



INITIATIVE ON  
Fragility, Conflict,  
and Migration

# A Review of Vulnerabilities of Water Systems-Related Risks in Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) Host Communities in Adamawa State, Nigeria

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Cover Photo: Arrival of internally displaced persons at a camp (Photo Credit UNHCR)

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## List of Acronyms

|       |     |                                                                  |
|-------|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AA    | ... | Anticipatory Action                                              |
| CERF  | ... | Central Emergency Response Fund                                  |
| DRR   | ... | Disaster Risk Reduction                                          |
| FAO   | ... | Food and Agriculture Organization                                |
| FLWs  | ... | Food Land and Water Systems                                      |
| HHs   | ... | Households                                                       |
| IDP   | ... | Internally displaced people                                      |
| IFRC  | ... | International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies |
| IOM   | ... | International Organization for Migration                         |
| OCHA  | ... | UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs           |
| SEMA  | ... | State Emergency Management Agency                                |
| UNHCR | ... | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees                    |
| WFP   | ... | World Food Programme                                             |

# Executive Summary

This report offers an analysis of the challenges faced by Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Adamawa State, Nigeria, set against the global context of internal displacement. It explores the primary drivers of displacement in the region, including conflict, particularly insurgency activities, and natural disasters like flooding. These factors have led to significant challenges for IDPs, such as safety, shelter, loss of livelihoods, and social disintegration.

The report highlights the prevalence of insurgency-related displacement, primarily due to Boko Haram, and the significant impact of natural disasters such as flooding. There were IDPs in Adamawa State in 2022 with 70% of them originating from within the State. About 53.8% of IDPs in the State are women, indicating that displacement in Adamawa State is gendered. This calls for gender-specific humanitarian interventions. A significant portion of IDPs reside within existing “host” communities, placing a substantial burden on these communities. The primary livelihoods of these displaced populations hinge on farming and traditional activities, making them vulnerable to environmental and economic disruptions. Access to essential services like nutrition and education varies among IDPs, with notable gaps in nutrition services.

In response to these challenges, the report emphasizes the importance of Anticipatory Action (AA) as a proactive measure in disaster response and a way to address the vulnerabilities of communities hosting IDPs. These strategies are crucial for mitigating the impacts of displacement and supporting the resilience of both displaced persons and host communities that are experiencing compound stress of climate change.

The report also highlights the need for robust and targeted interventions to address the immediate and long-term needs of IDPs and host communities in Adamawa State. This includes enhanced disaster management, long-term support for education, livelihood development, gender-specific programs, and proactive AA to anticipate and mitigate future displacement.



**Photo:** A vegetable farm (credit: Lord Kweku Sekyi)

# 1. Introduction:

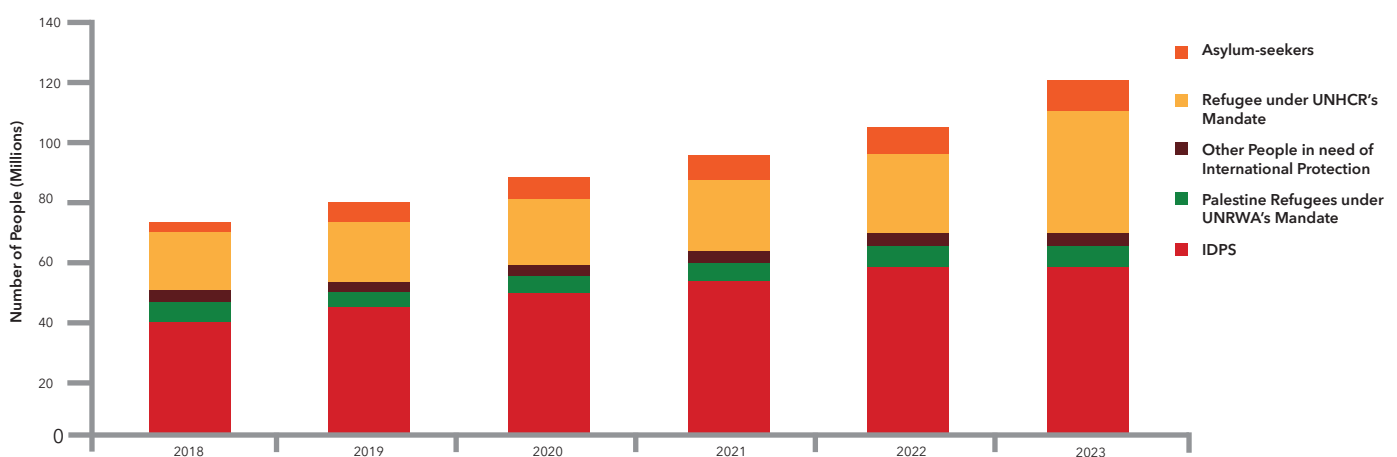
## Contextualizing the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) Issue

The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, defines internally displaced persons (IDPs) as "persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized border" (UN 1998). IDPs embody a significant global humanitarian challenge. The United Nations Human Rights Council Global Trends Report (2022) defined IDPs as individuals who are forced to leave their homes due to human-made or natural disasters, human rights violations, violence, or armed conflicts, without crossing internationally recognized borders (UNHCR 2022). Internal displacement refers to the forced or coerced movement of people from their homes or place of residence to another destination within the same country as a result of or combination of conflict, violence and/or disaster. Internal displacement can be attributed to two broad factors, namely (i) conflict and violence and (ii) disasters (poverty, food insecurity, climate variability, and change) (Viviane et al. 2021; IDMC 2023). The global scenario of internal displacement, as detailed in the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre's (IDMC 2023) Global Report, reveals a complex interplay of disasters, conflict, and food security challenges shaping displacement patterns across various regions.

### 1.1 Global Internal Displacements and IDPs

Global internal displacement levels are rising, with approximately 117.3 million forcibly displaced people worldwide at the end of 2023 (UNHC 2023). Figure 1 shows that at the end 2023, at least 31.64 million refugees and 6.86 million asylum seekers are among the people who have been forced to flee their homes worldwide (UNHCR, 2023). Moreover, 60.9 million internal displacements, or movements were recorded in 2022, which translates to 60 per cent more than in 2021 (IDMC 2023; IDMC 2022). In 2021, 23.7 million internal displacements were triggered by disasters while conflict and violence caused 14.4 million internal displacements (IDMC 2022). Furthermore, weather-related disasters accounted for 30.7 million displacements in 2020 (IDMC 2021), and 31.8 million displacements in 2022 globally (IDMC 2023). Despite moving away from specific climate hazards, displaced individuals often find themselves exposed to new dangers, putting them at risk of harm or further displacement (Easton-Calabria 2022).

This makes disaster-related displacement the highest among drivers of displacement.



## 1.2 Africa's Internal Displacements and IDPs

Africa faces significant challenges including ongoing conflicts, environmental crises, and socio-political instability leading to large-scale internal displacement (Figure 2).

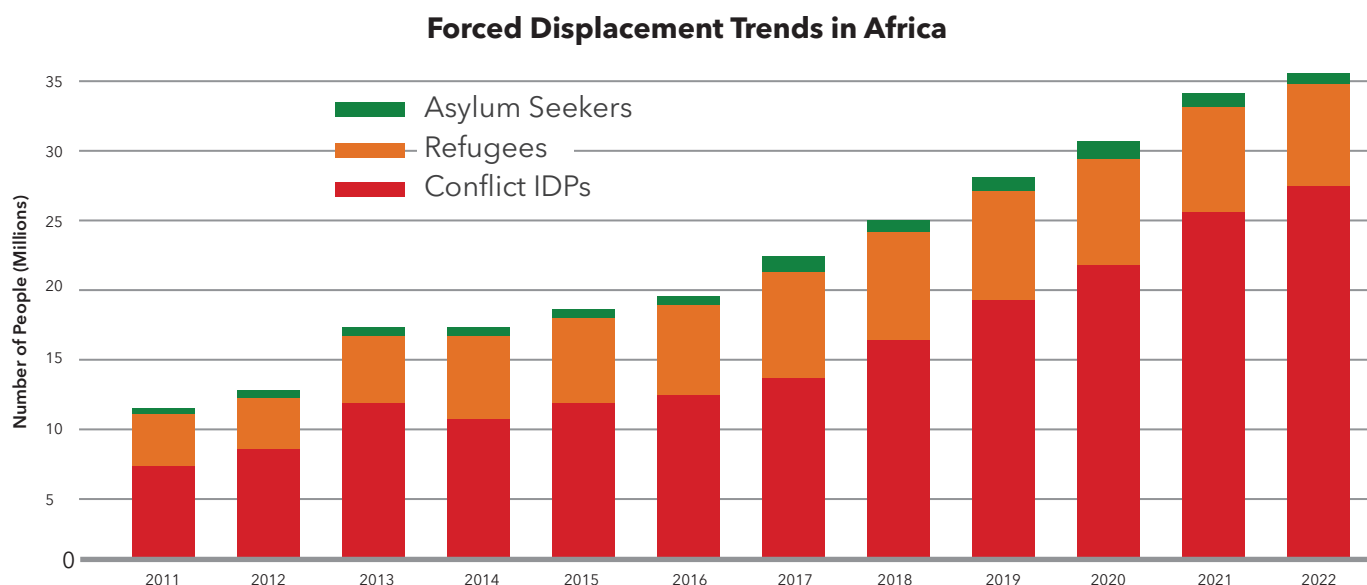


Figure 2: Trend of forced displacement in Africa [Adapted from Africa Center for Strategic Studies (2022)].

According to the IDMC (2023), sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East and North Africa, combined, had the highest numbers of IDPs in 2022 compared to the previous decade. While internal displacement is a global phenomenon, nearly three-quarters of the world's IDPs live in just 10 countries, including Nigeria (IDMC 2023). Others include Syria, Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ukraine, Colombia, Ethiopia, Yemen, Somalia, and Sudan (IDMC 2023). In these countries, disasters and conflict overlapped in 2022, prolonging IDPs' situation and displacing some for a second or third time. Figure 3 shows that IDPs constitute many of all displaced individuals in Africa, followed by refugees and asylum seekers (Africa Center for Strategic Studies 2022). As of 2022, there are about 31.7 million IDPs in Sub-Saharan Africa (representing 50.72% of global total); conflict and violence was the major cause of the internal displacement (displacing about 28 million individuals, representing 88.33% of total IDPs in Sub-Saharan Africa), followed by disaster, which displaced 3.7 million individuals (representing 11.67% of total IDPs in Sub-Saharan Africa) (IDMC 2023; UNHCR 2023). Developing nations often host the largest proportion of refugees, placing them in areas highly susceptible to natural disasters and degraded environments (Pollock et al. 2019).

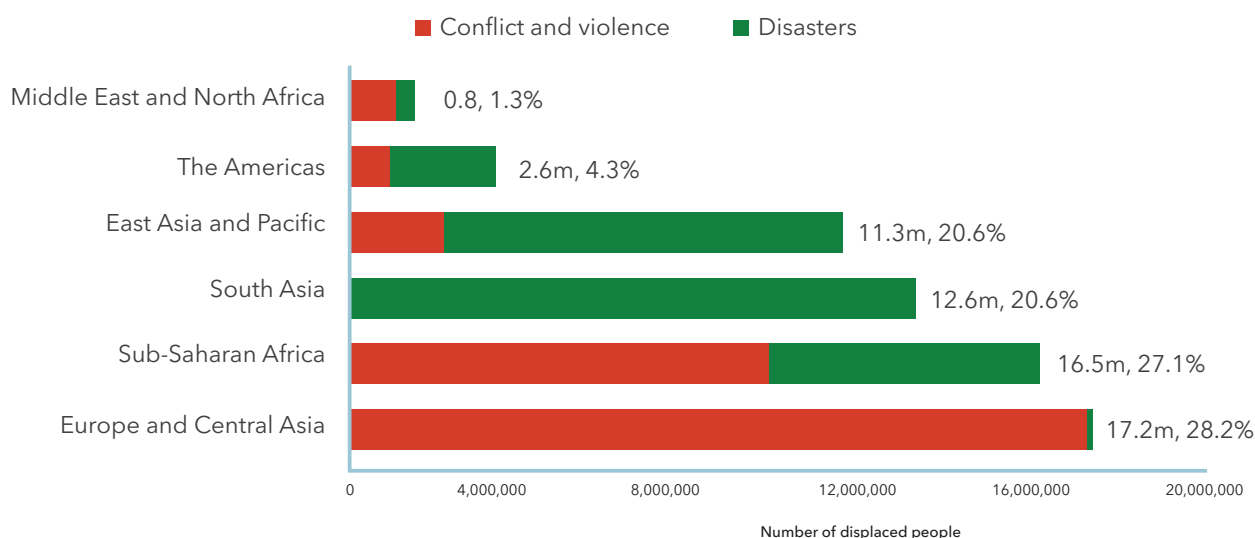


Figure 3: Number of internally displaced people by region and cause, 2022 (Source: Authors' diagram based on data from Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre's (IDMC 2023) Global Report.)

### 1.3 Nigeria's Internal Displacements and IDPs

The displacement figures for Nigeria from 2010 to 2022 illustrate the stark contrast between internal displacement and cross-border movement due to conflict (Figure 4). Initially, the lack of data for IDPs up to 2013 points to possible underreporting or data collection gaps. The emergence of over 1.18 million IDPs in 2014 could have been missed, because there is no common definition of the term IDP, and so the indicators used might have changed. While asylum seekers peaked in 2017, reflecting transient spikes in out-migration, the gradual increase in refugees from 2017 to 2022 indicates the enduring nature of displacement. The disproportionate rise in IDP figures, culminating in over 3.29 million by 2022, highlights an escalating internal humanitarian crisis. This trend calls for urgent and sustained intervention from Nigerian authorities and international partners, focusing on conflict resolution, humanitarian aid, and improved data collection to better understand and respond to displacement within Nigeria.

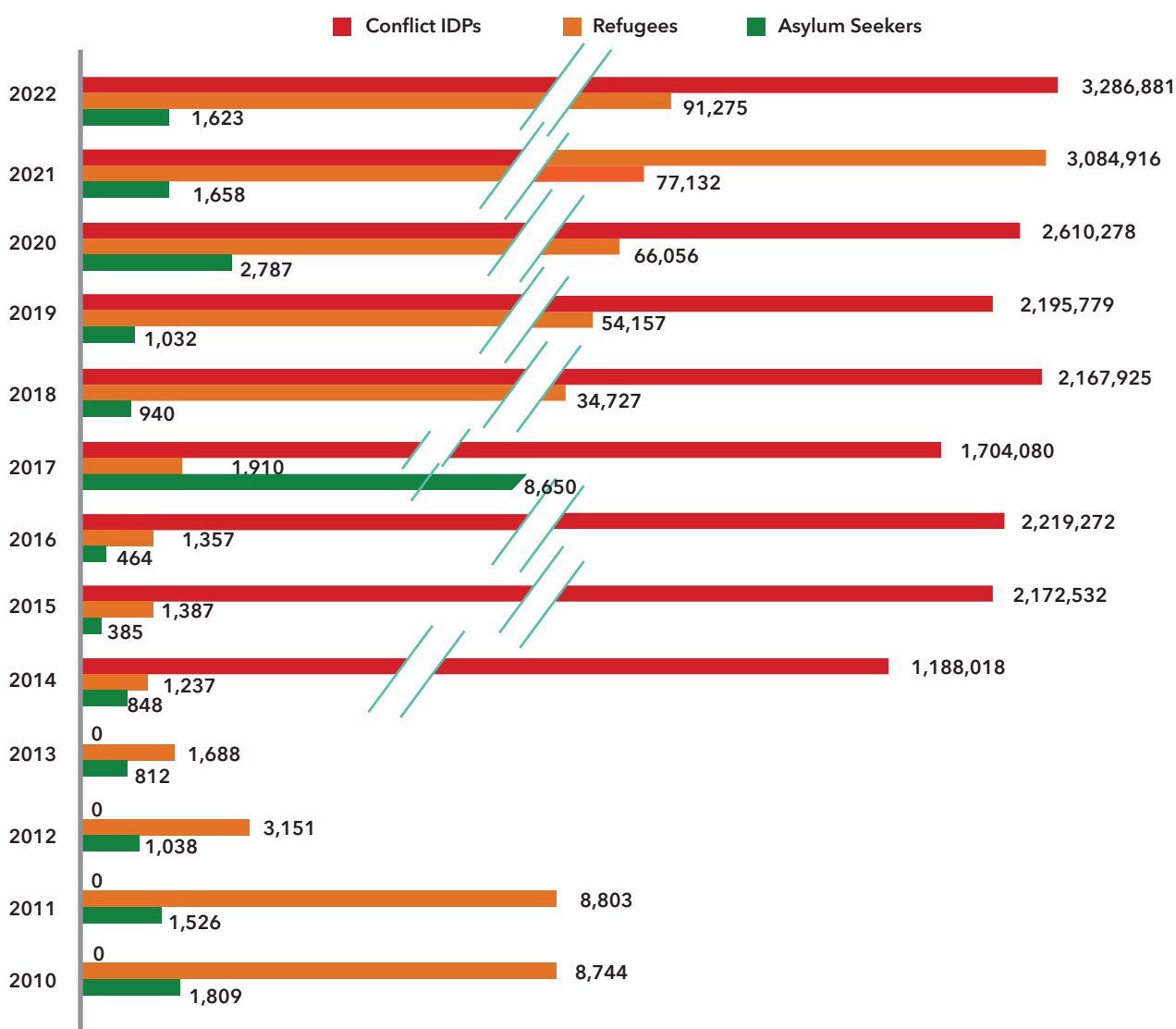


Figure 4: Trend of forced displacement in Nigeria, 2010-2022

**Note:** The UNHCR's statistics report that the Conflict IDPs population includes only conflict-generated IDPs to whom the Office extends protection and/or assistance (Source: Authors' compilation using UNHCR Refugee Data Finder database)

Nigeria's northeastern region, epitomizes the IDP crisis International Organization for Migration (IOM 2023a) with a total of 3,455,429 IDPs in the Northeast, Northwest, and Northcentral regions of the country as of January 2023 (Figure 5). It has one of the highest numbers of IDPs in Africa, largely due to insurgency, communal clashes, and environmental issues. IDPs in Nigeria face numerous challenges, from immediate concerns of safety and shelter to long-term stresses like loss of livelihoods and social disintegration. These challenges are compounded by the often-limited

resources and support available to them, both from government and humanitarian organizations. Figure 6 shows the evolution of IDPs and returnees in Nigeria.

Humanitarian needs are exacerbated by climate shocks, which generate increasingly severe damage. Climate change is causing an increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme hydrometeorological events, as noted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC 2021). With a projected increase in global warming in the short, medium and long-term under current commitments to global greenhouse gas reduction, climate-induced extreme events will become more frequent with increasingly severe impacts resulting in a growing number of people, including refugees and IDPs.

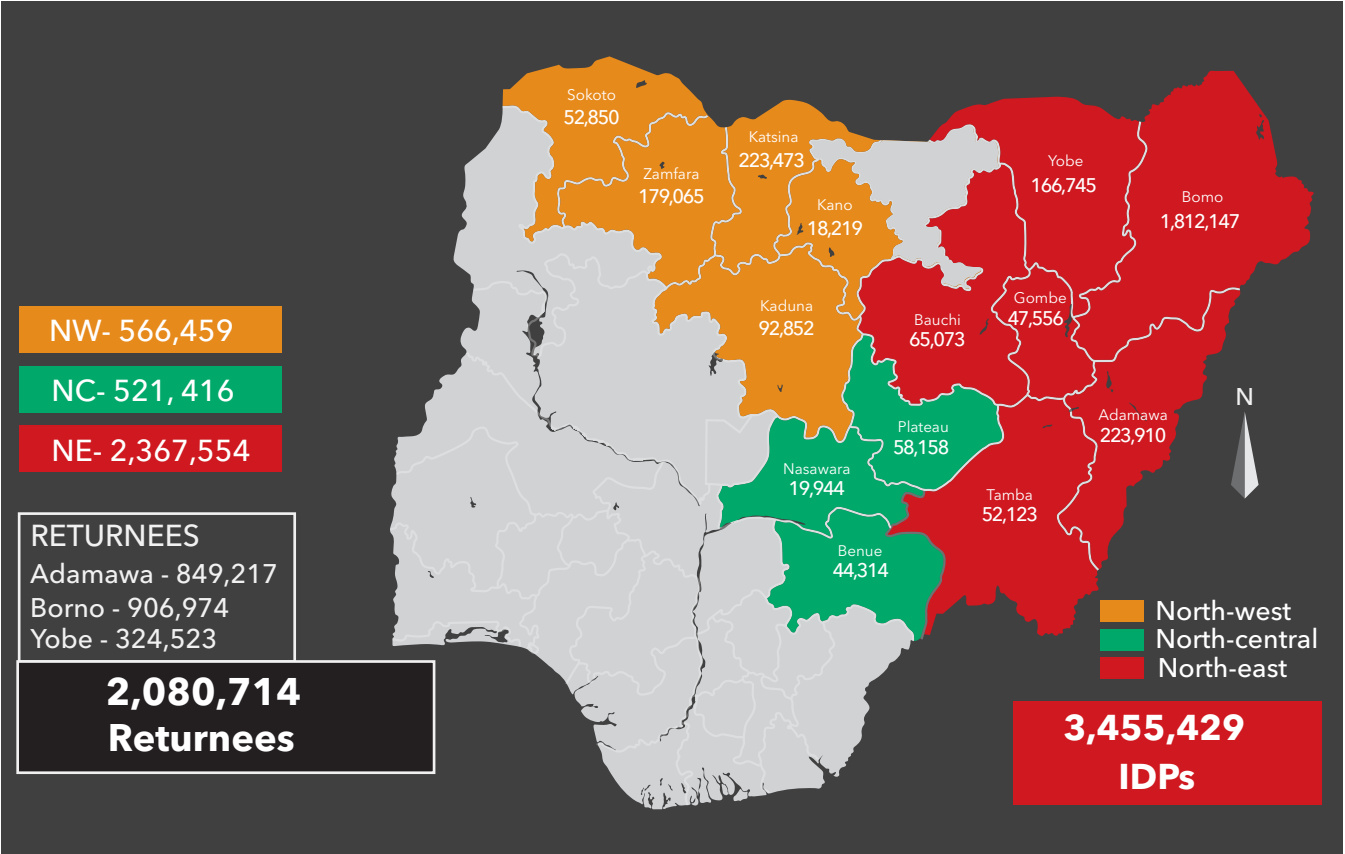


Figure 5: Map of displacement in North Central, Northeast, and North West regions of Nigeria, end of 2022 [Source: IOM (2023a)]

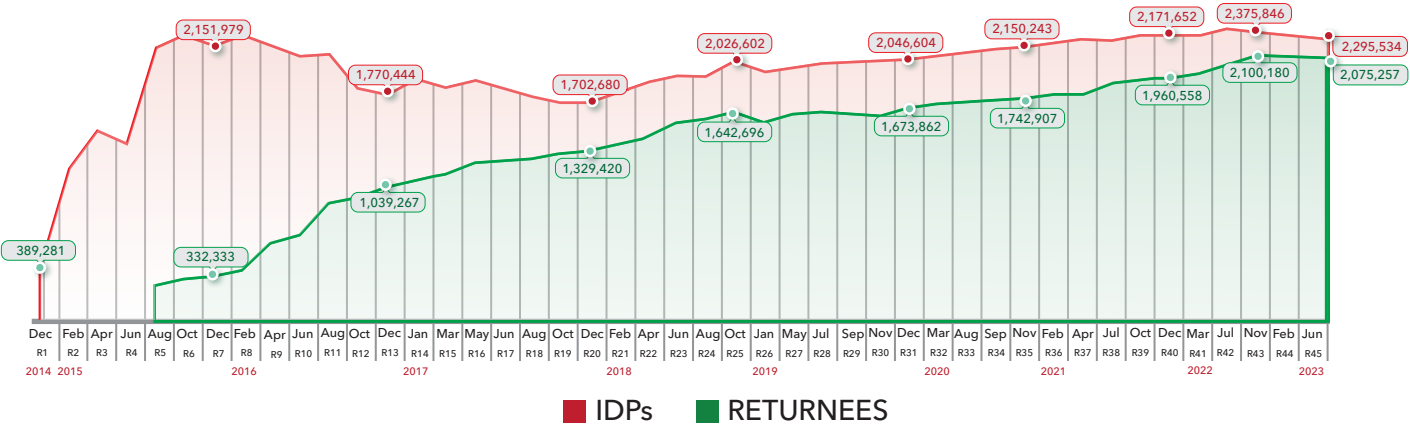


Figure 6: Evolution of IDPs and returnees over time in Nigeria [Source: IOM (2023b)].

In the fragile and conflict-prone North-East Nigeria, 95% of the IDPs are linked to insurgency in 2022 (IOM 2023b). Activities of Boko Haram and other non-state armed groups triggered significant displacement in Nigeria's north-east region since 2009 (Olowojolu and Ettang 2021) with 87% of IDPs in the region were forced to flee their locations of origin between 2014 to 2020 (IOM 2022a). IDPs faced greater vulnerability and often experience an acute scarcity of access to essential services such as education, healthcare, clothing, shelter, food, and water. According to IOM (2023a) there are 2,367,554 IDPs in the North-East zone of Nigeria alone. Communal clashes were reported as a reason for displacement by five per cent of IDPs. A few cases of natural disasters, flood, banditry, and farmers-herders clashes resulted in less than one percent of the displacement (IOM 2022a).

## 2. IDP Situation in Adamawa State

Adamawa State has been a focal point for displacements. Conflict and violence have led to sustained displacements (Badeson and Chatharal 2022). After Borno, Adamawa State hosts the second highest number of IDPs in the North-East Nigeria. According to the IOM (2022a; 2023c), there were 223,910 IDPs in Adamawa State in 2022 (Figure 7, top left panel). About 70% of the IDPs originate from within Adamawa State while 30% are from neighbouring states. For IDPs originating from neighbouring states, Borno state accounted for 29% while Yobe state 1%. There is a higher number of females (120,365) than males (103,545), showing that more women were displaced than men. This gender disparity is critical as it suggests women may face additional challenges and risks, emphasizing the need for tailored humanitarian interventions.

The primary causes of displacement are deeply troubling, with insurgency leading to the displacement of 90,510 females and 75,977 males as of 2022 (Figure 7, below left panel). Communal clashes and natural disasters follow, affecting tens of thousands as at 2022. These reasons underscore the turbulent circumstances under which these people have had to leave their homes, with insurgency pointing to a larger, more systemic regional stability and security issue that needs addressing.

Most IDPs (108,802 females and 93,628 males) are dispersed in host communities (Figure 6, top right panel). Similarly, regarding the type of settlements, a significant number of IDPs (99,745 females and 85,548 males) live with host community families– (Figure 7, below right panel). This indicates that most displaced individuals rely on existing social structures and personal networks for shelter and support. This large number could burden the host communities and potentially strain available resources. Other forms of settlements, such as planned campsites and dispersed settlements, also house thousands, indicating a variety of living conditions for IDPs.

The age breakdown of IDPs reveals that displacement affects all age groups. Notably, there are 25,012 female and 21,418 male youths between 13 to 17 years old, and 45,988 female and 39,015 male adults between 18 to 59 years old, the largest age displaced age category (Figure A1 in the Annex). These are critical age ranges for education and workforce participation, hinting at long-term impacts on the community's development and economic prospects.

A look at the distribution across local government areas (LGAs) shows that displacement is widespread. Michika, with 23,570 IDPs, Numan with 25,255, and Yola South with 25,004 are among the most affected (Table A1 in the Annex). These numbers reflect the scale of the crisis and the geographic spread.

A total of 193,914 IDPs arrived at their current location before the year 2021, which covers the period from 2014 to 2020. This large number indicates a long-standing issue of displacement in the State, due to prolonged conflict, instability, or recurring natural disasters. In 2021, there were 14,854 arrivals, followed by a slightly higher figure of 15,142 in 2022. The increase in the number of IDPs in 2022, albeit small, suggests that the factors causing displacement have not only persisted but may have

intensified or expanded. The findings demand a robust response from all humanitarian actors, indicating an urgent need for assistance that covers not just immediate relief but also long-term support for education, psychological assistance, livelihood development, and gender-specific programs.



**Photo:** An internally displaced persons (IDP) camp on the outskirts of Maiduguri, northeast Nigeria (*credit: Akintunde Akinleye/Reuters*)  
 [Source: [www.cfr.org/blog/humanitarian-crisis-you-havent-heard-about](https://www.cfr.org/blog/humanitarian-crisis-you-havent-heard-about)]



**Figure 7:**IDP characteristics in Adamawa State, 2022  
 [Source: Authors’ figure using IOM data (IOM 2022a; IOM 2023c; IOM 2023d)]

### Insurgency and natural

As earlier noted, the insurgency-linked internal displacement in the North-East region, and Adamawa state in particular, is linked to the Boko haram non-state armed group’s activities. Moreover, the prevalence of natural hazards affecting IDPs is overwhelmingly skewed towards flooding, constituting 64.8% of the risk, followed by storms at 34.3%, and fire at a minimal 1% (Figure 8, top left panel). This distribution indicates that water-related natural disasters are the predominant concern, necessitating focused disaster management and mitigation strategies, particularly in flood-prone areas.

### Nutrition and education services

When examining access to essential services, the disparity becomes stark. Only 18% of the population of state, reports having access to safe nutrition services, underscoring a severe deficiency that requires immediate attention, particularly for vulnerable groups such as women, adolescents, and those with disabilities (Figure 8, top right panel). Conversely, access to education seems to be well-facilitated, with 93% of children from displaced households (HHs) having access to formal or informal education (Figure 8, below left panel). This is a positive sign, suggesting that despite displacement, the continuity of education is largely maintained, offering a semblance of stability for displaced children.

### Coping Mechanisms

Coping mechanisms employed such as, migration and non-farm livelihoods by displaced HHs are indicative of the rural and agrarian context of the state. A vast majority rely on farming (82.4%), with daily labor (9.4%) and agro-pastoralism (3.7%) also being significant (Figure 8, below right panel). These activities reflect a reliance on natural resources and traditional livelihoods, which may be at risk due to the natural disasters that cause displacement. The minimal reliance on activities such as fishing and pastoralism suggests a limited diversification of income sources, which could be problematic in times of environmental or economic stress.

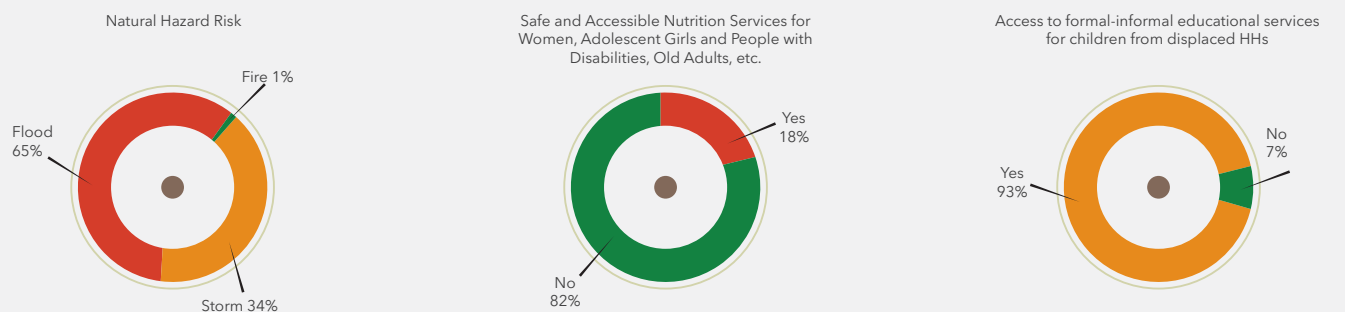
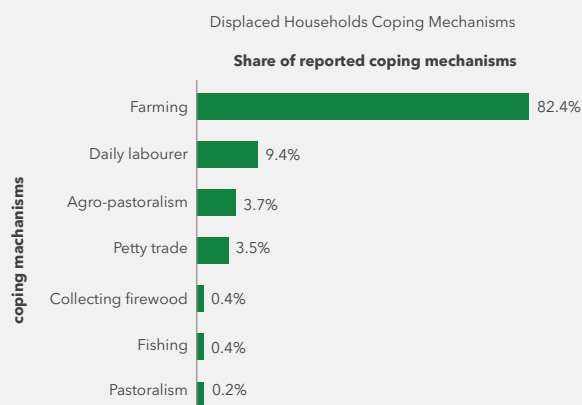


Figure 8:IDP situation in Adamawa state, 2022  
Note: HH means households  
[Source: Author’s figure using IOM data (IOM 2022a; IOM 2023c)]



The impacts of internal displacement come in different directions and magnitudes affecting the social, economic, and environmental spheres of life. Internal displacement impacts the livelihoods, education, health, security, social life, environment and access to housing and infrastructure of displaced people, their hosts and the people they leave behind. As of 2016, the Boko Haram insurgency was the greatest single cause of displacements in the Lake Chad Basin with over 2.5 million people leaving their homes and becoming refugees and IDPs (Beltramo and Rossiasco 2016). Competition over production resources may contribute to tensions between host communities and IDPs or even between different groups of IDPs (Kamta et al. 2020). Regarding the impacts of internal migration, a few studies clarified its negative impact on residents' employment and wages (Kleemans and Magruder 2017). An investigation of the nature of the relationships between IDPs and host communities in Maiduguri was carried out and it was established that there is potential for tensions or conflict may erupt between the two groups (Kamta and Scheffran 2022). This impact is equally found to manifest in the decay of infrastructure, socio-economic instability, increases in crime rate in such communities and so on (Badeson and Zaphania 2020). For example, according to OCHA (2022a), inter-communal conflicts between farmers from Guyuk and Lamurde LGAs resulted in over 30 fatalities and over 500 damaged or destroyed dwellings between 6 and 9 June 2022. The violence originated from a dispute over who owned the farmland that bordered the neighboring LGAs. The State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) reports that more than 10,000 residents of the communities of Lafiya, Boshkiri, Mumseri, Mere, Kupte, and Zakawon were forced to flee (OCHA 2022a).

Some of the reasons for IDPs and their negative impacts could be linked to weak recognition by officials that a particular displacement situation exists but might also extend to a lack of understanding of its scope, causes, triggers, patterns, and impacts. However, according to Magalhães et al. (2021) addressing the plight of IDPs requires political and changing the calculus of incentives such that there is a reason to take responsibility for displacement, or at least for relieving its impacts. The power of civil society to insist on programs agenda that include internal displacement can be seen in several cases. In El Salvador, Mexico and Uganda for instance, reporting and documentation of displacement helped to get displacement onto the political agenda (UNDP 2021). In Uganda, the Refugee Law Project has been working since 1999 with a mission to empower all who are affected by forced migration—IDPs, refugees, asylum seekers, deportees, and host communities—to enjoy their human rights and lead dignified lives .

## 2.1 Flooding and Internally Displaced Persons in Northeast Nigeria

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), (2021) reports that frequent and severe floods, droughts, and storms make up nearly 90 percent of global natural hazards. Climate variability and extreme weather events, such as unpredictable precipitation, temperature fluctuations, flooding,

and drought, pose significant challenges to food production, livelihoods, and food security in sub-Saharan Africa (Onyeneke et al. 2023a; Onyeneke et al. 2022). Developing countries, such as Nigeria, with limited coping strategies, are more severely affected by climate variability and change compared to developed nations (Onyeneke and Madukwe, 2010; Onyeneke 2021; Onyeneke et al. 2021; Onyeneke et al. 2023b).

Nigeria, which has been grappling with an over 12-year-long conflict with Boko Haram, is home to approximately 3.455 million IDPs (IOM 2023a; Adeboye 2021). The lack of proper planning for camps and their swift establishment without consider climate risks can exacerbate vulnerabilities of the displaced population. In 2022, severe floods affected over 4.4 million people, displacing 2.4 million, damaging 174,000 houses and causing over 660 casualties in Nigeria (OCHA 2022b). Perennial flooding is increasingly affecting numerous states in Nigeria (OCHA 2022b; OCHA 2022c) and the impact was especially severe on IDPs, with floods damaging six camps housing approximately 15,618 people in Borno State alone (IOM 2022b).

The climate crisis compounds other factors like conflicts and economic downturns, leading to severe food crises (Balana et al. 2023; Tarif 2022). Among other climatic variables, floods, tend to be more severe as a driver of displacement in Nigeria (OCHA 2022a; OCHA 2022b; OCHA 2022c; UNICEF 2023; OCHA 2023). Violent conflicts like the Boko Haram insurgency and herder-farmer conflicts further disrupt agriculture and food supply chains, worsening food insecurity, water scarcity and malnutrition (Baliki et al. 2018; Adelaja and George, 2019; Kamta et al. 2020; George and Adelaja 2022).

The northeastern states of Nigeria, facing prolonged climatic shocks and insecurity, are in dire straits. Recent years have seen a significant increase in flooding in states like Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe. In 2022, these states experienced severe floods that affected many people (OCHA 2022d). Adamawa State faced significant flooding, affecting around 260,000 people and submerging approximately 1,000 km<sup>2</sup> of land in October 2022 (REACH Initiative 2022). Also, the flooding in Adamawa State, which was reported by IOM (2023e) in October 2023 led to large-scale displacement, with 5,189 HHs affected. The IOM (2023e) further reported that 29,864 individuals were affected comprising of 5,839 men, 6,656 women and 17,369 children now residing in temporary settlements across several LGAs. Tragically, 275 casualties were recorded, and 120 shelters were damaged (IOM 2023e). In 2022, flooding in 34 of Nigeria's 36 states following the rainy season caused loss of life, injuries, and extensive damage to infrastructure, property, and agricultural land in Nigeria, severely impacting livelihoods and food security (OCHA 2022c). displaced 2.5 million people. Of those displaced and in need of humanitarian assistance, more than 60% were children. The floods resulted in over 600 fatality and destroyed more than 200 000 homes. In Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states, 7,485 cases of cholera and 319 associated deaths were reported by October 2022 (UNICEF 2022). About 11 million people in these states and other regions around the Lake Chad basin require humanitarian aid in 2022 due to the ongoing conflict spreading to areas around Lake Chad (OCHA 2022e).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.refugeelawproject.org/>

## 2.2 Economic Impact of Internal Displacement

The increase in the global population has had a significant impact on the global food system. Currently, approximately 30% of the global population, mostly from developing countries, faces food insecurity (WFP & UNEP, 2023). Internal displacement exacerbates food insecurity in the world (IDMC 2022). Although, there is no comprehensive data on food security and internal displacement, however about 75% of countries where food security assessments were carried out had IDPs, and five countries – Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, Yemen, Ethiopia and Afghanistan – had the highest level of acute food insecurity in 2022, and more than 26 million IDPs (over one-third of the global total) live in these countries (IDMC 2023).

Internal displacement affects the displaced individuals, their host communities, and those left behind in various ways (IDMC 2018; IDMC 2022). Displaced individuals face diverse vulnerabilities, including mental health challenges, trauma, disrupted social networks, limited access to education and housing opportunities, and family separation, which limit their ability to cope with climate-related hazards. Research indicates that displaced individuals are more susceptible to secondary displacement caused by disasters than those who have not experienced displacement (UNHCR 2015). People displaced by conflict often settle in high-risk areas prone to disaster-induced displacement due to hydrometeorological hazards (Easton-Calabria et al. 2022).

Displacement imposes a substantial economic burden on individuals, communities, and nations (IDMC 2018). The economic impact of internal displacement in 2021 was about \$21 billion (IDMC 2022). This number includes cost of providing support for the IDPs for their housing, education, health, security, and account for loss of their income for one year (IDMC 2022). Internal displacement affects various sectors such as agriculture, education, environment, health, infrastructure and housing, livelihoods, security and social life. Understanding these complexities is essential for designing effective strategies to mitigate the impact of climate-related disasters on displaced populations.

## 2.3 Food, Land, and Water-Related Stresses (FLWSs) in Host Communities

The large number of IDPs/refugees negatively affects and host communities in low-income countries (Schneiderheinze and Lücke 2020; Ibáñez et al. 2022; George and Adelaja 2022). Research conducted in Adamawa State highlights the substantial impact of IDPs on host communities, leading to deteriorating infrastructure, socio-economic instability, and increased crime rates in these areas (Badeson and Chatharal 2022). Overcrowded camps and settlements with limited access to food, water and sanitation facilities can increase the risk of malnutrition and transmission of communicable diseases like malaria, cholera, and bacterial and diarrheal illnesses. In countries like Afghanistan, Nepal and Iraq, inadequate water supply and sanitation worsen the challenges faced by displaced populations (IDMC 2010; Refugee Studies Centre University of Oxford 2014). In Afghanistan, wells have dried up due to humanitarian organizations consuming more water than is available to meet IDPs' needs (UN Environment/OCHA Joint Unit 2017). In Kenya, 17 percent of deaths among displaced under-five children in Kenya were caused by malnutrition (Feikin et al., 2010). Also, displaced people can destabilize host communities directly through participation in attacks (Lischer 2006; Itumo and Nwobashi 2016).

The consequences of a substantial, unexpected, and poorly managed increase in population can severely damage the environment, leading to various documented issues such as soil erosion, forest degradation, loss of biodiversity and increased waste and pollution (IDMC 2018; Musa et al. 2019; Kamta and Scheffran 2022; Daramola 2022). Research shows that displaced individuals worldwide used energy equivalent to 3.9 million tonnes of oil in 2014, primarily sourced from firewood and charcoal accounting for about 26,000 hectares of forest annually (IDMC 2018; Lehne et al. 2016). IDPs contribute to deforestation in their host communities through lumbering, fetching of firewood to meet their household energy needs and selling firewood and charcoal in the IDP camps and local markets (Musa et al. 2019; Daramola 2022). Notably, emergency shelters built for IDPs in Haiti led to

the depletion of approximately five percent of the country's forest cover (UN Environment/OCHA Joint Unit 2017).

IDPs often lack access to farmland for cultivation, making them unproductive and worsening issues related to food security and unemployment in the affected country (Itumo and Nwobashi 2016). Furthermore, the unsustainable livelihood practices of displaced individuals impact host communities, such as in northern Cameroon, where the establishment of a refugee camp reduced local grazing areas, affect the indigenous population (Brangeon and Bolivard 2017).



**Photo:** A woman using a hoe to till rows of dry soil in a rural agricultural field (Photo Credit: Dominique Rollin/IWMI)

### 3. Anticipatory Action for Internally Displaced Persons and Host Communities

Governments, development and humanitarian organizations play an influential role in improving the conditions facing IDPs, but a short-term/short-sighted approach to humanitarian assistance in camps, can have unfavorable effects, including reduced risk reduction and preparedness for disasters. In such context, the urgency of Anticipatory Action (AA) remains a priority. AA is a set of actions taken to prevent or mitigate potential disaster impacts before a shock or before acute impacts are felt. It is increasingly recognized as a key solution to reducing the impacts of climate change and extreme weather events (IFRC 2022). AA approaches that take into account the long-term needs of communities, resilience building and sustainable livelihoods can mitigate the impact of climate change and extreme weather events” (Schindler et al. 2023: vii). This concept embodies proactive measures, initiated in anticipation of potential disasters, based on accurate forecasts and early warning systems (Pichon 2019; Schindler et al. 2023). In regions like Adamawa State, Nigeria, where the confluence of conflicts, environmental challenges, and natural disasters has led to significant forced displacement and continuously compounding vulnerabilities in affected communities over time, AA emerges as a transformative approach in the realm of humanitarian response.

AA utilizes risk analysis and climate services to forecast potential crisis locations and enable actions to prevent or mitigate effects before disasters occur (de la Poterie et al. 2023). AA, primarily driven by humanitarian actors, predefines actions and triggers, automatically allocating humanitarian support when thresholds are met. This approach not only preserves human dignity and saves lives but also makes economic sense, safeguarding livelihoods, food security, and nutritional conditions by taking preventive measures before disasters strike (FAO, WFP 2023). Protection of lives and livelihoods, improvement of aid efficacy, maintenance of dignity, and fortification of vulnerable populations' resilience are the goals of AA. Developing AA systems fosters a more proactive way to DRR, expedited funding and response, and improves collaboration among partners (de la Poterie et al. 2023; Schindler et al. 2023). It takes various forms, dimensions, and scales depending on the targeted people and organizations developing the AA system (Levine et al. 2020; Anticipatory Action Hub 2022). AA works best if the following are agreed in advance: the roles of different stakeholders and the type of action to be taken; the type and projection of the hazard as well as the benchmark that would be used to trigger the actions; and the finance (amount and source) to implement the actions (Anticipatory Action Hub 2022). Early warning system or risk analysis with carefully defined triggers, action plans that have already been prepared, a thorough operational implementation strategy, and funds that are set aside and ready to be released as soon as the triggers are among critical requirements for AA (de la Poterie et al. 2023) (Figure 9).

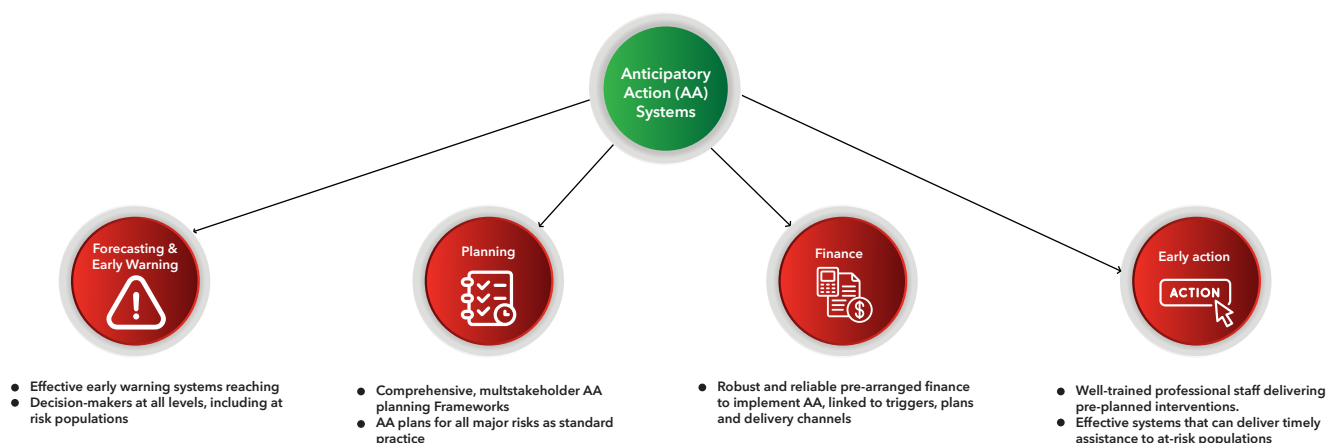


Figure 9: An AA system and its components  
[Source: Authors' figure, based on Schindler et al. (n.d.)]

AA not only mitigates the immediate effects of shocks but also addresses the root causes of poverty, food insecurity, and vulnerability to disasters. It is essential to reinforce and complement long-term investments in social protection, resilience building, and DRR to tackle these underlying issues (FAO, WFP 2023).

According to the Global Report on Food Crises 2023, 58 countries and territories experienced food crises in 2022, impacting nearly a quarter of a billion people suffering from acute hunger (Food Security Information Network & Global Network Against Food Crises 2023). Emphasizing AA as a key strategy can significantly contribute to minimizing the impact of crises and ensuring timely aid delivery to those in need.

Governments and humanitarian organizations provide support to those affected by climate shocks, including essential services, food assistance, temporary housing, and increasingly, one-time financial transfers (Ferraro and Simorangkir 2020; Pople et al. 2021). However, most humanitarian assistance focuses on post-shock situations, emphasizing the need for proactive measures to enhance household readiness and reduce long-term catastrophic effects. Anticipatory measures, when effectively implemented, can reduce susceptibility and enhance household resilience, enabling better preparation and response to climate shocks (de Perez et al. 2022; Gros et al. 2022). This requires addressing several challenges to the design and implementation of AA. These challenges include developing a robust insight into underlying vulnerability of the target community, potential secondary hazards, sustainability of funding and policy frameworks that support AA (Schindler et al. 2023).

## 4. Conclusion

The literature review examines the situation of IDPs in Adamawa State, Nigeria, amidst the broader context of global internal displacement. The key drivers of displacement in this region are identified as conflict, particularly due to insurgency activities, as well as natural disasters, with flooding being a significant factor. This displacement has led to various challenges for IDPs, including safety, shelter, loss of livelihoods, and social disintegration.

The report notes a distinct gendered aspect to displacement in Adamawa State, with a higher number of displaced females, which calls for gender-specific humanitarian interventions. A significant portion of IDPs reside within host communities rather than in camps, placing a substantial burden on these communities. The primary livelihoods of these displaced populations hinge on farming and traditional activities, underscoring their vulnerability to further environmental and economic disruptions.

Insurgency-related displacement, driven primarily by Boko Haram, and the prevalence of natural disasters such as flooding are highlighted as key issues necessitating focused disaster management and mitigation strategies. The access to essential services such as nutrition and education varies, with significant gaps in nutrition services but relatively better access to education for children from displaced HHs.

The report also recognizes the implementation of AA as a proactive measure in disaster response and the development of the Integrated Host Community Vulnerability Framework (HCVF) to address the vulnerabilities of communities hosting IDPs. These approaches are crucial in mitigating the impacts of displacement and supporting the resilience of both displaced persons and host communities.

In conclusion, the report emphasizes the need for robust and targeted interventions to address the immediate and long-term needs of IDPs and host communities in Adamawa State. Targeting interventions on building better social relationships between IDPs and host communities are needed since many of the IDPs live with host community members. Further interventions should focus on enhanced disaster management, long-term support for education, psychological assistance, livelihood development, and gender-specific programs, as well as proactive strategies like AA to anticipate and mitigate the vulnerabilities that could be perpetuated by future displacement scenarios.

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# Annex 1: IDP Demographics

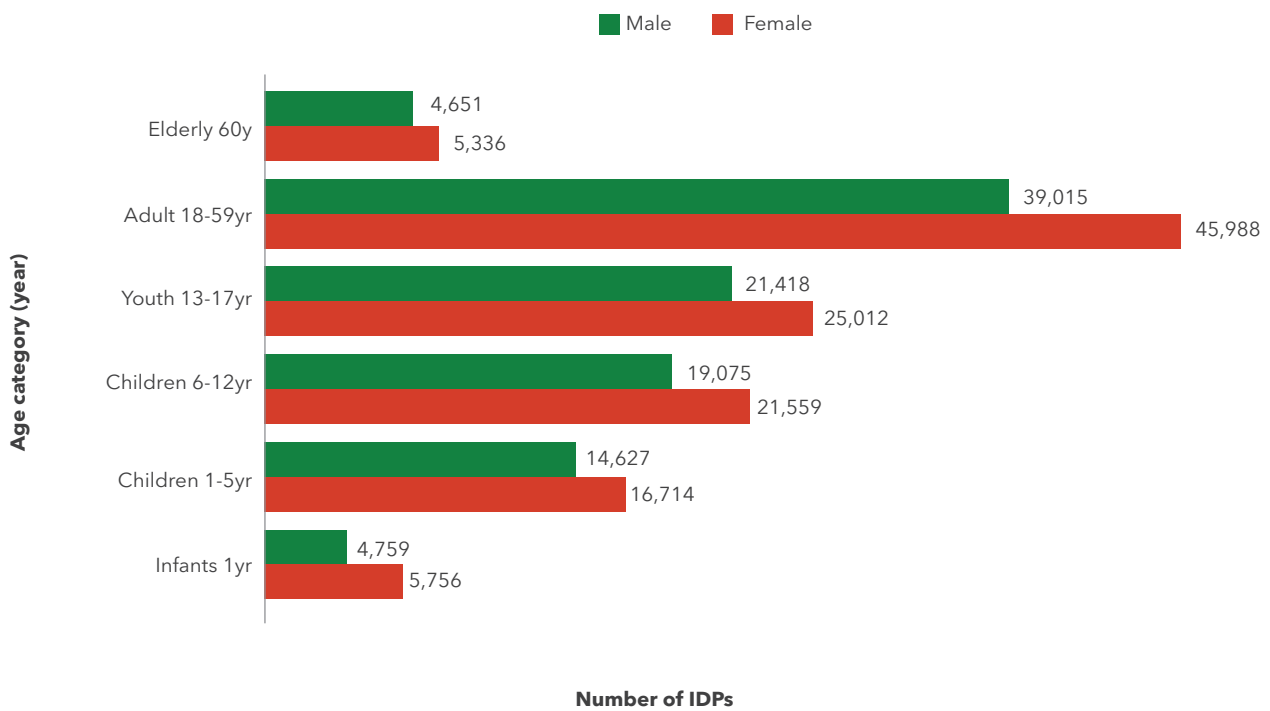


Figure A1: IDPs number by age category, 2022  
[Source: Authors' figure using IOM data (IOM 2022a)]

**Table A1. IDPs number by Local Government Area (LGA), 2022**

| LGA                | Female         | Male           | Total          |
|--------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Demsa              | 9,031          | 8,885          | 17,916         |
| Fufore             | 4,492          | 4,004          | 8,496          |
| Ganye              | 356            | 317            | 673            |
| Girei              | 10,907         | 9,738          | 20,645         |
| Gombi              | 2,306          | 1,725          | 4,031          |
| Guyuk              | 3,532          | 3,230          | 6,762          |
| Hong               | 2,904          | 2,381          | 5,285          |
| Jada               | 234            | 204            | 438            |
| Lamurde            | 3,122          | 2,860          | 5,982          |
| Madagali           | 9,273          | 8,460          | 17,733         |
| Maiha              | 8,836          | 8,149          | 16,985         |
| Mayo-Belwa         | 741            | 518            | 1,259          |
| Michika            | 13,808         | 9,762          | 23,570         |
| Mubi North         | 6,603          | 6,427          | 13,030         |
| Mubi South         | 3,672          | 3,434          | 7,106          |
| Numan              | 13,303         | 11,952         | 25,255         |
| Shelleng           | 6,191          | 4,267          | 10,458         |
| Song               | 1,103          | 1,081          | 2,184          |
| Toungo             | 310            | 271            | 581            |
| Yola North         | 6,073          | 4,444          | 10,517         |
| Yola South         | 13,568         | 11,436         | 25,004         |
| <b>Grand Total</b> | <b>120,365</b> | <b>103,545</b> | <b>223,910</b> |

(Source: Authors' compilation using IOM data)

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