Gender Assessment of Northeast Nigeria
conducted for Managing Conflict in North East Nigeria (MCN)
Chitra Nagarajan, June 2017

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<tr>
<td>ACF</td>
<td>Action Contre La Faim (Action Against Hunger)</td>
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<td>AOG</td>
<td>armed opposition group</td>
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<tr>
<td>CJTF</td>
<td>Civilian Joint Task Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>CID</td>
<td>Criminal Investigation Department</td>
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<td>CRA</td>
<td>Child Rights Act</td>
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<td>CBOs</td>
<td>community based organisations</td>
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<td>COOPI</td>
<td>Cooperazione Internazionale</td>
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<td>CPP</td>
<td>community peace partnership</td>
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<td>CSOs</td>
<td>civil society organisations</td>
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<tr>
<td>DDRR</td>
<td>disarmament, demobilisation, rehabilitation and reintegration</td>
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<tr>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>Danish Refugee Council</td>
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<td>ECR</td>
<td>Education Crisis Response</td>
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<tr>
<td>FGM/C</td>
<td>female genital mutilation / cutting</td>
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<td>FIDA</td>
<td>Federación Internacional de Abogadas (International Federation of Women Lawyers)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FOMWAN</td>
<td>Federation of Muslim Women's Associations of Nigeria</td>
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<td>GBV</td>
<td>gender based violence</td>
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<td>GBV IMS</td>
<td>Gender Based Violence Information Management System</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEO Bill</td>
<td>Gender and Equal Opportunities Bill</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
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<tr>
<td>HRW</td>
<td>Human Rights Watch</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDP</td>
<td>internally displaced person</td>
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<tr>
<td>IEDs</td>
<td>improvised explosive device</td>
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<td>IMC</td>
<td>International Medical Corps</td>
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<td>IOM DTM</td>
<td>International Organisation for Migration Displacement Tracing Matrix</td>
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<td>INGOs</td>
<td>international non-governmental organisations</td>
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<tr>
<td>IRC</td>
<td>International Rescue Committee</td>
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<td>ISWA</td>
<td>Islamic State West Africa (Wilayat al Islamiyya Gharb Afriqiyah)</td>
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<td>JAS</td>
<td>Jama’atu Ahlis Sunnah Lida’awati Wal Jihad (People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet’s Teachings and Jihad in English)</td>
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<tr>
<td>JONAWPD</td>
<td>Joint National Association for People with Disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>LAC</td>
<td>Legal Aid Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGA</td>
<td>local government area</td>
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<td>MCN</td>
<td>Managing Conflict in North East Nigeria</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDAs</td>
<td>ministries, departments and agencies</td>
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</table>
MMC Maiduguri Metropolitan Council
MNJTF Multi National Joint Task Force
MOJ Ministry of Justice
MOH Ministry of Health
MORRR Ministry of Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Resettlement
MOWASD Ministry of Women’s Affairs and Social Development
NAP WPS National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security
NAWOJ National Association of Women Journalists
NBA Nigerian Bar Association
NCWS National Council of Women’s Societies
NEMA National Emergency Management Association
NERI North East Regional Initiative
NGOs non-governmental organisations
NHRC National Human Rights Commission
NRC Norwegian Refugee Council
NSCDC Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps
NSRP Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme
NYSC National Youth Service Corps
OCHA United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PCNI Presidential Committee on the Northeast Initiative
PEP post exposure prophylaxis
PSS psychosocial support
PSWG Protection Sector Working Group
SAP WPS State Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security
SARC Sexual Assault Referral Centre
SCMA State Conflict Management Alliance
SEA sexual exploitation and abuse
SEMA State Emergency Management Agency
SGBV sexual and gender based violence
SHOA State House of Assembly
SRH sexual and reproductive health
STD sexually transmitted disease
UXO unexploded ordnance
VAWG violence against women and girls
UN United Nations
UNFPA United Nations Population Fund
<table>
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>VAPP Act</td>
<td>Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>VSF</td>
<td>Victim Support Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>WOWICAN</td>
<td>Women Wing of Christian Association of Nigeria</td>
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<tr>
<td>WINN</td>
<td>Women in New Nigeria</td>
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<td>WPSN</td>
<td>Women, Peace and Security Network</td>
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Introduction

In 2005, Jama’atu Ahlis Sunnah Lida’awati Wal Jihad (JAS, translated as People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet’s Teachings and Jihad), commonly known as Boko Haram, noticeably emerged in Maiduguri. Originally protesting the corruption and inequality produced by state structures and calling for a return to a ‘purer’, more Islamic way of life, the group’s ideology, tactics and strategy have been constantly evolving. Over time, it morphed into declaring control over territory, setting off bombs including through ‘suicide’ bombers, forced recruitment and kidnapping and violence against women and girls (VAWG) including sexual violence and forced marriage. Operations by the Multi National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) together with local vigilante groups and the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) recovered the territory taken by JAS in 2014 and 2015. Always with different factions, the group split into at least two distinct groups: JAS headed by Abubakar Shekau and Wilayat al Islamiyya Gharb Afriqiyyah (Islamic State West Africa or ISWA) headed by Abu Musab al-Barnawi in 2016.

Civilian harm has been committed by all parties to the conflict. The Nigerian military have failed to protect communities from violence, committed civilian harm during the course of operations and directly targeted civilians, including through unlawful detention, harassment, destruction of property, forced displacement, sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) against women and girls, indiscriminate targeting of groups such as young men, torture and excessive use of force. Meanwhile, the CJTF in particular has been implicated in extra-judicial killings, harassment of communities, SEA, recruitment and use of children and diversion of humanitarian aid. Vigilante groups, which include local hunters, are seen by communities to have committed fewer abuses but there is a lack of empirical research in this area.

Conflict between the Nigerian state, vigilante groups/ CJTF and armed opposition groups (AOGs) overlays, exacerbates and feeds off already existing dynamics. As well as creating new tensions within and between communities, it has also caused communities to come together against common threats. In all of these, the experiences of girls, women, boys and men have been very different.

The overall objective of the Managing Conflict in North East Nigeria (MCN) programme is to enhance state and community level conflict management capability to prevent the escalation of conflict into violence in selected locations in northeast Nigeria. Its geographical scope is Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states and its specific objectives are as follows:

- **OS1:** To strengthen community level conflict management mechanisms
- **OS2:** To enhance reconciliation and stability within communities, in particular those affected by displacement
- **OS3:** To both support the involvement of women in peace-building and address the impact of violence on women and girls
- **OS4:** To enhance the reintegration of young men and women (affected by and involved in insurgency and counter-insurgency operations)
- **OS5:** To influence key decision-makers and opinion-formers through targeted research

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1 As the existence and level of agency of those who carry and detonate bombs is unknown, quotation marks will be used around the word suicide in the absence of another succinct descriptor. Reports are some people are drugged, duped or unaware of plans while others volunteer for the task, motivated by commitment to the group’s ideals.

2 Please note that in the interests of conflict sensitivity, the assessment will use the exact names of the groups involved where relevant and the term ‘armed opposition groups’ to refer to all those active in the northeast (as opposed to using the blanket term ‘Boko Haram’ which, rather than being the name of the groups themselves, is one given to them by the media and serves to simplify their message and aims).

3 K Dietrich, “When We Can’t See the Enemy, Civilians Become the Enemy”: Living Through Nigeria’s Six Year Insurgency, (Center for Civilians in Conflict, 2015).
This gender assessment is one of several documents that provide situational analysis to inform MCN interventions. It aims to ensure the programme has enhanced understanding of the experiences of women and girls in the three states, the opportunities for them to play a role in conflict management and peacebuilding, the nature, levels and impact of VAWG and the existing mechanisms to prevent and respond to VAWG.

There are many issues affecting women and girls in northeast Nigeria. It is not possible for this gender assessment to provide a comprehensive analysis due to limited time and the need to prioritise. As a result, the document focuses on areas most relevant to MCN. The assessment also takes a gender relational approach, looking at the situation affecting men and boys where appropriate given the impacts of their experiences on women and girls.

It draws on a desk review of research and documents, interviews conducted in April and May 2017 in the three states and the author’s history and experiences working on and in northeast Nigeria since 2013. The assessment focuses on research and assessments carried out in late 2016 and 2017 as far as possible given the rate at which dynamics are changing and as this assessment focuses on the current situation rather than giving a historical perspective. There are large gaps in research and insufficiency of data, particularly on VAWG incidence and trends, that hinders the formulation of a complete assessment. As a result, the assessment relies heavily on interviews and previous work done by the author rather than published research, with efforts made to verify information given in interviews. The assessment clearly states where this was not possible.

After an overview of trends across the three states, the assessment turns to examining Adamawa, Borno and Yobe in detail. For each state, the assessment starts by providing context, highlighting key conflict dynamics in the state and outlining relevant legal frameworks. It then goes on to cover involvement in conflict, physical harm caused by armed actors, dynamics around displacement, economic and psychological impacts. The state sections finish with examination of women’s participation and voice (or lack thereof) in governance and peacebuilding and discussion of VAWG through an overview of incidence and trends and analysis as to prevention and response mechanisms. It is important to note that the content of these sections has been determined by a review of existing research and other documents and interviews. That one trend is noted in one state but not another does not necessarily mean that it does not happen but rather that no evidence for it was found in the timeframe available for the assessment. After outlining these factors for each of the three states, the gender assessment finishes with a list of opportunities for engagement for MCN to consider when it comes to 1) involving women in rebuilding communities and 2) adding value on VAWG prevention and response.

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4 Please note that the term VAWG will be used throughout this assessment as the focus is on violence against women and girls alone rather than also examining gender based violence against men and boys. Where organisations use other terms such as sexual and gender based violence, the assessment will use the terms organisations themselves use.
Trends Across Adamawa, Borno and Yobe

This section of the assessment highlights key trends across the states, drawing on the information presented in the state sections as well as research that covers all 3 states but does not disaggregate between them.

- The experiences of women and girls depend greatly on the conflict, security and humanitarian dynamics in their localities. Borno has been the epicentre of the JAS-related conflict with its impact being felt in all 27 LGAs, most of which are still experiencing high levels of insecurity and violence. In many LGAs, the military controls only the LGA headquarters and a one to five kilometer perimeter surrounding it with varying levels of presence of AOGs outside this radius. Meanwhile in Yobe and Adamawa, although many LGAs see the presence of internally displaced people (IDPs), the impact of JAS-related conflict has been limited to some extent to the LGAs which saw violence and continue to experience some levels of insecurity. However, there are other types of conflict present in these states, notably conflict over land and water resources between farmers, pastoralists, hunters and fisher folk and inter-communal conflict between ethno-linguistic and religious groups, the latter particularly found in Adamawa state. Furthermore, many areas are experiencing conflict between IDPs and host communities, conflict over housing, land and property due to displacement and around even suggestions for disarmament, demobilisation, rehabilitation and reintegration (DDRR) of AOG fighters, as will be explored below. Another point of concern is increasing dissatisfaction expressed by vigilante and CJTF members against the state for lack of recognition and remuneration and the potential for this conflict to escalate into violence. These conflict dynamics are taking place against a backdrop of significant erosion in trust in community leaders, seen as corrupt, politicised, biased and diverting humanitarian aid, in many areas. Not only do these perceptions mean institutions charged with performing conflict resolution tasks are no longer widely trusted, but also that this erosion of trust leads to conflict in and of itself.

- Significant gaps exist in all three states when it comes to relevant legislation. Yobe, where the passage of the Child Protection Law is at its final stages and opportunities exist for work on the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act, is the furthest ahead of the three states. In Adamawa and Borno, some advocacy is ongoing around domestication of the VAPP Act, Child Rights Act (CRA) and Gender and Equal Opportunities (GEO) Bill but passage remains challenging. The Attorney General of Adamawa State seems committed towards reforms and is planning to convene all 36 State Attorney Generals in Yola to look at reforms to the Penal Code as well as discuss the VAPP Act, harmonisation with the CRA and other ways of protecting rights. This gathering may provide entry points for work on legislative and policy reform afterwards.

- As for men and boys, women’s and girls’ pathways to association with JAS defy neat categories of ‘voluntary’ and ‘forced’ with women and girls falling on a spectrum encompassing abductions, coercion, pressure, circumstantial motivation and intrinsic motivation. While the abduction of women and girls has made national and international headlines, the extent of abductions of men and boys remains unknown. Some gendered pathways for young women include feeling obligated to join husbands in JAS, the unique opportunities the group offers for young women, particularly to acquire religious knowledge denied to them by patriarchal gender norms, and opportunities for higher status due to carrying out tasks for the group, while for young men, the role of complex business relationships and feelings of attendant obligation are more marked.⁵ Other reasons that JAS appealed to many, especially young women, were Mohammed Yusuf’s encouragement of marriage within the sect and alleviation of financial demands and social obligations as he promoted quick, simple weddings and

ordered dowries to go to the bride not her family. More recently, in areas where JAS are active, women and girls have been given to fighters by fathers under pressure and have chosen to marry fighters themselves, including for protection. Recruitment of women and girls in certain areas has helped attract supporters, establish a political ideology in opposition to the state and target institutions, particularly as women and girls, unlike men and boys, were not viewed with suspicion and could move freely (although this is now changing). Women and girls associated with the group have taken part in attacks on villages and towns, been responsible for recruiting members, acted as bomb makers, taught other women and girls new to the group what was expected of them, persuaded family members to join and, of course, served as 'suicide' bombers. Issues of abductions, forced marriage and sexual violence will be considered below.

- From 8th April 2011 until 31st May 2017, the media reported 216 unique instances of ‘suicide’ bombing attacks involving 345 people in total in the Lake Chad region. Of these, 174, or almost 50 percent, were identified as female, a rate much higher than the gender distribution seen in other similar groups. It is important to note that many ‘suicide’ bombers do not have their gender reported by the media so the real figure may be higher. This study shows that women more frequently went to civilian targets such as markets, bus stations and educational institutions while men were more likely to attack government institutions, including police and military installations. Women are seen as more expendable by JAS leadership. As the study quotes one former JAS member as saying, women are 'cheap and they are angry for the most part. Using women allows you to save your men.'

- Large-scale DDRR processes are yet to start in the northeast. However, tensions continue between families of presumed AOG members and those harmed by violence, with widespread suspicion and mistrust in some communities as to who may be a sympathiser or member. Women and girls associated with AOGs often face marginalisation, discrimination and rejection by family and community members and are viewed with fear that they have been radicalised. Children associated with both JAS and CJTF are viewed differently according to whether they are seen to have joined willingly or been forced to join but, regardless, there are high levels of reluctance to accept them back into communities. While men are likely to face higher levels of fear and mistrust as they are seen as being more willingly involved, even while people acknowledge the high levels of forced recruitment, women and girls are likely to face higher levels of stigma, particularly if they have become pregnant as a result of association with AOGs. Although there is less stigma and discrimination related to being associated with vigilante groups and the CJTF, which continue to be active, there are fears of the future trajectories of those involved in these groups, their propensity to be involved in violence and refusal to give up the power associated with fighting. In addition to the ways in which they are perceived by the community, all those associated with armed groups have experienced and/or taken part in violence, with the forms that these take manifesting very differently for women, girls, boys and men, and are likely to experience continued trauma as a result.

- Women and girls are also active in vigilante groups and the CJTF across the three states. While some of them come from families of hunters, a group that has been active in defending communities from JAS, with women inheriting family positions and taking active part in fighting, others without this background also have taken conscious decisions to join. While in

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7 Ibid.
8 J. Warner and H. Matfess, *Exploding Stereotypes: The Unexpected Operational and Demographic Characteristics of Boko Haram’s Suicide Bombers*, (Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, 2017).
many such groups, leadership tends to consist of men at the highest levels, women command groups of fighters, take part in active fighting alongside men, are responsible for patrolling towns and villages and screen women and girls at checkpoints. Women have also been known to spontaneously take up weapons to fight JAS members trying to enter their communities alongside the men.

- Children, both girls and boys, have been recruited and used by armed groups. While children associated with JAS have been used in direct hostilities, for planting landmines, improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and unexploded ordnances (UXOs), burning houses and schools and as cooks, messengers, look-outs and human shields, children associated with the CJTF have been used mainly for intelligence related purposes, search operations, night patrols, crowd control and to staff guard posts. As with adults, children fall along a spectrum of forced to voluntarily recruitment, due to factors including poverty, peer influencing, lack of parental care, familial ties to the groups and the desire to protect families and communities for both JAS and the CJTF. Pathways to recruitment specific for JAS alone include abductions, religious ideology, charismatic leadership and financial incentives whereas pathways to recruitment specific for the CJTF alone include associations with positive community image, to take revenge on JAS and fear of security forces who may see you as a JAS member if one did not join the CJTF. Meanwhile, association with vigilante groups is often inherited from parents, particularly for hunters. The drivers for girls and boys are very similar with some important additional pathways for girls. They have become associated with JAS due to forceful conscription by husbands who did not express their support for JAS prior to marriage and to protect their families from violence. Reasons for association with the CJTF additional to those mentioned above are to show solidarity for those abducted, as protection against sexual violence or due to fear of being forced to join JAS. There is widespread sexual violence against girls while associated with JAS. Stigma and distrust, common for boys and girls associated with JAS once they have left the group, is a key barrier for reintegration as is the risk of violence from CJTF and vigilante group members. Girls were seen as having increased reintegration challenges compared to boys due to the additional stigma of being a survivor of sexual violence, particularly if this resulted in pregnancy and childbirth, and the use of girls in 'suicide' attacks. Meanwhile, children associated with the CJTF and vigilante groups were viewed positively as having brought peace, although there was some concern about behaviour, caused by their witnessing of violence, exposure to drug use and the increased authority they had experienced. The Nigerian government is currently reviewing a protocol for handover of children encountered during military operations to civilian child protection actors.

- Women have been instrumental in saving the lives of men from JAS. Countless women and men interviewed between October 2016 and March 2017 for the author’s previous work spoke of women hiding men in their homes, dressing them in women’s clothing and smuggling them past JAS fighters, often at great personal risk. Women have also helped soldiers who were worried they would be the first to be targeted to escape JAS fighters coming into the area by disguising them as women so they can escape. Many men interviewed are thankful to the crucial role that women played in ensuring their safety and security, however some women speak of a desire on the part of men for people to forget this happened and attempts to silence them with this in mind.

- Attacks still continue in Borno with major gaps in information as to what is happening in areas that are contested territories in the north of the state and around Lake Chad but security levels have significantly improved in Adamawa and Yobe. The time when their villages and

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12 Discussions with UNICEF staff working on child protection.
towns were controlled by AOGs was a time of fear and many people interviewed spoke about sleeping in the bush during this time due to fear that fighters would come to kill and abduct them if they stayed in their homes, particularly at night. Many men and older boys, worried about being targeted (for good reason as will be shown below), were some of the first to flee communities, leaving behind women, the elderly and children. The pattern of harm seems to differ between AOGs: JAS is characterised as having a policy of deliberately targeting civilians while ISWA is much more strategic in terms of reaching out to them. This is an area that warrants further investigation. It is important to note here the risk of IEDs and UXOs and the lack of comprehensive mine surveys or action around demining, particularly as people start farming and trading in some areas. That mine action continues not to be taken risks increasing the number of disabled people, already heightened as a result of violence. Disabled people, particularly women and girls, have found it very difficult to escape violence and continue not to be specifically targeted for assistance.

- While most civilians feel AOGs have perpetrated the majority of harm to them and their families, they also had key concerns about Nigerian security forces: They were worried about being wrongly identified as a combatant, perceived security forces to be unprofessional, untrained and unwilling to fight, did not know how and where to file complaints or receive post harm assistance, noted poor relations and mistrust between communities and security personnel and highlighted abuse, unlawful detention and intimidated. Military action or inaction has led to civilian harm in three ways: 1) failure to protect communities from violence; 2) failure to prevent collateral damage during operations, causing direct and indirect harm; and 3) directly targeting civilians with unlawful detention, harassment, destruction of property, sexual violence, indiscriminate targeting of certain groups such as young men, torture and excessive use of force causing injury and death. Women and girls are particularly disadvantaged when it comes to Nigerian security forces. Not only do gender norms act as a barrier to approaching them with security concerns but high levels of SEA perpetrated by security forces make them afraid to do so. As a result, many women feel they have nowhere to turn to when it comes to their own safety and security as well as passing on information and intelligence they have, such as the location of AOG fighters or ways they move into and out of towns and villages.

- In addition to AOGs and security forces, community self-help militias i.e. vigilante groups and the CJTF have also caused serious and significant harm to civilians. This perpetration of harm seems most marked by members of the CJTF against whom accusations of harassment of all community members, sexual harassment, violence and abuse against women and girls, extra-judicial killings and other human rights abuses are made. Indeed, in some areas such as Dikwa the military has purposefully distanced itself from the CJTF, preferring to rely instead on vigilante members including local hunters who have good knowledge of the area and are seen as ‘more mature’ than CJTF members. However, community perceptions of these groups tend to be mixed: they are viewed more positively that state security forces in many places and many are thankful for their role in defending communities from AOG attack while simultaneously being concerned as to current abuses by and future trajectories of group members.

- Men of fighting age (roughly spanning 15 to 60 years) are often the first to flee insecure areas, deliberately targeted and killed by AOGs, viewed with suspicion and detained by security agencies and involved in fighting (their recruitment spanning a spectrum between coercion

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13 The above analysis in this paragraph is taken from K. Dietrich, “When We Can’t See the Enemy, Civilians Become the Enemy”: Living Through Nigeria’s Six Year Insurgency, (Center for Civilians in Conflict, 2015).

14 Based on discussions with women in Adamawa and Borno between February and June 2017.

15 Discussions with soldiers in Dikwa in March and April 2017.
and volition).\textsuperscript{16} They are targeted directly by the military for arrest and detention, including through screening processes for IDPs. In 2015, Amnesty International estimated that Nigerian military forces had extra judicially executed more than 1,200 people, arbitrarily arrested at least 2,000 people, mostly young men and boys, and that more than 7,000 men and boys had died in detention since March 2011 due to starvation, thirst, severe overcrowding leading to spread of diseases, torture, lack of medical attention and the use of fumigation chemicals in unventilated cells.\textsuperscript{17} At times, they also become the focus of suspicion by others, including their own communities and families. If a particular community or local government area (LGA) is seen by others to have large numbers of recruits to AOGs, it is often the young men that are seen as fighters.

- The latest International Organisation for Migration Displacement Tracing Matrix (IOM DTM),\textsuperscript{18} covering the period 5 April to 15 May 2017, reported 1,884,331 displaced individuals and 1,234,894 returnee individuals with 56 percent of the population being children, 55 percent being female and 7 percent being over the age of 60. The largest populations are located in Borno (79 percent), Adamawa (8 percent) and Yobe (6 percent) with 87 percent of displaced people originating from Borno and 97 percent of displacements in total due to the JAS linked crisis. Most displacements occurred in 2014 (31 percent), 2015 (30 percent) and 2016 (29 percent), with only 9 percent of displacement having occurred in 2017 so far. Multiple displacement is common with nearly 70 percent of people having been displaced at least twice. Borno has the highest percentage of people living in camps and camp like settings (42 percent) while Yobe has 12 percent and Adamawa has 8 percent of people doing so. Food is the predominant need in 70 percent of IDP sites followed by non-food items like blankets and mosquito nets (13 percent) and shelter and medical services (both at six percent). Unfortunately, the DTM does not disaggregate by sex. However, there are reports that displaced single or divorced women may be allocated housing in formal camps with those in host communities having to fend for themselves and likely to be marginalised.\textsuperscript{19}

- The directions on protection, access and solutions for IDPs and returnees developed by the Government of Nigeria and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has three pillars: 1) opportunities for solutions ensuring voluntariness, safety and dignity; 2) critical protection needs, including sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) prevention and response; and 3) empowerment and social cohesion including gender equality, inclusion, empowerment and community reconciliation.\textsuperscript{20} The Governors of Adamawa and Borno states, both who had insisted that all IDP camps in state capitals would be soon closed and people sent back to LGAs of origin, have in recent months backtracked due to pressure from federal government actors and national and international development and humanitarian actors. There is significant movement around the region as people move back to their LGAs where the security situation has improved, move to LGA headquarters for safety and security from surrounding towns and villages, experience refoulement from Cameroon and are forced back over the border into Nigeria and flee to Maiduguri due to violence in their LGA. This is a complex and quickly changing area with services insufficient or not present to assist the numbers of people displaced.

- The conflict affected education in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. JAS targeted educational institutions, warning teachers not to go to school, attacking schools and killing teachers. Students were also warned not to attend educational institutions. For example, in a 24 March

\textsuperscript{17} Amnesty International, Stars on Their Shoulders. Blood on Their Hands. War Crimes Committed by the Nigerian Military, 2015.
\textsuperscript{19} A. Rodogovsky, Gender Rapid Assessment – Jere LGA, Borno State, Nigeria, (CRS/ CAFOD, February 2017).
\textsuperscript{20} Government of Nigeria and UNHCR, Directions on Protection, Access and Solutions for IDPs and Returnees in North-Eastern Nigeria, 24 February 2017, Oslo, Norway.
2014 message Shekau was seen as saying, 'University is forbidden, girls you should return to your homes.'

Mass displacement also led to many schools being converted into IDP camps. The town of Buni Yadi made national headlines in February 2014 when 59 boys were killed and 2 more boys went missing from the Federal Government College while girls were ordered to leave school and get married. It was one of several attacks against schools, with the numbers of children killed and abducted leading to the long-term closure of schools disrupting provision of education. Many parents were scared to send their children to schools even when they reopened due to the attacks on and abductions from Chibok Girls Secondary School in April 2014. Even where schools reopened after the security situation improved, many parents are unable to find the money to cover the costs of education as they are just about managing to provide food and shelter. Although school fees have been waived for children of IDPs in some areas, lack of books, shoes and uniforms hinders this access in reality. In many cases, due to the severe economic hardship families find themselves, children are required to go out to work with girls sent to hawk products, rather than being able to go to school. This lack of education is a concern to many parents, particularly women who have been left with the responsibility of taking care of children. For disabled children, although the organisation Education Crisis Response (ECR) has assisted 80 physically challenged children to access education in Borno, this is just a small proportion of disabled children in the state. ECR has no specific mandate of working with disabled children and, as was the case before the conflict, there are no teachers with the requisite skills to teach deaf and blind children. These dynamics affecting access to education overlay challenges present before the conflict. In many rural areas of the states, regardless of whether they have been conflict affected, children, particularly girls, do not have access to education. Even where enrolment rates have been good, there have been issues with transit to different stages of education, completion and violence against girls by teachers as well as fellow pupils. However, it seems there have been some changes when it comes to attitudes towards education. Some parents have shifted their minds due to the conflict, characterising what has happened as being due to lack of education and so wanting their children to be educated. Efforts have also been made towards enlightenment in mosques about the need for girls in particular to have access to education and giving the example of female lawyers and doctors and members of the National Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) as role models. Many women also spoke about how much more difficult their own situation of being the sole breadwinner now was due to lack of education and their determination not to have this be the situation for their daughters. Today, there are some indications of increased enrolment of children previously out of school in certain geographical areas as education actors intensify programming and attitudes towards education start to change.

- Violent conflict has profoundly affected and changed gender roles in areas affected by violence. Women interviewed across the three states spoke of increased poverty due to years of missed harvests, losing their equipment and business sites, finding it difficult to get buyers for their goods as everyone's incomes levels have been affected and using up all their capital hosting friends and families who had been displaced or during their own displacement. They spoke of being able to manage before but finding things increasingly difficult, particularly as men, who used to be breadwinners for the family, are now no longer there in many cases. Women make up the majority of the adult population in many areas due to what has happened to men of fighting age. They have had to take on new types of economic activities and decision-making roles as a result of these demographic changes. Even if husbands and fathers are present, men are no longer able to provide for families, forcing women to find new ways of earning incomes, including through survival sex. Where humanitarian assistance has been given to families via men, there are cases where men favour one wife over the others or

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do not pass on assistance to their families but sell goods received, with the money earned not given to the family or used to marry another wife. As a result, many agencies distribute food and non-food items to women, further impacting household gender dynamics.

- Levels of trauma due to their experiences of violence are high in areas affected, for women, men, boys and girls. Women spoke about their husbands being traumatised and having to support them through this in the absence of any services. Women also report high levels of trauma themselves, with many stories of women in severe psychological distress after witnessing the killing of their husbands and children, being raped by their sons who are JAS members or being abducted and forced into sexual slavery relayed. Although these cases are exceptional and shocking in their nature, they are just some examples of what women have experienced and the ways in which these experiences have continued psychological impacts. There are some organisations working in this area but not only are many areas completely missing psychosocial support (PSS) interventions but the level of services provided is far outstripped by the level of need even in areas where they exist. Counsellors who have been trained to provide psychological first aid spoke about receiving no assistance or guidance on how to prevent and cope with secondary trauma, highly likely as a result of their work in the absence of clear mitigation strategies and actions.

- While women may have significant influence on men in their households and communities, they can struggle to translate this into recognised positions in society at large. As in other parts of Nigeria, there are very few women in positions of political leadership. Please refer to Table 1 below for figures of women who are currently serving in elected and appointed positions in the three states. While women may participate in party political structures, their role is often to mobilise women voters for candidates rather than influencing policy direction or being in positions of leadership themselves.

Table 1: Number of Women in Elected and Appointed Positions in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Parliament</th>
<th>State Executive</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>House of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of</td>
<td>Representatives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>House of</td>
<td>Commissioners</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assembly</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Secretaries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>LGA Chairs/Councillors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adamawa</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borno</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yobe</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• There are some roles allocated to women in community systems of leadership, with the wives of men serving as the hakimi or bulama expected to be the conduit for women’s concerns and with women traditional title holders at the emirate level. However, in reality, many of these women are no longer living in these communities but in state capitals. Indeed, some of the community leaders themselves no longer live in these areas as they were some of the first to flee due to fears of violence and are yet to return. Furthermore, women in communities say there is often no direct line of communication between these women and those in the community and that they struggle to access community leadership institutions as they are barred from interacting with community leaders directly. There are some signs of change with a few leaders taking conscious steps to involve women in community leadership institutions in recognition of their role in peace and security however these are uneven and depend to a large extent on the initiatives of the community leaders themselves.

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24 These figures were received by Olufunke Baruwa of the Nigerian Women Trust Fund via email correspondence on 30th June 2017.
• In many areas, women continue to be active in their community and are organised in women’s associations. Many of these associations, for example women farmer councils or market women’s associations, are linked to occupation. They provide a way that women can advocate to decision makers on common interests as well as shape community narratives. They also can bring women together across lines of division for mutual interest either because they draw membership from different groups or due to the potential for women’s groups formed along ethnic and religious lines to come together in dialogue and action. Self-help groups, including adashe or savings groups, provide a way that women can support each other. Some of these associations, which had been no longer operational due to displacement, are now being revived as security improves, people return to their communities and markets and livelihoods are slowly rebuilt.

• Women are active in peacebuilding efforts, although this tends to be at family and community levels and using informal ways of organising. Women are integrated into peace and security structures at community level supported by external actors such as the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme (NSRP) or United Nations (UN) Women to some extent. However, their participation can be tokenistic in some cases as they are outnumbered by men present, feel unable to contribute and do not necessarily have a mechanism of seeking input and feeding back to other women in the community. As a result, even when these efforts are made, women feel marginalised from formal decision making processes around peace and security. However, women do organise outside these structures. In addition to women’s groups and associations talking about the need for peaceful coexistence and to take proactive measures to ensure peace and security, they also reach out to others. For example, in Adamawa, FOMWAN is undertaking programming on inter-religious tensions while the Kirchinga Women’s Association conducts peace education to children, undertakes tension management activities and plans to start working on return and reintegration of former JAS fighters. In Borno, members of the NSRP supported peace clubs undertake peacebuilding and conflict management activities in their communities. In all three states, women are very active in civil society and have links with communities, understanding of how to manoeuvre systems and leaders in order to influence change and ability to work with and assist women and men in communities. They have also been involved as negotiators and mediators, including at the highest levels, as seen by the examples of women such as Barrister Aisha Wakil and Hamsatu Allamin who, on several occasions, have linked AOGs with the government for negotiations and negotiated access for humanitarian actors.

• There is no centralised mechanism for data collection around the quantity and quality of women’s participation and voice in decision making. Although the numbers of women holding elected office throughout the country is available from the Nigeria Women’s Trust Fund, there is no system of tracking women’s influence in political and government institutions let alone when it comes to women’s leadership and influence in formal and informal ways in community leadership institutions or women’s groups and association. UN Women conducted a baseline survey of women’s engagement in peace and security in Adamawa, Plateau and Gombe states in 2015 but this only cover one out of three MCN states and relies largely on perceptions (not gender disaggregated) from community members alone. The NSRP Annual Perception Survey conducted over five years offers another source of data of perceptions of communities of women’s participation in peacebuilding albeit only in certain locations in Borno and Yobe. Without a clear baseline that measures facts as well as perceptions and mixes qualitative and quantitative methods, it becomes difficult to measure progress or learn from interventions about what works and what measures should be taken to improve programming.

25 NSRP is a conflict management programme working at federal, state and LGA levels in Bayelsa, Borno, Delta, Kaduna, Kano, Plateau, Rivers and Yobe. It ran from 2012 to 2017.
• An estimated 1.8 million people are reported to be in need of assistance due to gender based violence (GBV), including rape, sexual exploitation, forced and early marriage, survival sex and domestic violence. Population movements due to military operations, spontaneous movements and forced returns raise VAWG concerns. The conflict has exacerbated some types of VAWG such as sexual violence while giving rise to new types of VAWG phenomenon such as abductions. Those most vulnerable to VAWG are IDPs, women and girls with disabilities, girl hawkers and those who are experiencing food insecurity as well as survivors who continue to experience stigma and shame.

• Women and girls IDPs in camps, informal settlements and host communities face sexual violence, often in the course of daily activities such as collecting firewood, fetching water and using toilets and showers. In some cases, men hosting displaced women and girls have sexually abused them, forcing them to have sex in exchange for food and shelter. Non-displaced women and girls also face experience sexual violence, although this is less studied. There is still an overwhelming culture of silence around sexual violence, particularly for older girls and women who are often blamed for crimes committed against them.

• SEA from state agents, including the military, police and camp officials, and men in the community was reported by many women interviewed. This is particularly marked given scarcity of food and other resources, restrictions on movement and diversion of aid by these state agents. Left with the primary responsibility for providing for families, many women are forced to engage in sex in exchange for money, food and other items, or in order to be able to leave camps to earn money for themselves and their families. Girls are sent out by families to hawk, with some understanding that they are, in fact, selling their bodies rather than their products in order to bring back money to their families.

• JAS first started talking about abductions in 2012 in their public messaging saying these measures were in retaliation for the detention of wives and children. Forced marriages of teenage girls began to be recorded in the Bulabulin Ngarannam neighbourhood of Maiduguri in 2012. Abductions of thousands of girls and young women have taken place in the years since then from a variety of settings including schools, markets, during raids on villages and houses and on public transport with girls and women then forced into marriage, kept in rooms for sex at the convenience of male fighters, raped, forced or persuaded to carry out tasks for the group and forced to convert to Islam if Christian. There is some differentiation between ‘wives’ and ‘slaves’ predicated on religion and behaviour, with the former protected to some extent from certain types of abuse. Women and girls associated with JAS face stigma and fear from communities who are unsure as to how their thinking has been affected by their experiences and to what extent they have been ‘radicalised,’ particularly given reports of girls and women who have returned killing their parents and family members.

• No empirical study has been conducted in the northeast on early and forced marriage but across the border in Niger, 20 percent of fishing households interviewed by Oxfam reported...
having to marry their daughters earlier than they wanted to reduce pressure on resources due to the devastating impacts of the violent conflict and military measures restricting fishing on their livelihoods.\textsuperscript{32} Whether this is mirrored on the Nigerian side of Lake Chad is unknown. According to the Gender Based Violence Information Management System (GBV IMS), 3 percent of 2,394 cases dealt with early marriage\textsuperscript{33} but this is not necessarily an accurate reflection of incidence. Women activists speak of parents having to marry off their daughters as they are no longer able to provide for them and hope they have a better future with their new husbands and of men in Maiduguri in particular marrying displaced girls as ‘cheap brides’ then divorcing and returning them to families after a few months.

- There is little empirical evidence as to whether levels of domestic violence and abuse have increased and this is an under-researched area. From interviews conducted for this assessment, a complex picture emerges. Many women spoke of increased arguments and violence within the home, higher rates of divorce and abandonment as a result of men’s inability to perform their breadwinner roles and frustration with being unable to do so. Regardless of whether or not they were actually engaging in survival sex, they reported that their husbands were suspicious as to where they were going and how they were earning the money they brought home to their families but also realising the extent of family reliance on this income. Other research has found a link between increased women’s income earning and domestic violence and abuse, particularly controlling behaviour, in Nigeria.\textsuperscript{34} However, some women spoke of having increased decision-making power in their families from earning money for the family and the realisation that husband and wife had to come together during this time of hardship – and that levels of arguments and violence had reduced as a result.

- There are high levels of stigma and victim blaming against women and girls who have experienced sexual violence as well as a lack of differentiation between consensual sex, sexual exploitation and sexual violence. While people realise that women and girls often do not have a choice as to whether to engage in sex and are forced to do so, either by (threat of) violence or in order to feed themselves and their families, all these types of violence are labelled as iskanci (immoral behaviour). This stigma has severe consequences on the lives of these women and girls who are re-victimised by their communities with blame attaching to them rather than to their perpetrators. It also poses severe barriers to women and girls being able to access the help they need and to being able to hold perpetrators to account. Despite the impact of stigma and this labelling as iskanci on survivors’ lives and access to services as well as justice and accountability, there are hardly any actors tackling stigma directly.

- There is a high risk of anti VAWG work leading to increased policing and restrictions on the movement and rights of women and girls for their ‘protection.’ Women and girls who continue to move around the community are blamed for any violence that happens to them, particularly if they approach security or camp officials for help or engage in sex in exchange for food and / or money. This risk is particularly high given common conflation of consensual sexual activity outside marriage with sexual violence and abuse. There is also a high likelihood of backlash against the roles and decision-making power that women have been forced to take on as a result of violent conflict with, as seen in many other countries, men taking steps to push women back into ‘traditional’ gender roles and increased levels of domestic violence and abuse as a result. There is no actor currently working in this area.

- The GBV IMS is managed by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in order to ensure a standard tool and methodology for data collection and analysis, uniform classification of

\footnotesize{
\begin{itemize}
\item UNFPA, \textit{GBV IMS Report August – December 2016}.
\item C. Nagarajan, \textit{Masculinities, Conflict and Violence in Nigeria}, (NSRP / V4C, 2015).
\end{itemize}
}
incidents across service providers, more reliable information about reported incidents and ensure adherence to guidelines of ethics and safety.\(^{35}\) It started in April 2016 with 2,394 incidents were reported from April to December 2016 from Adamawa, Borno, Gombe, Lagos and Yobe. Of reported cases, 19 percent were from children aged 0 to 11 years, 23 percent from children aged 12 to 17 years and 57 percent were from adults. Please see Tables 1 and 2 below for more details as to type of incidence and circumstances surrounding it. These statistics are included here to be illustrative. Not only does GBV IMS data not aim to give an accurate idea of actual incidence and does not disaggregate between violence against girls and boys but it also covers Lagos and Gombe, states not within the purview of MCN and the data is not disaggregated by state. Indeed, some of the trends observed by this data are surprising. For example, many people interviewed spoke of the strong culture of silence around violence against adult women and around intimate partner or domestic violence and abuse yet these types of VAWG are amongst the highest reported. Potential explanations for this discrepancy include differences between Adamawa, Borno and Yobe and Gombe and Lagos and the nature of data gathering organisations that send VAWG data. For example, child protection actors were just being integrated into the GBV IMS system in the reporting period, hence explaining the lower than expected levels of reporting of violence against children. In terms of referrals, the highest numbers of survivors declined legal assistance and safety/security services while the services most in demand but unavailable were livelihood and access to safe houses/shelters. This finding matches discussions and interviews in the three states where survivors often do not wish to report cases to the police and security and justice services and livelihood and shelter support is often not forthcoming. In recent months, UNFPA has taken steps to improve the operationalisation of the GBV IMS with visits to data gathering organisations to review and address programme and technical issues related to collection, computation and reporting of data and provide coaching and mentoring. The extent as to whether this strengthens the GBV IMS will be seen in the forthcoming months.

Table 2: Type of incidents reported to the GBV IMS April – August 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Incident</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rape</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual assault</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical assault</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forced marriage</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denial of resources</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological/ emotional abuse</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Circumstances surrounding incidents reported to the GBV IMS April – August 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Circumstances Surrounding Incident</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intimate partner violence</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child sexual abuse</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible sexual slavery</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harmful traditional practices</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early marriage</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual exploitation</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Although many new actors have invested significantly in strengthening response to VAWG particularly in Borno, large gaps remain as the humanitarian report has been late, slow and still does not mainstream VAWG sufficiently. These dynamics occur in a context of higher and

\(^{35}\) All statistics in this paragraph are taken from UNFPA, *GBV IMS Report August – December 2016*, PowerPoint presentation. Unfortunately, despite repeated requests, it was not possible to get up to date or state disaggregated data.
new types of VAWG in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe as a result of the violent conflict and a large impact of violence on infrastructure, which was far from sufficient before the conflict. For example, over 40 percent of healthcare infrastructure in Borno, Adamawa, Yobe, Gombe, Bauchi and Taraba has been destroyed. Many women and girls are returning or being further displaced to LGA headquarters but the minimum VAWG services needed are absent. While there has been some investment in healthcare and psychosocial services, provision of shelter and livelihoods support is very low across the three states. Furthermore, there is incomplete access to sexual and reproductive health services, particularly when it comes to abortion. This is of particular concern given levels of sexual violence and survival sex, lack of sex and relationships education, difficulties in negotiating safe sex, the stigma attached to pregnancy outside the bonds of marriage and the lack of formal adoption services. Although Nigerian law does not permit abortion except to save the life of the mother, in practice, those with money are able to get medical abortions while those without money or connections have only the options of dangerous methods or local herbs. In 2014, in response to the number of abductions of women and girls and difficulties they faced upon their return, the Federation of Muslim Women’s Associations of Nigeria (FOMWAN) issued an advisory, pointing out that Islam allows for abortion for a certain period of pregnancy and does not allow stigmatisation of women who have been abducted and raped and any children that may be born to them. Even where services exist, awareness of their existence and what to do to get help among communities remains low. Please see the state sections for detailed discussion as to the availability of response services in each state.

- Very few actors are working on prevention of violence as action tends to be focused on response. The Protection Sector Working Group (PSWG) has developed an advocacy note on SEA in Maiduguri and prepared an action plan for response but concrete work on prevention with security actors has yet to start. There is a lot of potential to do prevention work, including when it comes to reaching out to institutions whose members are reported to engage in SEA, changing norms and attitudes around VAWG, tackling stigma and peer to peer work with young women and men.

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37 Advisory shared via email in summer 2014.
Adamawa

The information below draws upon a review of documents and research, particularly quantitative data from a 2015 baseline study conducted by UN Women in Maiha, Mubi South, Numan and Yola North, as well as interviews conducted in Yola and Gombi in May 2017 and work done by the author previous to this assessment. There is not much research on gender in Adamawa per se and research that covers Adamawa, Borno and Yobe does not often distinguish between dynamics in different states. Where this is the case, findings have been included under trends across Adamawa, Borno and Yobe section above. Further, due to logistical challenges, only 3 days of interviews in the state were possible. As a result, the information presented below is more limited to some extent compared to the other sections.

Context

The brunt of JAS related violence has been focused on the LGAs taken over by JAS fighters although people have been displaced from these LGAs into other parts of the state. As of May 2017, the security situation in Madagali continued to be tense with fighters reported in the area and the presence of the Nigerian state tending to be purely military. The police were operating at the LGA headquarters in Bulac monitoring other areas from a distance. Other parts of the state are relatively safe and have seen the resumption of civil authority.

As of May 2017, most actors tended to focus on Michika and Madagali for their interventions rather than the other five LGAs affected. This focus was perceived by interviewees as being due to media coverage of the attacks as well as the proactivity and receptiveness of the chair of Madagali LGA. However, although more people were killed in these two LGAs, the other five LGAs have also seen widespread destruction of infrastructure and economic impacts. In addition, the violent conflict was seen to have impacted areas outside these seven LGAs with people displaced having moved to other locations. Some government officials interviewed expressed unhappiness with actors continuing to focus on LGAs taken over by JAS rather than taking a more holistic approach. MCN would be wise to take into account of this dynamic when choosing focal LGAs.

In many communities, suspicions as to who is a sympathiser or a (former) JAS member continues. Mubi, Madagali, Michika and Gombi, particularly Michika and Madagali, are seen as areas with some levels of JAS recruitment. Interviewees in Gombi said that nobody is willing to ‘talk in public against the insurgency as we don’t know who is a sympathiser.’ At the same time, there is unwillingness to ‘allow former fighters to stay and reintegrate’ due to fear of continued support and allegiance, including through the influence of charms: ‘if they came back repentant, we wouldn’t believe. We need to check their brain first and will take them to the security forces to ensure their minds are okay.’ Indeed, one interviewee in Gombi spoke about people identified as parents of fighters being taken and detained in Madagali – although it was not possible to verify whether this actually happened during the short time spent in Gombi. From Mubi South to Mobbar, accusations against Muslims of collusion with JAS were said to be used to settle existing grudges. Conflict over housing, land and property is a concern as many people left their communities, leaving behind homes, land and animals that have since been used by others, and lack of access to justice or arbitration systems given distance from courts and reduced levels of trust in many community leaders.39

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39 Community or ‘traditional’ leadership systems have experienced some decline in power and influence due to perceptions of increasing politicisation, favouritism towards certain groups and reports of diversion of humanitarian aid by leaders. However, this is highly context specific and depends on the leader in question with high levels of trust and confidence in some leaders. Furthermore, influence can be limited to certain groups, with young people and women particularly reporting little contact with these institutions and leaders. There have been some attempts to address this but, as yet, they do not seem to have been felt on the ground.
Another current area of conflict is the relationship between those displaced and host communities. The ‘influx’ of IDPs is seen as leading to health facilities being strained, shortage and increasing prices of items in markets due to low supply and high demand, closure of schools for use as IDP camps and increased competition with IDPs setting up shops taking away business from the people who were there before. This conflict is being exacerbated by government rhetoric particularly towards IDPs in camps, seen as being predominantly from Borno and so not the responsibility of the Adamawa State Government with IDPs camps characterised as ‘brothels’ or ‘centres of criminality’ and needing to be closed. The Adamawa State Government had said it would close all IDP camps but, due to pressure from government, UN and NGO actors, announced this would be delayed. Government officials seem concerned about perceptions, not wanting Adamawa to be seen as ‘an IDP state’ and pointing to cases where foreign investors decided not to do business due to security concerns as having IDPs camps was seen as a sign of insecurity.

In Adamawa, although the JAS-related conflict is seen as the outflow of another state rather than rooted in the state itself, many of those interviewed for this assessment believed that the crisis spread easily into the state due to pre-existing tensions between ethno-linguistic, religious and occupational groups caused by struggles for political power. These tensions exist among the women as well as the men. According to the state Attorney General/ Commissioner of Justice, the state recognises 87 different groups with 14 more groups asking for recognition making 101 groups in total. He spoke about mutual suspicion between groups on the basic of religion and ethnicity, requiring conflict resolution mechanisms. There are perceptions of ‘domination’ by Fulani people who control positions and therefore have more access to money and resources.

Tensions between Christians and Muslims are particularly marked in Mubi, Madagali and Michika with cases of killings even before JAS related conflict. For example, the people of Michika LGA had been living peacefully for years until polarisation post announcement of the April 2011 presidential election results which led to killing and destruction of property. A striking example as to how communities remain divided is the local market. Established decades ago and held weekly on Sundays, after the 2011 post-election violence, Christians, who saw the market as contributing to low church turnout, changed the market day to Saturday without consulting Muslims in the community who objected to the change. As of 2017, the market stands divided with market days for Christians held on Saturdays and for Muslims held on Sundays with Christians not daring to sell on Sundays and vice versa and groups holding onto their positions. Most local farmers bring farm produce for sale to Muslim buyers who tend to be fewer in number but with a stronger economic position. After the Nigerian military recaptured Michika, held by JAS for 8 months from September 2014 onwards, conflict broke out among returnees. Christians, conflating Muslims with JAS members, perceived killings while JAS was in control of Michika as perpetrated by Muslims or with their support in identifying houses of Christians to be burned and attacked. As a result, there were reprisal attacks on at least three occasions by Christians on Muslims, particularly those passing through the road connecting Mubi to Christian majority villages around Mucucks. However, there seems to be some signs of improving relations in many LGAs: although tensions still continue, Christians and Muslims are seen mixing more from 2016 onwards than in the period between 2013 and 2016.

In addition, tensions between farmers and pastoralists continue, particularly during farming season. It is too simplistic to see this conflict as being purely between occupational groups given the links between these groups and ethno-linguistic and religious identities. As in other parts of the country, while the cattle of pastoralists (particularly those who are migratory) destroy and

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40 Please note that these identities are often overlapping and mutually reinforcing.

41 This information on Michika LGA is taken from information shared by USAID from their Tolerance project. Although many people in Yola interviewed talked about market days segregated by religion in Michika, they were not able to state with confidence when this separation happened nor give background as to its causes. This lack of historical memory for events that occurred just seven years ago is worrying in and of itself and shows how quickly conflict can seem 'natural' with its genesis forgotten.
eat the crops of farmers, designated grazing land and routes is being used as farmland by farmers. While pastoralists do not always know the location of grazing routes, this encroachment by farmers means there are fewer areas without crops where cattle can graze. Tensions around these dynamics is seen as being on the rise in the central and southern parts of the state, particularly in Yobe South, Damas, Mayabalwa, Ganyo and Tango LGAs. There were many clashes during the last harvest with farmers tracing footsteps of cattle to the relevant pastoralist leading to skirmishes. There are some attempts being made to address these issues. In Garkida, Gyaku and Gombi, conflict was mediated by community leaders and did not escalate. Gombi LGA has allocated 2,000 acres to farmers and asked them to plant there instead of on grazing routes.

Another concern is the dissatisfaction expressed by vigilante group members. When interviewed, they spoke of poor relations with the police who they do not respect for leaving during the violence while they stayed and fought. Relations are better with the military but there were many complaints about lack of remuneration for members. They said the Adamawa State Government had said they would look into this but nothing has happened to date: ‘We fought and got peace and they have forgotten us.’ The vigilante leaders interviewed expressed concern about what this may mean for the future as members have experienced violence and now have guns and know how to use them.

While the seven LGAs controlled by JAS have experienced JAS related conflict, it is important to note significant amounts of farmer-pastoralist violence and inter-communal tensions, particularly in central and southern parts of the state. The 2015 UN Woman study found that 81.9 percent of respondents reported the presence of violent conflict in their communities, with 59.2 percent reporting insurgency/terrorism, 9 percent reporting pastoralist/famer conflict, 6.5 percent reporting youth violence and 13.1 percent reporting ethno-religious conflict.

### Legal and policy frameworks

As of June 2017, Adamawa has not domesticated the VAPP Act, GEO Bill or the CRA. Women’s rights organisations and UN agencies are doing policy and legislative advocacy around these laws. However, passage may prove challenging given the CRA was passed through the first reading before being dropped, with provisions around the age of childhood and early and forced marriage particularly contentious. Furthermore, the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (NAP WPS) is due to be domesticated in summer 2017 via a State Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (SAP WPS). UN Women has been working in partnership with the state Ministry of Women’s Affairs and Social Development (MOWASD). Although civil society being involved as one of the stakeholders around this, it seems that, unlike in NSRP states, they are not the driving force behind domestication with involvement seemingly more tokenistic.

Adamawa has an Attorney General who seems proactive and committed to pushing forward reforms, including around VAWG. The state Ministry of Justice (MOJ), which serves as the secretariat for the Northern Attorney Generals Forum, has recently been part of revising the Penal Code. Among the revisions is the removal of the requirement for corroboration for VAWG and changing language on sentencing to from ‘more than 7 years’ to ‘not less than 21 years.’ This revised Penal Code, endorsed by the Governor, is currently before the State House of Assembly (SHOA). The Attorney General is planning to bring all 36 state Attorney Generals to Yola in the upcoming months to look at reforms to the Penal Code and discuss the VAPP Act, harmonisation with the CRA and other ways of protecting rights. When interviewed, he spoke about the need for training, including of prosecutors, and to look at funding implications of domestication of laws as he would not domesticate laws the state could not implement due to lack of resources.

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43 Discussion with the Adamawa State Attorney General.
Involvement in armed groups

The 2015 UN Women study found respondents reported significant levels of women’s involvement in violence: 26.9 percent reported that women encourage their husbands and children to fight; 19.4 percent reported that they bear arms and carry out violence themselves; 33.9 percent reported that they provide support services to men and 10.2 percent reported all of the above.44

Given advances by the Nigerian military in 2015 and 2016, AOGs do not have control of territory in Adamawa and although there have been sightings of fighters, there is little recent information about the groups in Adamawa. Although both women and men are members of AOGs, the proportions of female to male members is unknown as are the roles that women, men, girls and boys play in Adamawa as opposed to in other states. Of course, women associated with AOGs are most visible as ‘suicide bombers’ in Adamawa as elsewhere in the region while levels of agency and choice in detonating bombs is unknown.

In vigilante groups, women make up 3,000 out of 15,000 members across Adamawa according to vigilante officials interviewed. Many of these women are hunters who, before the conflict, would go into the bush to hunt and joined the fight against AOGs when they came to Adamawa as did the male hunters. Some of these women participate in the active fighting at the ‘warfront’ against members of AOGs but others are involved in patrolling towns and cities to keep them safe. In Maiha in particular, it was said by vigilante leaders that there were many women vigilante members present as most of the men had left the LGA and the women wanted to protect their community. These women have younger men under their command who submit to their authority and work with the police who have high levels of trust in them.

Physical harm caused by armed actors

Physical harm has been caused by all parties to the conflict. The months when JAS controlled their LGA was a time of fear with families afraid to stay in their homes, particularly at night, for fear that JAS members would come to their homes to kill or injure all family members and abduct women and girls. As a result, they would leave their homes in the evening to sleep in the areas outside their towns and villages to return in the morning.

While women were killed by AOGs, there seems to have been more of a specific campaign of targeting and killing men of fighting age who were seen as more of a threat. Sometimes, this meant that men of this age range were the first to leave communities if they had advance warning of AOGs approaching for fear of violence, leaving behind their wives and children. As a result, many women have lost their male family members, with implications to be discussed below.

It is important to note that returnees reported the presence of landmines and unexploded ordinances, particularly in Madagali, Mubi South and Michika LGAs.45

Displacement

A 2015 UN Women study found that respondents considered displacement away from home to be the most common effect of violent conflict on women in Adamawa.46 The violence in the seven LGAs with JAS presence caused many people to leave their communities for other parts of the

state and region. IDPs are spread across the state. Many people fled to their LGA headquarters, neighbouring LGAs and to central and southern Yobe for safety. There are fewer camps in Adamawa compared with Borno and most people stayed with family members and friends or were able to get rented accommodation in their new localities. Those who have hosted them have been extraordinarily generous, using their own resources to take care of IDPs at great personal cost. Whereas IDPs want to go home, most of the IDPs from Adamawa who have not yet returned are from Madagali and Michika where it is still not safe with sporadic killings continuing in the villages, most buildings having been burned and little to no services present.

Displacement is still continuing particularly given refoulement with Cameroonian security forces forcibly moving Nigerians who had sought refuge in their country across the border. These Nigerian refugees in Cameroon are being returned to Adamawa to join IDPs in formal camps, informal settlements and in host communities – or to be handed over to the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) in Borno without a clear plan of what will happen to them or where they will stay in Borno. Furthermore, some IDPs from Borno who came to Adamawa then returned to Borno have started coming back due to lack of homes and services in Borno state. Given the gendered dynamics of killings committed by JAS, as discussed above, the majority of those displaced tend to be women, boys, girls and elderly men.

In Yola, there were 6 formal camps as of March 2015. Many of these have been closed down with only Malkohi and Fufure transit camps, both with around 2,000 people remaining. There is still insufficient food in these camps with attendant nutritional issues although general feeding practiced in these camps means that issues experienced in Borno and Yobe of some households not receiving any food seem not to be taking place. Water, sanitation and hygiene facilities are overstretched. There is urgent need for shelter due to the rainy season with water now penetrating roofs due to sun damage to tarpaulin. Levels of light are bad, possessing a risk to women and girls moving at night. Most IDPs in formal camps are from Bama, Gwoza, Konduga and Damboa in Borno state and have been here since 2015 or the first quarter of 2016. However, many more IDPs are in host communities and informal settlements in and around Yola than in camps. Here, apart from Malkohi village and Daware settlements where most people are from Gwoza, the majority of people are from within the state itself. The humanitarian response started by directing all its resources at the formal camps with IDPs in informal settlements and host communities seemingly forgotten. This has started to change to some extent but challenges with regards to food and shelter remain.

Although the Adamawa State Government had declared that all camps would be closed by 31st March 2017, this has, to date, not happened. A return and durable solutions committee has been set up. However, there is much misinformation being spread about the camps, for example that the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) camp (recently closed) had become a brothel, with attendant stigmatisation of the women and girls living in the camp who may or may not be engaging in survival sex for food and other resources due to lack of services being provided. Humanitarian actors interviewed spoke of indications of forced evictions and denial of food in order to close down camps. For example, NYSC and Malkohi camps received the same allocations of food but there were serious problems with insufficient food distributed in NYSC camp. Although, this difference may be due to poor camp management, the government had said previously that they wanted to close down NYSC camp and there were indications of a ‘desire to take back the camp at all costs.’

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47 Fufure transit camp was originally set up to be a transit camp for people returning from Cameroon to stay on their way to Borno. It has now transformed to a formal camp however security is not as well set up as in the other places.

48 The above information about the situation in Malkohi and Fufure transit camps is drawn from an interview with IOM staff members.
Although the majority of IDPs are hosted and supported by communities, there are also indications of tensions between IDPs and host communities. Complaints that ‘IDP children are taking over’ and affecting the quality of education has led some schools to split their sessions into morning and afternoon sessions so as to separate children of the host communities and IDPs. There are also conflicts over access to land as many IDPs want to farm, particularly with the start of the planting season. Whereas some host communities have agreed to give land to IDPs, this is not universal and indefinite in nature. Verbal abuse against IDP women is common although not often reported. In one criminal case supported by the International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA), a displaced woman went to shop and was insulted and beaten for being an IDP. There have also been complaints of displaced women ‘snatching wives’ with men of host communities choosing to marry them to the consternation of women in the host community. Some of these tensions have been caused by humanitarian actors who work only with IDPs, leaving out host communities, despite paying lip service to the need to include host communities.

There has also been much diversion of humanitarian aid, including by community leaders and National Emergency Management Association (NEMA) and SEMA officials. Items meant for distribution have been seen for sale in markets. Bulamas have been arrested for stealing food that humanitarian actors have given them to distribute to IDPs and there are indications of bias with community leaders diverting humanitarian assistance away from minority ethnic and religious groups and favouring certain other groups.\(^{49}\) Representatives of local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) interviewed talked about how camp officials refuse to allow individuals and groups to distribute items directly to IDPs but insist on being the ones to distribute and how, as a compromise, they had to proportion some of these items to security and camp officials as ‘their share’ before they were allowed to do direct distribution.

**Economic Impacts\(^ {50}\)**

The conflict affected the livelihoods of both women and men in the LGAs which saw JAS attacks and control. Women interviewed in Gombi spoke about how the conflict had left them in poverty without a source of income. Before the conflict, women said they were able to manage and used to run businesses, for example frying kose, going to the market to sell farm products, processing food and planting and harvesting crops while the men were mostly involved in trading, unskilled labour, masonry, being artisans, electrical work and farming.

However, these livelihoods were lost as shops and salons were closed down, equipment was destroyed or lost during displacement, land was unsafe to farm and any savings were used up to feed themselves and their families. In Gombi, the attacks came just before harvest in 2013 and when people returned to their farms, it was to find their crops destroyed by animals. In 2014 and 2015, it was too insecure to farm, with the result that 2016 was the first harvest for four years, with little results due to lack of capital and seeds and as farm equipment had been lost or destroyed. In addition to their own households, many women found themselves taking in those displaced from places that were even more insecure. One woman interviewed housed 60 people saying, ‘The money I used then is specifically responsible for making me as I am today’ as she had spent all her savings looking after these additional people who joined her household.

There has been a reduction in income earning for both women and men. Even when women went to the market to sell items, they spoke about people not buying as nobody has money. The cost of renting land has increased: what used to be N5,000 before is now N15,000 as people do not have money and want to get as much as possible for their land. Many women spoke about having to go

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\(^{50}\) This section is based mostly on discussions with two women’s groups in Gombi LGA and with NGO actors in Yola in May 2017.
out to beg as they had no source of income themselves and had either lost husbands or their husbands were not able to provide.

Before the conflict, while both women and men contributed to the household, husbands were the ones with primary financial responsibility but now women have been forced into this breadwinning role. They said they were unable to pay school fees for their children and were worried about future implications of lack of education. Key informants in the 2015 UN Women study spoke of a sharp rise in the number of destitute widows, orphans and abandoned women as a result of violent crises, with the hakimi of Maiha saying ‘some men run away and leave their family once the situation is critical. But the wives will stay and face the problem.’

The level of economic activity is now picking up but the economy remains depressed compared to earlier times, compounded by the national economic situation and increased food prices. As one woman said, ‘Life was easy before but it is hard now. Food was cheap and we had money to buy but now things are expensive and there is no money and nothing to do.’ One particular market woman spoke about going as far as Kano and Lagos before but now being grounded. They saw a link between their financial situation and the lack of respect with which they were viewed by family and community members. Overwhelmingly, their number one request was for the need for (start-up) capital to help them rebuild their businesses, seen as a prerequisite for more involvement in community decision making.

Although issues of VAWG were not reported or discussed openly, women interviewed saw a link between men being unable to provide and committing domestic violence and abuse. Divorce rates had increased with husbands divorcing wives because they were unable to provide for the household. Levels of survival sex are likely to be high as a result.

Psychological impacts

Unfortunately, due to the short timeframe for research in Adamawa due to the logistical challenges mentioned above, it was not possible to meet actors working on mental health and trauma. Furthermore, there is not much research in Adamawa in this area. While psychological impacts are likely to be similar to those in Borno and Yobe in the LGAs previously controlled by JAS, they may be different in other parts of the state where other conflict dynamics, including those between farmers and pastoralists, are more common.

Women’s participation and voice in governance and peacebuilding

Adamawa state has two women out of 25 legislators (8 percent) in its SHOA, one woman representing the state in each of the Senate and House of Representatives, no woman LGA chair in its 21 LGAs and 5 women out of 22 (22.7 percent) as Commissioners. At the local level, women in Gombi see politics as gradually opening up to them with women able to contest in the primaries during the 2015 elections, even if they were not elected as opposed to the past when women were ‘completely banned.’ Lack of financial resources and fear of sexual harassment and violence is seen as a major barrier to entry into politics as is attitudes towards women in leadership.

When it comes to community leadership systems, leaders are overwhelmingly men with women not invited when decisions are made and no attempts made to reach out to them. In many places,

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52 Nigerian Women Trust Fund, June 2017, information received via email.
women do not have opportunities to meet leaders. There are women leaders at LGA, district and ward levels in these institutions. Whereas they may have been active in the past, it is unclear what role they play now post conflict and their level of influence as one woman outnumbered amongst men in debateable. Women in Gombi who were interviewed talked about nobody representing them at LGA or emirate level in these structures. They had made attempts to reach the wife of the community leader and LGA chairman to ask them to use their influence to little avail, primarily because while these decision makers may be in Gombi, their wives live in Yola.

However, there are some signs of change. According to UN Women, the paramount leader in Numan LGA recently made 39 women advisers in his council and another community leader in the same LGA made 4 women assistants to the ward heads. There was unhappiness among the men present when this took place but these leaders made the case for involving women in decision making saying they are able to get information in areas that men cannot, that the world is changing and there is a need to keep up with these changes and that there would have been less attacks if women had been involved in peacebuilding. However, this is just one locality and the level of influence these women will have in practice is unknown. The sarkin matasa was created at state, district and ward levels in 2014 by the emirate council in order to ensure the participation of women and young people in the system. However, no information about this was forthcoming during interviews in Gombi and its presence and influence at the district and ward levels is unknown.

Prior to the conflict, there used to be a number of women’s associations at community level, however when people were displaced, these structures stopped functioning. They are being slowly rebuilt now that people have returned. In addition to women’s associations, there are also occupation based association such as women farmer councils, market women’s associations and associations of women tailors which push the interest of their members with decision makers, settle disputes and serve as interlocutors on behalf of members. There are also community savings and loans groups (adashe) where members make monthly contributions which are shared out among group members in turn. These groups serve important support functions, not only enabling women to gather savings to invest in businesses but also providing a forum where women discuss issues of concern and help each other in the event of sickness, death and problems with husbands and family members, including abuse.

These groups can act as important ways outside actors can connect with women, particularly given the role of markets in spreading information, rumours and community narratives and growing conflict between farmers and pastoralists. They can serve as a way of bringing women together across lines of division for mutual interest, economic and otherwise, either because they have women from different groups as members or for the potential for women’s associations formed on ethnic, religious and occupational lines to come together in dialogue and action. The members of the Gombi market women’s association interviewed spoke of being more vigilant to the security situation and consciously talking about the need to live in peaceful coexistence. That these groups are engaged in promoting this kind of discourse is important given the deep divisions and tensions that exist among women of different religions and ethnicities, the context of deepening polarisation and their influence in their families and communities in terms of shaping narratives and attitudes and in urging or cautioning certain types of action.

However, while 77.3 percent of respondents to the 2015 UN Women study felt women are involved in peacebuilding initiatives, this tended to be primarily in family and village levels, with 57.7 percent characterising the level of women’s decision-making power as low or extremely low. Women are active at community level through a number of women’s groups or initiatives

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53 Interview with Titus Orngu, UN Women, May 2017.
that are secular, community based and faith based where women play leading roles. For example, the Kirchinga Women’s Association in Madagali tries to promote peace in communities, including through peace education to children, undertakes tension management activities and plans to start work on reintegration of former JAS fighters, a highly sensitive and contentious issue.\textsuperscript{55}

However, as elsewhere, women tend not to be involved in formal peacebuilding processes when it comes to conflict with actors convening the leaders of these groups (all men) but not reaching out to the women. In Maiha, one key informant interviewed by UN Women said only the daughters of hunters were allowed to serve as vigilantes or participate in security meetings held in public places.\textsuperscript{56} Women reported ‘low levels of education, economic dependency on male benefactors and lack of leadership skills’ as well as their expected roles within the family and household as major barriers.\textsuperscript{57}

UN Women have done a review of structures at community and state levels designed to manage conflict and reduce tension in order to ensure the inclusion of women. This programme runs in Yola North, Maiha, Mubi South and Numan and has led to women who are respected by women and the rest of the community becoming more involved, including those from Women Wing of Christian Association of Nigeria (WOWICAN), FOMWAN, National Council of Women’s Societies (NCWS), the Widows’ Council and women political leaders. They become mentors who mentor other women and are supervised by lead mentors to ensure effectiveness.

Women’s civil society is active in Adamawa, particular in Yola and the areas surrounding the state capital, including when it comes to peacebuilding. For example, FOMWAN is currently undertaking programming on inter-religious tensions in Michika. In terms of other ways of organising, the NCWS, women leaders of political parties and women union members are present in every LGA. However, women in political parties are seen as mainly used to reach out to women for their votes during election campaigning rather than meaningfully influencing party policy and practice let alone being politicians and decision makers themselves. At the same time, unions may have one woman, who often does not have much power, out of 10 representatives.

The government is taking action to strengthen conflict resolution mechanisms but needs to do more to integrate women. For example, the MOJ is currently training all its lawyers to become chartered mediators and including religious leaders, political leaders, ward heads, staff from the judiciary and the wives of traditional leaders in this scheme. It wishes to set up a multi door court system covering cases from contractual to inter communal disputes with mediation centres being attached to courts as in Yola. Cases will go to mediation, only going to court if no settlement is reached. Inclusion of the wives of community leaders is meant to open up the system to women. However, as is the case in Gombi, these women are not always resident or linked to the women of the community. Even if this is not the case, not only is their inclusion linked to their relationships to men but their small numbers mean the ranks of the mediators will be overwhelmingly male, risking reinforcing already existing gender relations with attendant impact on women’s involvement as mediators as well as access to justice.

\textsuperscript{55} Information on the Kirchinga Women’s Association was provided by the North East Regional Initiative (NERI) whose partner Dialogue, Reconciliation and Peace Centre supports this association.


\textsuperscript{57} Ibid.
Violence against women and girls

Incidence and trends

VAWG in Adamawa includes rape and other forms of sexual violence, forced marriage, denial of resources, physical assault and psychological and emotional abuse. VAWG, as elsewhere, is under-reported but the majority (59.4 percent) of respondents to the UN Women 2015 study agreed or strongly agreed that VAWG is increasing.

Those most vulnerable to VAWG are IDPs, women and girls with disabilities, girl hawkers and those who are experiencing food insecurity. Many women and girls, both unmarried and married, engage in survival sex in order to get the resources they need for themselves and their families. Parents are unable to provide for their daughters who then have sex with men for money.

The GBV IMS collates and analyses reports, dividing these according to rape, physical assault and sexual assault. Not only does this system of categorisation not provide enough information, but there are flaws in the system although, as mentioned above under key trends, steps are underway to strengthen the system.

Rape and sexual assault of women and girls was reported by 9 percent of focus group discussions and key informant interviews with accounts describing this as prevalent, severe and being committed with impunity in Michika and Madagali. Rape and sexual violence of girls is the type of VAWG most likely to be reported, with more cases reported now after sensitisation efforts. Sexual violence against women is rarely reported. Women are more likely to be blamed for their actions and behaviour compared to young girls. They are most likely to be raped by husbands and marital rape is often not viewed as rape. Cases reported tend to be of girls between one and 14 years of age with most perpetrators being relatives, including fathers, although perpetrators can also be strangers. In one week in May 2017, FIDA received the following reports. A ten-year-old girl was taken from a community wedding into an uncompleted building and raped by three men. A 19-year-old girl was taken by her boyfriend to a friend’s house for the night then raped by him and three of his friends, all of whom were injecting drug users. A four-year-old girl was raped by a 13-year-old boy. A mother returned home to see semen around the body of her six-year-old daughter, left at home with a male relative aged 32.

There is more of a culture of silence around VAWG for teenage girls than for those under ten. School is a site of abuse with perpetrators including boys, teachers and people in the community. Women’s rights activists talked of taboos preventing girls from discussing certain issues with their mothers contributing to vulnerability, giving the example of a 13-year-old girl who had been approached by her perpetrator for some time before the rape took place but could not talk to her mother about this. Another 13-year-old girl had been continually raped in exchange for N50 or N100 by the man who sold her the yam she would go on to hawk. This happened for months before her mother noticed pregnancy signs and realised what had been happening. Not only was the girl pregnant, but the man had passed on HIV to her. Often these girls do not even know what is happening to them due to a lack of sex education in schools, in families or by the community.

Meanwhile, in Michika, focus groups of elderly men, elderly women and women reported medical personnel at the primary health care clinic had raped many women, estimated to be as many as

58 The information in this section draws from Protection Sector Working Group, Participatory Protection Assessment Report: Adamawa State Nigeria, 2016; O. Para-Mallam, Promoting Women’s Engagement in Peace and Security in Northern Nigeria: Report of Baseline Study (Adamawa, Plateau and Gombe States of Nigeria), (UN Women, 2016; and interviews conducted in Adamawa,


20, when they came for treatment. Some of the women’s husbands had divorced them after rapes became known. Mass rapes of women and girls with hundreds of women and girls sexually assaulted by armed groups, including members of security forces, resulting in many cases of pregnancy and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) incidence, were reported to have taken place in 2014 and 2015.

Threats of SGBV have been reported by women and girls in IDP and returnee sites when conducting daily activities such as collecting firewood, water, farming and using latrines in camps with no lighting. Sexual abuse has been reported in the camps in Yola although levels of reporting are low despite reporting mechanisms being present, due to fear of stigma, reduced marriage prospects and as the perpetrator usually has power or is a family member. For example, a 9-year-old girl was raped on her way to access water at night due to lack of water close to NYSC camp in which she was staying. Partly in response, a borehole close to the camp was subsequently drilled. SEA also takes place in informal settlements and host communities. Upon arrival in Yola, women who had been displaced from their homes and did not know anyone in the city would walk around the streets asking for shelter. This shelter was sometimes offered to them by men who would then sexually abuse them before chasing them out of their homes after a few weeks. These women and their families would then be back on the streets, again looking for help. Indeed, food insecurity among those displaced, whether in informal settlements, host communities or even formal camps is high, with attendant risk of SEA. There is high likelihood of women and girls engaging in survival sex in return for food and other resources. Government officials are seen as not wanting to hear about such cases, which they do not see as connected to government responsibilities to protect women and girls in these camps. For example, the Executive Secretary of SEMA denied that any sexual abuse was happening in IDP camps at all on radio.

Levels of sexual exploitation by state actors are high, with perpetrators including members of the military and camp officials. Sexual exploitation of women and girls was reported in nearly all displacement and return locations, despite high levels of stigma associated, with critical levels of exploitation in Michika and Madagali. In Michika, focus group discussions and interviews characterised ‘hundreds of women and girls’ as engaged in sex to earn incomes with many cases of sexual exploitation perpetrated by members of security forces. In Madagali and Michika, cases of the military going into people’s homes and calling out women and girls who then take away for sex have been reported although this is not confirmed.

In Mubi, women complained of ‘soldiers chasing school girls’ or demanding women’s numbers at checkpoints before they allowed them to pass. They would then keep calling to ask them to meet them at night. When these issues were raised with members of the 28th Taskforce Brigade of 7th Division stationed there, their answers were that women can say no when asked for numbers or an evening meeting that long deployments meant they had no other option as there were unlikely to meet girlfriends and that ‘it may start as sexual exploitation but it could lead in marriage.”

In Fufure transit camp, a number of girls have become pregnant from sex with soldiers. In 2016, a soldier started beating a girl with whom he was in a relationship in NYSC camp leading to intervention from IDP leaders and NEMA. Rather than being dismissed and punished, the soldier in question was transferred away from the camp. Although these relationships are sometimes initiated by the women and girls themselves, they cannot be divorced from the context of widespread food insecurity, restricted freedom of movement, few to no livelihood options and the power and access to resources wielded by men in uniforms with guns. Many people also spoke of the lack of mechanisms in place to report abuse. As elderly women in Mubi South were

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62 Information from Mubi is drawn from workshops with the military on civilian protection, including SEA, and with the community on self-protection in March 2017.
63 Interviews and discussions carried out in Mubi, Gombi and Yola in March and April 2017.
reported to have said, ‘Who do we report to when it’s the people who are supposed to protect us that are the ones taking advantage of us?’\

In addition to sexual exploitation, violence and abuse, women’s rights activists described receiving many cases of early and forced marriage of girls around the age of 13 or 14, particularly in areas such as in Fufure, Gire and Mubi, leading to curtailed education, rape, unwanted pregnancy and fistula. In these areas, both Christian and Muslim communities engage in early and forced marriage. FIDA, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and the Legal Aid Council (LAC) have taken on a number of these cases where they try to intervene, involving religious and community leaders, to prevent or end the marriage. Furthermore, early and forced marriage was identified by IDPs in Namtari host community as pressure to marry off girls was due to parents no longer being able to afford school fees, food, shelter and other basic needs. They also reported forced marriage for girls who had become pregnant as a result of sexual assault or exploitation.

There were mixed views as to whether domestic violence and abuse was increasing or decreasing. In the absence of proper data as to incidence and trends, it is difficult to say what the situation actually is as people report perceptions rather than facts. The 2016 protection sector assessment found reporting of domestic violence and abuse in Madagali, Mubi North, Michika, Mubi South, Girei and Yola South, including men beating their wives and fighting over lack of livelihoods and food. Elderly women in Mubi South spoke of husbands treating them badly and focusing support on male children and neglecting female children. Other women spoke of husbands denying them food, maltreating them and not supporting school fees for children, with drugs and alcohol cited as contributing factors.

As described above, the women in Gombi believed that domestic violence and abuse had increased due to men’s frustrations with their inability to provide and women taking on new types of breadwinning responsibilities. However, other women saw domestic violence and abuse as decreasing. They thought this was higher before the conflict as issues were caused due to expectations that men should be financially providing for all the needs of the family. Because women contribute now more of a proportion financially to the household than before, they felt women had more bargaining power as they were able to withdraw their contributions if husbands threatened them, leaving all financial responsibilities with their husbands.

Other forms of VAWG mentioned included denial of resources, refusing access to education for daughters, refusing widows inheritance of husbands’ property and removing their children from them and not allowing wives to work. Impunity for VAWG cases continues. In Mubi, a young man who was alleged to have perpetrated rape against many women was seen as evading legal sanction due to the wealth and power of his father which meant he had complete impunity. The police are also seen as not interested and tending to blame the survivor by asking questions about dressing and behaviour.

Prevention and response mechanisms

The key actors in Adamawa when it comes to prevention and response are FIDA, FOMWAN, UN Women, UNFPA, UNHCR, International Rescue Committee (IRC), Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and government actors such as the MOJ, MOWASD, police and courts. A protection assessment in July 2016 characterised humanitarian assistance in Adamawa as targeted at the most easily accessible urban areas, including the formal camps, often overlooking host communities with critical needs and areas of return in the northern areas. This assessment continues to be true to some extent, although increasingly, actors are working in areas affected by violent conflict, particularly Michika and Madagali. It is important to note the landscape in

Adamawa, as in Borno and Yobe, is quickly changing and other actors may be planning or starting VAWG programming soon.

**Healthcare:** Efforts are being made to improve the quality of care received by survivors in health care facilities in Adamawa state. Institutions tend to provide quick response and treatment on the spot with referrals made from primary to secondary and tertiary institutions based on capability and availability of human resources. The government has set up referral centres for sexual assault in Bekaji, Malamare and Yelwa. Staff at Bachure federal centre and FMC specialist hospital have been trained by the UN and IRC on clinical management of rape but training remains a significant gap across institutions. UNFPA has provided sexual and reproductive health (SRH) kits to primary and secondary healthcare institutions and rape kits at primary healthcare facilities to make these services accessible and affordable to all. However, these kits are now being provided to only 19 facilities, down from 75 facilities in early 2016. There are almost 400 healthcare facilities in the state. Other agencies are providing different types of kits, for example FHI 360 provides post exposure prophylaxis (PEP) kits (are not as comprehensive as SRH kits) but significant gaps remain. Furthermore, people do not always know where to go for help, many times bypassing primary healthcare facilities for secondary healthcare facilities where their case is not always dealt with as an emergency and where the kits needed are less likely to be present. Another key issue is the low number of women healthcare workers, particularly doctors, which may deter women and girls coming forward for treatment or feeling comfortable to share what has happened. There are some female midwives and nurses but this is not enough.

**Psychosocial care:** Agencies have made efforts to put in place systems of psychosocial care with UNHCR, IRC and UNFPA having trained counsellors to provide this service in IDP camps, host communities, neighbourhoods and schools in particular areas. For example, UNFPA partners provide care in Mubi, Madagali Fufore, Gire, Numan, Yobe South and North. Two gaps identified when talking with UNFPA partners are the need to address potential secondary trauma of counsellors working with survivors more holistically and the need for younger women to undertake this work. Most counsellors are social workers from MOWASD who tend to be in their 40s, 50s and 60s whereas young women find it easier to open up to women their own age.

**Shelter:** There is a shelter in Yola to which survivors of SV are referred and can stay for some time to get immediate relief. Here, they receive psychosocial and legal services and take part in a skills acquisition programme. However, although staff follow up to ensure safety, women and girls can only stay for maximum of 10 days before they have to go back to community. Having a shelter for immediate relief in Yola is more than is present in many parts of Nigeria, however its temporary nature means there is a large gap when it comes to more holistic and long-term support as well as the lack of this kind of service outside the state capital.

**Access to justice:** A majority (74.8 percent) of respondents to the UN Women study agreed or strongly agreed that the reaction of law enforcement agencies to VAWG was unsatisfactory. The study found that community leadership structures were seen as no longer effective and there was low public confidence in securing justice through police and law enforcement bodies. Although the NSCDC has a gender units and staff assigned to work on VAWG cases, there is a need to change attitudes across the organisation. Members of the NSCDC interviewed showed poor understanding of VAWG, calling it natural that ‘young men will be enticed by seeing women on the road’ and that husbands have rights over wives. The NSCDC gender focal point said although around 30-40 percent of staff are women and there is one person in each LGA who is a VAWG focal point, she is the only person who has received formal training on gender and VAWG. There seems to have been more investment in capacity building of the police by outside actors with the Family Support Unit in Yola in particular seen as more supportive, able to refer and taking

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decisive action as a result. Police officers in Yola had received training in March 2017 from the Force Headquarters' gender officer. However, the person who serves as the Adamawa command's gender desk officer is currently double hatting with another job in the salary section, reducing the amount of time available to work the gender portfolio. Furthermore, even though it was said that police officers working in the LGAs knew the nearest facility for referral, in practice they do not received many reports and have made little efforts to reach out to improve reporting rates. Another key challenge is the need to transfer VAWG cases (as with murder and robbery) to state Criminal Investigation Department (CID) to be tried in Yola. While the reasoning behind this is understandable, it hinders access to justice as survivors and their families are often unable to find the time and other resources required to travel and stay in Yola. Legal aid is provided by FIDA, Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) and NHRC and there seems to be a very close connection with FIDA, NBA and the MOJ as many FIDA and NBA members work for the MOJ. As a result, when a VAWG case comes to the MOJ, it is passed onto FIDA because they are seen as more invested and effective. A better approach may be to build incentives and interest across the institution rather than outsourcing to FIDA members.

Livelihoods: No information on the livelihoods support offered to survivors was found during the assessment. However, given the short time spent in Adamawa, this does not necessarily mean none exist.

Coordination, case management and referral pathways: The PSWG brings together actors working on protection with subsector working groups on GBV and child protection. Adamawa was the state with the first referral pathway in the country. Standard operating procedures for prevention of and response to VAWG were drafted in November 2015 and revised in February 2016 for use in IDP camps and host communities. After setting out guiding principles, they detail responsibilities for survivor/victim assistance and for prevention with telephone numbers and email addresses of contacts at key agencies. However, these referral pathways and SOPs are not comprehensive despite revision to address flaws. While agencies are trying to ensure early response, reporting and management of cases, donor funding for referrals has been withdrawn or cut. As a result, organisations are having to cut down the number of LGAs in which they work or focus only on certain populations such as returnees or IDPs. The MOJ wishes to set up a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) with experts seconded to mentor staff there on legal aid, counselling and healthcare. The MOJ is open to advice on how best to do this and, after initial conversations with MCN, has started talking with UNHCR, UNFPA and others (due to impatience at the time it has taken MCN to start). If set up correctly, this could lead to improved coordination and case management. However, it is important to think about how to scale this up to locations outside Yola as well as to ensure how to cover all VAWG cases rather than just be limited to those of sexual assault.

Sensitisation and addressing stigma: There have been attempts to sensitise communities around VAWG. However, this tends to be along the lines of engaging with police officers, community leaders and others in institutions. Some community level sensitisation has been done and has resulted in increased cases being reported, however more is needed to reach out to communities, particularly those outside Yola, providing concrete information about what services are available, how to access them and the importance of early reporting. In addition, a real campaign around addressing stigma is needed. It seems that hardly any organisation is working on this, despite the impact of stigma on survivors as well as this being a key barrier preventing reporting.

Prevention: Most efforts have been focused on strengthening response mechanisms, which is welcome. However, very little, beyond advocacy visits to community leaders and other decision making partners, has been done. There are 32 donor funded ref

makers seems to have been done on preventing VAWG in the first place. Given the levels of SEA reported committed by the military, police and camp officials, this seems like an obvious starting place with focus on revising and institutionalising codes of conduct, changing institutional cultures and ensuring quick and effective measures to investigate allegations, with cases publicised to show the seriousness with which institutions take the issue. Another clear site of intervention is work with young people around consent, sex and healthy relationships education, mobilising peer to peer networks as well as other community resources such as women’s groups and associations and ensuring this programme is implemented in a way sensitive to community fears around this and the potential for backlash.
Borno

The information below draws upon a review of documents and research, as well as interviews conducted in Damboa, Dikwa, Biu and MMC in April 2017 and work done by the author in the state prior to the assessment.

Context

Unlike Adamawa, the security situation across the state is highly volatile. Whereas some LGAs are relatively stable and calm and work on recovery and long-term programming can start, many others still experience ongoing insecurity and violence. In most LGAs in Borno, the government controls the LGA headquarters and a one to five km perimeter surrounding it with the area beyond that contested territory. Areas in southern Borno that were safe before, such as Damboa LGA, have seen a number of attacks in recent months with ambushes along the Maiduguri – Damboa and Damboa – Biu roads and reports of ISWA fighters having migrated to the area. In March and June 2017, ISWA fighters took over the towns of Sabon Gari (Damboa) and Magumeri respectively, with security forces having to temporarily retreat before coming back with reinforcements. However, although there were 3,000 households in Sabon Gari, no civilians were reported to have been killed with ISWA fighters taking food and stopping vehicles but not causing physical harm. These developments feed perceptions that ISWA is different from JAS in that its focus is the military with a strategy towards more positive engagement towards civilians.

These clashes between the military and AOGs are one of the factors causing continued displacement. Indeed, there are at least five types of movement around the state: 1) refoulement from Cameroon back to Nigeria; 2) movement from villages into LGA headquarters due to violence or as the army regains control of areas; 3) movement from Maiduguri into LGA headquarters, falling on a spectrum between coerced and forced; 4) movement from surrounding states into Borno; and 5) movement into Maiduguri from LGAs where insecurity has risen in recent months, such as Konduga and Damboa. In April 2017 in Dikwa, a soldier estimated that almost 1,000 people had come into the LGA headquarters in the four days prior to talking with him. People continue to move into the LGA headquarters of Damboa and Biu, with an estimated 800 families having moved into Damboa in the last seven months. Disputes over housing, land and property as people return to their communities is predicted. The MOJ are planning a process of capacity building of their staff in alternative dispute resolution and mediation but it is unclear to what extent this will be able to address the problem.

Relationships between IDPs and host communities are varied. As in Adamawa, people have welcomed relatives and friends into their homes and cared for them years before international actors came to the state. However, IDPs can be seen as AOG members in hiding. For example, in Biu, many people believe that IDPs from Damboa are not going back to their LGA for fear of being identified as AOG members rather than due to the insecurity there. Young people’s threatened protest was prevented due to the intervention of the community peace partnership (CPP) supported by NSRP who arranged for the CJTF from Damboa to come to Biu and identify if any of the people there were not from Damboa. However, tensions remain as do questions as to why people from Damboa do not return home and a general feeling that Damboa IDPs are not the responsibility of the people of Biu, that they will assist when necessary but there are limits to this assistance and that Damboa IDPs should go home. The Emir of Biu issued a declaration in late May 2017 that people in Biu should not house or rent to people from Sabon Gari in Damboa as it was unknown whether they were AOG members and so they should be checked by security forces first. In Mafa, conflict between host communities and IDPs, predominantly Christians from Gwoza, is due to humanitarian assistance focusing on IDPs alone when members of the host community also feel in need. Certainly, this focus of humanitarian action is causing conflict in many areas, whether it is between host communities and IDPs or people of different ethno-
linguistic and religious groups or with community leaders who are seen to have diverted the aid meant for their communities.

At the same time, respect for community leadership institutions has been significantly eroded, with community leaders openly being accused of being thieves in some areas. Representatives from HERWA, a civil society organisation that works in many LGAs across Borno, said that community leaders were perceived as corrupt at ward and village level even before the conflict with bulamas selling blocks of land to people illegally, engaging in multiple selling of houses and finding other ways to profit from their positions in the absence of proper remuneration despite all LGAs contributing 5 percent of their allocations to the emirate council to fund the system of community leadership. They were often the first to leave their communities in the face of violence, partly due to their power and connections enabling them to do so and partly as they were often the targets of JAS fighters, leaving a power vacuum filled by others. These dynamics led to people going to members of the CJTF for conflict resolution as they were seen as resolving conflicts fairly, amicably and quickly, with community leaders losing ground and worrying that ‘the boys’ were usurping their power. This analysis from HERWA is buttressed by a 2017 Mercy Corps working paper. As will be discussed below, women are also filling this vacuum by engaging in conflict resolution and proactively reaching out to groups they fear have the potential for violence.

Vigilante groups and the CJTF have played an important role in the conflict in Borno. They pass on intelligence, including about the terrain and who may be an AOG member, patrol towns and cities and go on joint operations with security forces. They have been instrumental to ensuring some level of peace and security in the state. However, there are concerns about future trajectory, particularly of the CJTF, if action is not taken. People are less concerned about vigilante groups, which tend to be made up of hunters, formed due to the conflict who they see as more mature and less ‘hot-headed.’ CJTF members on the other hand are seen as under the influence of drugs, difficult to manage and more likely to commit human rights abuses, including the recruitment and use of children and sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse. For example, the military in Dikwa has stopped working with the CJTF due to concerns about their behaviour and works only with the vigilante group. This situation is exacerbated by what is seen as a lack of recognition by the military and other state actors for the role the CJTF have played and the sacrifices members have made, as well as low levels of remuneration for members and lack of efforts towards job and livelihoods creation.

The conflict has also strained relations between Christians and Muslims. In certain areas such as Biu, the number of families with both Christian and Muslim members act as a form of resilience against those who try to sow division. However, in many other areas which used to see joint celebrations, children playing together and adults working together, there are high levels of mistrust and suspicion. Many Muslims protected their Christian friends, colleagues and neighbours, for example by hiding them or giving them veils to cover. There are stories of Muslims and Christians protecting each other on Fridays and Sundays during religious services. However, people interviewed also spoke about cases where Christians ran to their neighbours who handed them over or of Muslims identifying their Christian neighbours’ homes to AOG fighters. One woman who had seen a priest killed in February 2009 in Maiduguri in front of her said the person who killed him was, in fact, wearing the clothes he had given him. She said, ‘I forgive them but I am afraid to be free with them.’

On the other hand, conflict between farmers and pastoralists is less in Borno than in neighbouring Adamawa and Yobe states. This is not surprising given that farmers in most of the state have been unable to plant or harvest crops for many years due to insecurity and violence. Biu is one of the few LGAs in the state where farming is able to take place. In Biu, farmers used to plant on grazing

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69 Discussions with soldiers in Dikwa in March 2017.
routes which caused conflict and violence. The people who planted there were mostly those who had been displaced from other areas and did not know of grazing areas and routes. There was no system of knowing which areas were grazing routes. In 2016, measures were taken to prevent conflict with the Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources, lamido and community leaders at district, ward and village levels sitting down to agree there should be no planting on cattle routes and if this happened it would be prosecuted. The LGA tried to allocate a small portion of its land to those who had planted on cattle routes the year before. Cattle routes were also demarcated with paint and trees planted to serve as a permanent demarcation in the future.

Another area for current and future concern is the reported increase in gangs. Some areas in and around Maiduguri have seen an increase in gangs of young women and men and of drug use. Many gang members are young people who have lost their families and, in the absence of support structures, have turned to gangs to fill this gap. Fighting and violence breaks out within and between the groups, including fighting over girls and young women, as will be discussed below.

Drug use is high in these groups, as it is among IDPs and the general population with people taking marijuana, tramadol, exol and sucudite (embalming fluid which is inhaled) among other drugs. Indeed, there is widespread perception of drug use among JAS and CJTF ranks as well as in the Nigerian Armed Forces. Women, girls, boys and men are seen as using drugs, with some indications that this is linked with sexual violence against women and girls and increased stigma for women drug users who are also more at risk of SEA.

**Legal and policy frameworks**

Borno state has not domesticated the VAPP Act or the CRA. There have been some suggestions from UN agencies of working to do so but the prospects for passing these laws without significant concessions, for example around the age of marriage, are unlikely.

However, Borno was the first in the nation to have a SAP WPS in 2014. Observed to have gaps in light of contextual developments since, it was reviewed by a team consisting of MOWASD and women, peace and security network (WPSN) members and validated by members of the security sector, women’s leaders, international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), civil society organisations (CSOs), ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs), LGA officials and community and religious leaders to enable their input and ownership. It covers the period 2017 – 2019 and details actions government, civil society including NGOs, CBOs, the media and community and religious leaders, and international actors should take on prevention, protection, participation, promotion, prosecution, relief and recovery, mobilisation of resources and monitoring and evaluation. This SAP WPS has an estimated budget which needs approval and release and plans are underway to pass a Bill in the SHOA so its provisions become legally binding. Some efforts are being made to ensure impact at the LGA level with women’s groups, community leaders and religious leaders from some LGAs invited for SAP WPS events with the mandate to implement afterwards. Other agencies such as United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), UNFPA, UNHCR and IRC seem interested in exploring how they can support implementation. However, efforts to date have been focused on drafting and signing the SAP WPS itself and the document seems to have had limited influence on changing government policy, practice and institutional culture as yet.

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71 Conversations with military officers in Maiduguri and in Defence Headquarters in Abuja.


73 Borno State Government, *Borno State Action Plan (BoSAP) for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 and Related Resolutions*, date unknown.
Involvement in the conflict

Dynamics around recruitment have already been addressed in the key trends section of this document. However, it is important to note that according to Mercy Corps research carried out in Damboa, Mafa and Maiduguri, while fewer young women know members of extremist groups, compared to young men, young women are both more likely to be solicited to join groups by their members and more likely to support the use of violence or feel it is justified. Notwithstanding this more nuanced picture, the two aspects of women’s association that receive the most attention are abductions and ‘suicide bombing’. Women and girls are viewed with increasing suspicion, suspected of being on their way to detonate bombs. Common perceptions are that the mind of a former JAS member who is a woman can be easily changed but that it is more difficult for men associated to change their mind. Not only is this assumption drawn from gendered stereotypes but it is not based on evidence. The recent case of 25-year-old Aisha who, a few months after she had undergone a nine-month government ‘deradicalisation’ programme, vanished with her baby son after talking with another woman from the programme who had returned to Sambisa is illustrative. This is just one case of many women reported as having returned to JAS. Indeed, women may find it more difficult to deradicalise and reintegrate than men due to stigma faced.

On the other hand, men of fighting age from communities where it is thought recruitment was high or areas controlled by AOG fighters are automatically assumed to be members or at least sympathisers. They are targeted directly by the military for arrest and detention, including through screening processes for IDPs. In Damboa in May 2017, soldiers started rounding up and detaining all the young men there on suspicion of membership, with many choosing to flee the town as a result. During screening processes, the decision made as to whether a man is thought to be a member or not seems more or less arbitrary with indicators including seeming ‘well fed’ and information from bulamas, who may or may not have this knowledge or use this opportunity to settle old scores, being used to make a final decision. Although government and military officials admit that both women and men can be forcibly recruited and abducted, women associated are seen as automatically victims of abductions while men associated are seen as automatically perpetrators of harm choosing to join.

Pro government armed groups have both women and men as members although the men outnumber the women. In Biu for example, women make up six out of 46 vigilante group members in the main office and hold command in some areas according to the (male) vigilante commander there. These women are hunters who inherit this occupation from their parents and have received training in fighting AOGs as have the men. They go into the bush with the army and police in joint operations to catch and fight AOG fighters. In Damboa, women are also the daughters of families of hunters who take on the same roles as male vigilante members and include married women with children who leave their families to go on operations according to the (male) vigilante commander there. They also provide security to prevent spies and people carrying IEDs coming into town, go on patrol and operate checkpoints. Women are also part of the CJTF but seem confined to certain roles of checking women at checkpoints and markets, which men are not able to do, rather than going on operations as women associated with vigilante groups do.

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74 Mercy Corps, Youth Vulnerability Assessment: Borno State, March 2017.
76 Information from an INGO staff member who lives in Damboa via email, May 2017.
77 Observed in Dikowa in March 2017 during discussions with soldiers about people who had walked into the LGA headquarters from surrounding villages.
It is not only adult women and men who are associated with armed groups. There are many children who have been recruited and used by both pro-government and opposition groups as messengers, spies, porters, fighters, ‘suicide’ bombers and for sex. This includes children with disabilities. For example, young boys with disabilities, used to carry explosives in Maiduguri, were apprehended by security operatives who were tipped off in 2011 or 2012. The below table provides some figures from Women in New Nigeria (WINN), a civil society organisation that works with children associated with armed groups, as to the numbers of such children who have been identified in three LGAs as of April 2017.

Table 4: Children Associated with Armed Groups in Dikwa, Gwoza and Mafa, April 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dikwa</td>
<td>94 (39 pregnant)</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwoza</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>100 (plus 81 just identified)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mafa</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some of these children are still active in armed groups. It can be very difficult to persuade children associated with the CJTF or vigilante groups to leave these groups as they say they are getting money they can use for themselves and their families. The boys in particular (from six to 17 years in age) feel like they are heroes defending their communities. They are reluctant to give up the attendant ‘respect’ and ‘prestige,’ which can be largely based on fear, that this affords them in their communities. However, children associated with CJTF and vigilante groups also face much less stigma and fear than those associated with JAS.

There have been some releases of people associated with AOGs. For example, on 10th April, 480 people (including 138 boys and 107 girls) were released from Giwa Barracks to the MOWASD. A number of UN agencies and INGOs were present during the release, with the process a marked improvement compared to previous instances of release in terms of links to support services.

Beyond association with and membership of armed groups, women have played other direct roles in fighting and saving community members. In some communities, women have spontaneously fought with cutlasses with men at the entrance to communities to protect them and prevent JAS fighters coming into their town. Women have also played instrumental roles in saving the lives of men. Many women from Gwoza, Damboa, Ngala and Monguno spoke of giving soldiers their clothes so they could be disguised as women and escape JAS fighters. They also saved the lives of men in their communities, hiding them in their homes and smuggling them to safety. When interviewed by the author in December 2016, one man spoke about him and his friends running away from JAS fighters who were killing all the men nearby. A woman he did not know who had just seen her son killed in front of her asked them to enter her house. She hid them in her granary until the fighters had stopped going house to house killing all the men. She then gave them clothes so they could escape disguised as women. A woman, also interviewed in December 2016, hid 14 men in her ceiling until she had sewed enough clothes for them all then smuggled them, dressed as women, into the nearby hills while being seven months’ pregnant. These are not just isolated incidents but a pattern of women protecting men from being harmed by JAS members. These actions risk being forgotten. As one woman said, ‘We played a vital role in saving men but now the men are asking us to keep this silent.’

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79 This information is from a member of Joint National Association for People with Disabilities (JONAPWD) in Borno State who was unclear as to the exact year this took place.
81 Information from INGOs and UN agencies present at the time.
82 Discussions during self-protection workshops held in December 2016 with IDPs from these LGAs currently living in Bakassi, NYSC, Teachers’ Village and EYN camps in Maiduguri.
**Physical harm caused by armed actors**

Harm has been caused to civilians by all parties to the conflict in Borno, including Nigerian security forces, AOG fighters and vigilante groups / the CJTF.

In many places, the consistent pattern seems to have been that JAS fighters, when they came to towns and villages would kill all the men and older boys in the community, including in front of their families. Sometimes, they gave them a choice: they could 'choose' to join their group or be killed. As one woman describing what had happened in Gwoza interviewed by the author in December 2016 said, 'They killed all the men over the age of nine except the elderly ones. They didn't kill the women saying they couldn't do so as it was a woman who gave birth to them.'

JAS fighters abduct and forcibly recruit many women and girls. Some of these women and girls are forced into 'marriage' with JAS fighters whereas others are raped by a number of men. The phenomenon of abductions will be discussed in the VAWG section below. JAS also burned property, equipment and goods, with the women and children left behind fleeing the area, often with nothing but the clothes on their backs. It is important to note that the patterns of civilian harm seem to differ between JAS and ISWA with ISWA being far less likely to cause physical harm to civilians with the vast majority of attacks and brutality against civilians attributed to JAS. However, the lines are probably more fluid than simple characterisation of JAS as attacking civilians and ISWA as not doing so and this is an area that requires further investigation.

At the same time, as detailed above, the military is seen to have detained and killed many men on suspicion of AOG association. They force people to leave their homes to come into LGA headquarters, with the implication being that if they choose to stay behind they are either on their own or are likely AOG members or sympathises. In Dikwa, nine women who had gone out of their village to look for food and leaving children at home as young as six months old came across soldiers who made them leave the area and come into the LGA headquarters, without their children. Of course, if they had returned back to their village, it is highly likely they would have been killed by JAS members for having talked with the military. Soldiers have also been found to be involved in human rights abuses. These actions have caused a lot of resentment and anger. A mother of one of the young men who was detained was reported as saying, 'If only I could get a gun, I wouldn't mind going out and shooting any military officer I find.' There has been some action taken by the military to curtail this with revision of the code of conduct, establishment of a human rights desk to which complaints can be made and court martials and imprisonment for abuses however much more concerted effort is needed to build trust and confidence in security institutions.

CJTF members have also been seen as causing harm to and committing human rights abuses against civilians. While the young men of the CJTF may provide protection and safety and behave to some extent in towns where security forces are present, they are seen as sometimes 'losing control' once they go out on patrol without the military. There have been cases of extrajudicial killings (sometimes on the request of soldiers), sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse and extortion of money. They are vehemently opposed to any suggestions of reintegration of former AOG fighters with some reports of their having killed women and men associated with JAS. As discussed below, the way people associated with JAS are seen and treated adds to their sense of hopelessness about the future.

During the fighting between armed groups and security forces and as a result of bomb blasts, many people were made disabled. Disabled people find it very difficult to escape violence. Disabled women are much less likely to have mobility aids and so be able to escape than disabled men. One man who managed to escape from Bama to Maiduguri in his tricycle left behind his two wives, also with physical disabilities which limited their mobility, as they did not have tricycles. Deaf people who do not hear instructions and are unable to respond can be killed. In Madagali, seven deaf people were attacked for this reason, with three killed and four injured as a result.
Blind people on the other hand do not always know the direction in which to run when they hear gunshots and explosions so many of them are killed or injured. There are reports of at least one case where JAS beat people on their forehead during interrogation until they went blind. This assessment found no agencies working specifically with disabled people. The Red Cross offers some assistance with artificial limbs but people have to go to Jos for measurement and those without money for transport are unable to do so. The problems that all disabled people face are often compounded for disabled women who faced double discrimination due to gender and disability even before the conflict. How the conflict affects disabled women, men, boys and girls in the northeast and what response this requires in terms of programming and policy is an understudied area.  

In Borno, attacks and fighting are not in the past but still continuing. For example, people in Damboa interviewed in April 2017 still felt scared about the possibility of AOG fighters coming into the LGA headquarters after their attacks on nearby Sabon Gari and Wajero with soldiers seen as running away rather than staying to protect the people there. Attacks also continue in many other parts of the state. In fact, there are large sections of the state from which news as to the situation does not leave, particularly in northern Borno and the area around Lake Chad.

Displacement

As outlined above in the context section, displacement and movement around the state continues. In many areas, people do not feel able to return to their communities either due to fears of continued violence or due to lack of homes, services or livelihoods which have been destroyed or both. Some people who have returned from Maiduguri to LGAs such as Gwoza are now returning to the city as there is nowhere to stay or they are worried that those who killed their families are still nearby and will return to kill them. In Askira Uba in January 2017, some people who had gone back to their villages were killed in attacks there with others displaced once more as they had to flee to the nearest larger village.

IDPs rely on humanitarian aid due to their difficulties in earning incomes themselves. Their livelihoods have been destroyed and businesses lost due to the conflict. In areas of relative safety, some of them have been given farmland to cultivate or work on the land of others during the rainy season. However, most of the state is not safe enough for anyone to farm and the parts of LGAs that are safe to farm being cultivated by the owners of the land. Often, they face restricted movements and are not allowed to leave camps, with levels of SEA linked to being able to get the gate passes needed to leave the camps.

Women, girls, boys and elderly men make up the majority of displaced communities, with few men of fighting age among IDPs. These dynamics vary across the state with more men of fighting age being present in some areas, particularly where advance warning was given before attacks and they were able to escape. Women have been providing for families but find this very difficult.

In areas where significant numbers of men are still with their families, this does not always solve problems. As one man said, ‘When I was in Bama, I had hundreds of bags of rice and was supporting my whole extended family. Now, I am struggling to get one meal.’ Men can be overwhelmed by the size of their families but uptake of family planning services where available is very low, and often done by women without the knowledge of their husbands.

Distribution solely to men as heads of households has been largely discounted in humanitarian practice but still seems to be continuing in some areas of Borno. Women in the Biu zonal IDP camp in Biu LGA headquarters talked about men being ‘considered ahead of women when they bring anything to support IDPs in the camp.’ Men often have more than one wife and so are unable to

83 The above information was provided by representatives of Joint National Action for People with Disabilities in Borno.
provide for their whole family. Furthermore, sometimes the assistance given to men does not reach their family at all. Even when women are the recipients of assistance, their husbands can take this away from them. Men have taken away cards from their wives loaded with credit for people to use to buy goods in the market then sold the food they were able to buy with this, keeping the money to themselves.\footnote{84 Conversations with humanitarian actors working in Borno.}

There is wide-scale diversion of humanitarian aid as well as lack of adequate funds, with the result that there is insufficient food. In Maiduguri, camps moved from general cooking where food would be cooked communally and distributed to all in the camps to household feeding whereby food was given to individual households to cook themselves. This move has reportedly pushed some households into ‘desperate situations’ as not all people now receive food distribution. Women are forced into begging and/ or survival sex as a result in order to get the money to buy the food for their families that should already have been distributed to them. Girls are sent out to hawk products with parents living in a state of denial that in reality they are selling their bodies rather than their goods in exchange for money they bring back to their families. Many IDP women spoke about finding it increasingly difficult to control their children as they are unable to provide them with food to eat. They worry about what this may mean for their future if children get into a pattern of misbehaving. This situation is set to deteriorate further given the World Food Programme is cutting the food basket available due to lack of funds and asking their partners to prioritise the most vulnerable in a situation which may lead to violence against them, increasing their vulnerability.

In addition to food scarcity, many areas are experiencing water scarcity. For example, in Pulka, due to the numbers of IDPs that have been moved there, including returnee refugees experiencing refoulement from Cameroon, there is limited shelter and severe water shortages such that the amount of water available is far below the recommended daily amount of 15 litres per day per person. The geography of Pulka means even digging boreholes will not solve this scarcity. Yet, the government plans to move even more people here.

**Economic impacts**

Incomes are now significantly lower than before the violent conflict. According to a study conducted by Mercy Corps in Damboa, Mafa and Maiduguri, there is a higher unemployment rate for young women with men typically favoured as employees but many businesses also willing to hire women.\footnote{85 Mercy Corps, Labour Market Assessment: Borno State, March 2017.} While 29 percent of young women surveyed were unemployed, only 14 percent of young men did not have a job.\footnote{86 Mercy Corps, Youth Vulnerability Assessment: Borno State, March 2017.} It is unclear to what extent this gender discrepancy in employment was there before the violent conflict.

In Gubio, while male focus group participants said the biggest barrier to engaging in income generating activities was insecurity, for women focus group participants, barriers were rather lack of capital and low technical skills levels.\footnote{87 CRS, Rapid Needs Assessment – Gubio, May 2017.} Beforehand, some women had strong businesses with shops full of maize and beans, were rearing goats, hens and cows or going out to farm. When the attacks came, women and men fled the area, leaving behind equipment such as farm implements or things used for frying food and premises such as salons or stores, only to return to find them burned and otherwise destroyed. Farmland is still largely insecure in many areas due to fear of attacks or IEDs and UXOs which means yet another year with no harvest. Money that had been borrowed to start business is still owed with no means of earning the income.
needed to pay it. Women’s jewellery is usually the first item to be sold when the household is in need of cash, thereby further depleting women’s savings.88

As many men have been killed, detained or left their communities to escape violence, many women have been left with the sole responsibilities of feeding, clothing, sheltering and educating their families. There are large numbers of young women who have few prospects of marriage given many of the men are no longer around and those who are there cannot afford another wife. As a result, women are trying to find ways to support themselves and their families often despite lack of experience in doing so, lack of education and in the face of immense challenges.

Even if there is money to buy food, insecurity and attacks disrupt food supply with certain roads blocked or truck drivers not willing to use them for fear of ambush. Furthermore, the military also prevents movement of certain goods to and from particular locations, seemingly to avoid this feeding AOG fighters. This also affects civilian populations there and while starvation of the enemy is permissible under international law, starvation of civilian populations is not. Furthermore, there is widespread suspicion that soldiers block trade as they wish to take over businesses themselves. Indeed, soldiers are now in charge of Baga market and are the only people able to transport fish. Any civilian trying to do so finds not only their goods confiscated but is at risk of detention and questioning. As a result of this limited access, commodity prices have increased and some areas now see price hikes and shortages in food.

In addition to their own children, many women have taken in unaccompanied and separated children whose parents have been lost or killed and are struggling to cater for them all. Some women are looking after grandchildren in addition to children, elderly or sick parents and/ or other relatives alone. Women may consider the children of their household too young to go out to earn money for the family but many of them are forced to send them out to hawk products because they have no other choice.

In some areas, such Simari in Jere LGA, a significant number of the men of the community are economic migrants who send money back from other parts of the country to support their family with the women responsible for managing their family, household and finances.89 Husbands, if around, are not always able to fulfil their previous breadwinning roles as their businesses have also been affected. It is not seen as acceptable for men to beg, sweep or doing domestic work. While Muslim households do not accept men of different families going into their compounds to work, some Christian men are going into Christian houses to sweep, do laundry and iron clothes. This is still considered ‘women’s work’ not alright for men to do but these men also feel they do not have any other choice.

As a result, women tend to be the ones moving around trying to get work, even if this is in areas that they were not previously used to working. As one woman said, ‘Women are now doing things men were doing before as men are afraid to go into the bush as they worry about being killed.’ Both women and men have been killed trying to collect firewood, including in the areas around Maiduguri. In some places, women have returned to their villages to dig up food they had buried, only to find this has already been taken away by JAS members or others in the community. Households in Banki survive mainly on fish and a certain wild plant gathered by women and girls who, while having to walk further into the bush to gather it as it is no longer accessible nearby, have been abducted never to be seen again.90 Many women have started begging or turned to domestic work, even if both occupations were previously seen as demeaning. They also plan days where their families do not eat purposefully. For example, one woman in Kaga interviewed in June 2017 spoke about her family skipping meals three days a week and trying to space these out.

89 Ibid.
Women also try to get help from others. The State Government, Victim Support Fund (VSF) and the Bank of Industry all have schemes to help individual women and/or cooperatives of women. Many actors have decided to distribute food and non-food items to women as they found men did not always use this to support their existing family or would give the food away as they do not understand domestic needs. However, most humanitarian assistance tends to be for IDPs in camps rather than for host communities or IDPs in host communities or informal settlements. There is a perception that food is being brought for IDPs alone, even if this is not the case, with many women and girls reporting problems accessing support as they live in faraway places, do not know when distribution happens and as a result of overcrowding.91

In a number of instances, distribution has been managed so poorly that it has led to riots, excessive use of force by the military, injury and death. In Jere, an ‘incomplete registration campaign, an ambiguous definition of what consists of female or male headed households, unclear vulnerability criteria and poorly communicated eligibility criteria resulted in inconsistencies in the distribution of food e-voucher cards and lack of gender considerations which caused tension between targeted and untargeted beneficiaries and amongst family members, especially in polygamous families. In several cases, one of the wives received food support whereas the husband and the other wives and their offspring were omitted from the registry and did not receive aid’ according to the gender assessment by two INGOs working there.92

Distribution can be delayed for days or even weeks and when it comes be insufficient to meet needs, adding to the chaos and uncertainty. At least three people died during the food distribution in Dikwa in March 2017 with many elderly people experiencing injuries and fractured bones as they were unable to escape. People were also killed in the distribution in February 2017 in Dikwa. In this kind of situation, many women, elderly people and disabled people are unable to even go to the food distribution site for fear of violence. As a result, men have much higher levels of access to food than women, leading to situations ripe for high levels of SEA. The levels of insecurity can also interrupt delivery of food, sometimes for weeks, yet another factor likely to lead to SEA.93

These dynamics have profound impact on gender relations. As one civil society woman said, ‘The mind-set of women and girls was that the man is everything in the house but now that mentality is changing and women are beginning to understand their self-worth, how to assert themselves without becoming aggressive and working together to assist one another.’ The fastest changing gender role is when it comes to breadwinnership. As many men are no longer present or unable to be the primary breadwinner for the family, women are being forced to take on this role. Men who would not allow their wives to engage in trading beforehand now accept – to a certain degree – the necessity of women going out to find work as this is seen as bringing necessary support for the family. Their communities can also be less engaged in policing of women’s behaviour and movements due to social disruption caused by the conflict and as querying women is seen as taking on responsibility for the family to some extent. However, men are not always happy at the increased independence that comes from work as their wives do not hand over all the money they earn. There have been cases of men coming to women’s workplaces and complaining of their wives no longer obeying them.

Inconsistency in registration and distribution of food assistance and poorly communicated targeting criteria of humanitarian aid can also cause tension and confusion as women are beneficiaries in some households and men are in others, as men whose wives are beneficiaries

91 This finding came out strongly from women and girls interviewed by Oxfam researchers in Kusheri but is also matched by interviews conducted in other locations.
93 Information about food distribution in Dikwa was collected during work in the town in March 2017 and interviews conducted in April 2017.
express dissatisfaction with arbitrary loss of power, only some wives receive aid in polygynous households or men who hold cards may show preferential treatment to certain wives in terms of distribution of aid received.\textsuperscript{94} There is also a link between shifting gender roles around income earning and domestic violence and abuse and increased rates of divorce.\textsuperscript{95} There is a great risk that humanitarian and development programming may exacerbate these dynamics, leading to increased levels of intimate partner violence and abuse.

Please note that the above paragraphs describe the situation where there is some presence of government and/or humanitarian actors. Outside LGA capitals, in northern Borno and around Lake Chad, there are no actors (apart from the military) working at all and the situation is likely to be even worse – both for people displaced from their homes and for people who continue to live in their communities. Parts of Borno are highly likely to already be experiencing famine like conditions, away from the eyes of the Nigerian government, the national and international media and humanitarian and development actors.

**Psychological impacts**

Although many people in Borno are likely to have experienced trauma to some extent, there is a spectrum. Men are also in acute psychological distress also but this section will focus on the psychological impacts of trauma on women. A 2017 gender assessment in Jere LGA found high needs in mental health, PSS and SGBV risks, including conflict-related SGBV, survival sex, early marriage and intimate partner violence.\textsuperscript{96}

Trauma is marked in particular for women who have seen their own family members killed in front of them. Women in civil society spoke about the case of a woman who had been ‘traumatised into madness after seeing her husband and seven children slaughtered in front of her.’ During an immunisation exercise, she kept asking, ‘Why can’t they come back and kill me too?’ In another case, a woman had seen all the men of her village being lined up, beheaded with knives and their heads placed on their bodies. The people around her, not knowing what to do with her mental state, placed her in a prayer house in Maiduguri to be ‘cured’ by prayer. In Rann, women reported that they kept on ‘thinking of their abducted children and of the lack of food’ and that their children had witnessed a lot of potentially traumatising events and were ‘not happy’ as a result.\textsuperscript{97}

In April 2017, a woman in acute mental distress gave birth on the streets of Maiduguri. It was difficult to get much information from her. Her husband was no longer with her for reasons that were unclear and she was living homeless with men coming to have sex with her. Her mental state was such that she was not able to consent. She delivered alone on the street and was found by women traders the next day who took her to hospital. She was subsequently placed in an IDP camp with psychological help provided for her and assistance for her baby. However, a few weeks after this, she left the camp with her baby saying she needed to go and visit her brother (who had been killed).\textsuperscript{98} In many cases, women who are in acute psychological distress who give birth have had their babies taken away from them rather than given the care they need.

While the above cases are spectacular in nature, they are an accurate depiction of what many women have experienced. Women and girls who have experienced VAWG, including through abductions, been forced to flee their homes, seen their villages destroyed, had their children abducted, lived through attacks and taken part in fighting may all suffer from trauma. People in Maiduguri perceive there to be a link between trauma and increasing drug use. Women and men


\textsuperscript{95} Women interviewed in Damboa, Dikwa, Kaga and MMC between March 2017 and June 2017.

\textsuperscript{96} A. Rodogovsky, *Gender Rapid Assessment – Jere LGA, Borno State, Nigeria*, (CRS/CAFOD, February 2017).

\textsuperscript{97} Multi-Sector Initial Rapid Needs Assessment: Rann/ Kala Balge LGA, 9 January 2017.

\textsuperscript{98} This case is one of many reported to the author and is included here as an illustrative example.

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of all ages and marital status are seen as using drugs to find ways to cope in the face of a healthcare system that cannot meet the scale of psychological needs. Although psychological first aid services are available in some locations with agencies having trained lay counsellors to provide this support, referrals prove a challenge with lack of enough trained psychiatrists and psychologists in the state. More details about service provision will be given under the VAWG response section below.

**Women’s participation and voice in governance and peacebuilding**

As of April 2017, Borno had four women serving as Commissioners out of 17, two women Permanent Secretaries (one for Women’s Affairs and the other awaiting posting), no women LGA chairs and three women LGA secretaries (in Dikwa, MMC and Shani) as well as one woman in the House of Representatives (representing Gwoza).  

When it comes to community leadership systems, as in Adamawa, leaders are men and they tend to exhibit a rigidity and resistance to change that excludes women. Some leaders are more receptive to hearing from women but this is uneven and largely limited to Maiduguri and the surrounding areas. There are supposed to be women leaders in these systems holding titles, chosen by women themselves and recognised by the hakimi after the elections. This leader then is supposed to become the conduit for institutions to reach women. This system seems to be working in some areas to some extent, for example, a 2017 gender assessment found several community female leaders in Muna Dalti in Jere LGA. However, in many places, particularly those areas which have seen high levels of insecurity and displacement, such as Dikwa, this women leader tends to be in Maiduguri rather than in the communities concerned, leaving women without an effective interface with local systems of leadership.

Not surprisingly, women’s groups and associations have also been affected by the conflict, subsequent displacement and loss of livelihoods with their members now in different areas and/or no longer engaging in those businesses. While there are many cooperative formations and active women’s groups in Biu and Damboa, the space for women to engage is more closed in northern and central LGAs such as Mafar and Dikwa where men have insisted even in joining focus group discussions with women and girls.

Women are integrated to some extent into peace and security structures at community level, sometimes because these are supported by external actors but women continue to feel excluded from decision making. For example, the Biu CPP (supported by HERWA and NSRP) has five women out of 15 members but it is unclear how much influence these women have and how connected they are to women in the community at large. Women interviewed in Biu felt left out of community decision making. Even if they were present during community meetings, they felt unable to speak and if they did find the courage to talk, they were often disappointed by men’s reactions. However, women’s voice in decision making depends on the demographics of the location. In Hausari in Damboa town, women are very involved in decision making, because the people in the area are 95 percent women, mostly widows and single women who say they had to toughen up and so do not need men any more.

Women may be excluded from many decisions made in their communities but they organise and are consulted in other ways. In 2014, there were a number of marches and rallies in Maiduguri of women protesting the detention of their children and calling for them to be released. These were not elite women who are more likely to have the connections needed to ensure release of family

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99 Nigerian Women Trust Fund, June 2017, information received via email.
101 Information from UNICEF based on mapping of community based organisations conducted by them.
102 As reported by Oxfam protection staff who work with them.
members. A large number of agencies have entered Borno in the last year with groups of women consulted by donors, NGOs, UN agencies and government officials in a way they were not before. Many local CSOs are reaching out to women and girls, particularly in camps in Maiduguri with the result that women IDPs are acting as peace advocates and running child protection committees.

Women’s civil society in Maiduguri is strong in terms of reach and influence even if financial, governance and report writing capacities need to be strengthened and their work tends to be limited to the state capital. Organisation such as FOMWAN, NCWS and Muslim Sisters do much needed work on integration, dealing with trauma and combating stigma against women and girls associated with JAS. INGOs and UN agencies have hired women as community mobilisers and psychosocial counsellors, building skills, confidence and income generating abilities. Faith based organisations work in their faith communities to shape narratives. FOMWAN has produced alternative narratives on ‘Western’ education, women’s rights and girls’ education while WOWICAN works to train young people on early warning and the effects of violence and urge young Christians not to seek vengeance but find ways of living in peace with Muslim neighbours.

The NSRP supported peace clubs are a good example of how women’s organisations can have multiplier effects in training women to do peace work in their communities. Peace club facilitators interviewed spoke about the impact of receiving the training in the peace club on them and the work they have gone on to do in the community. One facilitator spoke about how the peace club gave her the support and confidence to leave an abusive marriage and negotiate doing so with her husband, bulama and lawan. She now focuses on reconciling drug users with their families. Another facilitator spoke about helping NDLEA officials to catch people who were dealing drugs to children in the community and reaching out to young people in the community to come to her with issues and concerns. A third facilitator, aware of how JAS started in its early years, reaches out to young people in her community who join violent gangs because they have no other forms of support. These women talk about needing to fill a gap left by failures of the state and community leadership institutions with young people having little trust and confidence in either and community leaders having little influence on young people. They also say their bulamas are not interested in peacebuilding work as their focus is on distribution of humanitarian aid as this affords opportunities for personal enrichment while the work of peace club facilitators is unpaid. All three facilitators are now recognised by their communities who call on them to intervene in cases of community conflict. They point to the knowledge gained during the peace club as enabling them to do this saying they were afraid before and had no capacity or training but now know how to handle situations.

**Violence against women and girls**

*Incidence and trends*

As in Adamawa, in Borno, the GBV IMS collates and analyses VAWG reports. However, very low levels of reporting, with even service points not proving adequate to collect information, make it difficult to get a proper picture of what is happening in the state from this information.

Although reporting levels are low for all types of VAWG, the cases most likely to be reported are the rape and sexual abuse of young girls. Perpetrators include family members, those in host communities and IDP camps, community and religious leaders and government and security officials. There have been some cases of men in host communities raping the women and girls staying with them. For example, a girl orphan who was staying in the house of a bulama reported being raped by him and his friend. In Konduga, a girl is being raped by the stepfather her mother married as her husband had died and she had nowhere to go. The girl refused to talk with her mother about this as she was worried she would leave the man and there would be nowhere for her younger siblings to live. She disclosed this to a women civil society activist who had come to her community to do sensitisation work, not for action but just so someone else would know. A
girl raped by her discipline master in her Islamiyya school disclosed this to her mother who told her not to let others know as this would become a big issue given its religious dimensions but that she would try to persuade her father to remove her from the school without telling him the reason. There have also been some cases of VAWG linked with gang violence with gangs fighting over girls as well as sexually harassing, assaulting and raping them.

Women and girls are also raped and sexually abused by JAS members. In Dikwa, ten women were raped on their way from their villages to Dikwa town. There have been a number of cases of women going back to villages they had heard had been liberated by the military to pick up items, running into JAS members and experiencing mutilation of their genitals at their hands in Dikwa also. While the abductions from Chibok Girls Secondary School in April 2014 made national and international headlines, abductions had been happening beforehand and continued afterwards. At least 2,000 women and girls were abducted between January 2014 and March 2015. In 2013 and 2014, JAS members would even break into houses at night to abduct women and girls, demanding that families hand over their unmarried daughters in exchange for 'bride price' and abducting women and girls from schools, markets and banks. Once abducted, these women and girls are often forced into 'marriage' with fighters and raped. If they refuse or if he decided to divorce them, they are kept in rooms as slaves available to fighters for rape. Christian women and girls abducted are forced to convert to Islam. Women and girls have also been used as 'suicide' bombers with their levels of agency in this unknown.

Some of these women and girls have either escaped or been rescued by the military, vigilante groups and the CJTF. They go through government 'deradicalisation' programmes but the efficacy of these programmes in helping them to cope with what has happened or changing is unknown. Sometimes, women associated are released without any follow up. In one incident in late 2016, six of them were arrested by the CJTF for association in Bakassi camp just after they had been released into the camp. There have been many reports of women and girls saying they wish to be reunited with their JAS husbands as they preferred life there, as discussed above.

These reactions may be partly due to treatment by their communities on their return. Families have mixed reactions. While some women and girls have experienced complete acceptance by families, others have been divorced by husbands, viewed with suspicion by co-wives and rejected by fathers, saying their minds have been polluted. The children born to them are commonly seen as at risk of becoming like their fathers with people saying they have 'bad blood' as 'the child of a snake will always be a snake.' Communities stigmatise and fear both the women and their children associated with JAS, describing the women and girls as 'annoba' (epidemics), showing fear that radicalisation and recruitment may spread to others. They do not eat food with them, are afraid to let the women around knives during cooking and often ostracise them from community life. As a result, many women and girls are reluctant to report their experiences, do not know how to report and do not trust formal institutions (whose officials tend to be male) which inhibits their access to services. They may also feel guilt for being separated from their children and husband due to captivity and for not being able to escape.

In one case, even though the father had given his daughter to JAS members when they threatened to kill him, he refused to accept her when she was rescued as she was now a 'Boko Haram wife'. His wife left home as a result of this and moved with her daughter into an IDP camp. After FOMWAN's intervention, the father agreed to accept his daughter back, saying his refusal was

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104 The above information is from interviews with people working on issues around stigma and fear that these women and girls face and from International Alert, 'Bad Blood': Perceptions of Children Born of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence and Women and Girls Associated with Boko Haram in Northeast Nigeria: Research Summary, (International Alert/UNICEF, 2016).
because he had been afraid of CJTF members thinking he was sympathetic to JAS.\textsuperscript{105} In fact, CJTF members do not always accept women associated with JAS, and there have been cases of some members killing these women.

Lack of access to sexual and reproductive services, particularly abortion, is an issue under-examined when it comes to sexual violence generally. In Nigeria, abortion is not allowed except to save the life of the mother.\textsuperscript{106} In 2014, a woman in her 40s who had been abducted and repeatedly raped was given an abortion to save her life after she had become depressed and tried to commit suicide. She and her husband were subsequently shunned by their church and asked not to come back to services.\textsuperscript{107} Members of the NBA interviewed spoke about a client who had become pregnant by a soldier. She aborted the child at night and the CJTF found the foetus in front of the house and saw her inside covered with blood. She is now imprisoned for the crime of procuring an abortion.

Borno also sees high levels of SEA and survival sex. A November 2016 Human Rights Watch (HRW) report focused on IDP camps in Maiduguri brought this issue to light.\textsuperscript{108} In addition to members of security forces, HRW found NEMA and SEMA officials to be perpetrators of SEA, requiring sex before giving food or allowing movement into and out of the camp. There are high levels of stigma attached to all forms of sexual violence, particularly sexual exploitation and survival sex, termed iskanci even when it is accepted that women and girls do not have a choice and are motivated out of desperation. The line between sexual exploitation and survival sex is blurred with the men in question always having more power over the women concerned. As a result, they will be discussed here jointly. Perpetrators include soldiers, police officers, NEMA and SEMA officials and others in their communities. Survivors include girls as well as unmarried and married women. Some of the contributing factors for this have already been discussed under economic impacts above. Due to the rate of poverty and need, some women say that for N1,000 they go to any lengths with a man. One area of Maiduguri, notorious for underage girls selling sex, was destroyed by the police in late 2016/early 2017 after women’s rights activists brought this reality to the attention of the Commissioner of Police. No provisions were made to support the girls involved who have since been dispersed to other places. In one case, a girl IDP who was going to this area to have sex for food due to hunger said she refused to be with her parents anymore as they were not giving her any food. She is now pregnant.

From late 2016 onwards, Oxfam and the Girl Effect carried out a number of waves of research in Kushneri in Maiduguri Metropolitan Council (MMC). Conducted by girl researchers who were trained to use mobile phone technology, the study looked at women and girls in the settlement with a focus on the situation for girls. In the absence of any similar empirical research in other communities, it is worth detailing research findings in some depth. In Kushneri, the number one priority for women and girls was food, which was subject to scarcity and inflated prices, with women concerned about effects of lack of food on health and productivity in terms of being able to undertake income generating activities. Women and girls faced with this kind of economic hardship are compelled to seek alternate livelihoods, including transactional sex. At the same time, Kushneri is a highly conservative society where there is widespread anxiety about mobility with girls requiring the consent of parents and guardians to leave the house as it is thought ‘roaming without purpose’ will attract attention, particularly for IDP girls. As a result, it is assumed, particularly by older women in host communities, that a girl raped outside the home is to blame. Once a girl is raped and this is known, in many cases the perpetrator marries her or takes responsibility for the upkeep of any children that may result from the rape, paying either a

\textsuperscript{105} Interview with FOMWAN members.

\textsuperscript{106} As provided by both the Penal Code 1959 (for northern Nigeria) and Criminal Code 1916 (for southern Nigeria).

\textsuperscript{107} As told by Hamsatu Allamin in 2014.

fine or the costs of the naming ceremony. There were also some indications of SEA with soldiers impregnating girls. Women also complained about men in the community coming at night to cut holes in the tarpaulin tents in which they were staying to spy on their daughters. Victim blaming for all the above types of VAWG is common, even among girls themselves with girls distancing themselves from others who are known to have been raped, even if they feel sympathy for them. The stigma is particularly great if the woman becomes pregnant as a result of rape. A widespread perception is that transactional sex and sexual assault is the same, especially for older women to whom very few people showed sympathy. Blaming women and girls for engaging in survival sex is also common, with lack of empathy shown. Most respondents said girls would tell a family member, mostly mothers, if anything happened but family members would rather conceal cases. Most people interviewed did not know where they could go for help or what to do.109

In November 2016, Oxfam’s assessment showed that women respondents felt less safe and protected than male respondents in Damboa and that women and girls were more at risk of child labour, early marriage, restriction on freedom of movement, forced marriage and domestic violence, with girls perhaps at heightened risk of VAWG related to coping strategies.110 The community is very closed about these matters but has recently started opening up to Oxfam staff about coping mechanisms. Women and girls engage in sexual activities to have incomes and parents trade girls to men for money with girls being sent by parents to look for men. Oxfam also found a few cases of men engaging in sexual activities with other men for money although this was far less than those of women and girls. There is coercion and exploitation particularly when it comes to disabled women. In one case reported to Oxfam a man told a woman who had a disabled daughter that he would escort her into the bush to give her drugs for her condition but he wanted sex in return. In another case, a woman who had a disabled daughter was told she would get a voucher for food in return for sex with her. It is noteworthy that both cases are of mothers of disabled girls reporting attempts at sexual exploitation of their daughters rather than the cases being of sexual exploitation of disabled women or reported by them. Whether this is because disabled women have even greater barriers to reporting than able bodied women or the impact of the culture of silence being stronger for adult women than for girls or both is unknown.111 However, despite this sexual exploitation and survival sex occurring, when interviewed, the DPO said there had been no cases of VAWG reported to him at all.

In Dikwa, women engage in sex for around N500-N1,000 in order to access food and other items that they need. The men in the communities are more likely to have access to these items due to issues with distribution discussed earlier under economic impacts as well as members of the CJTF and police stealing cards that entitle to food distribution.112 In addition to men in communities, SEA perpetrators are also CJTF members. It seems that fewer soldiers are involved with women and girls in the community, perhaps because the Brigade Commander posted in Dikwa tries to take action to prevent SEA and ensure proper investigation of allegations. However, despite this, cases continue with women and girls approaching soldiers or following them as far as Mafa in order to get food. A women leader in Dikwa also spoke of members of the police, immigration service, customs service and NSCDC being involved in SEA giving women money in return for sex which they then use to buy food although it was not possible to confirm this.

As of April 2017, no proper VAWG assessment had been done in the state although this may have changed given new actors now working on VAWG in Borno. Multi-sectoral assessments of

109 Findings from upcoming Oxfam and Girl Effect research on women and girls in Kusheri settlement, as presented on 26th April 2017.
111 The above information is from interviews with Oxfam staff working in Damboa.
112 This information is based on work conducted in Dikwa from February 2017 onwards and on interviews in Dikwa in April 2017. Please note that the system of food distribution is under review in Dikwa so this dynamic may change in the future.
locations outside Maiduguri are often done without anyone with VAWG expertise. In any case, these are highly sensitive issues not just due to the stigma attached to the survivor but also given the power of the perpetrator in many cases and it is not possible to find out any real information in a four-hour assessment trip. There has been at least one incident where women spoke about SEA when going to collect water and firewood by members of the military in a focus group discussion – then were later beaten by soldiers who found out.

There have been cases reported of sexual abuse against boys also. In Maiduguri, three seven-year-old boys were found to have been abused by someone involved in dealing drugs who used them to steal from shops when people were praying, sell illegal substances and raped them. In Dalori 1 camp, many boys were abused by three men, one of whom leads prayer in the camp. It took a long time before the community came forward as they were worried about charms. In another well-publicised case, a father used a hot iron on his son’s buttocks because he had been found engaging in sexual activity with a younger boy. It is important to be aware of the context here. The father had himself been abducted and abused by JAS members, had become traumatised by this and upon his return started using the same punishments JAS members had used to punish him and his fellow captives on his family. Whether men (as opposed to boys) are experiencing sexual violence is unknown. Extrapolating from other conflicts, male sexual violence against men and boys can occur although not at the same levels as male sexual violence against women and girls.

Another key issue is that of early and forced marriage. The minutes of the 28 February 2017 PSWG meeting stated that the GBV subsector has ‘reported numerous cases of forced marriages as a coping mechanism linked to the lack of access to basic needs.’ There are numerous reports of men from Maiduguri going into IDP camps in search of ‘cheap brides’ and paying as little as N2,000 in bride price. Parents feel they have little option as they are struggling to feed their families and hope that at least this man will take care of their daughter. However, in many cases, the man has divorced the girl in question after a few months and returned her to her family, often pregnant. In December 2016 in Banki, one agency reported four to five marriages of girls and boys aged 14 to 17 a day as well as female genital mutilation/ cutting (FGM/C) and circumcision of young boys who then end up in local clinics.

There are also some indications of increased domestic violence and abuse although these cases are hardly ever reported. In Muna Dalti and Simari, 8 percent of individuals reported domestic abuse and neglect. There is some backlash to changed gender roles with women under pressure to strike a balance between economic independence and household roles and needing new levels of diplomatic skills. Disabled women may face verbal abuse from husbands. In one case, a disabled woman married to a disabled man with other able-bodied wives said he discriminated against her asking why she was not able to do the household tasks the others did and whether she was different from them, despite knowing about her disability and being disabled himself.

Prevention and response mechanisms

According to members of the PSWG, the VAWG response is half what is required, does not meet needs, is still heavily focused on MMC and Jere with key gaps, particularly when it comes to funding, ensuring safe shelter and functioning services. This assessment is despite more VAWG actors, resources and funding being present in Borno than in Adamawa and Yobe. At the same time, many INGOs and UN agencies work with the same local partners, creating an impossible level of expectation and workload. Government actors in Yobe are adjudged to be stronger and

113 Conversations with FIDA members working on the case.
114 Protection Sector Working Group, Minutes of the Meeting, 28th February 2017.
more interested than those in Borno, perhaps due to the levels of money and opportunities for diversion that have come into Borno. There are many more actors working in MMC and Jere, outside which serious gaps exist when it comes to VAWG programming in all sectors. However, new actors have started programming on VAWG and the landscape is rapidly changing. MCN should engage with the GBV sub sector working group to ensure the programme is updated with the most recent updates as the below information will become outdated relatively quickly.\textsuperscript{117}

**Healthcare:** While healthcare is probably the strongest part of the response, there are still large gaps. While members of the health sector are able to identify survivors and activate some level of response, precautions, ethical considerations and knowledge of where to refer are yet to be mainstreamed, risking more harm. However, some organisations such as Medecins du Monde have recently started work in informal settlements in MMC and Jere (El Maskin, Garba Buzu and Kawarmela) providing training to health staff as well as ensuring availability of necessary medication, counselling and case management\textsuperscript{118} although they say uptake, so far, is low.\textsuperscript{119} However, even in Maiduguri, many health care workers refuse to treat survivors without seeing a police form which necessitates reporting to the police, which some survivors may not wish to do. A safety audit conducted by UNICEF found that even in hospitals, doctors talked about being out of drugs and so giving half prescription. This meant that even people judged to have received medical treatment within 72 hours had not received adequate treatment. In MMC and Jere where the focus has been strongest, there are health facilities where adults know how to administer PEP for adults but not for children. Kits distributed to health NGOs do not contain HIV tests, which need to be administered before giving PEP. Outside of MMC and Jere, the situation is even worse with only primary healthcare centres present and patients having to be referred to Maiduguri for secondary healthcare, with attendant issues of access, cost and safety of travel. Staff have received very little training on how to handle VAWG cases or on clinical management of rape\textsuperscript{120} and healthcare centres are missing PEP kits, ARVs or emergency contraceptives. Furthermore, there are few women among the healthcare workers. In Dikwa for example, there are 11 women out of 74 healthcare workers. In some areas, there is a lack of trained healthcare personnel at all. For example, the hospital in Baga is staffed by volunteers with no qualified doctor or nurse present, making access to clinical management of rape impossible.\textsuperscript{121} In Rann, there is one fixed health structure with three community health extension workers and three assistants who work without any data tools, register, water, handwashing stations and with some necessary drugs such as amoxicillin missing.\textsuperscript{122} Even where there are a relatively good number of health workers and services, crowded waiting areas make confidentiality impossible as everyone can overhear consultations. As a result, in Dikwa, even cases of sexual violence that are known to the community are not reported to health facilities.

**Psychosocial care:** Many efforts have been made in the field of PSS with a number of actors providing this. For example, UNFPA has 140 counsellors working in Biu, Damboa, Gwoza, Bama and Chibok. IOM and UNICEF are focusing on children and recreational group activities while the Neem Foundation, FHI360, IRC and International Medical Corps (IMC) are doing case management. In Dikwa, UNFPA, IOM, UNICEF, UNHCR and FHI360 are providing PSS. Most of these services are at the level of psychological first aid and basic counselling through individual and group activities. Psychological and psychiatric assessments are a challenge. Many referral forms have no diagnosis as counsellors are not able to diagnose so doctors do not know the facts of the case. UNFPA is planning to train all counsellors, doctors and those doing case management then start organising case conferences to address these issues. While the initial focus was MMC

\textsuperscript{117} Please contact Sylvia Opinia, the GBV Sub Sector Coordinator on opinia@unfpa.org; 0815 083 5954.


\textsuperscript{119} Conversation with Medecins du Monde staff.

\textsuperscript{120} Please note that Oxfam is considering conducting training in Damboa for healthcare workers.

\textsuperscript{121} Multi-Sector Initial Rapid Needs Assessment: Baga/ Kukawa LGA, 3 January 2017.

\textsuperscript{122} Multi-Sector Initial Rapid Needs Assessment: Rann/ Kala Balge LGA, 9 January 2017.
and Jere, actors have started working in other LGAs but locations outside Maiduguri remain a significant gap.

**Shelter:** At present, there is a big gap when it comes to shelter provision in Borno although there is some interest in setting up shelters run by local organisations that can provide a centralised location for services and coordinated case management in Maiduguri and some LGA headquarters. FHI360 is currently establishing a temporary shelter to be used as a safe space covering Agric Camp, Sholda Settlement and 20 Housing Unit as well as two safe spaces in Dikwa and Ngala. However, the range of services on offer, the length of time survivors can stay and what measures will be in place to ensure a managed transition are unknown as yet.

**Access to justice:** There are low levels of VAWG reporting to police officers. For example, according to police officers in these locations, there had been only two cases of rape reported in two years in Biu and no cases reported at all in Dikwa since September 2016. According to an April 2017 assessment in Damasak, there had been no cases of VAWG brought to the local clinic or police. There was also poor understanding among police officers which many conflating VAWG with rape of young girls alone. As in Adamawa, one of the key challenges seems to be the requirement for rape cases to be moved to Maiduguri where they fail due to lack of evidence as survivors and witnesses need to pay to travel to give evidence in court, which survivors see as a punishment in and of itself. In Biu, local actors are pushing for an appropriate prosecutor and judge to come to Biu to constitute a High Court to try the case in the locality. Low numbers of women in police stations outside Maiduguri may contribute to women’s unease in coming forward. In Damboa, there are four women (two inspectors and two sergeants) out of 79 total police officers deployed. In Dikwa, there are 28 police officers, of which only two are women. In Biu the ratio is better: 20 women out of 120 officers. However, communities say that even when they report to the police, officers cover up the case if the alleged perpetrator gives them money. While some police officers have received training, their response tends to depend on the individuals concerned rather than institutional protocols. The community in Damboa tends to trust the vigilante groups and the CJTF more than the police. Oxfam is planning to train the police, vigilante members and CJTF members on protection. This kind of training may be useful in other locations also. Cases of VAWG are very difficult to prosecute and even in MMC and Jere, very few actors apart from FIDA, the NBA and NHRC are doing work on access to justice with legal representation tending to be ad hoc as a result. Worryingly, some members of the NBA seem to have incomplete understanding of power dynamics involved in SEA, talking about ‘contributory negligence’ on the part of the survivor for receiving material assistance in exchange for sex. Many times, cases are settled out of court. There is no clear legal basis for prosecution with inadequate legislation. It is difficult for counsel to prove all ingredients of the crime, particularly given the common time gap in sexual violence cases between the alleged crime and reporting. Even when cases are successfully prosecuted, sentences tend to be low. For example, a man who had raped 16 children received a sentence of six years. There are attempts in the state to address some of these legal issues and MCN should link up with FIDA and the NBA in this area.

**Livelihoods:** Support to survivors in the field of livelihoods is very weak. Some skills acquisition schemes are aimed at women and girls but these tend to be focused on obvious occupations such as bead making, sewing and cap making with goods often passed on to men to sell who can get a larger amount of profits than the women who make the items. In addition to reinforcing gender stereotypes that do not have basis in reality given women take part in many occupations, these skills acquisition programmes are often developed without sound market analysis or access to capital, meaning women are unable to set up businesses or sell their goods because there is little demand.

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Coordination, case management and referral pathways: There are major coordination challenges when it comes to VAWG response with people not knowing to whom to refer even in MMC and Jere. There are different understandings and levels of service provided by those doing VAWG case management. Levels of coordination and referral pathways vary across the state. In Jere and MMC, there are referral pathways for VAWG and child protection.\textsuperscript{125} In Damboa, according to Oxfam which holds coordination meetings every two weeks that are attended by UN agencies, INGOs and community based organisations (CBOs) in the LGA, services are weak and referral pathways are not there with only bulamas and Oxfam set up protection committees, which identify, report and refer cases, doing case work. In Biu, Mercy Corps trained VAWG master trainers to train people in the community and, together with UNHCR, UNICEF, UNFPA and other actors, has been able to domesticate referral pathways for southern Borno. In some ways, action on child protection seems to be further ahead with child protection networks set up and seemingly functional in Biu and Dikwa consisting of members drawn from NSCDC, police, hospitals, social welfare, road safety corps and social workers from the LGA administration. Steps are continuing to be taken to strengthen field level coordination and referral systems with draft referral pathways being developed in Dikwa and Ngala. Those working on VAWG response reported that 80 percent of cases they responded to in May 2017 were possible due to shared knowledge on VAWG referral mechanisms and ability to coordinate with other sectors.\textsuperscript{126}

Sensitisation and addressing stigma: Even when services are present and functioning to some extent, their utilisation is very low with many women and girls not coming forward to report even when it is known that cases are happening. Most of the cases received are from children, understandable given the stigma attached to reporting as well as the victim blaming that teenage girls and adult women experience, but there is also a significant gap when it comes to sensitisation. In every location (Biu, Damboa, Dikwa and Maiduguri), apart from women in CSOs, women did not even know where to go to help. While women's rights activists have done sensitisation work, including going on radio programmes to talk about VAWG and the need to report, information about where to report and how has not necessarily reached women and girls.

In MMC and Jere, many organisations are conducting outreach, community dialogues and integrating reproductive health and VAWG activities. Anecdotally, this work seems to have led to increased reporting of violations against children. However, community information and packaging to different age groups continues to be weak and needs work. It is difficult to know how to frame issues around sex and consent in a way that does not cause resistance but this is absolutely necessary, particularly given the amount of SEA and survival sex in the state as well as the stigma attached to iskanci. Security forces need training on basic principles of confidentiality.

In April 2017, the Commandant of NSCDC in Borno held a press conference to announce that they had arrested two women associated with AOGs, included one married to Mamman Nur, a senior commander. Not only was one of the women, who had been passed from man to man after being abducted before she managed to escape, at the press conference but it was revealed that she was pregnant and had tested HIV positive. The stigma and fear related to women associated with JAS and their children has been mentioned above. International Alert, FOMWAN and their partners have been doing good work in this regard in Maiduguri with families reconciled and daughters who had been rejected being accepted back into their families. However, very little work is being done in this area outside the city, despite the high numbers of women and their children in LGAs,\textsuperscript{127} discrimination and marginalisation they are experiencing and many more women and girls being rescued and released by the army.

Prevention: Most prevention work is in the realm of outreach to decision makers with much more needed to mainstream prevention strategies into the work of over sectors. Crucially, despite

\textsuperscript{125} Help-Seeking and Referral for IDP camps and Host Communities in Borno 2017; Child Protection Sub-Sector Working Group, Child Protection Referral Pathway, Maiduguri and Jere LGAs, 2017.


\textsuperscript{127} According to HERWA, there are 1,500 women associated with JAS and 2,000 children born to them in Dikwa alone.
some organisations having set up safe spaces, there are no shelters, which serve a vital preventative function in stopping the violence, in the state. There is great potential for utilising peer networks with both boys and girls and for working with security agencies and camp management agencies on protocols, policies and ways to institutionalise a zero-tolerance approach. Despite attempts made to develop referral pathways for SEA, very little work has been done to reach out to all institutions where perpetrators work to prevent this violence from taking place and ensuring quick and effective response when it does. Although a focal points training took place in May 2017 and there is a prevention of SEA network with a joint inter-agency tool to facilitate safe and ethical reporting of allegations, this tends to be looking at humanitarian agencies themselves.\(^\text{128}\) While it is highly likely that humanitarian workers are engaged in SEA even though few cases have been reported as yet and preventative action is necessary and welcome, there is an opportunity here to reach out to and work with security and camp management institutions, particularly the police, military, NEMA and SEMA.

Yobe

The information below draws upon a review of documents and research, as well as interviews conducted in Bade and Damaturu in April 2017.

Context

Yobe has been less affected by the violent JAS-related conflict than neighbouring Borno state, although skirmishes still continue in the Buni Yadi/Gujuba area. However, the impact of violent conflict is still noticeable, particularly on the economy of the state, amongst IDPs and with high numbers of people having left the state due to insecurity and violence. It is the only state to have had its state capital occupied by AOG members and has experienced destruction of homes, markets, government structures and places of worship as well as (forced) recruitment into AOGs. Reintegration of these fighters is a concern given community attitudes towards those who have caused suffering to them and their families and killed their loved ones. While there is understanding that not all fighters were recruited voluntarily, particularly for women and girls, this does not necessarily reduce levels of fear and stigma greatly.

Yobe has already seen conflict over housing, land and property. There are cases where land sold to heads of household killed by JAS is sold to someone else. Indeed, there are indications that women may be dispossessed of land as a result of their husbands and fathers being killed or seen to be members of JAS. IDPs who have settled on someone else’s land (with or without their knowledge), for example forming informal settlements, may be asked to leave by owners who wish to farm during the rainy season.

In addition, there are other conflict dynamics at play, notably conflict between fisher folk, pastoralists and farmers due to competition for scarce resources in areas such as Maisandari, Tarumwa, Bade and Dukshi as well as political violence. Animals belonging to migratory pastoralists may destroy crops of farmers which lead to clashes between pastoralists and farmers, exacerbated by some farmers planting in grazing reserves, routes and areas that block the path to the river necessitating cattle to pass through the area destroying crops. There is also conflict between fisher folk and river owners over over-fishing and the types of nets used with worries that there will be no fish in the river as a result.

The Yobe State Government seems more proactive than in Borno perhaps due to a long period of investment by DFID and others in good governance programming. It has set up an IDP Committee headed by the Deputy Governor which is investigating how to handle housing, land and property disputes. It has plans for rebuilding with funds allocated and plans in place to rebuild hospitals, police stations and other government structures. Yobe State has a Strategic Action Plan for Peace and Recovery which covers safe and voluntary return and resettlement of IDPs; reconciliation, peacebuilding and community cohesion; local governance and citizen engagement; mine action; environment; water and sanitation; health; education; agriculture; and public buildings, with prioritisation of interventions according to spatial and beneficiary coverage and estimated budgets. Government officials interviewed during the course of this assessment were very open, asking for assistance and support in conflict management and community engagement.

International actors including UN agencies, the World Bank and international NGOs are increasingly coming into the state, however presence tended to be very new and skeletal at the time of research there (April 2017). These actors are working on mainly humanitarian assistance and livelihoods. Areas of focus are Damaturu, Gubja, Gulani, Gaidam, Yusari, Potiskum, Bade and Fika, with most efforts focused on Damaturu, Gubja and Gulani.

130 According to the OCHA representative in Yobe.
Legal and policy frameworks

As of April 2017, the Child Protection Law was due to be sent by the Governor to the SHOA as an Executive Bill. There were high hopes among civil society for its passage, with all provisions of the CRA contained and the penalty for rape being life imprisonment, due to the involvement of legislators in discussions beforehand. Women’s rights activists were planning to intensify advocacy on the passage of the VAPP Act given the lack of a strong legal framework on VAWG. Women’s rights groups had started talking with the MOJ and SHOA in 2016 but had been told to wait until the Child Protection Law had been finalised. Legislation is also underway in other areas, for example to criminalise the withdrawal of girls from schools to be married.

The SAP WPS was in its final stages of review by the MOWASD in April 2017 before being presented to the Executive Council and for approval of the Governor. The WPSN has been instrumental in pushing this forward with relevant actors. A key concern is the lack of awareness of women, peace and security issues in the state and work is needed to ensure the SAP WPS is taken forward by all MDAs.

Involvement in conflict

In Yobe as in Adamawa and Borno, women, men, boys and girls are part of armed groups, although in different numbers and performing different roles. In the past, women conveyed weapons and IEDs for JAS as, not seen as a threat, they were less likely to be checked by security agents. Women have been found to make bombs, recruit other women for example in Islamiyya schools, hide guns for their male family members and lead attacks. During the 1st December 2014 attack on Damaturu, a woman fighter was spotted leading her group coming along Balge Road. Women have also influenced their children and husbands to join JAS. While some women and girls join AOGs voluntarily due to beliefs, politics or financial incentives, others become associated as their husbands or fathers are involved and they have no choice or because they are abducted. Women and girls are forcibly married to JAS fighters and raped or kept in rooms which are then visited by fighters for sex. As in other parts of the region, involvement in setting of explosives as ‘suicide’ bombers is the role for which women and girls are best known, leading to increased vigilance and suspicion directed against them.

Women are also part of vigilante groups, particularly in Damaturu, Postiskum, Jakusko and Bursari. Women members search other women in communities and investigate cases involving women and girls. Children are also associated with vigilante groups, used in patrols, to screen individuals during public gatherings and at school entrances and to run checkpoints in rural areas. After UNICEF’s intervention, fewer girls are seen publicly performing actions linked to the groups. However, the Yan Agaji and Boys and Girls Brigades screen people outside mosques and churches to check they are not carrying explosives with both girls and boys involved in doing so.

There are significant numbers of girls and boys associated with armed groups in Yobe state with little programming in this area to date and restricted access by the military. UNICEF has set up a committee on this issue consisting of government MDAs including the Ministry of Social Welfare, NGOs and faith based organisations.

Physical harm caused by armed actors

As in other parts of northeast Nigeria, the experiences of women, girls, men and boys show similarity as well as divergence. While women and men have been killed by all parties to the conflict (AOGs, Nigerian security forces, CJTF and vigilante groups) and abducted and forcefully recruited, men escaped during attacks on their communities or beforehand, have been detained

131 The name of the CRA was amended in Yobe to the Child Protection Law due to resistance.
or were attacked and killed. As a result, women, along with children, are the majority of those left behind. As a result, the weight of caring and providing for families and communities has fallen on the shoulders of these women who often do not know whether their husbands are alive. Boys and girls have also been left as heads of households with the responsibility of providing for younger children. JAS has also destroyed homes and food supplies, further adding to their difficulties, as will be explored below.

Women have also been directly threatened. HRW has documented the ways in which JAS has targeted and killed teachers, education workers and students, both women and men, with at least 611 teachers deliberately killed and a further 19,000 forced to flee since 2009. A woman journalist interviewed for the assessment spoke about how she is watched and threatened: “All my colleagues left so I ended up being the one to read the news. I am threatened by Boko Haram and have to be taken to and from work in armoured calls. They call me and say, “Can we not shoot at this car?” This is building pressure and tension in me. I have not left Damaturu but I have sleepless nights and a depressed and turbulent mind. I know they will call me. I change routes but they call me almost every day after I read the news as they don’t like me calling them Boko Haram. They want me to call them by Jama’atu Ahlis Sunnah Lida’awi Wal Jihad, which they say is their proper name.”

The conflict has also affected disabled people disproportionately, with people becoming disabled due to violence. This area is one under-researched and not much information was forthcoming. Joint National Association for People with Disabilities (JONAPWD) in Yobe seems heavily male dominated, with a key challenge preventing disabled women to be engaged in organising being that they are often confined to the home. As a result, it was not possible to find out ways in which the conflict had affected disabled women and girls specifically.

Physical harm has also been caused by security forces and vigilante groups who have committed human rights abuses as well as caused civilian harm during operations. Levels of human rights abuses have decreased to some extent according to members of civil society interviewed for this assessment but harassment, insults, beatings and SEA continue. Community women interviewed in Damaturu spoke about how their brothers, husbands or other male relatives were picked up by the military, detained or killed even when they were not always members of the group. The impact on their female relatives still continues. One woman talking about her sister whose husband was taken to a military base never to be seen again spoke about the trauma that her sister still experiences as well as the struggle to support herself and her children despite the assistance offered by her family and her husband’s family.

**Displacement**

Levels of displacement in Yobe are less than in Borno but still significant. There are two formal camps for IDPs recognised by the Yobe State Government in Damaturu with the vast majority of IDPs living in what are seen as ‘self-settled camps’ as well as in host communities. Most intervention and support by state government and humanitarian actors is seen as focused on IDP camps rather than host communities.

Focus group discussions with women and girls conducted by UNFPA found that the vulnerability of IDPs is higher in host communities than in formal camps due to this focus and as they come into host communities with meagre resources. There are some indications of differential treatment for IDPs from Borno and Yobe although it was not possible to completely verify this. In some areas, IDPs living in informal settlements have been asked to leave by the owners of the land. SEMA seems unaware of the existence of these settlements and slow to act when brought to

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their attention. The Presidential Committee on the Northeast Initiative (PCNI) is interested in supporting IDPs living in host communities but had yet to start work in this area in April 2017.

Even in the IDP camps, conditions are far from ideal. Women in Kukareta IDP camp who were interviewed spoke about rain coming in through the leaky tarpaulin roofs of their tents. In previous rainy seasons, they had gone many nights without sleep due to the rain and strong wind which they were worried could blow their whole shelter away. Although there were organisations providing food assistance, some families were yet to receive food and what was received was insufficient. Food was given monthly but finished before the next distribution and there have been cases of violence in IDP camps during food distribution according to JONAPWD representatives which has meant disabled people in particular have not been able to access food.

Although IDPs remain in Damaturu, some (estimated at 30% by State Conflict Management Alliance (SCMA) members) have returned to their communities in the state as there seems to be hope for rebuilding, increased perception of security and safety and opportunities for livelihoods with the coming of the rainy season and re-opening of markets such as in Buni Yadi. Those who remain often wish to go back to their homes but are fearful about safety, particularly as fighters are known to be in certain areas, and concerned about where to live given houses were burned down and about how to earn a living as they have no means of rebuilding their lives. Some girls have been married into host communities. It is unclear whether this is a deliberate tactic for integration or a matter of circumstances as girls of marriageable age are married into the community into which they are now living. Unlike in Borno, there are no indications of men of host communities seeing displaced girls as a source of ‘cheap brides’ but this is not an area that has been investigated.

**Economic impacts**

The conflict has affected the state economy negatively. When attacks took place, people ran away from their homes with the clothing on their bodies, paying high costs to get them to safety and having used up all their savings to escape and provide food and shelter for their families. Those returning to villages found not only their buildings and land burned but also their animals as nobody was there to untie them when attacks took place.

In some areas, host communities have agreed to provide land for those displaced to farm on a temporary basis. Displaced women living in host communities have, in some cases, managed to start trading and set up businesses. According to displaced women in Kukareta camp, the Ministry of Land has also demarcated land for each household that has come forward to use in farming. Last year, land was given to both women and men to farm. These actions by the government are positive but challenges remain. As one woman interviewed said about the previous year, ‘I farmed myself as my husband is a hunter and is away. I got crops but they were very small and have finished. We have no means to farm a large area to sustain ourselves for the year as you need people to farm land and harvest for you.’ What levels of support will be given to IDPs who decided to stay in Damaturu, whether living in IDP camps, informal settlements or host communities, to enable them to integrate into communities and ensure good livelihoods is unknown.

Women interviewed from Damaturu spoke about the ways in which livelihoods had been affected in the city: ‘Now we are safe sleeping without problem of insurgent but suffering from poverty. Everything has stopped when it comes to livelihoods.’ Many of their husbands were no longer able to find work, placing increased burden of their shoulders. Unmarried women also spoke about parents not being able to provide for them and feeling increased responsibility to find a way of earning income to support the family. Whereas there were always girl hawkers in the state, the depressed economy seems to have led to more pressure on them to earn money to bring back to the family, by any means necessary.
However, women’s businesses have also been affected. Women interviewed for this assessment across a number of locations in Yobe spoke about being poor, about having exhausted all their capital and being trapped in a vicious cycle with all the money they were able to earn going on food, leaving no money to buy goods to sell and to earn income. Work they used to get from other women, for example who would bring in sewing for them to do, has dried up as the community at large is experiencing economic hardship. They are unable to collect on loans made to family, friends and community members as they can see that these people are in even worse financial situations. At the same time, inflation has led to increased price of goods and rent. They spoke of having had to move in with in-laws and being dependent for food to eat and about skipping meals.

The situation has also changed the kinds and patterns of work for women and girls. They seem to be more flexible than men and able to do a variety of tasks to earn income whereas men are likely to consider ‘women’s work’ beneath them. For example, some women engage in hard labour such as collecting firewood from faraway places and selling it for money. Women and girls are spending more time away from homes than was the case before in order to earn money for the family. These increased responsibilities on women to earn money in a context of intense challenges has also led to increasing begging on streets and survival sex with women ‘chasing men, not for money but for food’ according to a woman traditional title holder in Damaturu. Women of all levels and marital status engage in sex for money or food for as little as N100 or N500. Their husbands’ and fathers’ reactions range from purposefully not knowing to being suspicious that women who have spent the day working outside have been engaging in sexual activities, whether or not this is actually the case.

In many households, women are now the primary breadwinners. For example, in Gubio, most households able to generate incomes do so through petty trading such as sale of groundnuts and cowpeas, generally done by women. In a context where gender roles and norms have been that men are the primary breadwinners, these changing circumstances have caused depression and anxiety in men. Women interviewed spoke about some men leaving families and staying away for years as they were unable to provide for them. For example, a large number of female headed households were reported in Karashua. This breadwinner masculinity means not only do women and girls feel abandoned but they also struggle to cope as they have been raised to expect husbands to financially provide and not been taught the tools and skills to take on this role. Where husbands have not left, levels of conflict have increased in many households, leading to higher levels of divorce and domestic violence and abuse. Older women spoke about daughters having been divorced or had their husbands die moving in with them. One woman said she had her seven young children as well as her six daughters whose husbands had died, left or divorced them move back in with her, leaving her with 14 people to look after including herself.

Women also spoke about the disrespect with which they are treated due to their poverty. One woman said, ‘someone who is like son to you will overlook you and not give you respect because you are poor.’ Among older women there was a sense that conditions were better in the 1950s and 1960s with women having more voice as societal relations were closer and socio-economic conditions were better. They were able to engage in cross border trade with the money they earned meaning they had more voice in family and community decision making. They see younger women as being less respected, having many children that they cannot look after and husbands abandoning families.

Government and humanitarian actors are trying to provide assistance in the form of livelihood training, skills acquisition programmes and food distribution. However, skills acquisition programmes are often designed to pass on skills without the required equipment, such as

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135 This information about older women was collected by OCHA from focus group discussions in Machina and Yusufari.
carpentry tools or sewing machines, which are then too expensive to buy or conducting a market assessment to determine gaps and what types of businesses would flourish. Furthermore, these programmes have not met the scale of need in the state, been diverted by those in power, including community leaders, or only reach certain groups. In Bursari, cards with credit to be used to buy goods from local traders were seen as reaching only Kanuri communities, with large number of cards going to family members of local leaders rather than those in need and IDPs living in the LGA headquarters purposefully sidelined. In some cases, as in Katarko, people were seen as going there to collect food which they then sold in their shops in Damaturu.

**Psychological impacts**

Their experiences have caused trauma and depression in many women and girls. Women saw the killing of the men, including their husbands, by JAS members, sometimes in brutal ways. For example, in Katarko, men were beheaded in front of women. Women lost their children too and witnessed the burning of their homes and being in a state of constant fear during attacks. It can be particularly distressing to see one’s own children kill family members in order to reach a certain rank within JAS. In one case, a mother welcomed her son home when he returned saying she would go out to buy food for him but instead went to report his presence to security forces. He had previously killed her husband/ his father in order for promotion within JAS ranks. Women civil society activists interviewed spoke of working with women no longer able to talk with others or who are thinking of suicide. They spoke about an increase in drug use in communities and among security forces. One of the reasons for this increase given was that drug use served as a coping strategy for people who have suffered trauma or lost family members. Drugs were also given to women abducted while they were with JAS.

Boys and girls need PSS but most organisations are doing very little in this regard. The UNICEF representative in Yobe talked about children's experiences coming out during play with boys engaging in war play, dividing their group into JAS fighters, the military and the community and enacting the violence. On the other hand, many children, boys and girls, who have experienced conflict are withdrawn and unable to associate with their peers. Girls who have been abducted or who have experienced SEA remain reserved and uncomfortable in society, even if they have been reunited with their families.

The Nigerian Association of Women Journalists (NAWOJ) was among the first organisations two years ago to provide counselling. With time, other organisations have started doing this work (as detailed below), however, the PSS provided is far less than the needs present. In addition, there is a lack of understanding in this area and it can be difficult to make the case for the need for this type of work.

**Women’s participation and voice in governance and peacebuilding**

As of April 2017, Yobe state had one woman Commissioner (Women's Affairs), one woman representing the State in the Senate and no women Permanent Secretaries or LGA chairs. Only one woman had been elected as a local government councillor. Resistance from male politicians, the monetisation of politics with women not having the money to contest, norms around women in leadership and reluctance of women themselves to be part of politics mean that women often do not even contest for these positions as they frequently do not make it past the primary stage even when they stand.

In all 17 LGAs, the LGA chairman and party officials are meant to ensure that at least 1 out of 4 supervisory councillors is a woman. Those working for women’s rights groups estimated that this

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136 Interviews conducted in Bursari in June 2017.
137 Nigerian Women Trust Fund, June 2017, information received via email.
Men dominate community leadership systems also. The Damaturu Emirate Council has a mechanism for conflict management reaching down through district and village heads who report back on a weekly basis covering all kinds of conflict and reporting these to security forces and the state government. There is a committee of women in the palace led by women title holders, with women in the community supposed to go to these women at the emirate level and to the wives of district and ward heads at those levels with their concerns for investigation. Interviews were conducted with the yah mera and yah morom, the older sisters to the Emir of Damaturu, during the assessment. They spoke of forwarding requests to the emir, organising entertainment for guests, representing the emir, settling disputes among women and between women and men and providing assistance and consolation to women in need. They had intervened in a number of cases of early and forced marriage, housing and looking after the girls concerned and paying for their school fees until they were reconciled with their parents. While the roles these women play are important, they do not seem to have much influence on the emirate council itself or wide reach among women and girls in the community, with many women and girls interviewed not knowing about these women title holders or not knowing how to access them.

As in Adamawa and Borno, there are women’s associations at community level which provide mutual support and assistance. These are primarily business orientated. Women leaders participate in party political structures. Although they are part of decision making processes here, they lack influence as they are mainly seen as tools to mobilise women voters for candidates. Women’s faith based and community based organisations can be active when it comes to spreading peace messages, promoting alternative messaging and engaging in peacebuilding, with women’s participation in these activities sometimes even higher than that of men if spaces are women only and with women leading discussions. However, for some women, their participation tends to be contingent on getting permission from their husbands to attend gatherings.

Although women are involved in state and community level conflict management structures to some extent, they are present in low numbers. For example, six women and 30 men were present in the last meeting of the Yobe SCMA before interviews were conducted with its members for this assessment. Numerous times different actors seemed to think that women’s involvement in conflict management was contingent on the nature of the conflict: while they are needed to talk with other women, when it comes to issues like farmer-pastoralist relations, they are not necessary as ‘all the farmers and herdsmen are men.’ Not only is this not the case with many women farming and rearing animals, but woman can take part in conflict resolution mechanisms when the conflict parties are men. Other challenges to women’s involvement in peacebuilding includes lack of education and awareness on the roles women roles can play and socialisation of women, girls, boys and men that pushes gender roles around leadership.

Women’s rights groups and other CSOs are reaching out to women to increase involvement in peacebuilding and decision making. For example, FIDA, supported by NSRP, trained 15 women in peacebuilding with these women training up 30 more women in Bade, Damaturu and Potiskum. These women have become involved in peace initiatives, educating others on peace and security and mediating community conflicts. NAWOJ is conducting value reorientation training to mothers and teachers to encourage them to shape community narratives and instil good values in children. Women’s civil society groups are also organising radio programmes on the roles of women in peacebuilding and training women on early warning and early response mechanisms. However, much of the work women’s civil society is doing is self-funded. Some women believe that, if
women had been able to take action when they started to see community members, including members of their family, join JAS, violence could have been avoided or mitigated.

Violence against women and girls

Incidence and trends

All of those interviewed spoke about a general perception of increased levels of VAWG in Yobe however this may be due to increased reporting and discussion around on this issue. The work of civil society has led to more women and girls coming forward, although the vast majority of reported cases still tend to be of those aged 13 and under, reflecting shifting attitudes when it comes to violence against young girls but not necessarily against older girls and adult women. However, it is difficult to know the real picture in the absence of reliable longitudinal data and low levels of reporting. As in Adamawa and Borno, UNFPA has a GBVIMS operational in Yobe that is meant to provide data and analysis. Yobe has received some of the highest reporting in the region with over 200 people treated for rape in one year and places like Gaidam, Potiskum and Damaturu show reporting. However, there are very low reporting rates and many institutions who deal with VAWG survivors do not collect let alone share data with the GBV IMS. Furthermore, capacity issues mean data received does not have the information necessary for analysis as it is not always disaggregated by gender, age and nature of violation. There is no system of sharing data although every organising working on VAWG has data. There are some suggestions that this data should be shared with MOWASD but some CSOs are reluctant to share data of this sensitive nature, particularly implicating perpetrators who are state officials, with the government.

There have been some cases of sexual violence reported in IDP camps although often people refuse to talk about what has happened or withdraw cases before they get to court due to fear of the stigma attendant to sexual violence. There have been cases of IDPs living in host communities also experiencing violence, with the men and boys with whom they are staying often the perpetrators. These women and girls find it very difficult to report given doing so is highly likely to put their shelter at risk.

Girl hawkers face high rates of sexual harassment and violence when selling items from men and boys. There have been some cases of gang rape too. The Commissioner of Police spoke of a case of a ten-year-old girl living with her grandparents who was raped by ten men who then gave her N200. Often the ‘solution’ to rape can be seen as marriage to the rapist. Members of the SCMA talked about the case of a 13-year-old girl who had become pregnant by a neighbour who agreed to marry her as restitution. NGOs are trying to prevent this marriage. They also spoke about a university lecturer who had abducted three girls aged nine, 11 and 13 who were hawkers and had raped them for three days.

A focus group discussion with women from Damaturu led to them talking about different forms of VAWG. They spoke about how girls who had no other forms of support as they had lost their relatives were given money in exchange for sex with the men concerned raping them if they said no and giving them drugged food and drink to make them more compliant. One of the women told the story of her sister. She had rejected a man in the community who then abducted her on the way to the market. After five days, she was left on the streets and found by family members. She became pregnant as a result of the rapes and has since gave birth. Even though there is a man in the community who has agreed to marry her, she is not able to marry as there is no money to buy items she needs to set up house. She is now begging on the streets and continues to be traumatised. There have been cases of women raped by their sons. Members of CSOs interviewed talked of cases where sons had killed fathers and raped mothers so that they would be made an amir in the JAS group. In one case, a woman whose husband was killed in her presence by their own son was told by him that she could not stay unmarried. He tried to marry her himself. She took his knife while he lay sleeping and stabbed him before going to report to security forces.
A number of interviewees also spoke about survival sex with women, particularly those who were IDPs, having sex to get money. Doing so is often seen as engaging in iskanci with a perceived high likelihood of women spreading sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) which serves to stigmatise the women and girls concerned further. In Bade for example, the CPP discussed this issue then went together with religious clerics to ‘preach words of warning and guidance’ to women and girls engaging in survival sex. It is difficult to see what impact this had on the material circumstances of these women and girls or deterring perpetrators as opposed to just stigmatising and shaming them further. A number of brothels in Damaturu were being investigated by the Ministry of Religious Affairs in April 2017. Many of the girls and women inside either had parents try to force them into marriage or had no other way of earning an income. According to the Yah Morom, these places are patronised by the police and military. It is unknown what plans are in place to ensure these women and girls are linked to livelihoods, actions taken to combat stigma and other appropriate services given when these brothels are closed down.

Soldiers, police, vigilante and other men in positions of power engage in SEA. Interviewees spoke mainly about the role of soldiers in SEA but there are indications that the police and vigilante groups engage in similar behaviour. Those most at risk at IDPs, girl hawkers (when they go to sell food to soldiers and police officers) and any women and girls living in conditions of high food insecurity. According to the Yah Morom, ‘the Brigade Commander has made it clear that soldiers need to find a way to ease themselves.’ She spoke of the case of a soldier who, even though he killed a girl with whom he was in a relationship when he returned to find a man in the house, was not punished. Women from Damaturu spoke of how the military would rape women, particularly if they came to search houses and there was no man there. As one woman said, ‘There was a time when the military came for search in our house. There were no men so we had to hide away. They molested my uncle’s wife. This is common. It happened to my cousin. She was raped and she is traumatised. There is no place to complain – and we don’t know where to go.’ In Katarko, eight women were reportedly raped by soldiers at gunpoint. One husband was killed for protesting while some of the others have subsequently divorced their wives. These women are stigmatised by the community for what happened to them. A local NGO reported the case and the military said it would take action but it is not clear what subsequently happened.

Soldiers also have sex with girls aged 12-14 years old at checkpoints in small rooms nearby, giving them money in return which they take to feed their families. Indeed, NGOs spoke of a number of girls who were 12 to 15 years old in relationships with soldiers so they could take the money they gave them to their families. It can be difficult to take action in such cases, even with assistance from NGOs. Families can be scared by the power soldiers have and either not come forward to report or not want to take the case further if they do. In one case, a soldier impregnated a 15-year-old girl. Her parents do not want to be named as complainants as they have been threatened. The person who is helping them with the case has put down his name instead but suspects that the soldier concerned is putting extreme pressure on the parents to drop the case. There have been cases where soldiers have entered into relationships with women in communities that have led to marriage – but these marriages often end when the soldier is moved out of the area of operations. A lot of times, these kinds of cases tend to be settled at the lower levels of the military rather than being reported to commanding officers or reaching headquarters.

In addition to sexual violence, there are reported cases of early and forced marriage. This phenomenon was present across Yobe before with girls being married around the age of 14 but it seems to have increased recently as a result of the poverty that many families are experiencing, particularly among IDP populations. In many cases, CBOs and NGOs have had to intervene in cases where girls were being married because their parents said they could no longer support them and that this was a way to get money from their bride price to be used for the family.

Women interviewed in both Bade and Damaturu felt that there had been an increase in domestic violence and abuse. As discussed, changing gender relations have meant that men, socialised to
be heads of households and breadwinners for the family, are no longer able to fulfil this role. This dynamic not only causes frustration but can lead to suspicion that women and girls are earning money through sex and attempts to control the behaviour of women who resist this, particularly given they are the ones who are providing for the family. Men can also engage in domestic violence and abuse because women are no longer able to provide the same standards of food and housekeeping as they did before due to reduced economic circumstances. In Bade, women felt that divorce rates had drastically increased due to men’s inability to provide and domestic violence and abuse. One woman told the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) that she engages in sex for money because her husband expects good food, not possible in their current economic situation, and beats her when she cooks according to the ingredients they are able to afford. The money she gets from the men with whom she has sex allows her to top up the quality of cooking and means there is no longer physical abuse from her husband.

Other forms of VAWG in the state include FGM/C particularly in Gulari, Goneri and neighbouring villages and abductions by JAS members. Given abductions have been discussed above and patterns of the abductions and the stigma women and girls face are similar, not much more will be written about them here. However, it is important to note that there were no organisations focusing programming on helping women and girls associated with JAS reintegrate into communities or working on issues of stigma and fear they face as of the time of the assessment.

While women when interviewed report a high level of VAWG, cases are underreported due to stigma, lack of sensitisation and lack of knowledge as to where to go for help. In many locations, for example Yusufari, Machina and Karasuwa, there are no VAWG actors on the ground to deal with and follow up cases.

It is important here to note the risk of programming and awareness raising on VAWG curtailing women’s movement and freedom. There seems to be misunderstanding around sex and consent and a conflation of consensual sex with sexual violence. For example, the vigilante group in Bade spoke about questioning men and women they saw together in the evening as to whether they were married or planning to be. If the answer was no, they would take them to the police station. If the man told them he was ‘a true suitor,’ they would take them to the father of the woman in question. They also spoke about women and girls attending maroud celebrations and how they would use going to the bathroom as a way to meet men for sex. In order to stop this ‘indiscriminate sexual abuse’, vigilante group members now accompany women to the bathroom and back. Not only does this amount to the policing of women’s movements but may also lead to increased sexual violence, not less, from the vigilante members themselves.

**Prevention and response mechanisms**

There are fewer protection and VAWG actors in Yobe compared to Adamawa and Borno who are functional and credible. For example, in Yusufari, an assessment in February 2017 concluded that there are no actors on ground to respond to or follow up VAWG cases. Most actors do not have the capacity to provide services. FIDA, the Ministry of Health (MOH), MOJ and MOWASD are notable exceptions. Key agencies supporting these actors in service provision are UNFPA, UNHCR and to some extent and UNICEF when it comes to child protection. However, new agencies such as NRC, IRC and Danish Refugee Council (DRC) are planning to start programming.

**Healthcare:** There have been some interventions made to increase the quality of healthcare services when it comes to VAWG in Yobe. There are referral centres in two hospitals in Damaturu

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139 Yusufari Inter-Agency Assessment Report, 23 February 2017.
and in Kukareta IDP camp with VAWG cases being referred to the general hospitals in the LGAs. UNFPA supplies rape management kits, each of which can cover up to 400 cases, to 22 medical facilities in seven LGAs (Damaturu, Fika, Funke, Potiskum, Tamurwa, Gashua and Gaidam). However, some of the biggest challenges in the state are with human resources, ineffective management of primary health facilities and inability to link with secondary healthcare centres. The SARC was commissioned in September 2016 to deal with cases of rape and other sexual assault. It had received 34 cases, with survivors ranging in age from 3 to 30 years in age, when visited in April. Sixty percent of the cases came from Damaturu with the rest coming from Gujuba, Gulani, Damagun and Gashua. Most cases were brought to the SARC by the police with the patients in the two cases of self-referral coming to the hospital for treatment without knowing about the SARC. It is early days for the SARC and it is up and functioning, with the police reporting a noticeable difference in the speed of response compared to hospitals. SARC staff do not yet seem linked to other VAWG actors in the state and there seems to have been no work done on creating awareness among communities, including women’s groups, about its existence and how to access it to date. Outside Damaturu, women and girls have serious barriers in accessing healthcare due to lack of finances, beliefs and pressure to be ‘strong women’ with medical care, particularly during delivery, seen as a sign of weakness. Bade General Hospital has received several cases of rape and sexual violence, with survivors ranging in age from infants to 14 years in age. Nine or ten cases were reported in March, but the hospital keeps no accurate data nor does it report cases to any centralised system. Healthcare workers do not charge for examination but whereas HIV testing is free, pregnancy testing costs N150, hepatitis testing costs N250-350 and no other STD tests are given. When visited in April 2017, they had no rape kits. Across many healthcare institutions, healthcare workers, particularly doctors, tend to be men. The SARC has eight personnel (two male doctors, four female nurses and two female counsellor). Bade General Hospital has five doctors, all of whom are men, 42 nurses, including 16 women, and 4 community health workers, all men. Another key issue is lack of training on clinical management of rape. Although there has been some training (UNFPA has trained 45 doctors and more nurses), this has not reached all healthcare workers, with only one person (the Chief Medical Officer) able to examine patients who have been raped and offer testimony in court at present in Bade General Hospital. Another key challenge is lack of secluded rooms in which to examine patients. At present, in many health facilities, there tends to be a queue of patients waiting outside examination rooms who can hear everything that is discussed within.

**Psychosocial care:** The main actors doing psychosocial work in Yobe seem to be UNFPA, UNICEF and MOWASD and local NGOS who serve as partners to UN agencies. UNFPA assesses the level of services as not up to IASC standards with issues around training as a singular module is usually delivered across actors. UNFPA conducts training in collaboration with a psychosocial specialist and clinical doctor with trainees receiving supervision and advanced training afterwards for between 2 and 3 months. In the case of children who are abused, both the child and their parents need psychosocial care but there is lack of knowledge as to how to treat child patients as opposed to adult patients. Counsellors work in camps and communities but there are few health facilities with trained counsellors and very few psychologists in the state. According to UNFPA, there is one psychologist at the university, one consultant in neuropsychiatry at the specialist hospital and two neuropsychiatric nurses, one in Potiskum and one in Damaturu. In Bade General Hospital, the Chief Medical Officer spoke of counselling being provided by the nursing officer as there were no trained counsellors in the hospital. At the SARC, patients meet the counsellor for one session and many of them do not come back for repeat sessions. They are not referred to community based counsellors for further support. Most cases of serious mental disorders are sent to the Maiduguri Federal Neuropsychiatric Hospital. If proper systems of training and supervision were in place, the cases that need to be referred should constitute a tiny minority as most cases should be dealt with by lay counsellors but, as mentioned above, there are major gaps in training.

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140 For example, that mastitis is 'jej' which leads to non-acceptance of drugs as they believe this will cause death. Lack of medical treatment leads to severe ulcers which spread systematically though the body.
Another key gap when it comes to psychosocial care is the lack of support given to the counsellors. Many counsellors come from the communities concerned and may have been experiencing low levels of trauma themselves, which can be further compounded by secondary trauma. The only support they receive is that which they provide to each other which risks recycling trauma within the same group.

**Shelter:** As of April 2017, there were no shelters in Yobe state. Although UNFPA is planning five safe spaces where women can spend the day and learn livelihoods, this is not the same as having a shelter for VAWG survivors. The one that is set up near the palace of the Emir of Damaturu is a room with not many facilities there when visited. UNFPA is thinking of making these safe spaces more residential for people without anywhere to stay but they are likely to have only four to five beds. There is a proposal in process for an alternate safe shelter for children who have experienced violence and abuse and are unaccompanied or separated to put together a pool of foster families with an exit plan in place to ensure sustainability. However, there seems to be no current safe space(s) for VAWG survivors to stay for immediate relief linked to support to ensure they are able to live free from abuse in the long term although all actors with whom this was discussed agreed that a shelter was urgently needed.

**Access to justice:** Both the police and NSCDC have gender units. All cases need to be transferred from LGAs to the CID in Damaturu. For the police, the gender seat is attached to the CID with the gender focal point being able to draw on others in the CID. The police in Gashua have 85 officers, four of which are women. The DPO when interviewed in April 2017 said not many VAWG cases had been reported but that it was difficult to make a proper assessment as to incident due to the stigma that prevents reporting. The NSCDC has a Peace and Conflict Resolution and Gender Specialist Units in all LGAs which have at least three members who can refer to headquarters in Damaturu if required according to their Commandant. Many of these NSCDC staff have not received training in gender, VAWG or psychosocial care although they deal with cases of VAWG and engage in counselling. According to the NSCDC officials posted in Bade, this Unit, which consists of ten people including two women, is not as functional as in the state headquarters. They seemed unaware of the gender functions of the unit. Out of 140 NSCDC staff across Gashua LGA, only 20 are women. At the time of discussion (April 2017), the NSCDC in Bade had four to five cases of young girls experiencing VAWG that it was working on. Both the police and NSCDC are active participants in VAWG coordination meetings in Damaturu. UNFPA has trained GBV desk officers working for NSCDC and police outposts (the latter recently established after advocacy by SCMA members). It is unclear how established these GBV desks are in reality outside Damaturu as no evidence as to their establishment and effectiveness was seen, either during the assessment or by women activists working on VAWG to date. The gender desk officer in Damaturu provides phone support to police stations around the state in reality. While she is active and the Commissioner of Police is now taking action due to pressure from NGOs, CSOs and DPOs telling parents of girls who have experience violence and abuse to let the case rest and the police only taking action in cases where male perpetrators are poor, ‘killing’ cases that involve politicians and members of security agencies. There also seems to be an understanding among some police officers that women over 18 cannot be raped, particularly if she knew the man in question. Many of the prisons in Yobe have been burned, leaving only three in Potiskum, Bade and Ngiru and no remand home for juvenile offenders. These facilities are severely overcrowded with few number of vehicles causing court delays as the perpetrator is often not in court. As in other states, the requirement for witnesses and survivors to travel to Damaturu for court cases which occur there is a serious barrier as people often do not have the money to travel there. Although some efforts are made to transport them for the trial, there are costs attached to staying in Damaturu as well as opportunity costs in terms of missing work completely during the time spent away. Another challenge in accessing justice is late presentation of cases by which evidence has been destroyed. A key barrier to access to justice is the lack of accompaniment and case workers for survivors and their families, particularly outside Damaturu and Potiskum. In Bade, six women, including LGA social welfare officers, trained by FIDA serve this function. They are not necessarily trained in the
law although they have received two days training on women in peacebuilding, violence against women and referral pathways. They refer cases to FIDA in Damaturu and say they need more training in order to do their work. There seems to be a key opportunity to train up legal case workers, who are mentored and supervised by members of FIDA, to handle VAWG cases. Although progress has been made on access to justice, to date, this seems confined to Damaturu with a lot of interventions needed outside the state capital. Even where prosecutions are brought and a conviction received, this can be in the form of a few months’ imprisonment or a fine. UNHCR is planning on convening an access to justice technical working group bringing together all relevant actors including the Commissioner of Justice, chief judge, magistrate, MOJ, Directorate of Public Prosecution, FIDA, Muslim Lawyers Association and the NBA. As of June 2017, the TOR for this group was yet to be finalised but aspects to be considered include filing fees in sharia courts, sentencing levels, strengthening capacity of actors and changing attitudes of victim blaming of survivors by security and justice sector actors.

Livelihoods: No actor was found to be working on livelihoods specifically for survivors of VAWG or to be integrating understanding of VAWG into their livelihoods work with many livelihoods actors even unaware of the existence and content of referral pathways.

Coordination, case management and referral pathways: Committee meetings on GBV (led by MOWA with UNFPA supporting) and child protection (led by the Ministry of Youth, Sports, Social and Community Development supported by UNICEF) are held monthly in Damaturu as part of the PSWG. Actors attending meetings include FIDA, NCWS, MOWA, MOH, MOJ as well as security actors such as NSCDC and police covering a holistic range of services. The people who attend characterise case management as fairly efficient. However, some health services sometimes take time to access and some referral pathways are not active. For example, while security, health, legal and psychosocial services are working to some extent, there are no livelihoods support as the agencies doing this work, such as Action Against Hunger (ACF), Cooperazione Internazionale (COOPI) and SEMA, are not providing support to VAWG survivors or integrating VAWG into their work. Outside Damaturu, the situation is much worse with lack of coordination between actors and weak to non-existent referral pathways. There are some actors who are planning to try to start coordination work in Gashua and Potiskum to serve surrounding areas but, as of April 2017, this had not yet started.

Sensitisation and stigma: As in the rest of Nigeria, fear of stigma is a strong barrier to reporting and accessing services. Women's rights organisations have done a lot of work encouraging women and girls, and their families, to come forward to report cases, particularly using the medium of radio. Efforts have been made to reach women leaders, community leaders, keke riders and others in communities, who are encouraging people to report. This work has led to some increase in reporting of violence and abuse against young girls. The development of referral pathways and strengthening of services has meant there are some services available to those who do report, at least in Damaturu. However, many people still do not know exactly what to do and where to go if they or someone they know experiences VAWG. Furthermore, despite stigma being a major issue for the women and girls concerned as well as a barrier to accessing services and justice, very few organisations are doing any work to tackle stigma.

Prevention: Most of the prevention work done to date in Yobe has been with community and religious leaders, encouraging them to preach in church and mosques telling congregations 'to fear God in what they are doing' and what Bible and Quran say about VAWG, with teachers in schools and with the NURTW to take the message to their drivers. While all of the above is commendable, the preventative work needed with men and boys themselves (as opposed to their leaders), and with women and girls who often collude or perpetrate VAWG themselves is missing. As in Adamawa and Borno, this area is one that is worth investigating and where a new actor seeking to go VAWG work can add value.
Opportunities for Engagement

After having examined trends across the three states and discussed dynamics in each state, this section now turns to looking at opportunities for engagement. It is split into two parts: involving women in rebuilding communities and adding value on VAWG prevention and response.

Involving women in rebuilding communities

- Work with communities to document the crucial roles women have played during the conflict and find ways for communities to acknowledge and remember this legacy so what women did and what happened to them is not written out of history but remembered by communities, combats gender stereotypes and serves as role models to girls and boys as to what women can do.

- Explore ways to link women with job opportunities that will arise as a result of development funding to the region, for example with infrastructure, agriculture or livelihoods programmes, as income earning and economic empowerment is crucial to have influence in families and communities.

- Work with women's associations as entry points to build confidence and skills in peacebuilding and explore ways they can work for peace, social cohesion and building of community relations. This includes through mobilising across lines of religious, ethno-linguistic and/or occupational division and coming together in a common platform of faith groups, cooperatives and business associations such as those of market women, women farmers and women tailors to discuss and identify issues of concern and develop plans how to use their different spheres of influence. These platforms should be meaningfully integrated into community and LGA peace and security structures.

- Support women to build an interface with and be part of community leadership institutions by 1) mobilising in groups to articulate concerns and solutions that need to be raised, 2) identifying strong leaders to talk with community leaders, 3) exploring possibilities for leaders to have meetings with groups of women rather than calling one woman to represent them all, 4) advocating to institutions for their meaningful inclusion as advisers and on councils and 5) showcasing the example of leaders such as the Emir of Kaltunga in Bauchi who includes women in emirate levels of decision making. If MCN is planning any work with community leadership institutions, the programme should reach out to women in the system as well as men to seek their analysis and to explore roles they can play in channelling issues and concerns from women in the community to community leaders.

- Train women in negotiation, mediation, conflict resolution and peacebuilding skills and ensure ongoing mentorship so they are able to put these skills into practice in their communities, learning from and building on the work of NSRP peace clubs.

- Hold inter-generational dialogues with girls and young women, boys and young men, middle aged women, middle aged men, elderly women and elderly men discussing their concerns and viewpoints separately before bringing them together to meaningfully participate and listen to each other in order to address grievances of young people and deal with the social rupture that has come about as a result of the conflict.

- Help communities understand and deal with changing gender power relations, working on masculinities, particularly breadwinner masculinities, by having open and honest discussions about the changing nature of household and community relations to forestall potential
backlash to increased women's rights and freedoms and bring gendered expectations of women and men in line with their realities.

- Ensure MCN's gender approach also includes awareness of what men and boys have experienced during the conflict, for example by working on the long-term effects of detention, abductions and aftermath of human rights abuses.

- Support WPSN in all three states, now they have or will soon have a SAP WPS in place, to re-strategise ways to ensure networks influence decision making on policy and practice across state and federal MDAs, with focus on increasing women's participation and ensuring inclusion of gender perspectives.

- Fund women's rights organisations and women's associations to work on peace and security issues at community, LGA and state levels. For example, in Adamawa, MCN should talk with the North East Regional Initiative (NERI) about their work supporting the Kirchinga Women's Association to work around tension management and reintegration of AOG fighters into the community to draw lessons and see if this work can be replicated in other parts of Adamawa, in Borno or in Yobe.

- In Yobe, provide capacity building and mentoring to the Yobe State Government on how to foster community engagement in upcoming programming funded by the World Bank and Islamic Development Bank and ensure this is done in a way that prioritises women's inclusion and conflict sensitivity in decision making and engagement. While the Yobe State Government's Head of Recovery and Peacebuilding has specifically requested this of MCN, there may be opportunities to similarly engage with the Ministry of Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (MORRR) in Borno State.

- Ensure ways to meaningfully include women who are from particularly marginalised, excluded and disadvantaged social groups into the above activities. This may require facilitating platforms for these women to help them organise separately, for example as disabled women, increasing awareness of other MCN beneficiaries as to their realities, challenges and concerns and facilitating their inclusion in all MCN programming.

Adding value on VAWG prevention and response

Almost every part of VAWG prevention and response mechanisms have major gaps but this section will focus on areas where MCN can add value, where other actors are currently not working and are not likely to start working and where positive impact is likely. Given the number of actors already working in healthcare, PSS and building referral pathways and their particular expertise in these fields, these areas are not included below as MCN's added value lies elsewhere.

- Work with women's rights organisations and allies (including UN agencies and INGOs) in the three states to bring about the conditions necessary for the full domestication of the VAPP Act, CRA and GEO Bill, including a clear influencing strategy around provisions that may be controversial such as marital rape and age of marriage, understanding that it may take years for legislation to pass.

- Support women's rights organisations to launch an anti-stigma campaign tackling the narratives around iskanci for all forms of VAWG in all MCN focal LGAs. This campaign would not only encourage women and girls to access services but would also lessen their stigma and discrimination. It would be focused on women and men in communities to seek to persuade them to change their attitudes and, given the ways that women are socialised into policing other women, include work with older women who can perpetuate stigma, young women
who tend to exclude survivors from social networks and with women’s associations and savings groups.

- Build awareness of VAWG that not just encompasses generic sensitisation but includes information about what to do and where to go for help in the community (so people are clear they have more options that just to report to the police), rights education, how to raise boys and young men not to be perpetrators, how to recognise signs of abuse and changing knowledge, attitudes and practices around VAWG. This information should be disseminated using creative ways among communities, including parents, teachers, school administrators, union officials, community leaders, religious leaders, women in party structures, women’s associations and women leaders.

- Fund shelter provision where women and girls can go to for holistic support that includes not only healthcare, psychological care and access to justice services but also builds confidence and skills and links survivors to livelihood options in a way that ensures transition to independent living. MCN should link up with others doing VAWG work in its focal LGAs to bring joint resources to bear and ensure women’s rights organisations with a history of working on VAWG are in charge of the running of these institutions.

- Work with institutions, particularly the military, police, NSCDC and camp management officials to train them on VAWG, particularly in Yobe and Adamawa where large capacity gaps have been self-reported, and to combat SEA by members of their institutions, looking at policy, training and accountability measures.

- Engage in VAWG programming around peer to peer influencing and networks with young people, finding ways to help them spread messages about consent and healthy relationships and build resilience in their fellow young women and young men.

- Explore ways to integrate education around consent, sex and healthy relationships into educational institutions, whether these be government schools, Islamiyya schools or tsangaya institutions, and into conversations parents have with their children in a way that is aware of and takes into account sensitivities around these topics.

- In Yobe, join the access to justice working group anchored by UNHCR and explore opportunities that may arise for (joint) programming and policy influencing work. In all three states, join the PSWG and its GBV and child protection subsector working groups to maximise opportunities for information sharing and joint policy influencing and programming work.

- Support and train VAWG case workers outside state capitals to be able to work with survivors and their families to help them access services, combat stigma and refer to specialists if necessary.
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  • GBV Subsector Working Group
  • State Conflict Management Alliance
  • Community Peace Partnership
  • Women, Peace and Security Networks
  • Observatories on VAWG