing services.

Promising results from those who do GBV prevention work: Progress is limited to where actors intervene and yet to reach tipping point but approaches are promising. The government has sanctioned some perpetrators and NGOs and communities work to mitigate occurrence.

CHALLENGES

Organisational bureaucracy and release of funds: Internal and donor processes hamper responsiveness to changing dynamics and delay programming. This challenge cuts across many organisations and was raised by government, NGO and UN respondents.

Reduced and decreasing funding levels: As of 31 July 2019, 38.6 percent of funds required for humanitarian response in 2019 had been received.[4] Even though most funds are earmarked for Borno, it cannot meet needs. Despite best

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3 2019-2021 Humanitarian Response Strategy: Nigeria, December 2018.

4 OCHA, 'Nigeria: Humanitarian Funding Overview,' 31 July 2019

efforts, gender mainstreaming has suffered with only 12.4 percent of GBV funds and 16.4 percent of child protection funds having been received.5

Access and security hinder programming plans and results: Actors are unable to access communities due to high insecurity and military restrictions. Spikes in insecurity and sudden displacement affects continuity of programming. Humanitarian actors scramble to find funds and deploy services needed while those engaged in longer-term work find people disperse.

Systems cannot deal with displacement caused by insecurity: In late 2018 and early 2019, it took weeks to provide adequate assistance to many of the over 100,000 people displaced within Borno and across national borders.

Uneven transition from humanitarian to development: Conversations and planning reflect increased talk of the 'humanitarian-development nexus.' Some areas saw over-hasty withdrawal of humanitarian assistance before results of livelihood programming have manifested, leading to adverse consequences. What this nexus means in practice remains unclear.

Absence of authorities to engage at community level: Many locations still have not seen the permanent return of local government officials or community leaders which creates a vacuum of authority and means crucial government services are missing.

Increasing polarisation between and within groups: While tensions within and between different groups have eased in some areas as a result of different groups seeing their common challenges, the community coming together and due to peacebuilding interventions, relations have worsened in other areas. There is increasing division along identity lines both old and new.

Community resistance to reintegration: Relative acceptance towards women and children does not stretch towards men associated with AOGs particularly given lack of transitional justice, reconciliation and healing processes.

Non-intersectional interventions mean all in communities, especially most vulnerable and marginalised do not benefit to equal extent: Programmes have found it difficult to reach the most marginalised in society.

People with high levels of trauma find it difficult to engage in programming interventions: Organisations that engage in trauma healing alongside peacebuilding or educational interventions reported positive benefits.

Difficulty maintaining interest in peacebuilding giving pressing nature of critical needs: While many individuals and communities see the need for conflict mitigation and peacebuilding to prevent future violence, it can be difficult to sustain interest given critical needs around food, shelter, water, healthcare and livelihoods.

Programmes continue to view women through gendered stereotypes not as conflict actors: Many actors do not understand women's perpetration of violence so women do not benefit from reintegration programmes for AOGs or community militias despite their combat roles.

Difficulties working on men's vulnerabilities means nobody is working on this: Men's physical vulnerabilities tend to be associated with conflict parties in terms of killing and forced recruitment by AOGs or detention by security agents. Working in this area is difficult but actors have also not thought of innovative ways to engage on protection of men.

Patriarchal norms hinder women's participation and voice without concerted efforts: Women of all ages are not supposed to speak up in public, particularly if (older) men are present. Many times, women continue to be excluded from decision spaces which tend to be all-male affairs and so lack information necessary for participation even in spaces to which they are invited. While these norms are changing, they hinder meaningful participation as many women and men have internalised this taboo around women being outspoken. Similar norms prevent young people of all genders from taking part in community discussions.

Male dominated security agencies hinder women's and girls' access to security and justice: Outside Maiduguri, particularly in areas with volatile security dynamics, there are often no women security agents among soldiers, police officers or NSCDC officers. As a result, many women and girls are unable to approach security agents with security and justice concerns.

Lack of holistic responses makes progress on GBV difficult: Although the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) in Maiduguri provides free and quality services, provision elsewhere is weak. Moreover, there are few interventions focused on removing survivors from violence. In the absence of protection programmes and no accessible safe house, survivors face threats and attacks if they report. Indeed, lack of work combating stigma means survivors are re-victimised and disincentivised from reporting. A major gap continues to be work on prevention.

People hustle for inclusion in order to benefit from programming even if interventions are not focused on them: Diversion of humanitarian aid persists and people that do not meet selection criteria participate in meetings, platforms and other mechanisms and events.

Politicisation of movement/ displacement/ return: IDPs moving from Maiduguri back to LGAs, even if to LGA capitals rather than their homes, has come to be seen as the sign of military and political success. As a result, policies to facilitate return are seen to have been put in place for political benefit rather than in response to the context.

Lack of community engagement and reflexibility by capital-based managers and technical advisers leads to uncertain quality of interventions: Many people based in Maiduguri, government official and NGO worker alike, do not spend enough time outside the state capital in the communities in which their agencies are working. Decision makers have insufficient knowledge of current contextual dynamics on which to base policy and programming.

A male dominated sector especially in LGAs outside Maiduguri limits ability to engage with women and girls or model women's leadership and participation: Having a workforce predominantly of men hinders gender transformational approaches in policy and programming.

Lack of coordination between implementers: While mechanisms bringing together actors exist, working together remains challenging.

Lack of measurement of gendered impact and intersectionality of programming: Agencies are required to ensure they deliver for all genders but donors said this is not sufficiently reported on and data disaggregated to provide a clear picture of programme participants.

Insufficient attention paid to sustainability: More efforts are needed to bring government MDAs, NGOs and UN agencies together in the spirit of genuine partnership as continued

5 Ibid.

sustainability of interventions and government ownership have, so far, proved to be disappointing.

Capacity and commitment gaps and pursuit of personal benefit: Despite training programmes, capacity gaps remain in MDAs and some people assigned to work on particular issues, including GBV, show little genuine interest. Respondents shared stories where officials asked for interventions in their own geographical areas and for their 'own take' in return for cooperation. Selection of beneficiaries can be skewed to benefit certain families, ethnic groups or religious groups with power. Often community leaders, who are asked to select participants, were said to pick their own family members rather than those meant to benefit.

(Lack of) political will for gender equality and women's rights: There is mismatch between public statements of government officials and key politicians who speak the language of valuing women and girls and what manifests in practice.

Non- domestication of human rights laws: Borno has yet to domesticate the Child Rights Act, Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act (VAPP Act), Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act, Gender and Equal Opportunities Act or the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa also known as the Kampala Convention.

Government/ civil society dynamics: Relationships between state government and civil society have been rocky with accusations by high level politicians that NGOs and UN agencies are providing support to AOGs.

Anti-NGO sentiment: There has been some increase in anti-NGO sentiment in recent years. While some of this has political roots, other drivers include lack of effective community engagement and suspicion about reintegration of people associated with AOGs.

LESSONS

Work at the institutional and structural level is slow and painful but necessary and needs to be balanced with individual and community level interventions: Both sets of interventions are required to bring about positive change.

Longer-term engagement and proper analysis are required for sustained impact: Agencies who did proper context and conflict analysis and built community trust and ownership found programming, even on potentially sensitive issues, went smoother and had longer-term impact.

Programmes need to balance demand and supply interventions: Alongside supplying services and infrastructure, actors should have engaged with communities, civil society and media to make demand more visible from the start to persuade government to act.

Collaboration, coordination and partnership rather than competition delivers results: Agencies competing over scarce resources has led to chaos and duplication while progress was more visible where actors came together.

Proper community engagement needs to be at all levels (not just top down): Ensuring buy-in of the entire community means reaching out to marginalised groups and holding town hall meetings and information sharing sessions. Otherwise, actors run the risk of elite capture, perceptions of closeness to those seen as corrupt and rumours of their 'real purpose' taking hold.

Adults speak for younger people but do not know their issues and have their own biases: Young people, women in particular, can feel and be discouraged to talk in group settings.

Adults start from biased perspectives, for example blaming girls for rape or seeing unemployed young men as a 'menace to society'. Actors need to find ways to directly engage with youth and support them to mobilise and advocate rather than have others speaking for them.

Rights awareness and education needs to be the bedrock of all interventions: Any new programme, particularly one working in communities unused to interventions should run a basic programme of rights awareness and education alongside interventions.

Supporting communities to act works – and should have been done earlier: People are eager to do work themselves rather than wait for assistance from others.

Interveners need to build capacity first before bringing livelihoods interventions: Financial skills and capacities need to be strengthened before giving grants.

Time required to build meaningful relations among interveners especially engagement with local civil society and community-based groups: Genuine partnership rather than transactional funding between international actors and local civil society.

Trauma healing interventions are important in themselves and a pre-requisite to engagement for effectiveness: Interventions can have little impact if they work with populations with MHPSS needs they do not meet. Alternatively, programmes that did trauma healing work alongside other interventions report better results.

DDRR programmes will face stiff resistance without transitional justice, reconciliation and healing: All respondents working on reintegration of people associated with AOGs reported backlash. Issues of atonement, justice, reconciliation and true peacebuilding approaches need to be addressed but doing so is difficult in the absence of a true state framework around this.

Women mislead on truths of association to get sympathy and lessen stigma, discrimination and suspicion, limiting effectiveness of interventions: Some women and girls who participated in violence present themselves as abductees so interventions have limited benefit.

Having women in the room is insufficient if organisations do not provide ongoing support alongside ensuring this inclusion: Holding women-only sessions before larger plenary meetings with men to gives women space to discuss their issues. Having women speak on radio brings in more women callers. When training women, it can be best for facilitators to be women to encourage participants to feel comfortable and speak freely.

Continued and sustained focus is needed to ensure women's participation and inclusion as (some) men tend to continue to exclude: Even if interventions are designed to maximise women's active participation, without continued focus, this outcome can slide.

If women self-organise, key power holders can be receptive and supportive to their demands: Several men have acted in support of demands after women have mobilised.

Interventions need to be designed to facilitate meaningful participation of women, youth, people with disabilities and other groups usually marginalised: Inclusion and benefit needs sustained engagement from design onwards including through holding separate sessions with different groups during design, community entry and for feedback during implementation.

Protection work is imbalanced if it does not look at men's threats: Few actors are working on addressing and mitigating men's vulnerabilities and men continue facing these risks.

GBV prevention work shows promising results but needs to be scaled up and undertaken by multiple actors in a range of communities: While progress has been made in improving service provision, not enough work has been done in prevention.

Opening up conversations around changing gender roles and supporting individuals, families and communities through this change can mitigate backlash and violence: While norms perpetuate unequal power relations, any movement in gender realities can lead to increased violence as men feel the need to 'prove' power and control. Programmes that engage women and men separately and together can help individuals, families and communities adjust.

Expansion in women's roles without working on masculinities adds to women's responsibilities and burdens: Women are increasingly burdened while men struggle with feelings of redundancy and inadequacy. Yet, men and women in families where responsibilities are split more evenly report feeling happier and having less household conflict.

Most work on GBV focuses on sexual violence against children, missing other types of GBV such as domestic violence and abuse, sexual harassment, early and forced marriage and sexual violence against women: Acting against sexual violence against children, if it occurs outside marriage, is likely to have widespread support as it does not challenge social norms around GBV. Yet, incidence of other forms of GBV is higher but not taken as seriously.

One-off sensitisation can improve access to services but has limited other impact: Cases reported to the SARC increased after more people knew of its existence and how to access its (free) services. Yet barriers to access remain, particularly for people outside Yola. Moreover, one off sensitisation events in the absence of campaigns led by people in the community have little impact in preventing violence, combating stigma or ensuring convictions.

Holistic GBV interventions are needed to make progress: Areas requiring action are as follows: 1) service provision beyond Yola; 2) case workers in place to support survivors (including but not limited to court appearances); 3) anti-stigma campaigns; 4) police and court systems to be more responsive to survivors; 5) victim and witness protection including through provision of accessible safe houses; and 6) attitudes, practices and norms to prevent violence.

Actors need to programme in different languages to ensure access and inclusion: Planning to work in Hausa and Kanuri alone is not sufficient to reach everyone, particularly members of ethno-linguistic groups already marginalised.

Build in flexibility between humanitarian and development programming: The insecurity Borno has experienced in the past year show that actors need to be responsive to changing dynamics.

Limited impact of work without government presence and action requires rethinking what is possible: Programmes engaged in systems strengthening work in particular should re-strategise what it means to do this work where government officials are not on ground.

It is better to go deep to ensure meaningful change rather than going wide to reach as many participants as possible: Several agencies cut programme participant numbers to have tangible results as spreading interventions among larger numbers of participants has little impact.

Trauma support for staff is needed: People working with affected populations report levels of vicarious or secondary trauma. Those whose organisations put in place trauma support and structures said this had been greatly benefited.

Put in places checks and balances to guard against diversion and elite capture: Agencies should strategise ways to mitigate elite capture while making power holders feel included.

Agencies need to plan for future reduction in funding: Robust sustainability strategies are needed to mitigate continual decrease in funding levels.

RECOMMENDATIONS

After having examined conflict, security and gender dynamics in the state and outlined key results, challenges and lessons from policy and programming interventions to date, this final section turns to making recommendations for action.

To the Governor:

- Support speedy passage and assent to all outstanding human rights legislation namely Administration of Criminal Justice Act, Gender and Equal Opportunities Act, Child Rights Act, VAPP Act, Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act and domestication of the Kampala Convention once passed by the State House of Assembly
- Take steps to implement the State Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security
- Bring together all relevant MDAs to develop a programme of transitional justice, reconciliation and healing to run alongside DDRR processes

To the State House of Assembly:

- Pass all outstanding human rights legislation namely Administration of Criminal Justice Act, Gender and Equal Opportunities Act, Child Protection Act, VAPP Act, Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act and domestication of the Kampala Convention

To the Ministry of Health:

- Include the SARC in 2020 and future budgets, building in a mechanism for continued inclusion

To the Ministry of Justice:

- Set up a Special Court on GBV as part of the existing High Court to operate in Maiduguri and other judicial divisions with prosecution and defence lawyers, judges and court personnel trained in handling GBV cases, a practice direction sent out, procedures drawn up to protect survivors and suspects and outreach conducted to the police, NSCDC and communities

To the Ministry of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs:

- Set up a programme of training and retraining community leaders to build skills and knowledge in conflict resolution, mediation, leadership, gender and human rights through a cadre of qualified trainers with knowledge and training skills

To the Ministry of Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Resettlement:

- Include community members in development planning, ensuring women of all ages, young men, people with disabilities of all ages and genders and members of minority

ethno-linguistic and religious groups are supported to meaningfully participate

- Develop recovery and urban planning strategies for Maiduguri and major towns as not everyone will return to their villages even when the security situation improves
- Plan transformation into more permanent settlements in locations where presence of IDP communities looks likely to continue for the foreseeable future through consultation with people living in these areas
- Improve and widen processes of community engagement around reintegration of men formerly associated with AOGs
- Work together with humanitarian, development and peacebuilding organisations to develop plans to increase access to areas that are currently hard to reach.

To the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development:

- Set up a safe house for survivors of GBV in Maiduguri as well as in two other locations, one in northern and one in southern Borno and post and train people to run it

To SEMA and NEMA:

- Develop a process that ensures quicker planning and implementation of response to sudden displacement that comes about due to heightened insecurity

To the military:

- (Re) train military personnel in the theatre on human rights, international humanitarian law, protection of civilians and community engagement
- Implement a zero-tolerance policy for cases of GBV which includes giving orders for military commanders to tell officers and soldiers that perpetrators will face consequences; reach out to NGOs in the area to encourage (but not force) reporting even if this is of trends rather than specific incidents; and publicise court martials for GBV so justice is seen to have been done.
- Provide mixed military and community militia patrols in areas of insecurity to enable people to go to farm, graze animals and collect firewood

To the Commissioner of Police:

- Deploy women to LGAs to enable better access to security and justice for women and girls
- Provide hazard pay to all police officers working in dangerous areas
- Increase outreach on Police Complaints Response Unit to NGOs and communities so people can report if police officers are found wanting
- Give clearance to the state CID head of gender to speak on radio programmes about the FSU
- Give instructions to DPOs in the state to work with officers posted to the FSU to increase awareness of the FSU among the general public through engaging in outreach
- Instruct state CID to inform FSUs how cases are progressing so they can inform survivors

- Institute a proper victim and witness protection programme and direct state CID and FSU officers to engage with survivors and witnesses about protection needs
- Provide adequate funds to provide materials and vehicles for proper GBV investigations

To the Commandant of the National Security and Civil Defence Corps:

- Deploy women to LGAs to enable better access to security and justice for women and girls

To MCN and other programme implementers:

- Improve financial and operations systems to mitigate future delays
- Expand scope of work on GBV to look at other forms of violence beyond sexual violence against children through 1) reframing the SARC steering committee into a GBV response team; 2) including other forms of GBV within the FSU's remit and re-training police officers; and 3) integrating gender awareness including on different GBV forms into training provided to CPSPs, CAF facilitators, community leaders and vigilante groups
- Develop effectiveness of the current SARC by 1) providing refresher training for staff on how to interact with patients;[6] 2) setting up a system where requests for drugs and other items are made well in advance to ensure timely release; 3) integrating legal assistance on SARC premises; 4) deploying more women staff so survivors can have women counsellors, nurses and doctors if they wish; 5) expanding the SARC steering committee to include more GBV experts including representatives from INGOs and UN agencies and its remit to cover GBV in the state; 6) training SARC staff in how to engage with women with disabilities
- Create additional SARCs outside Maiduguri with steering committees including all agencies working on GBV as well as security agents, community women, members of child protection networks and any government officials and community leaders present
- Fund women's rights organisation to do sustained community engagement through case work, anti-stigma and prevention work via peer to peer campaigns, radio programmes, engaging men in positions of power and reaching out to women and girls usually marginalised
- Explore alternative means of punishing perpetrators through increasing community censure and stigma and decreasing income generation and marriage prospects for men who commit GBV rather than relying solely on the criminal justice process to punish and deter
- Support the Ministry of Justice to establish a Special GBV Court through advocacy to the new Attorney General, training of prosecution and defence lawyers, judges and court personnel, drafting of a practice direction, drawing up of procedures to protect survivors and suspects and outreach to the police, NSCDC and communities
- Increase engagement in coordination structures around GBV and child protection
- Institutionalise training of community leaders through engagement with the Ministry of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs on a training of trainer model

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6 Some respondents praised the SARC for its work but said some staff required training as they were observed to be asking questions in a manner that suggested lack of empathy.

- Increase women's participation and voice across all MCN interventions by linking women only forum with CPSPs and Community Accountability Forums (CAFs) and asking women what support they need to be able to more meaningfully participate
- Improve systems for increasing women's capacities for mediation and dispute resolution by setting up systems for monitoring and mentoring women title holders and women's groups
- Support people with disabilities (women and men separately and together) to mobilise, build social networks, interact with platforms and demand change
- Support women's rights organisations to work on masculinities through encouraging and facilitating discussions among women and men of all ages, separately and together
- Engage the military on human rights violations, including GBV, by working with other actors that interact with senior military leadership
- Start working on sustainability, learning from what has (not) worked for other organisations so the tempo of work is sustained after MCN ends
- Encourage partners to employ more women and introduce affirmative action policies
- Budget for parallel spaces for women, young people and people with disabilities to share information, analysis and needs ahead of community platform meetings, increase budget for refreshments to provide for children that women may bring along and provide transport to meetings for people with disabilities
- Conduct regular context analysis integrating understanding of gender and social exclusion dynamics and update programmes to ensure continued effectiveness and conflict sensitivity
- Maintain space for peacebuilding work alongside humanitarian and development interventions as these programmes can drive community level conflict and problems