

# MANAGING CONFLICT IN NIGERIA



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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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## LIVELIHOOD OPPORTUNITIES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR PEACE AND SECURITY IN COMMUNITIES SELECTED FOR THE EARLY RETURN OF IDPS IN BORNO STATE

### INTRODUCTION

Borno State is to host the highest number of IDPs, totalling about 1,439,953, individuals as at June of 2018 (IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix DTM Round 23, June 2018). The state is worse affected by the insurgency, which led to massive population displacement, resulting in a situation where most of the population are living outside their communities, mostly in Maiduguri and its immediate environs with no viable means of livelihood. The gains in counter-insurgency operations recorded since 2015 increasingly led to the recovery of territories captured by the Jamatu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad (JAS), also known as Boko Haram. However, the recovery of territory from insurgents has not been followed by expected return of displaced persons. Consequently, the Borno State Government has been pursuing a policy phased return to communities in furtherance of its recovery, reconstruction and reintegration programme. However, there are concerns about the feasibility of planned return of IDPs given lingering security challenges. Additionally, of significant concern to stakeholders are the prospects of returnees accessing livelihood opportunities and the implications for peace, security and public safety.

As security situation continues to improve in Borno State and other parts of North East Nigeria, there is increased attention towards reintegration of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) to communities. Considering the loss of assets, land and capital caused by the insurgency, means of livelihood for returnees is a major source of concern to all stakeholders.



It is against this background that Centre for Community Development and Research Network (CCDRN) embarked upon an assessment of livelihood opportunities and security implications for returnee communities in Borno State. The study is aimed at examining livelihood opportunities and associated security implications in communities currently being resettled by displaced persons. It is expected that the study would contribute to effective and sustainable resettlement. This policy brief outlines the main findings and policy implications of the study.

## APPROACH

The study adopted a methodology that entailed use of a mix of quantitative and qualitative sources of data collection. This was informed by the need to capture information on both static and dynamic aspects of livelihoods. Quantitative assessment reflects the aggregate situation of the parameters at a given moment, while qualitative analysis reveals the way in which livelihood is affected by various socio-economic-political factors over time.

The sources of data collection included Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Community Survey. While the FGDs and KIIs were deployed to collect qualitative details focused on the knowledge of key informants as well as the experiences of the IDPs and returnees, the community survey was used to collect quantitative data to ensure balance in the analysis and reporting of study findings.

The research process also involved review of available literature and documents. Field investigation through FGD, KII and questionnaires was conducted in the selected communities in June and August 2018. Table 1 below captures the selected LGAs and communities for the study.

Table 1: Study Area

S/N	LGAs	COMMUNITIES	CURRENT SETTLEMENT
1	Konduga	Konduga Town	Resettled
		Wanori	Jakana and Auno IDPs Camp
		Maswa	NYSC Camp/ CBN Quarters
2	Mafa	Mafa Town	Resettled
		Ngowom	Maiduguri and Mafa IDPs Camp
		Ajiri	Mafa IDPs Camp
3	Nganzai	Gajiram	Resettled
		Gasarwa	Resettled
		Damaram	Resettled
4	Askira Uba	Hausari Zadawa	Resettled
		Cbulguma	Resettled
		Bumirgo	Resettled

Additional interviews were conducted with state and federal government officials and INGOs in Maiduguri.

Furthermore, due to the multidimensional aspect of the study, information was also collected by means of one-to-one interviews; group discussions; and observation visits to schools, financial institutions, development organizations, business sites and physical marketplaces.

## FINDINGS

The study found that there is no remarkable shift in the livelihood activities in the communities studied. Most returnees have started or are planning to initiate the same type of occupation they had prior to the period of their displacement. Agriculture, livestock and petty trading remain the foremost occupations of most returnees, after their return. The most prospective occupations for the returnees are those that target external markets, due to low level of local demand and poor purchasing power by the deprived returnees.

### Livelihood opportunities

Historically, Borno State is known as a trade hub given its strategic location on the country's important borders. In this regard, the geographical position of Borno State in the North-East offers a great advantage to trading activities which is a key success factor.

However, as the returnees begin a new life in their resettled places as their journey to gain a secure livelihood on account of the new socio-economic and political realities, it was discovered that most of the returnees are still involved in the same occupations they had before their displacement. Nonetheless, some have taken advantage of the skills they had learnt during the period of displacement, and a few ventured into the formal job market. This is particularly noticeable among persons with low level of education.

The study found that although most of the returnees depended largely on donor support when they resided in IDP camps, some of them adapted and adopted new means of livelihood to survive in the new environment. Upon return to their communities, most of them either resumed agricultural work or returned to the same type of occupations they had done before displacement. Similarly, there was no major shift in the livelihood activity prevalent in the communities studied. For example, farming and petty trading remain the major sources of livelihood. The main types of crops cultivated in these areas include sorghum, maize, millet, beans and rice, in addition to some cash crops such as – groundnuts and beans. Although farming practice is substantial, production is low as most households produce for consumption and not at a large scale for sale.

Findings from skills gap analysis and value chain studies conducted through FGDs and KIIs with trade associations, crafts persons and Medium and Small-Scale Enterprises (MSSEs) indicate the existence of prospective livelihood opportunities in the studied communities. This means the targeted communities already have experience of running these businesses, but face challenges such as capital and skills. The most common occupations in all LGAs are farming, livestock fattening and trading, shoemaking and repairs, oil processing and groundnut oil extraction, local cream production, manufacture of lotions, soaps and perfumes, value addition of crops and vegetables, vehicle repairs, repair of electronics, technical skills for construction, tailoring and fashion. This is captured in Figure 1 below.

As evident from Figure 1, 39.8% of the respondents said that farming is the major source of livelihood opportunity available in their communities. This is not surprising since all the communities are rural in nature and agriculture is the base of the economy. While 31.3% of the respondents said petty trading, 3.2% of them stated tailoring as the other major source of livelihood, 3.2% stated cap making and 2.7% of the respondents said livestock rearing. The survey analysis reveals that 48% of the respondents received assistance for their livelihood in the last 12 months while most (52%) of them did not receive any assistance. The result of the survey further indicates that only 1.65% of the respondents are not satisfied with their current occupation, while 28.3% are satisfied, 22.7% are somewhat satisfied, 39.8% are dissatisfied and 7.5% are very dissatisfied with their occupation. Consequently, a sizable proportion of the respondents is not satisfied with current occupation and need new skills for enhanced income generation.

The study also found that the communities are anxious to continue with the livelihood activities they were used to prior to their displacements such as farming, livestock rearing and sundry petty trading. This is due to lack of alternative opportunities. However, capacity to return to these sources of livelihood are undermined by socio-economic changes that have affected the viability of occupations residents were engaged in before their displacement. For instance, farming is seasonal and most of the returnees do not have irrigation facilities. Also, livestock production does not provide full time job to most households and there are few opportunities for supplementary income generating activities. Inadequate size of farmlands for cultivation arising from the increased populations in the community (with host and resettled populations sharing the land) is a source of competition and thus, a major concern for internal conflict.

## Focus of government and other INGOs

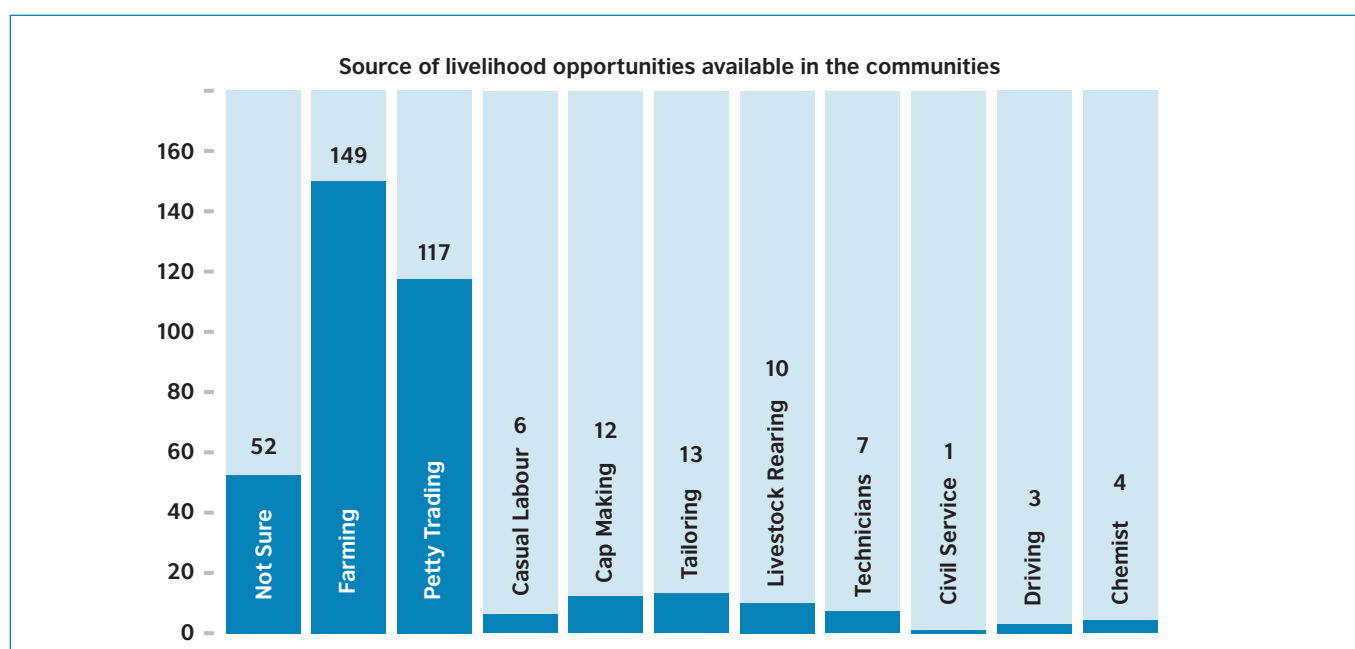
The study also revealed that while governments and international Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) are interested in the provision of livelihood support, income generation and job opportunities for the returnees, there seems to be no awareness and actions on inter community conflicts that may arise from competition for jobs and businesses especially in the post conflict context where the market is small, purchasing power is low and natural resources are limited.

## Implications of livelihood support

The communities in the study area are disproportionately affected by violent conflict, and the inability of households and communities to absorb, accommodate or recover from the violent conflict in a timely, efficient and sustainable manner have implication for peace, security and public safety. As a result, the study found that there is need for support for livelihood. The rationale provided for support includes the following:

- Livelihood support to members of communities affected by the insurgency will serve as a major turnaround for IDPs and returnees in the communities studied;
- Livelihood support will promote more stable, inclusive and sustainable source of income generation opportunities that will reduce unemployment and mitigate the social-economic inequalities that often fuel conflict;
- Intervention will contribute and support reconciliation processes and peace consolidation. It will strengthen the involvement of local community members to work to generate income and contribute their quarter to the development of their areas and;
- Livelihood support will contribute to the realization of peace, security, public safety and development in the affected communities, by creating immediate employment opportunities and social cohesion.

**Figure 1:** Sources of livelihood opportunities available in the communities



## RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was predicated on the need for development of tailor-made policy to enhance awareness of the existing and prospective livelihood opportunities in communities selected for the early return of IDPs in Borno State and the implications of return and resettlement for peace, security and public safety. This section outlines policy options for potential interventions in selected communities. The following recommendations have been disaggregated and made specific to state and LGAs, communities and the international development community.

### State and local government

- Provide life-sustaining dignity packages to returnee families and vulnerable community members in collaboration with the international development partners and humanitarian organisations;
- Beyond the role of the military provided by government, a minimal presence of civilian law enforcement, administrative, judicial, criminal justice and human rights institutions to protect returnees and their resources are necessary conditions to ensure a sense of security and trust among civilians;
- Government with the support of humanitarian support organizations should design IDP/Returnee Livelihood Strategy that is innovative and responsive in design. This strategic approach will enable transition from 'status' to 'needs-based' assistance;
- Money in circulation within the communities is very little, and this makes it difficult for small businesses to thrive. Governments and development partners need to initiate integrated local economic development interventions that will help the returnees to develop and nurture the small businesses. Interventions should provide soft and safe access to finance;
- Provide temporary jobs to the returnees and vulnerable community members for the rehabilitation of community socio-economic infrastructure through work-intensive building methods; and
- Facilitate access to mid-term vocational training programmes for returnee and vulnerable community members, in profitable farming and non-farming activities.

### Communities

- Returnees, host community representatives, community leaders and faith-based groups need to be fully involved in the planning and implementation of interventions in the resettlement schemes. The inclusive approach should be all-encompassing and specifically ensure participation of women and girls.

### International development community

- Deliver short-term skills training on immediate farming and non-farming livelihoods opportunities based on market studies;
- Distribute start up kits to help returnees and host communities establish basic farming, and provide grants for business revival (livestock, agriculture, trade, processing, etc);
- Support the policy environment to enable more conflict-sensitive economic growth, engagement of the private sector as well as economic growth in deprived communities, notably in livestock and agricultural products;
- Reinforce the capacities of key ministries and administrations at the federal, state and local level to lead, implement and monitor economic recovery programmes;
- Structuration of local producers into associations linked with savings groups (women's trading groups, farming pre-cooperatives, etc), and provision of related technical training and advice;
- Provide access to finance for business development: promotion of saving through self-managed saving groups, provision of startup grants, facilitation of access to credit;
- Carry-out advocacy to reconstruct large-scale damaged infrastructure and markets that foster regional trade. Such reconstruction strategies can be based on existing strategic frameworks for reconstruction and recovery such as the Recovery and Peace Building assessment for North East Nigeria and the Lake Chad Action Plan; and
- Livelihood support should focus on developing and restoring sustainable support system so that the dignity of residents of communities in the study area that depend on farming, livestock, petty trading, vocational skill and so on are not threatened by conflict and assist in their development of resilience.

### Proposed policy options

- Intervention effort and support by international actors and donor agencies should be based on the Principle of Impartiality and Non-discrimination as encapsulated in the National Policy on IDPs in Nigeria. In implementing the provisions of this policy, humanitarian action targeting internally displaced populations should be based on needs alone, giving priority to the most urgent cases of distress without regard to ethnicity, indigeneity, gender, religious belief, social class or political persuasion. It is recommended that all livelihood support should work with the community stakeholders to mainstream conflict mitigation strategy in the intervention framework;
- Low purchasing power by the community members, coupled with lack of capital on the part



of the enterprises makes it hard for the local economy to grow and create new jobs for the inhabitants. It is therefore imperative for the Borno State government and humanitarian agencies introducing programmes to consider injecting some money into the local economy for it to have the prospects for growth. Money can be injected through various models such as cash for work and provision of cash grants and soft loans for the MSE;

- Borno State Government should consider other sustainable livelihood interventions that can support the local economy such as establishing cottage industries. The prospects of cottage industries are bright given available natural resources in the communities. The cottage industries will be producing in mass quantity for export to other areas;
- The marketable skills identified are directly or indirectly related to the most viable or prospective means of livelihood. In view of this, state government in collaboration with donor agencies may want to consider providing livelihood support in form of startup grants and/or technical support on identified viable means of livelihood. They can be linked to necessary vocational skills training to address the gaps and further enhance their livelihoods skill;
- The interdependency of selected business will facilitate the supply and demand within the network of targeted beneficiary traders. For instance, textiles/accessories traders can supply tailoring beneficiaries; welders and fabricators producing oil pressing equipment can make and maintain its machines for oil pressing beneficiaries; whilst crops and vegetable traders can supply restaurants need. Participants sampled expressed great enthusiasm in participating in specific value chains. As a result, government in collaboration with international development partners should strengthen agricultural and market development value chains which will boost local market and economy;
- There is a need for state/non state humanitarian actors to train and empower local leaders with improved knowledge, skills and power to enable them design and implement both preventive and reactive conflict management strategies for their communities; and

- State government and humanitarian actors should consider the introduction of informal apprenticeships training schemes that will support informal workers to find opportunities for upward mobility through linkages to market-oriented initiatives.

### Strategies for effective implementation

The undermentioned strategies recommended followed the phased resilience-based development approach combining short, medium and long term programmatic intervention in an all-inclusive way. These covered important areas like security, protection, access to basic services and livelihood opportunities. Specifically, the state government and international development actors should consider the following as part of an overall implementation strategy:

- Carry out a baseline survey;
- Develop targeting criteria and select household accordingly (vulnerability and poorest wealth groups);
- Coordinate across board to define, plan and establish at what level to set the livelihood support (the quantity and kind of items to be provided to beneficiary, value of money to be transferred to beneficiary and kind of skill acquisition and vocational training to be provided);
- Assess capacity of beneficiary in management, record keeping, etc;
- Identify training needs and develop and carry out training programmes for beneficiaries;
- Develop a means of monitoring and verifying attendance at activities and trainings and other awareness raising sessions;
- Support beneficiaries and groups to put in place self-sustaining savings system (capital accumulation);
- Assess market prospects and opportunities; and
- Design and implement Monitoring and Evaluation system for the programme.

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