

**WITHIN AND BEYOND BORDERS:
TRACKING DISPLACEMENT IN THE LAKE CHAD BASIN**

Regional Displacement and Human Mobility Analysis
Displacement Tracking Matrix

March 2019



INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION (IOM)

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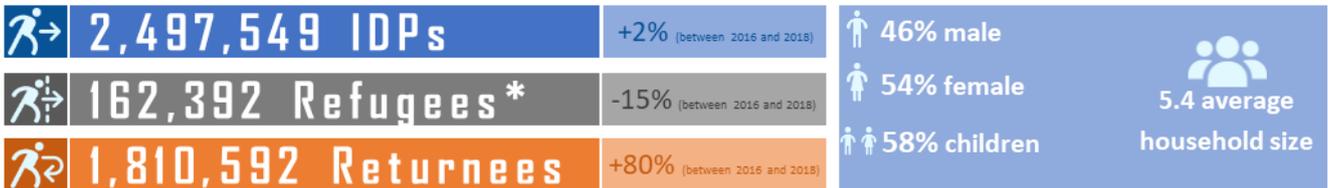
International Organization for Migration,
Regional Office for West and Central Africa,
Dakar, Senegal
RODakarEPCTeam@iom.int

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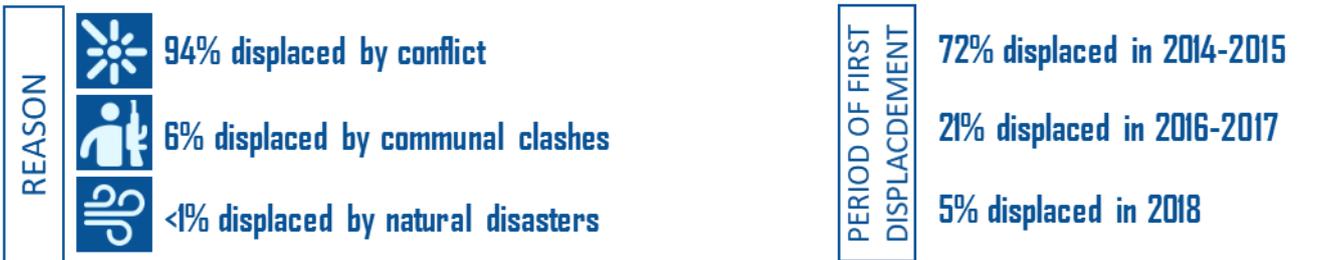
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ENGLISH - Regional Displacement and Human Mobility Analysis – Key Figures from 2018

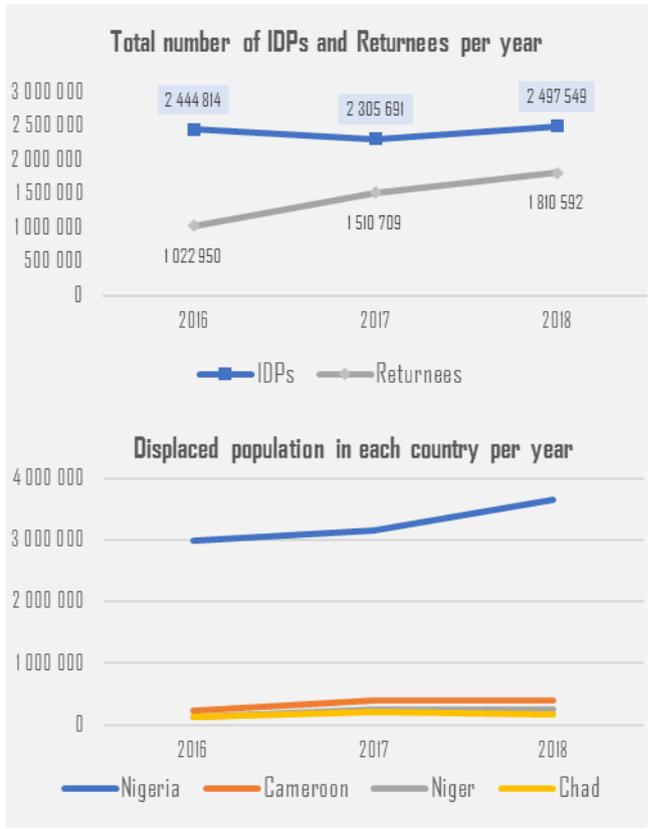
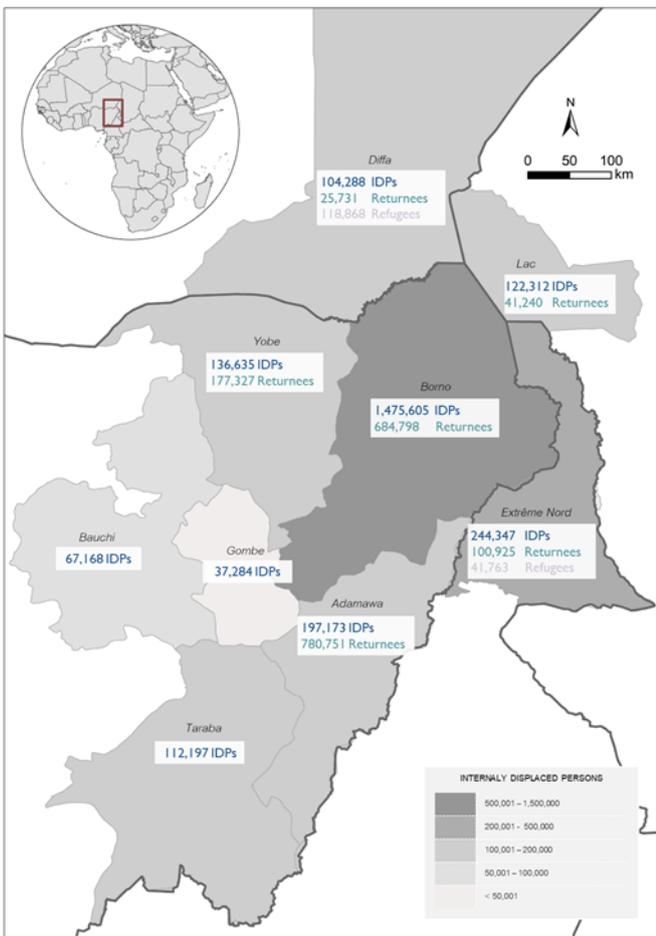
The four countries of the Lake Chad Basin (Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria) are currently affected by a protracted crisis resulting from a complex interaction of factors, including conflict with Non-State Armed Groups, poverty, underdevelopment and a changing climate. The crisis started in Northeastern Nigeria in 2009, and spread to the other countries of the Basin in 2014, generating substantial displacements of population and causing grave humanitarian concerns. This report, which primarily rests on data collected through IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), presents the evolution of the numbers, locations, characteristics and profiles of displaced populations between 2016 and 2018.



* Identified by DTM. This number does not reflect the total number of refugees in the regions affected by the Lake Chad Basin Crisis.



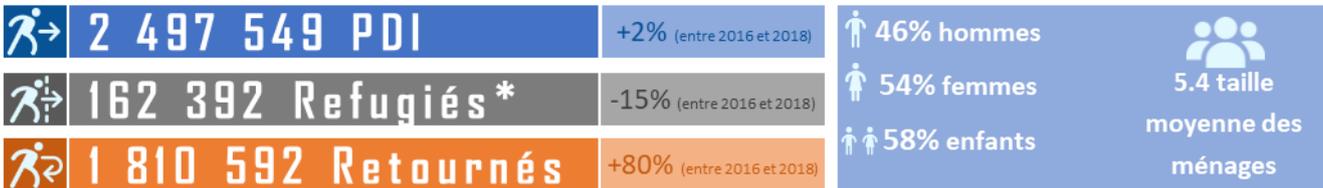
COUNTRIES	NIGERIA	CAMEROON	NIGER	CHAD
	2,026,602 IDPs	244,347 IDPs	104,288 IDPs	122,312 IDPs
	1,642,696 Ret.	100,925 Ret.	118,868 Ret.	25,731 Ret.



Contact: IOM Regional Office – Dakar
RO Dakar - DOE Team <rodakarepcteam@iom.int>

FRANCAIS - Analyse des déplacements et mobilités régionales – Chiffres clés pour 2018

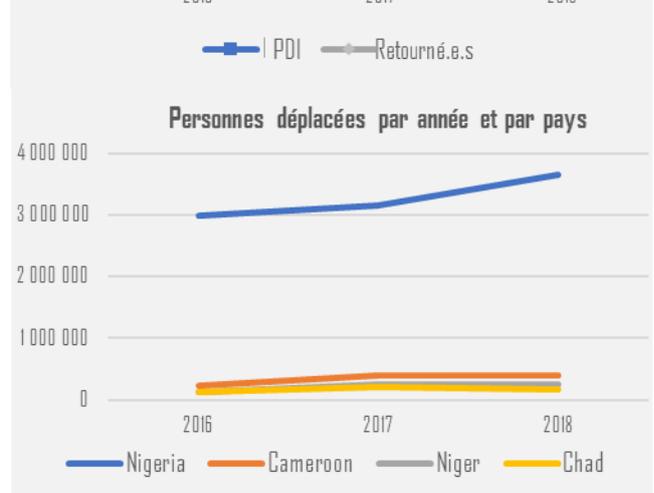
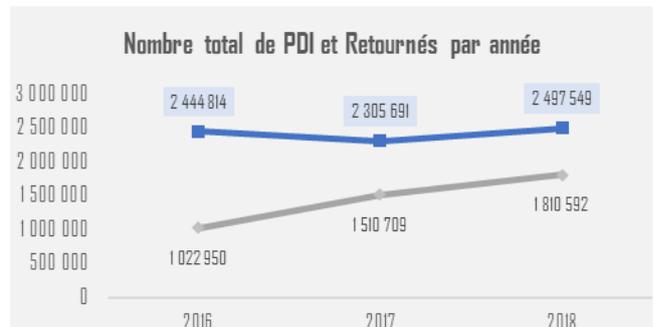
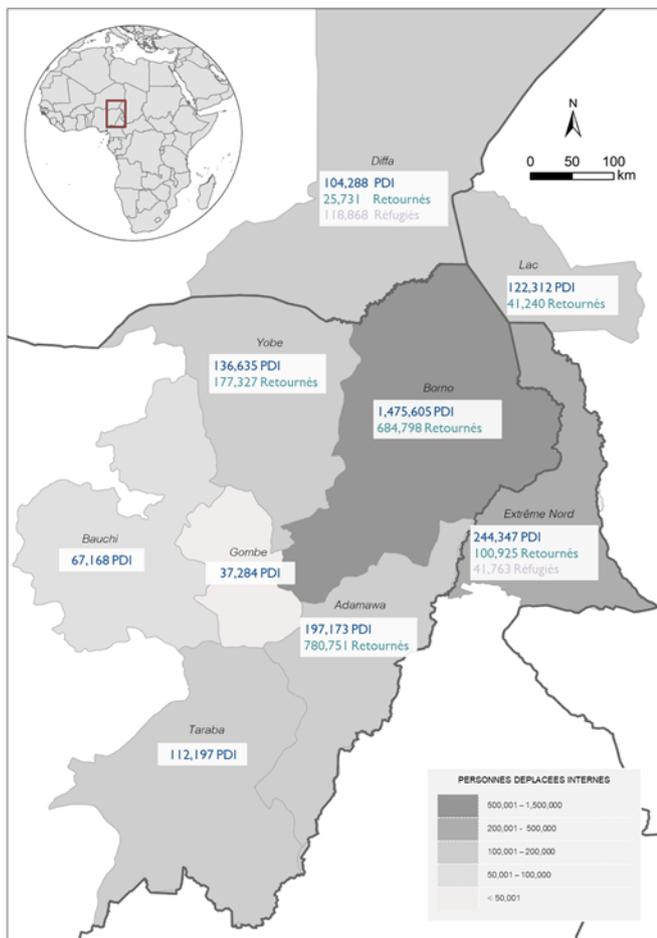
Les quatre pays du bassin du Lac Tchad (Cameroun, Tchad, Niger, Nigéria) sont actuellement en proie à une crise prolongée qui résulte d'une interaction complexe de plusieurs facteurs parmi lesquels le conflit face à un groupe armée, la pauvreté, le sous-développement et le changement climatique. Cette crise a débuté dans le Nord-Est du Nigeria en 2009 avant de s'étendre aux autres pays du bassin en 2014 générant d'importants déplacements de population et besoins humanitaires. Ce rapport, qui repose principalement sur des données collectées par la Matrice de Suivi des Déplacements (DTM) de l'OIM, présente l'évolution des données, des localisations, des caractéristiques et des profils des personnes déplacées internes.



* Identifiés par la DTM. Ce chiffre ne reflète pas le nombre total de réfugiés dans les régions affectées par la crise du bassin du lac Tchad.



PAYS	NIGERIA	CAMEROUN	NIGER	TCHAD
	2 026 602 PDI	244 347 PDI	104 288 PDI	122 312 PDI
	1 642 696 Ret.	100 925 Ret.	118 868 Ret.	25 731 Ret.



INTRODUCTION

The analysis of data, trends and patterns related to human mobility is key to the provision of relevant and targeted humanitarian assistance. Humanitarian and development actors require information on the location and composition of the affected population in order to deliver services and respond to needs in a timely manner. To address response challenges based on a better understanding of human mobility, IOM has gradually improved the **Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM)**, an information management system which regularly **captures, processes and disseminates multi-layered information** on the **mobility, locations, vulnerabilities and needs** of displaced populations throughout the course of a crisis. Its defining role is the collection and provision of primary data and information regarding displacement and human mobility, both in country and at the regional and global level.

In response to the need for accurate and up-to-date information on displacement and human mobility **resulting from the highly complex interactions between violence generated by Non-State Armed Groups (Boko Haram, The Islamic State of West Africa Province), communal clashes and climate change in the Lake Chad basin**, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) activated its Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) in Nigeria in July 2014, Chad in January 2015, and Cameroon in November 2015. In all three countries, DTM plays a key role in informing humanitarian and government actors about the location, number and profile of displacement affected populations, and thereby enables a targeted humanitarian response.

The Lake Chad Basin Crisis affects some of the world's poorest and most vulnerable people. Stretching across Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger and Chad, it is a complex humanitarian crisis with multiple causes. Although the violence generated by Non-State Armed Groups remains the main driver of displacement by large numbers, climate change is inevitably exacerbating tensions in the region and nourishes communal clashes and the conflict.

The aforementioned countries are affected by the crisis in similar manners. They are not only sharing similar root causes but are also impacted by changes that occur in other countries. As such, IOM deemed it important to compile the data, from a variety of different data collection exercises conducted in the sub-region, in order to compare the displacement trends in the concerned countries, improve the analysis of regional movements, facilitate the definition of regional strategies and actions, and highlight the different displacement and migration flows (especially internal and cross-border movements). The overall objective is to improve the understanding of displacement and human mobility flows in the sub-region in order to better inform the humanitarian response of governments, as well as humanitarian and development actors.

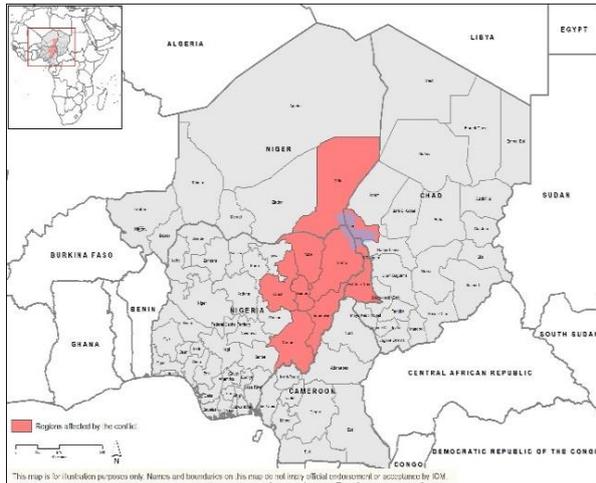
Information included in this report is primarily extracted from IOM DTM sources but also includes data collected by the Government of Niger. The population tracked by the DTM **in the regions affected by the crisis in the Lake Chad Basin in the three countries** (Cameroon, Chad, and Nigeria) represents 4,221,646 **individuals** (IDPs, refugees and returnees) in December 2018. Additional data collected by the government of Niger (DREC)¹ for the displaced population in Niger's Diffa region raises the total number of displaced individuals to 4,471,459.

The **IDP caseload** alone represents a total population of **2,497,549 individuals** in the four countries, more than the population of Slovenia (2.1 million). This population is displaced in an area of 702,356 km², which corresponds to the cumulative geographical area of France, Belgium, Switzerland, and Austria (in red on the maps below).

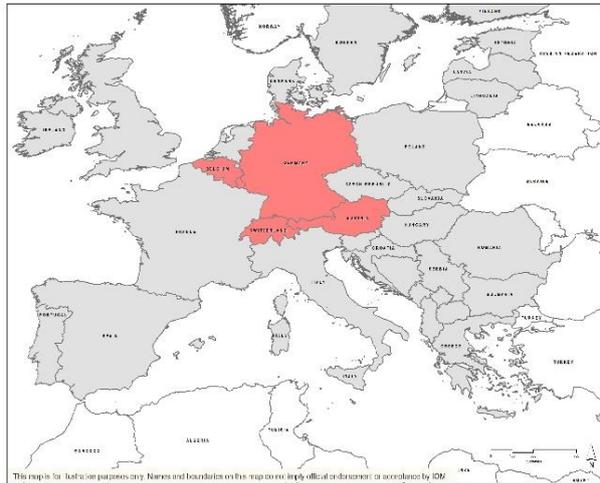
¹ Direction Regional de l'Etat Civil

Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria have a cumulative geographical area of 3,909,380 km² (World Bank, Land area), which approximately corresponds to the cumulative area of the European countries highlighted on the map below. Countries highlighted in red represent the area currently hosting displaced populations in the four Lake Chad Basin countries while grey areas represent the remaining non-affected area of the four Lake Chad Basin countries.

Map: Countries and regions affected by the conflict



Map: Comparative area if transposed to Europe



ACRONYMS

- ACLED: Armed Conflict and Location Event Data;
- DTM: Displacement Tracking Matrix;
- IDP: Internally Displaced Person;
- IOM: International Organization for Migration;
- LCBC: Lake Chad Basin Crisis;
- LGA: Local Government Areas;
- ROWCA: Regional Office for West and Central Africa;
- UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.
- WASH: Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

GLOSSARY

Categories of displacement and human mobility:

- **Internally Displaced Person (IDP)**: 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 State border (Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, UN Doc E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2.).
- **Refugee**: A person who, "owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinions, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country. (Art. 1(A)(2), Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, Art. 1A(2), 1951 as modified by the 1967 Protocol). In addition to the refugee definition in the 1951 Refugee Convention, Art. 1(2), 1969 Organization of African Unity (OAU) Convention defines a refugee as any person compelled to leave his or her country "owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of their country or origin or nationality."
- **Returnee**: In the framework of this report, returnees include former IDPs who returned to their locality of origin as well as refugees who returned to their country of origin from a foreign country in crisis. Even though returnees have returned to their areas of origin, they remain part of the displaced population until they have reached a durable solution to their plight.
- **Out of camp Refugee**: DTM Cameroon defines an out of camp refugee as a national of a country other than Cameroon (mainly Nigeria) who has found shelter in Cameroon but resides outside of Minawao camp and has not been registered.

Categories of displacement sites and locations:

- **Camp/Collective Settlement**: For the purpose of this report, "camps and collective settlements" are planned or spontaneous settlements, which can take the form of collective centers such as schools, existing buildings or temporary settlements and transit centers that arise outside of areas where there are established settlements.
- **Host community**: For the purpose of this report, "host community" refers to areas of displacement where displaced populations live in existing village or town structures or community, share homes with others such as friends or relatives, live in makeshift shelters constructed on available land in unfinished buildings or rent homes.

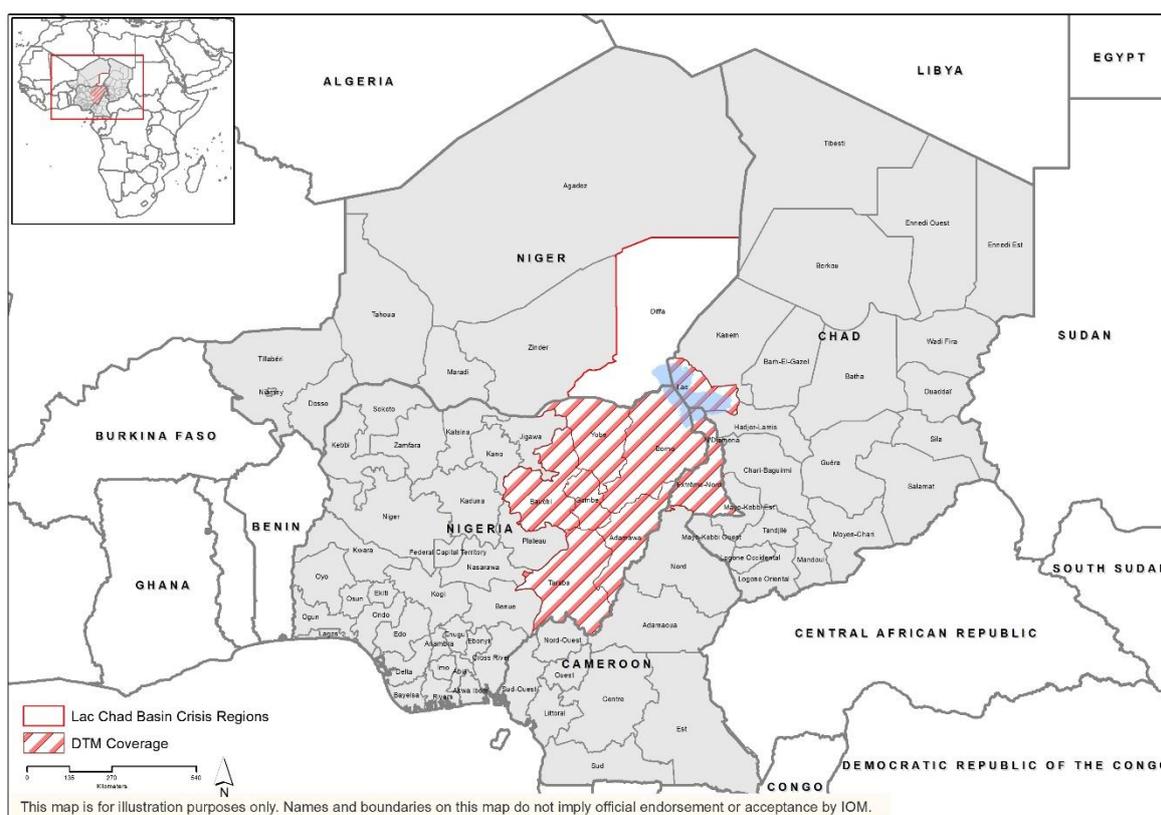
DTMs implemented in Cameroon, Chad and Nigeria use different location and shelter definitions that were designed based on the specifics of each country. As such, for analytical purposes, these location and shelter types were grouped in two categories: Host communities, and Camps / Collective Settlements.

METHODOLOGY

The following report is based on DTM data collected in Cameroon (September 2018), Chad (November 2018) and Nigeria (October 2018).

The data for the following analysis is collated from the three active DTM exercises and does not include in-camp refugees (not tracked by DTM). The individuals tracked are populations affected by displacement in the conflict affected areas of Cameroon, Chad and Nigeria. While Niger is part of the Lake Chad Basin and faces a similar crisis, its inclusion in this report is limited as the DTM is currently not implemented in the Diffa region; instead, information included in this report in regards to the Diffa region is based on data collected by the Government of Niger (as of 3 June 2018).

Map: Administrative divisions where the DTM is implemented



References to the four countries throughout this report **refer to the regions affected by the conflict**, i.e. the Far North region for Cameroon, the Lac region for Chad, the Northeast region (States of Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe) for Nigeria², and the Diffa region for Niger.

The data was collected through baseline and location/site assessments, which include interviews with key informants as well as visits to locations hosting displaced populations. In Chad, demographic data was collected at the household level through a demographic calculator with a representative sample of 8,816 households.

² Displaced populations originating from the LCB crisis are also residing in other States but DTM assessments are currently conducted in the six most affected States only.

CONTEXT

Before the conflict and the humanitarian emergency, there was thriving cross-border trade in agricultural produce, fish, as well as other goods and commodities across the Lake Chad region. The region acted as a trading hub offering economic opportunities and resources which those living around the Lake took advantage. Hence, the region is marked with a long history of migration. Borders were not perceived as a barrier but rather a point of exchange. Cross-border movements were traditionally undertaken for economic and educational purposes, to find grazing land, to find a spouse and to visit or settle with family, or communities of the same ethnic group. Migration patterns changed when climate change started to severely impact livelihood opportunities in the region and violence committed by Non-State Armed Groups increased.

The region is marked by low socio-economic development indicators, low levels of education, high levels of poverty, low levels of national integration and perceived and actual marginalisation.³ The violence has disproportionately affected borderlands and caused the temporary closure of borders, resulting in the restriction of border trade and migration movements primarily caused by those fleeing violence. An estimated 26 million people are affected by violence related to the on-going hostilities in the Lake Chad Basin.⁴

Northeastern Nigeria has been experiencing insecurity since 2009, with the violence causing a humanitarian crisis since the beginning of 2014. The violence between all parties intensified and expanded to neighboring countries including Cameroon, Chad and Niger. Following the escalation in violence, a Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), a coalition of forces from Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria, was activated in 2015 to fight the Non-State Armed Groups in the four affected countries. National and MNJTF military operations resulted in a significant loss of territory for the Non-State Armed Groups. However, the military operations also triggered unexpected displacements to insecure areas, mainly in Nigeria. These areas of displacement are often hard to reach for humanitarian actors. Furthermore, sudden withdrawal of military forces from certain locations have resulted in increased security concerns for civilians and displaced populations.

Since 2015, activities of Non-State Armed Groups and associated fatalities have decreased, but they still remain active and deadly. More activities have involved remote violence such as female suicide bombers, and battles with the Nigerian government, rather than violence against civilians. Between January and September 2018, especially in the border region of the Borno State, Non-State Armed Groups have demonstrated the ability to challenge the military in combat in both rural and urban areas.⁵

From June 2011 through June 2018, ACLED (Armed Conflict and Location Event Data) identified 3,346 incidents in which 43,261 people were killed.⁶ Alongside the deadly attacks, local populations live in volatile and insecure conditions, fleeing homes to look for safer places in their own or neighboring areas, state capitals, different parts of their countries and to other countries. 17.2 million people are living in the affected areas, and almost 4.5 **million persons (IDPs, refugees, asylum seekers and returnees) are displaced** across Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon and Chad,⁷ resulting in a major displacement crisis in the region.

³ Adelphi (2018), *Climate Change, Peace and Security in the Lake Chad Basin - Findings from the "Lake Chad Climate - Fragility Risk Assessment Project"*

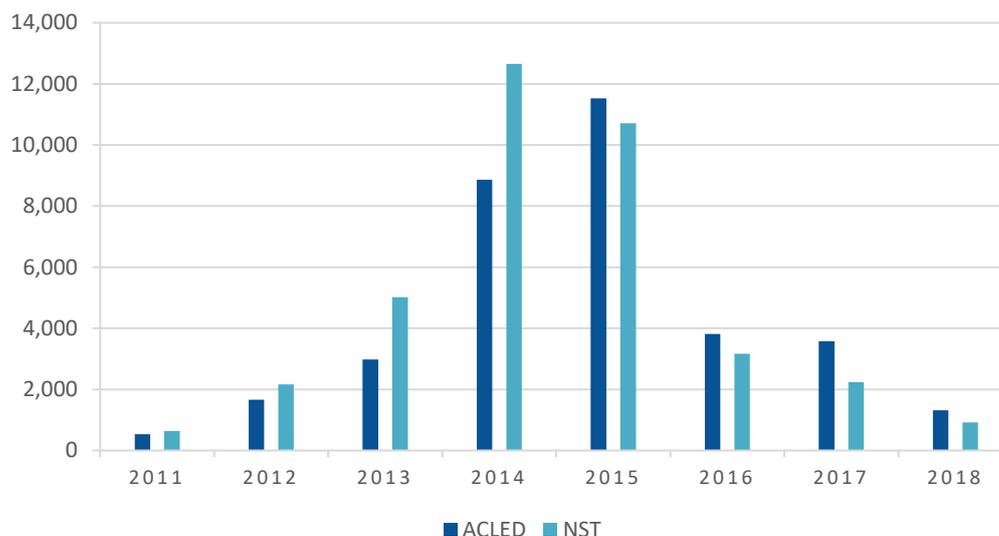
⁴ Zenn, J. (2018), *Boko Haram's Backyard: The Ongoing Battle in Cameroon*. Terrorism Monitor Volume: 16 Issue: 6

⁵ ACLED (2018), *Boko Harams deadly persistence* (1 January 2011 - 31 August 2018)

⁶ Idem

⁷ DTM of Cameroon (September 2018), Chad (November 2018), and Nigeria (October 2018); Government of Niger, DREC/MISP/ Niger (June 2018)

Graph: Total Deaths in incidents involving Boko Haram



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In addition to the fighting between security forces, pro-government militias and armed opposition groups, conflict over natural resources between occupational groups such as farmers, pastoralists, fisher folk and hunters, has been exacerbated by reductions in arable land, grazing routes, changing rainfall patterns affecting crop yields and cattle health, military restrictions, security concerns and scarcity of water.⁹

As a result of the conflict, ethnic, religious and social tensions increased remarkably, partly due to the impact on the economy. Inter-communal tensions and heightened violence regarding access to resources has led to the emergence of stigmatization and rivalry over the control of economic activities and land ownership. With time, the consequences of the conflict affected relations between IDPs and host communities as people have exhausted their own resources to host displaced populations, leaving them and their families in vulnerable economic positions. In recent years, the Lake Chad region has become the setting of the world’s most complex humanitarian disaster, devastated by converging scourges of climate change, violent extremism, food insecurity, population explosion, disease, poverty, weak statehood and corruption. The combination of these elements demonstrates the multidimensionality and the high complexity of the Lake Chad Basin Crisis.¹⁰

In 2018, more than four years after the spike in violence, and despite the fact that many IDPs and refugees have started to return home (an estimated 1,810,592 individuals), the security situation still has a significant impact on the resilience of the affected populations. The conditions on the ground remain dire and the pervasive threat of violence hinders the ability of national and international aid organizations to provide humanitarian assistance and to look at broader development needs.

⁸ Campbell, J. and Harwood, A. (2018), *Boko Haram’s Deadly Impact*. Council on Foreign Relations. ACLED database available at: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1YkVJa9Rt-mk-g.TX8q3hzA0Fg-YPcrtv>

⁹ Adelphi (2018), *Climate-Fragility Profile: Lake Chad Basin*

¹⁰ Taub, B (2017), *Lake Chad: The World’s Most Complex Humanitarian Disaster*. The New Yorker

SITUATION OVERVIEW

Nigeria hosts the great majority of the identified affected population (82%). This may be explained by the fact that Non-State Armed Groups have been active in the Northeast of the country for much longer than in neighboring countries and the large number of people that live in this region. Nigeria is also the most affected country in terms of attacks and violence. In addition, Non-State Armed groups controlled large swathes of territory in Nigeria, which was not the case in the neighboring countries. Certain areas have been deserted and their entire population displaced in other areas that are considered safer.

The affected area in Nigeria is much larger and much more populated than other countries and hence, of the four countries affected, **Nigeria is experiencing the largest displacement**, with more than two million persons internally displaced in the North East across 6 states. The highest number of displaced households are located in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states, and the majority are living in host communities.¹¹ IDPs **oftentimes have limited or no basic services** and live in conditions that fail to meet the most basic standards.

In 2013, Non-State Armed Groups initiated operations in Cameroon in order to establish supply lines, equipping their fighters with arms from Cameroonian towns, and as a safe haven for retreat after a Nigerian state of emergency offensive earlier that year. The group was forced to abandon urban positions for the mountains and towns along the Cameroonian border and first battles with Cameroonian forces occurred as the military tried to prevent the Non-State Armed Group from crossing the border.¹²

As hostilities between security forces and Non-State Armed Groups enter their tenth year, the number of people in urgent need of assistance is growing rapidly. As of September 2018, an estimated 10.7 million individuals in the Lake Chad Basin Region highly depend on humanitarian assistance for their survival while only 7.8 million people are targeted by humanitarian actors.¹³ Despite the successes by the armed forces in regaining territory, another 800,000¹⁴ people are currently in areas beyond the reach of humanitarian aid.

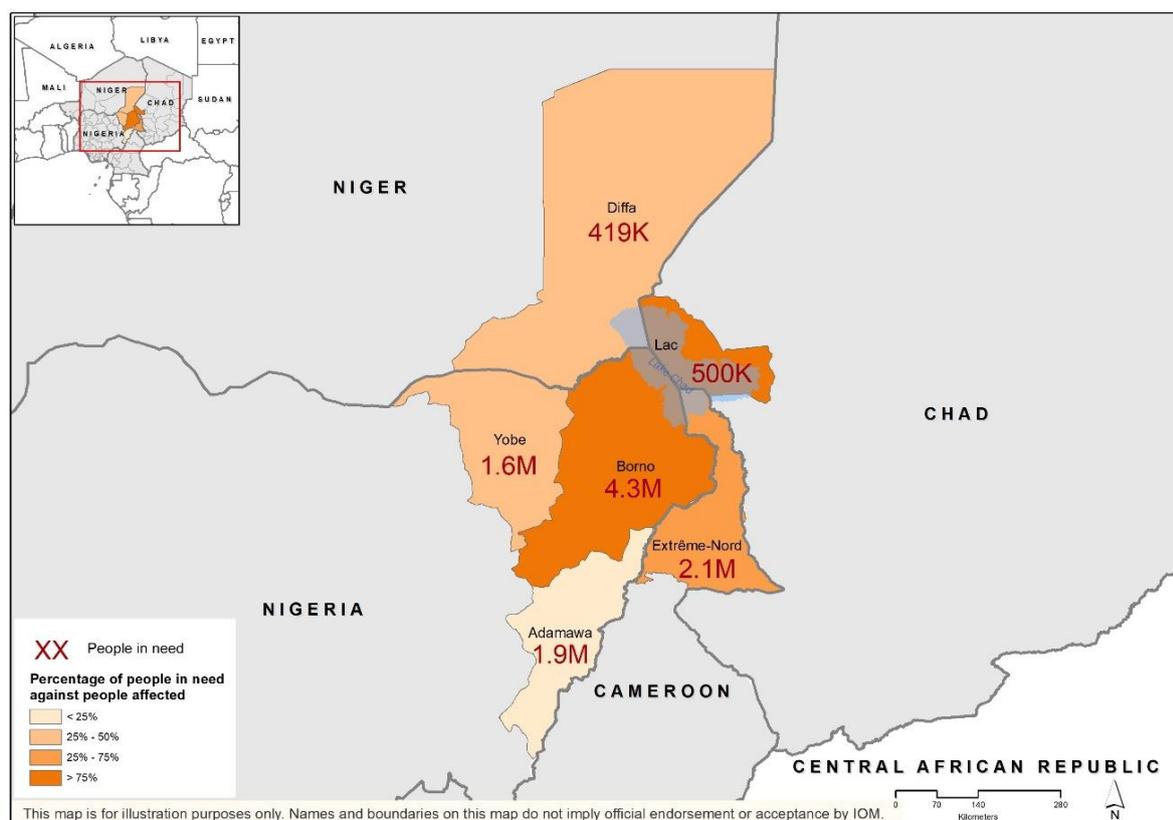
¹¹ IOM DTM Round 25 Nigeria

¹² Zenn, J. (2018), *Boko Haram's Backyard: The Ongoing Battle in Cameroon*. Terrorism Monitor Volume: 16 Issue: 6

¹³ OCHA (2018), *Lake Chad Basin: Crisis Update, No. 25*

¹⁴ The Guardian (2018), *Millions of people need urgent help to stave off famine in Lake Chad basin*

Map: People in need in affected areas



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Cameroon, Niger, and Chad are equally experiencing **high levels of displacement**, including hosting 231,504¹⁶ Nigerian refugees, as well as 638,843 IDPs and returnees.

Displacement dynamics are complex, characterized by multiple displacements, pendular movements (such as those returning to areas of origin to check on their assets/livelihoods, to carry out agricultural activities, etc.), forced returns, as well as the returns of refugees according to the Tripartite agreement signed in March 2017 between the governments Cameroon and Nigeria, and UNHCR. The agreement calls for safe, dignified, informed and voluntary returns from Cameroon to Nigeria.¹⁷ In addition, **the absence of identity documents** and **strong ethnic and family links** that span across borders and do not necessarily identify with a specific country, make the **categorization of displacement challenging**.

Ongoing violence has further aggravated the **weak economic development of the region**. Affected regions of all four countries were already experiencing high levels of poverty prior to the conflict, as well as underdevelopment, population growth, environmental degradation, and marginalization. The conflict has now exacerbated these conditions, causing **extensive damage to socio economic infrastructure**. The current situation, combined with the seasonal rainy season and ensuing flooding, exposes those displaced to serious **protection risks**. The rains are complicating aid access in Cameroon's Far North and malnutrition is surpassing the emergency threshold in Chad. The Lake Chad Basin is currently witnessing the worst cholera outbreak since 2010, with more than 35,000 cases and 845 deaths officially reported

¹⁵ OCHA (2018), *Lake Chad Basin: Crisis Update, No. 25*

¹⁶ UNHCR (2018), *Nigeria Situation*. Operational portal

¹⁷ UNHCR (2017), *Tripartite agreement for the voluntary repatriation of Nigerian refugees living in Cameroon between the government of the Republic of Cameroon, the government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and UNHCR*

between January and November 2018 in Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria.¹⁸

According to the World Bank, the economic impact of the crisis is substantial. In September 2017, infrastructure damages were reaching nearly 9 billion USD in Nigeria alone. The total need for recovery and peacebuilding across all areas of interventions is estimated to be 6.7 billion USD while infrastructure and social services interventions are estimated a total of 6 billion USD.¹⁹ As a comparison, the 2017 Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Nigeria was worth 375.77 billion USD, \$34.80 billion for Cameroon, \$9.98 billion for Chad, and \$8.12 billion for Niger.²⁰

High levels of insecurity, displacement, as well as security measures put in place in affected regions (such as closing of borders), have **severely and negatively impacted people's livelihoods**, primarily agriculture, fishing, animal husbandry, and transnational trade. This **economic disruption** has equally left millions in situations of acute food insecurity, prompting the Nigerian authorities to declare a food and nutrition emergency in Borno state, where 73 per cent of the internally displaced are located. As of July 2018, across the conflict-hit region, some 5 million people²¹ are food insecure. Parts of Chad and Niger have been hit by drought that has affected Sahel countries following poor rains in the 2017 season, leading to an early onset of the lean season.²² In the entire Sahel region, which includes the four countries of the Lake Chad Basin, an estimated total of 32.4 million persons are food insecure of which 10.8 million individuals are reaching emergency levels of food insecurity.²³



A displaced woman in Diffa, Niger

¹⁸ OCHA (2018), *Lake Chad Basin: Crisis Update, No. 25*

¹⁹ World Bank Group (2015), *Recovery and Peace Building Assessment – North East Nigeria – Volume I, Synthesis report*

²⁰ World Bank Group (2018), *GDP indicator*

²¹ OCHA (2018), *Lake Chad Basin: Crisis Overview (as of July 2018)*

²² *Idem*

²³ OCHA (2018), *Sahel: Overview of humanitarian needs and requirements*

MOVEMENT TRENDS: *A crisis within and without borders*

The crisis currently affecting the four countries of the Lake Chad Basin has triggered significant displacement of different population categories both within and across country boundaries. An estimated 4,471,459 individuals affected by the Lake Chad Basin Crisis in Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria have been identified by the DTM and the government of Niger. This population is made up of internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees and returnees, the three main displacement trends identified in the framework of the crisis. The population displaced within the boundaries of its own country makes up 56 per cent or 2,497,549 individuals of the total caseload tracked by DTM in the Lake Chad Basin (a 2% increase compared to the analysis in 2016). 40 per cent or 1,810,592 persons are returnees and 4 per cent or 162,392 individuals are out of camp refugees in Cameroon and refugees in Niger.

More refugees, however not tracked by DTM, are uprooted by the crisis in the Lake Chad Basin and are currently residing in Nigeria, Cameroon and Chad, but also in areas beyond the four countries mentioned in this report. According to UNHCR, Nigeria currently hosts an estimated 33,000 Cameroonian refugees and approximately 138,000 Nigerian refugees are presently residing in Cameroon. As mentioned in the table below, 42,000 of those Nigerian refugees in Cameroon are out-of-camp refugees and tracked by the DTM. Chad hosts an additional 15,000 Nigerian refugees stemming from the Lake Chad Basin Crisis.²⁴

Table: Populations identified by the IOM DTM and the Government of Niger by country and status

Population Type	Cameroon	Chad	Niger	Nigeria	Total	% of total
IDPs	244,347	122,312	104,288	2,026,602	2,497,549	55.9%
Returnees	100,925	41,240	25,731	1,642,696	1,810,592	40.5%
Refugees	41,763	1,761	118,868	/	162,392	3.6%
Asylum seekers	/	/	926 ²⁵	/	926	0%
Grand Total	387,035	165,313	249,813	3,669,298	4,471,459	100%
% of total	8.7%	3.7%	5.5%	82.1%	100%	

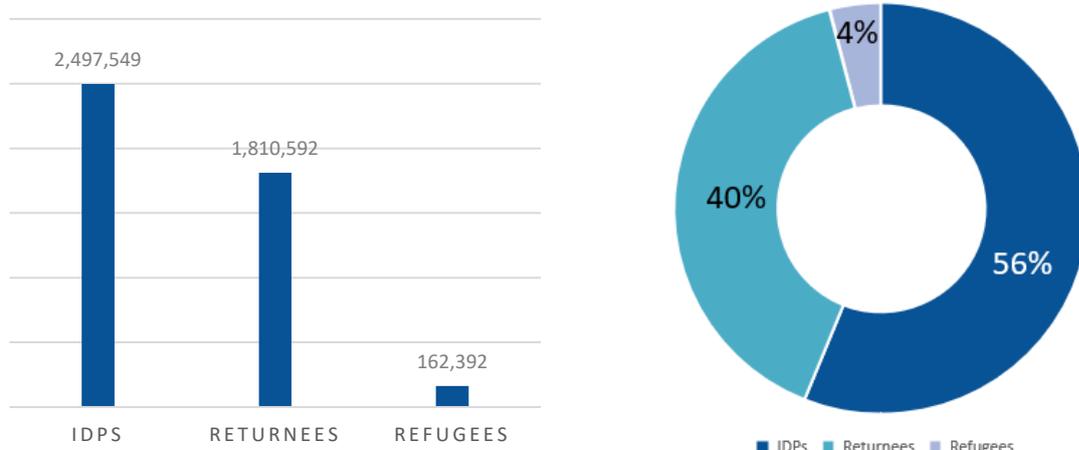
These numbers highlight that, despite close links between countries and cross-border issues, **most movements remain internal to the concerned countries**. This is explained by the fact that the Lake Chad Basin crisis can be described as a situation of localized violence and does not affect countries as a whole. Generally, refugee flows are greater in the face of state sponsored violence which is not the case in the Lake Chad Basin.²⁶ Displacement across borders, while rather limited in comparison with internal displacement, can be explained by the proximity of unsafe and safe areas on both sides of borders, particularly in borderlands with Nigeria, as well as family, religious and ethnic links in the sub-region.

²⁴ UNHCR – Operational Portal – Refugee Situations

²⁵ Asylum seekers are only counted in Niger because of the support provided by UNHCR in the collection of data.

²⁶ Moore, W. and Shellman, S. (2006), *Refugee or Internally Displaced Person? To Where Should One Flee?* SAGA

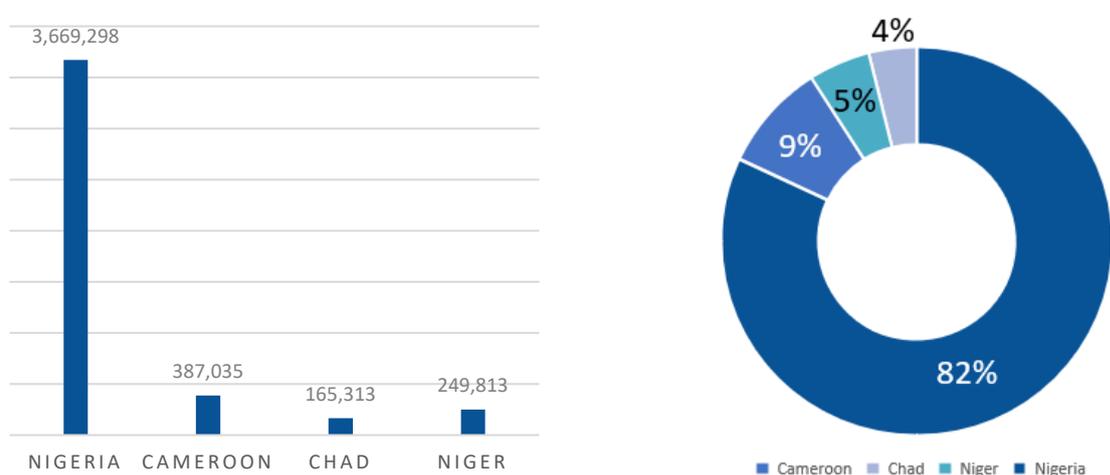
Graph: Breakdown by category of movement



Of the total affected population, 82 per cent (representing 3,669,298 individuals) are currently located in Nigeria, while 9 per cent are located in Cameroon (387,035 individuals), 5 per cent in Niger (249,813 individuals) and 4 per cent in Chad (165,313 individuals). **Compared to the previous regional analysis in 2016, the total number of displaced individuals has increased by 22 per cent or 812,733 individuals. The breakdown per country has remained similar.**

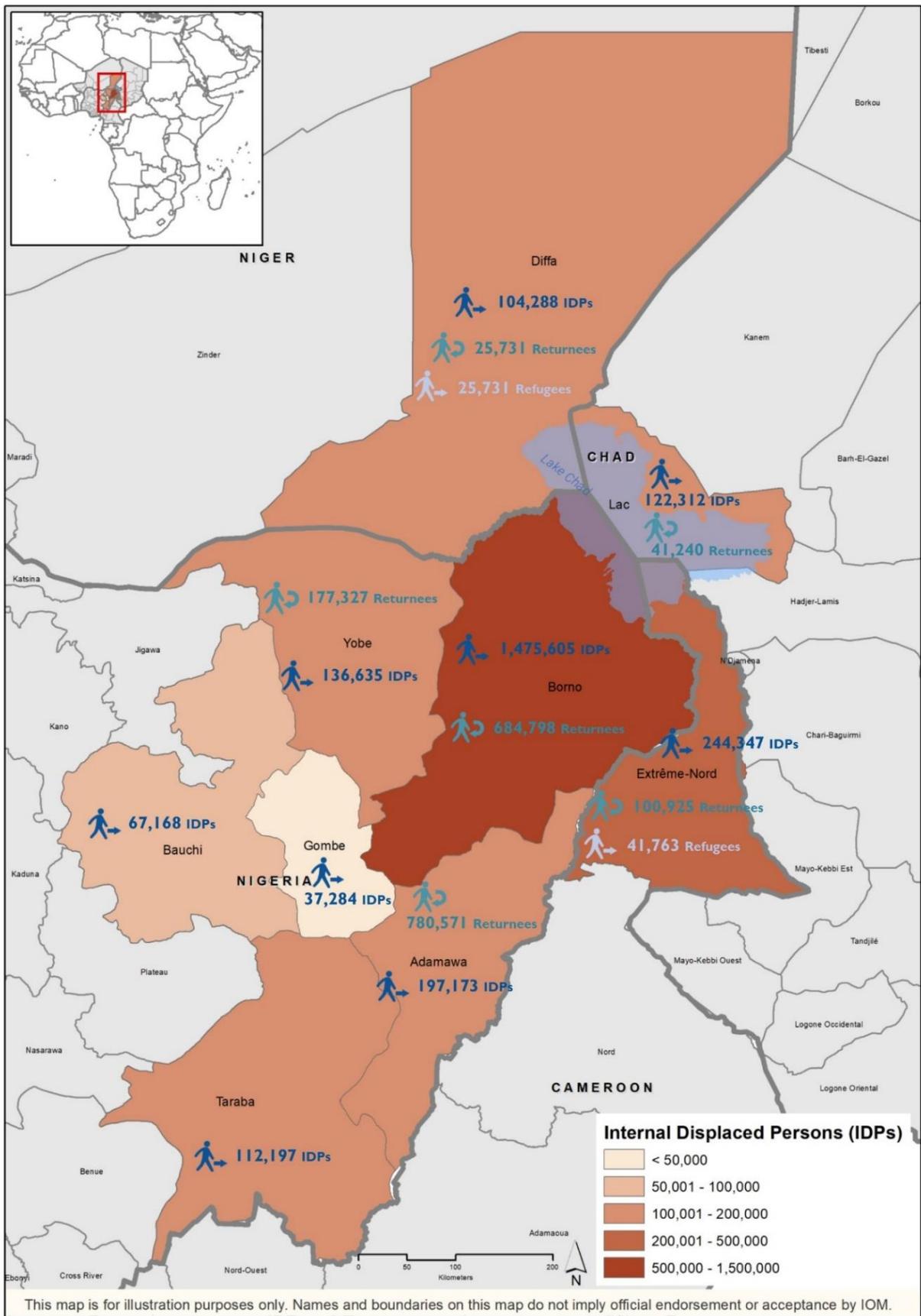
4,221,646 of these individuals were identified by the DTM (IDPs, unregistered refugees and returnees) while 249,813 were identified by the Government of Niger (IDPs, returnees and refugees) in Niger’s Diffa region.

Graph: Populations identified by the DTM by country



The following map visualizes the presence of displaced populations in the affected administrative areas. The highest concentrations of internally displaced populations are found in areas bordering Lake Chad where the four countries of the sub-region have common borders. Borno State in Nigeria is the administrative area where most of the displaced populations are found (IDPs and returnees), followed by Adamawa State and Cameroon’s Far North region.

Map: Presence of displaced populations per administrative area.



DEMOGRAPHY: A crisis displacing children

The DTM demographic data is gathered through surveys conducted at the household level in crisis affected locations in Cameroon, Nigeria and Chad. The sample for the Cameroonian and Chadian demographics is made up of respectively 4,319 and 8,815 households while the Nigerian sample is made up of 90,045 individuals in 2,663 locations and sites.

The average household size for the displacement affected population is 5.4 members with on average 3.3²⁷ children per household. Nearly 60 per cent²⁸ of the displacement affected population are children.

Table: Household composition by country

	Cameroon	Nigeria	Chad	Niger
Average household size	6.2	4.1	6.6	4.1
Average number of children per household	4.8	2.7	4.4	N/A

On average for the three countries, **58 per cent of the sampled displaced population²⁹ is under 18 years of age (31% female, 27% male)**, while the adult population represents 42 per cent (23% female and 19% male). The demographic data is very much in line with the data from the 2016 report, no significant changes have been observed.

Table: Age and sex breakdown by country

Age	Cameroon		Nigeria		Chad	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Minors (<18)	33.9%	31.4%	25.5%	30.3%	28.6%	37.7%
Adults (>18)	16.2%	18.5%	20%	24.2%	16.3%	17.4%

The census data from Nigeria places the population of children (age group 0 – 19) to be at 52 per cent³⁰ for the whole country, which is in line with the demographic data for the internally displaced population that estimates that 56 per cent of the displaced population sampled in Nigeria are children. By comparison, children represent 65 per cent of the total sampled population in Cameroon and 66 per cent in Chad.

In terms of sex breakdown, Nigeria hosts an internally displaced population composed of 55 per cent female and 46 per cent male, while Chad hosts a displaced population composed of 55 per cent female and 45 per cent male. In Cameroon, the displaced population is estimated to be composed of 50 per cent of female and 50 per cent male.

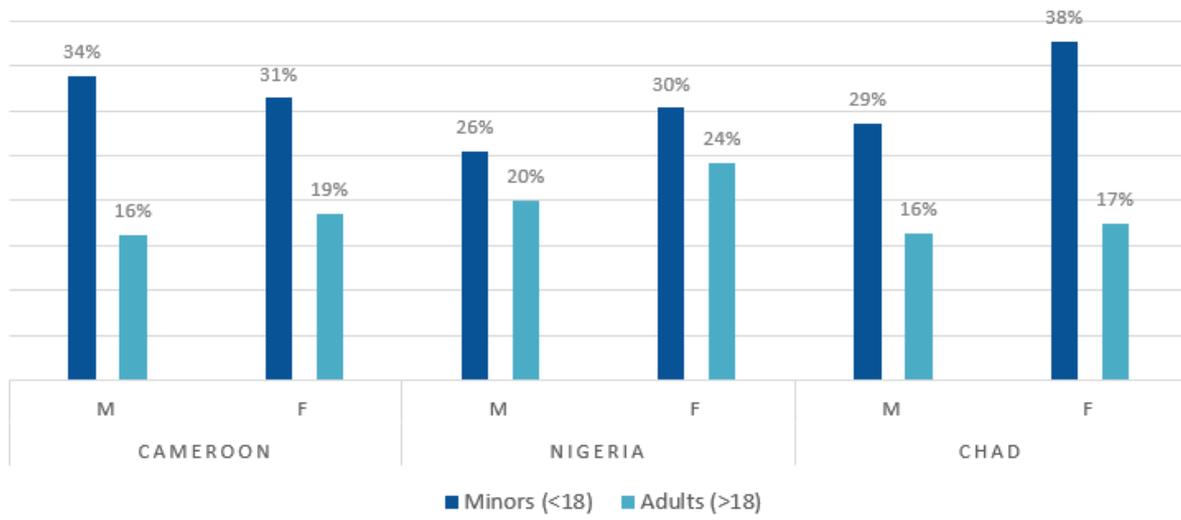
²⁷ This number does not include households in Niger, nor returnee households in Nigeria due to the lack of demographic data on these populations. Consequently, the number calculated is representative for only 60% of the total displacement affected population in the region.

²⁸ Idem

²⁹ Idem

³⁰ Nigeria Data Portal (2006), *Population distribution by age*

Graph: Age and sex breakdown by country



NFI distributions for IDPs in Maiduguri, Borno

REASONS FOR DISPLACEMENT: *Displaced by the conflict, but not only*

Assessing the reasons for population displacement is a key part of DTM exercises as it allows IOM to gather and share data on displacement drivers. **When displaced populations are tracked by DTM, the reason for their displacement is also captured.**

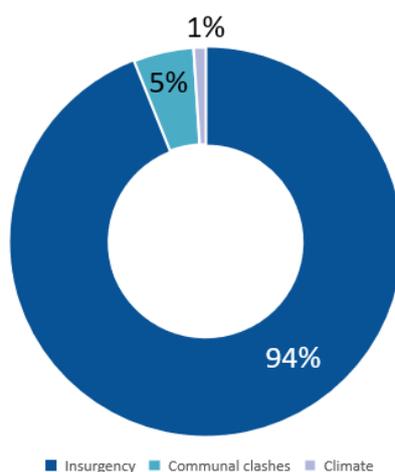
The **main reason for displacement for the affected population is the conflict. 94 per cent** of individuals were displaced due to the on-going hostilities in the three countries (Cameroon, Nigeria and Chad) combined. **5 per cent** of the tracked population was displaced due to community clashes³¹ and lastly, **less than one per cent** of the displaced population fled their areas of origin because of reasons related to climate change and natural disaster.

In Cameroon and Nigeria, respectively 95 per cent and 93 per cent of the tracked population are displaced due to conflict while in Chad 100³² per cent of the population tracked by the DTM are displaced because of the conflict.

Table: Reason for displacement per country

Reason for displacement	Cameroon	Chad	Nigeria	Grand Total
Community clashes	0.0%	0.0%	6.1%	5.3%
Conflict	94.6%	100.0%	93.3%	93.7%
Climate	5.4%	0.0%	0.5%	1.0%

Graph: Displacement reasons in LCB

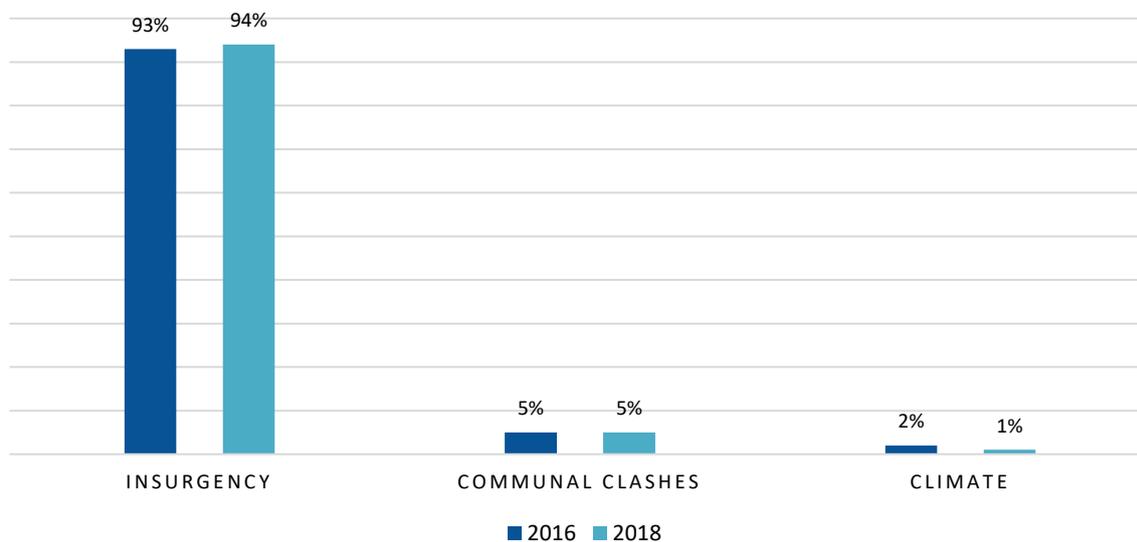


³¹ In the framework of this report and according to context of the Lake Chad Basin Crisis, community clashes are understood as the violent clashes between members of farmer communities and members of herder communities, over access to resources: water, land and pasture.

³² Note that this number only accounts for the Lac Region where the DTM is implemented. It is likely that in other regions, an unreported number of people were forced to flee their homes because of reasons related to climate change.

As demonstrated in the graphic below, the figures are very similar to the figures from the previous round in 2016. While in some areas the security situation improved considerably, increased hostilities between Non-State Armed Groups and the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MJTF) were observed in other regions in early 2018. These confrontations predominantly occurred in Nigeria’s Borno State and have contributed to renewed conflict-induced displacement in the area.³³ The highly volatile security situation is severely affecting the Lake Chad Basin region and results in the constant recurrence of new displacements.

Graph: Reasons for displacement in the Lake Chad Basin in 2018 compared to 2016



In Nigeria alone, violent communal clashes between members of semi-nomadic herder communities and native farmers have resulted in at least 3,641 deaths in the past three years, whereof 57 per cent occurred in 2018³⁴, and about 300,000 individuals were forced into displacement.³⁵ Villages were burned, and food supplies were stolen by attackers. These clashes are mainly linked to competition over resources: water, land and pasture. Herdsmen require grazing land for their livestock and farmers require vast land for agriculture. Large swaths of land have been fenced off because of the conflict and agribusiness activities have taken over some of the former grazing land. However, before the intensification of these clashes, a harmonious relationship existed between both communities. The conflict, soil degradation, desertification and general environmental degradation have increased tensions between farmers and herdsmen and resulted in increased conflict situations. Years of peaceful coexistence have given way to violence and forced displacement.

These clashes demonstrate that the reasons for displacement in the Lake Chad Basin are very much interlinked. Factors related to climate change are feeding into communal clashes as environmental conditions have driven herdsmen to move southward in the dry season for pasture, and the conflict is severely affecting the relationship between different communities in the region. Community clashes also include clashes over land ownership, as well as religious clashes and associated political clashes (an upsurge in violence could affect national elections scheduled for February 2019) in mixed ethnoreligious tense areas.³⁶

³³ REACH (2018), *Nigeria: Severe protection concerns in Borno State*

³⁴ Amnesty International (2018), *Harvest of death: three years of bloody clashes between farmers and herdsmen*.

³⁵ IOM DTM Round 25 Nigeria

³⁶ Amnesty International (2018), *Harvest of death: three years of bloody clashes between farmers and herdsmen*.

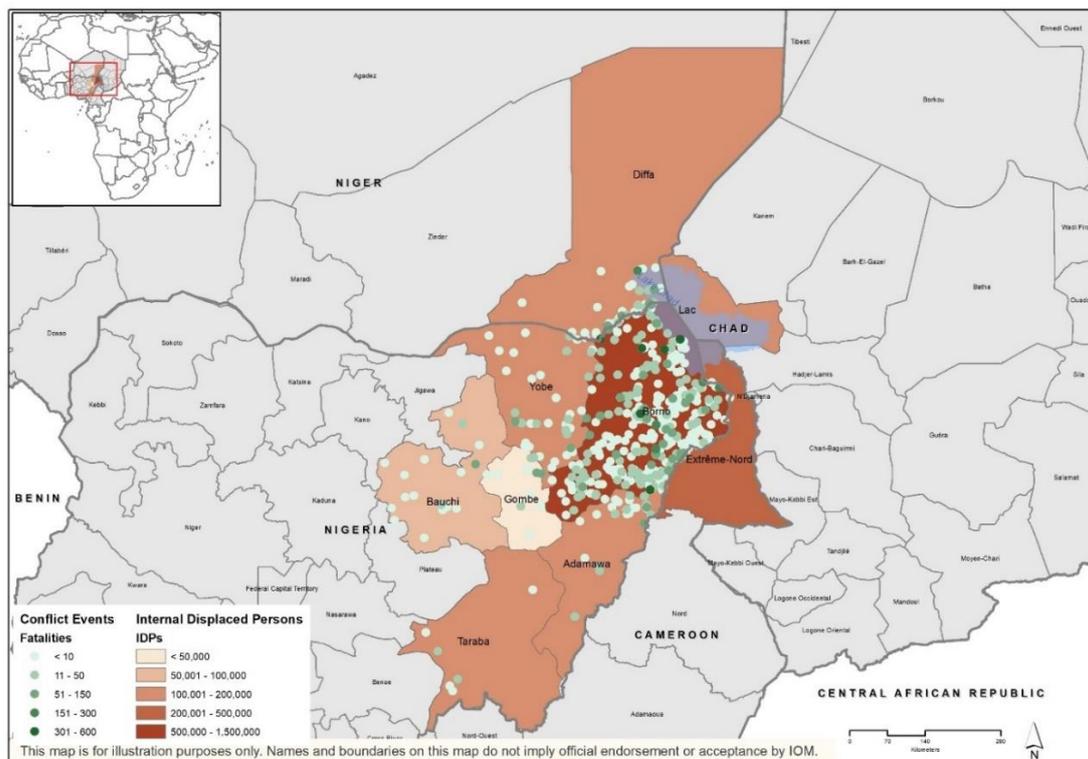
Lastly, one per cent of the displaced population was forced to flee their areas of origin due to natural disasters. This occurred predominantly in Cameroon, where 20,750 individuals were displaced because of heavy rainfalls and multiple episodes of flooding in the Far North region, along with Nigeria, where 19,206 individuals are currently displaced because of reasons related to natural disasters.

Displacement due to heavy rains and subsequent flooding is reported as a regular event associated with the rainy season. While most people displaced by flooding are likely to return to their place of origin after the rainy season, some populations have been displaced by flooding for several years and do not plan to return to their place of origin. This is because they are flood-prone areas and do not provide the necessary conditions for a durable return.

While less than one per cent of the tracked population in the Lake Chad basin associated their forced displacement with natural disasters, climate change increasingly threatens the stability of the region and society. Climate change can be understood as a **'threat multiplier'** interacting with existing risks. It can increase the likelihood of instability or conflict when combined with other environmental, economic, social or political pressures. This threat is particularly present in fragile and conflict-affected situations such as the Lake Chad Basin. At the same time, conflict and instability often contribute to environmental degradation, livelihood insecurity and increased poverty, and undermine the ability to adapt to climate change, creating a vicious circle of fragility and generalized vulnerability.³⁷

The map below reflects the current IDP population in the four countries, under laid with conflict events recorded by ACLED. The location of greatest displacement is visibly linked to event occurrences in those areas.³⁸

Map: Location and number of IDPs by administrative region, under laid with conflict events



³⁷ Adelphi (2018), *Climate-Fragility Profile: Lake Chad Basin*

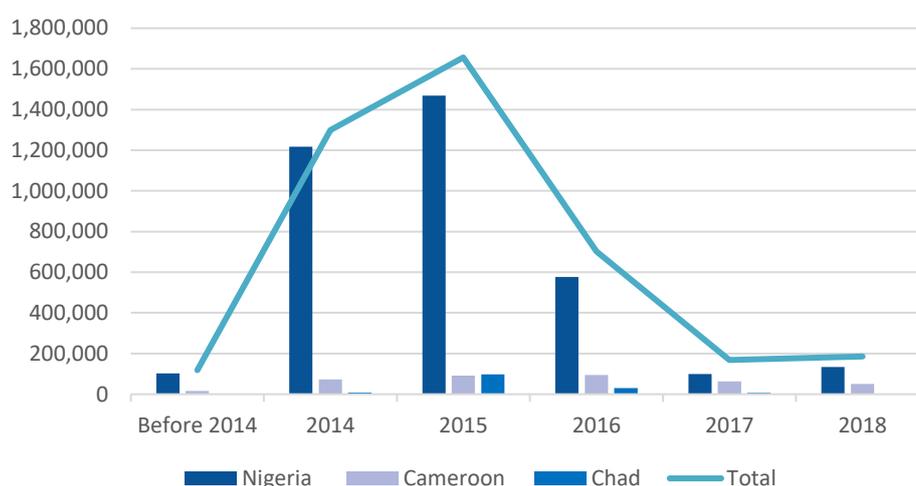
³⁸ No ACLED data available for conflict events in Chad and Cameroon

PERIOD OF DISPLACEMENT: *Between Protracted and New Displacement*

DTM operations active in the region collect data related to periods of displacement, more specifically on the time when the displacement started. Information on the length of displacement is vital as it influences the level of local integration, vulnerability levels of the displaced populations as well as the relationships with host communities and their capacity to continue hosting displaced populations. This section pertains to the year when IDPs, refugees and returnees were forced to leave their areas of origin.

Analysis of the data collected by DTM demonstrates that 2014 and 2015 were the years when most of the affected populations were forced into displacement. In 2014, almost 1.4 million individuals or 32 per cent of the tracked population were forced to leave their areas of origin. In 2015, over 1.6 million individuals or 40 per cent of the tracked population fled their homes. These years are followed by 2016 (17% of the tracked population), 2018 (5%) and 2017 (4%). 3 per cent of the tracked population was displaced before 2014.

Graph: Start of displacement of individuals currently displaced in all three countries



This trend is similar when analyzed at country level. In Nigeria, 2015 marked the year with the greatest displacement as nearly 1.5 million persons were forced to flee their homes. Similarly, in Chad, 2015 was the year when the majority of the displacement occurred as 97,129 individuals fled their locations of origin. In Cameroon, however, 2016 was the year that marked the greatest displacement. Over 94,000 individuals were forced into displacement which is 3 per cent more than the estimated 91,000 forcibly displaced in 2015.

Table: Evolutions of displaced individuals in all three countries over time

Year	Nigeria	Cameroon	Chad
Before 2014	102,551	15,769	0
2014	1,217,860	72,669	8,640
2015	1,467,959	90,965	97,129
2016	577,179	94,144	30,921
2017	98,772	62,833	6,274
2018	134,593	50,655	339

Displacement periods are very much associated with the fluctuations of attacks, especially those targeting civilians. In 2014, the Non-State Armed Group controlled territory included areas of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa States of **Nigeria**, with important towns such as Mubi and Bama. As of January 2015, it was estimated that the movement controlled a territory of 20,000 square miles³⁹ (or 51,800 square kilometers). The number of attacks on both civilians and military as well as the ideology and rules imposed on residents in controlled territories forced many to leave their home, with a peak of displacement in 2015.

Cameroon and **Chad** increasingly came under attack by the end of 2014, with a clear increase of attacks in 2015. Before that, most attacks in Cameroon and Chad took place in border villages, with an apparent targeting of military, national authorities and clerics. The increased violence against civilians in locations further away from the border with Nigeria as well as the use of indiscriminate tactics such as kamikaze attacks is likely to have triggered an increased displacement in 2015 and 2016.

Security in the region remains extremely volatile and the humanitarian situation continues to be precarious. The movement did lose substantial parts of its territory in 2016 following Nigerian military operations⁴⁰ **which is reflected in the increase in return movements in the region** (an increase of 797,642 individuals or 77% compared to 2016) **and the decrease of new displacements** (185,000 individuals in 2018 versus over 1.5 million people in 2015). However, despite the surrender of combatants since October 2017, Non-State Armed Groups still pose a genuine threat as attacks, kidnappings and suicide bombings killing both civilians and security forces are still occurring.⁴¹ Ahead of national elections in Nigeria in February 2019, violence escalated in late 2018 and a series of attacks were launched on villages as well as military bases allowing Non-State Armed Groups to retake previously lost territory. This led to significant displacement throughout Northeastern Nigeria.



IDP women in Borno State, Nigeria

³⁹ Bellal, A. (2015), *The War Report: Armed Conflict in 2014*. Oxford

⁴⁰ ACAPS (2018), *Nigeria Crisis Analysis*

⁴¹ International Crisis Group (2018), *Cameroon's Far North: A New Chapter in the Fight Against Boko Haram*

DISPLACEMENT PER COUNTRY: *linked to the conflict*

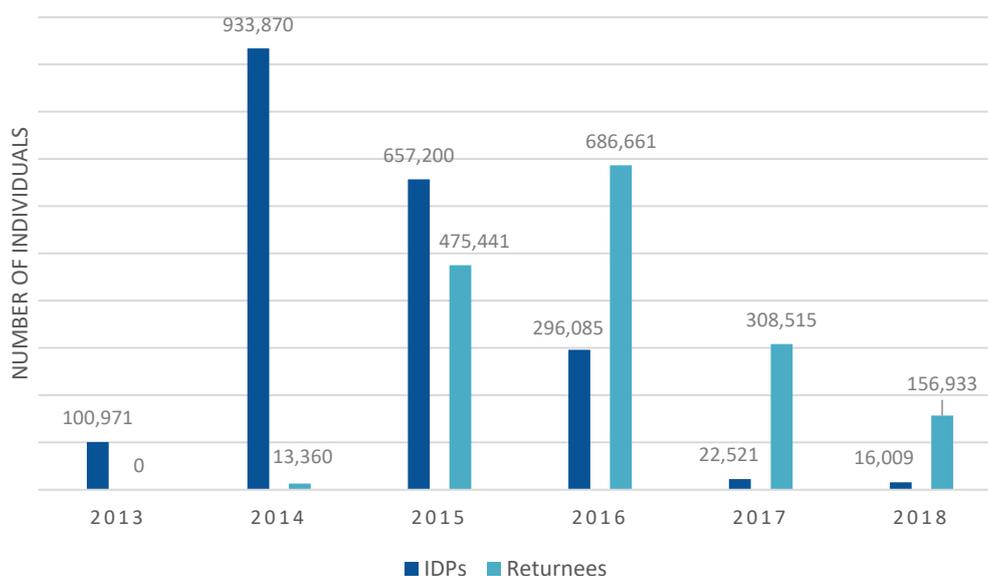
NIGERIA: 2 million internally displaced persons – 1.6 million returnees

Table: Key displacement numbers in Nigeria

IDPs	Returnees	Refugees
2,026,602	1,642,696	N/A

The DTM exercise in Nigeria provides data enabling regular analysis of displacement patterns. The chart below shows that the largest amount of IDPs in Nigeria were forced to leave their areas of origin in 2014 when 933,870 IDPs of the total current amount of 2,497,549 IDPs were displaced. In 2015, 657,200 IDPs of the current total Nigerian IDP population were forced to leave their homes. These displacement patterns are closely linked with the advances of Non-State Armed Groups in 2014 and 2015, the increased attacks against both civilian and military targets, as well as the size of the territory it then controlled. These factors forced populations from northeast Nigeria to flee their areas of origin to areas of increased security, often found in urban centers with increased presence of security forces as this is the case for Maiduguri.

Graph: Periods of displacement of internally displaced persons (IDPs) vs. periods of return in Nigeria



There has been significantly less displacement in 2017 and 2018 than in the previous years. In 2017, 22,521 IDPs were forcibly displaced and up until October 2018, 16,009 IDPs of the current IDP population were forced to leave their homes. Yet, renewed attacks during the last months of 2018 resulted in a significant increase in forced displacements across the region. Also, in 2016, there was less displacement than before 2014, when internal displacement in North East Nigeria began to rise. This decrease is likely due to the improved security situation resulting from gains by the Nigerian military against Non-State Armed Groups as well as the decrease in the number of attacks and security incidents in North East Nigeria.

Furthermore, since 2014, certain areas have been deserted and their entire population displaced in other areas considered safer, which limits the potential for new displacement. As such, **displacement recorded since 2016 is mostly comprised of secondary displacement, and new displacement is less frequently**

encountered. This confirms the trend that displacement peaked in 2014 and 2015 and that most IDPs have been displaced for several years. Finally, the decrease of people being forced into displacement may also be linked to the inaccessibility of certain affected areas and the subsequent inability to identify new displacement.⁴² The advance of the Nigerian military has allowed humanitarian organizations to access new territories, such as the cities of Bama and Banki in Borno State; however, an estimated number of 800,000 individuals remain beyond the reach of DTM enumerators and humanitarian actors.⁴³

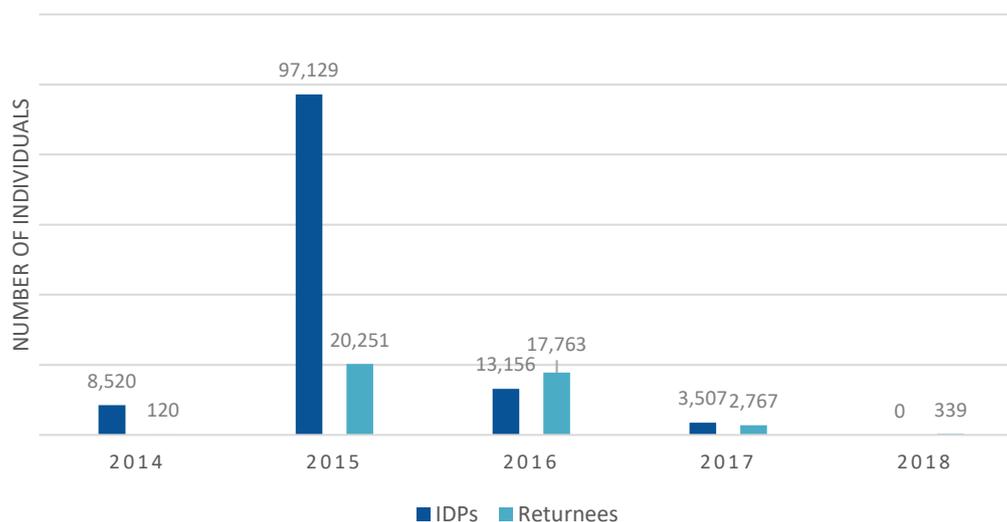
CHAD: 122,312 internally displaced persons – 41,240 returnees

Table: Key displacement numbers in Lac Region - Chad

IDPs	Returnees	Refugees ⁴⁴
122,312	41,240	N/A

The vast majority of internal displacement occurred during and before the year 2015 with a total of 105,649 IDPs, representing 86 per cent of the current IDP caseload. The remaining displacement occurred in 2016 (13,156 individuals or 11%) and in 2017 (3,507 individuals or 3%). Displacement in Chad has peaked in 2015 as Non-State Armed Groups expanded their focus from Nigeria to neighboring countries, including Niger, Cameroon and Chad. The majority of IDPs identified in Chad resided on islands located in Lake Chad, at the border with Nigeria and Niger. Following the increase of attacks in the region, and particularly on the islands, the residents were forced to leave the islands to come ashore in search of increased security. The displacement process often proved difficult as an important number of persons with limited resources concurrently had to find the means of transportation to leave isolated islands and cross the lake, and to then secure other means of transportation once ashore to reach the nearest safe and secure site or village.

Graph: Periods of displacement of internally displaced persons (IDPs) vs. periods of return in Chad



⁴² The DTM's geographical coverage in Nigeria has marginally shifted according to the conflict situation and access to certain areas. This is important to consider when comparing displacement numbers per year.

⁴³ The Guardian (2018), *Millions of people need urgent help to stave off famine in Lake Chad basin*

⁴⁴ Note that this number only accounts for Chad's Lac Region where DTM is implemented.

As mentioned above, most attacks and displacement occurred in the Lac region of Chad, which geographically contains multiple islands that are difficult to protect. Responding to the regional threat posed by Non-State Armed Groups, Chad entered the conflict in January 2015 and the Chadian army started military operations near the border areas to protect its population residing in the region.

While Chad remains a target, 2016 has seen far fewer attacks and incidents, which likely explains the significant decrease in displacement since 2016. Another potential reason explaining the decrease in displacement in 2016 may be found in the fact that populations residing in areas prone to attacks already moved to safer areas in 2015 and remain displaced to this day.⁴⁵ Very few new displacements are identified by DTM in Chad in 2017 and 2018.

CAMEROON: 244,347 internally displaced persons – 100,925 returnees

Table: Key displacement numbers in Cameroon

IDPs	Returnees	Refugees
244,347	100,925	41,763

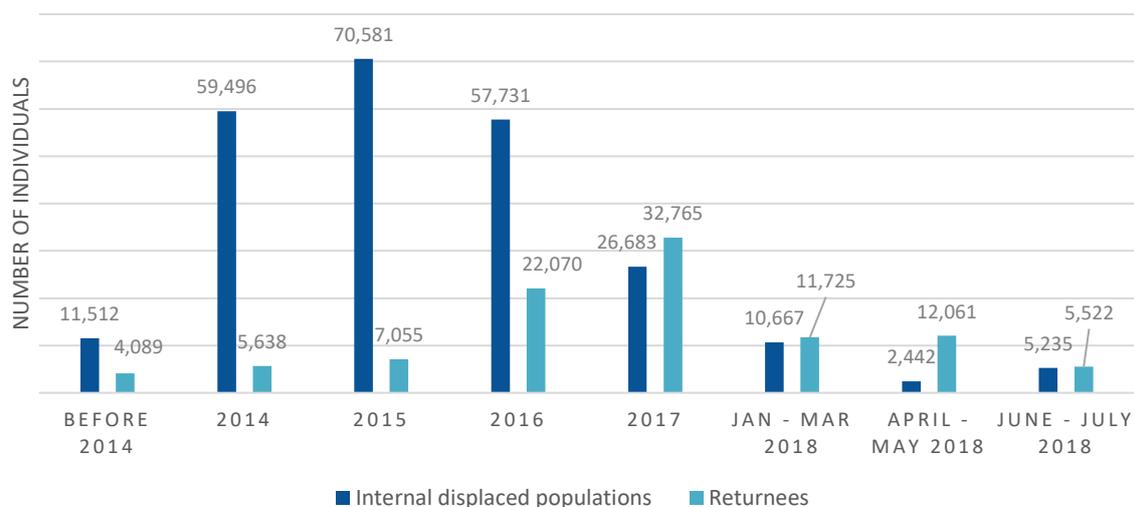
The Far North region of Cameroon has been subject to attacks by the insurgent forces resulting in displacement within Cameroon as individuals flee to find safety. In addition to internal displacement of Cameroonians within the area which amounts to **244,347 individuals** by December 2018, the region also hosts returnees, currently **100,925 individuals**, and refugees crossing the Nigerian border towards Cameroon. As per April 2018, **66,466 refugees**⁴⁶ resided in Minawao refugee camp in the Far North region of Cameroon while another **41,763 unregistered refugees** are located outside of the refugee camp.

The peaks of the displacement in Cameroon in 2015 and 2016 can be explained by the continued attacks by Non-State Armed Groups, especially in rural areas and borderlands, forcing populations to move inland to seek increased security. The Nigerian Army advances resulted in significant territory losses and forced the insurgency to leave relatively stable positions and to increase “hit-and-run” attacks aimed at resupplying the group, especially in borderlands. As such, despite overall improved security, attacks by Non-State Armed Groups continue to displace limited amounts of people across the Far North Region.

⁴⁵ IOM-DTM (2016), *Within and beyond borders: Tracking displacement in the Lake Chad Basin*

⁴⁶ UNHCR (2018), *Minawao – Profil du Camp (Avril 2018)*

Graph: Year of displacement of IDPs and Returnees in Cameroon



NIGER: 104,288 internally displaced persons – 25,731 returnees⁴⁷

Table: Key displacement numbers in Niger

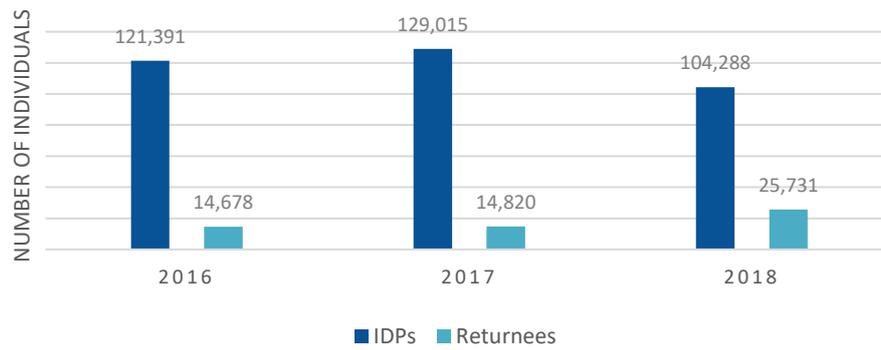
IDPs	Returnees	Refugees
104,288	25,731	118,868

The figures from the chart below are provided by the government of Niger and apply only to Niger’s Diffa region. Analysis demonstrates that there is a remarkable trend of return movements to areas of origin in Diffa. Between 2017 and July 2018, the number of returnees increased by 74 per cent or 10,911 individuals, while IDP numbers have dropped by 19 per cent or 24,727 individuals.

However, the returnee population in Niger should be understood as mainly returnees from abroad. The great majority of Nigerien returnees are individuals who migrated to Nigeria decades ago for livelihood opportunities and are now fleeing the violence in North East Nigeria. Because they are Nigerien nationals, they are considered a returnee population.

⁴⁷ Figures for Niger are provided by DREC (Direction Regionale de l’Etat Civil)

Graph: Numbers of IDPs and returnees since 2016



A class is in session led by an IOM staff for IDP children in an IDP camp in Borno State, Nigeria

DISPLACEMENT LOCATIONS: *Fleeing home to find a safer shelter*

In the three countries analyzed in this report, 3,649 locations and sites were assessed where forcibly displaced populations reside. Types of locations and shelters are different for each country and based on the local context. As such, these locations were divided into the category of host community and camp/collective settlement for analytical purposes.

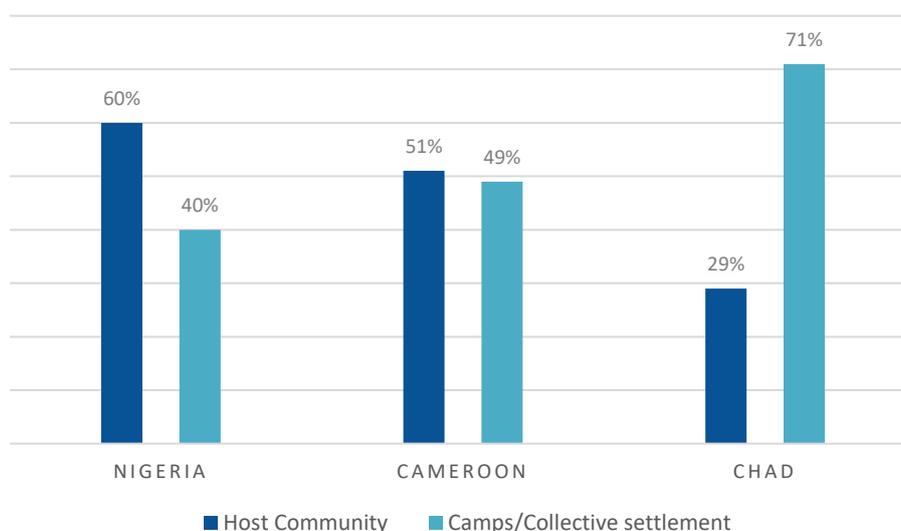
“Host community” refers to areas of displacement where displaced populations live in an existing village, town structures, community share homes with others such as friends or relatives, live in makeshift shelters constructed on available land in unfinished buildings or rent homes. “Camps” are planned or spontaneous settlements, which can take the form of collective centers such as schools, existing buildings or temporary settlements and transit centers that arise outside of areas where there are established settlements. Displaced individuals living in host communities are generally living in a more durable type of structure, which they are perhaps renting, or not, from the local population. Camp or collective settlements are more likely to be temporary structures like tents, straw housing or temporary mud housing.

In Nigeria, over 2,600 locations are hosting over 3.6 million internally displaced individuals and returnees. In Cameroon, 806 locations are hosting over 380,000 individuals and in Chad the 165,000 displaced persons are located in 180 locations. The table below shows the proportion of displacement sites in each country.

Table: Percentage of households per type of displacement sites (Returnee population is NOT included)

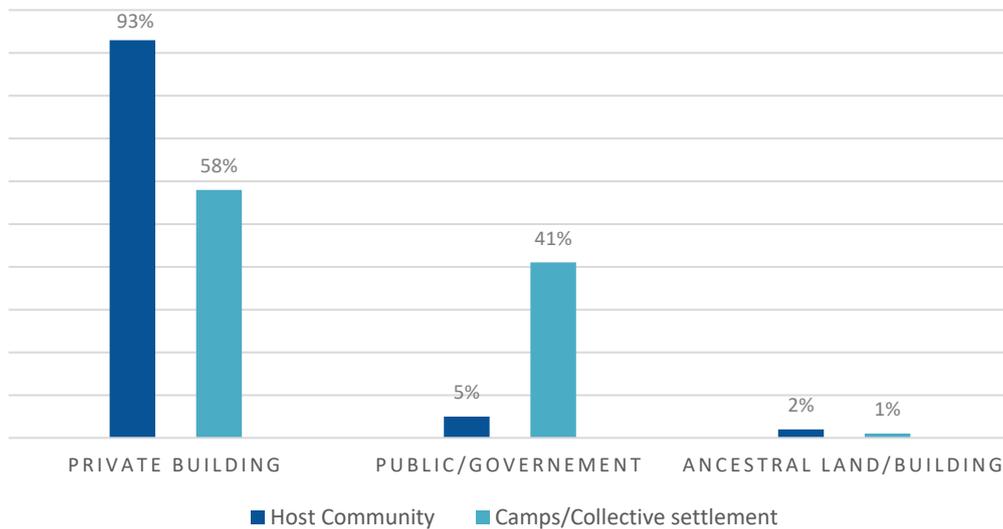
Displacement Sites	Cameroon	Chad	Nigeria
Host Community	51%	29%	60%
Camp/Collective settlement	49%	71%	40%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%
Number of locations hosting displaced communities	806	180	2658

Graph: Percentage of households per type of displacement sites (Returnee population is NOT included)



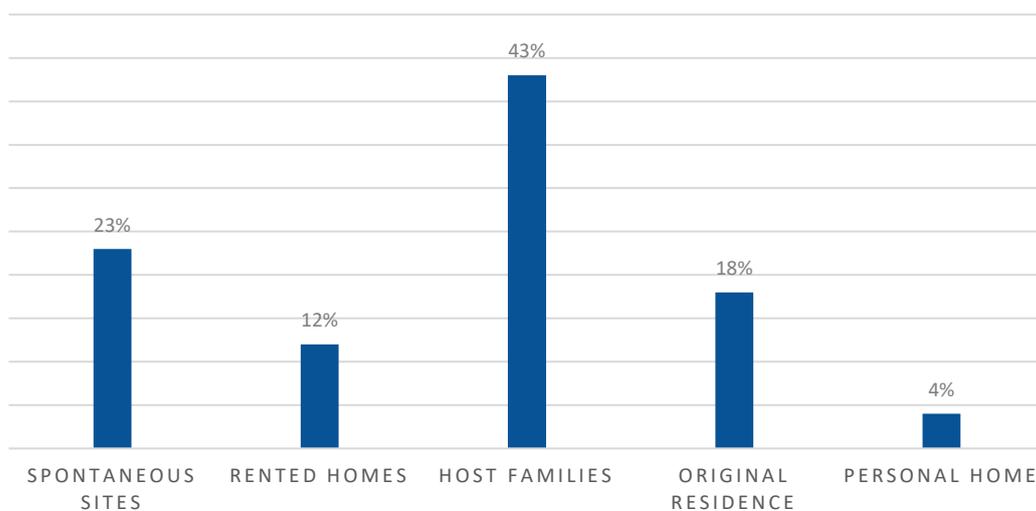
Analysis demonstrates that in Nigeria, 60 per cent of the internally displaced households reside with host communities (93% in private buildings, 5% in public or government buildings and 2% on ancestral land) while the remaining 40 per cent are displaced in camps or camp-like settings (58% in collective settlements, 41% in camps and 1% in transitional sites).

Graph: Type of displacement settings in Nigeria



In Cameroon, 82 per cent of the target population consists of internally displaced households. 43 per cent of displaced households live with host families, 23 per cent live in spontaneous sites, 12 per cent live in rented homes and 1 per cent live in collective centres or in the open air without shelter. 18 per cent of the target population are households who returned to their place of habitual residence.

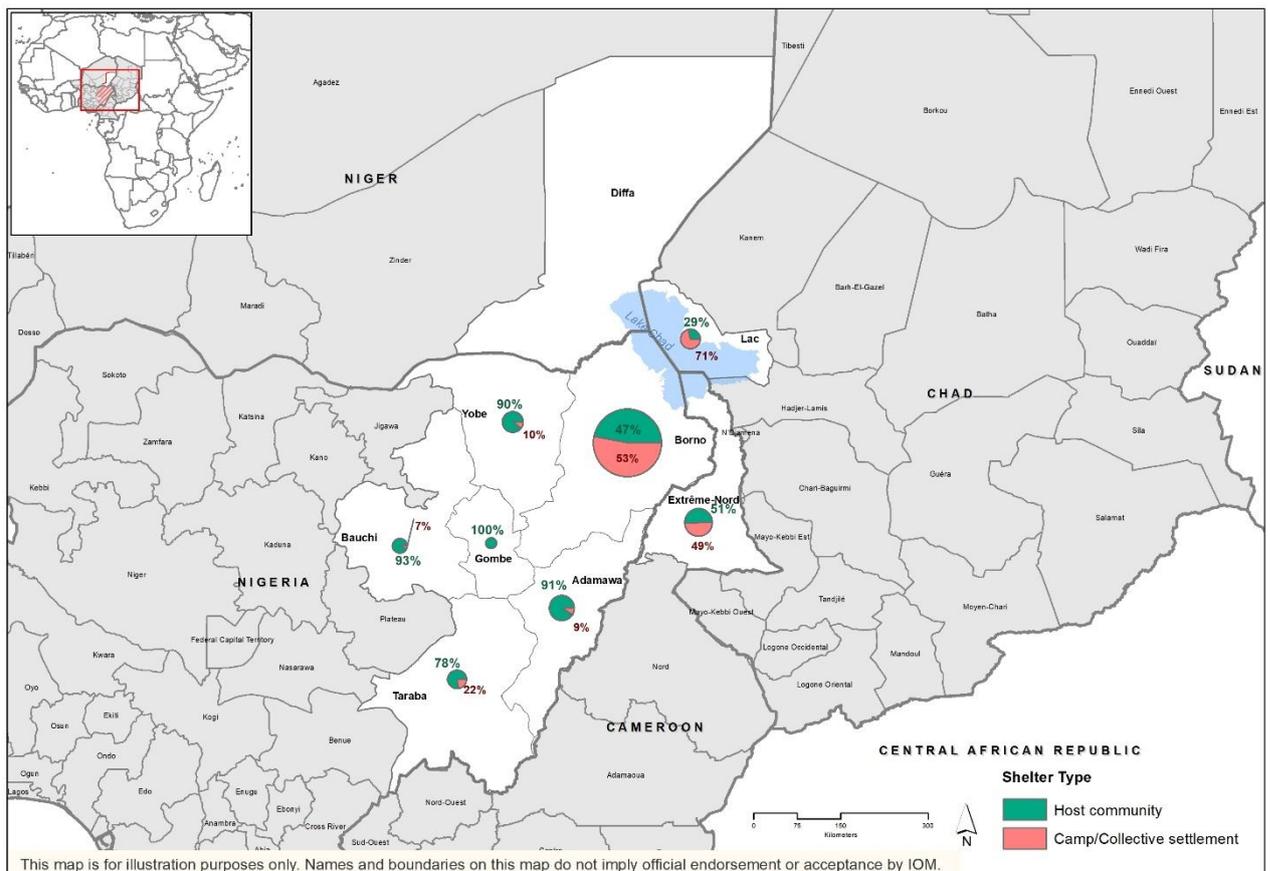
Graph: Type of displacement settings in Cameroon



The majority of internally displaced households in Chad, an estimated 71 per cent, reside in camp/collective settlements (mostly comprised of straw housing structures or tents) while 29 per cent live with host communities.

The map below shows the proportion of types of displacement locations (camp/collective settlement or host community) in each administrative area where DTM data collection is taking place. The only administrative division where camps and collective settlements are the majority is the Lac region of Chad and Borno State in Nigeria. In other divisions, most displacement locations are host communities.

Map: Distribution of shelter type (%) by administrative area (returnees not included)

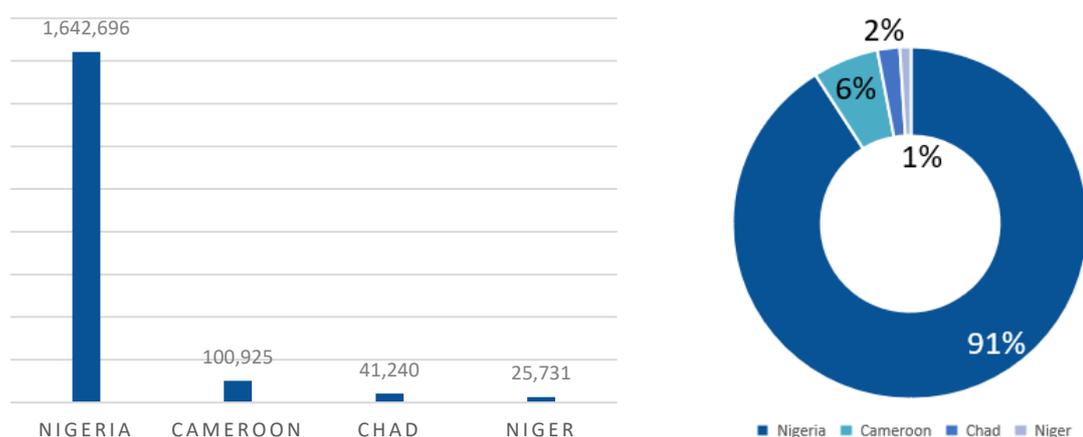


RETURNING HOME: *Returning home to rebuild a life*

An increasing number of displaced populations are returning to their towns and villages of origin, often to find their homes and communities destroyed. Regularly, people are returning too early and become subject to renewed attacks, repeated displacement and loss of life.⁴⁸ Nearly 1.8 million returnees currently reside in the three countries analyzed in this report. As per governmental statistics, Niger further hosts an additional 25,731 returnees. **The total returnee population consist of 41 per cent or 1,810,592 individuals of the total displacement affected population in the Lake Chad Basin.** Returnees include both former IDPs who returned to areas of origin as well as refugees who resided in a foreign country and returned to their country of origin. For Nigeria, Chad and Cameroon, **returns of former IDPs represent 91.2 per cent or 1,627,301 individuals of all return movements** against 8.8 per cent or 172,448 individuals who returned from abroad.

Nigeria hosts the great majority of returnees with a total caseload of 1,642,696 individuals (91%), while Cameroon hosts 100,925 returnees (6%) and Chad hosts 41,240 returned individuals (2%). Niger is currently hosting 25,731 returnees in the Diffa region (1%).

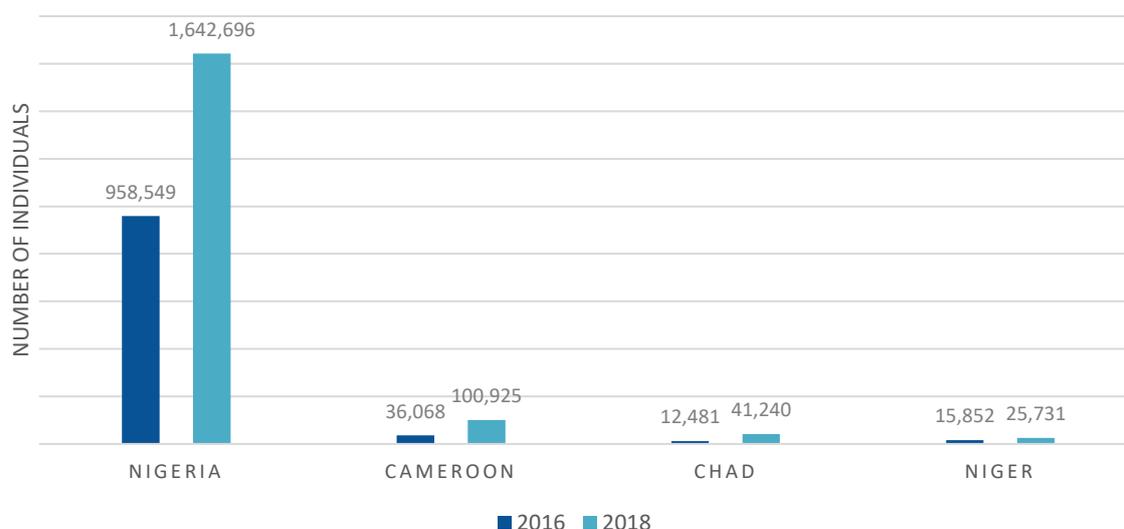
Graph: Partition per country of the returnee population in the Lake Chad Basin



Compared with the previous report published in December 2016, **the number of returnees has increased by 803,494 individuals or nearly 80 per cent.** In Nigeria, the country with the largest returnee caseload, the returnee population increased by 71 per cent or 684,147 individuals in 2017 and 2018. In Cameroon and Chad, the returnee population tracked by the DTM tripled during the last two years (an increase of 64,890 individuals in Cameroon, and an increase of 28,759 individuals in Chad)

⁴⁸ International Rescue Committee (2017), *Lake Chad's unseen crisis: voices of refugees and internally displaced people from Niger and Nigeria*

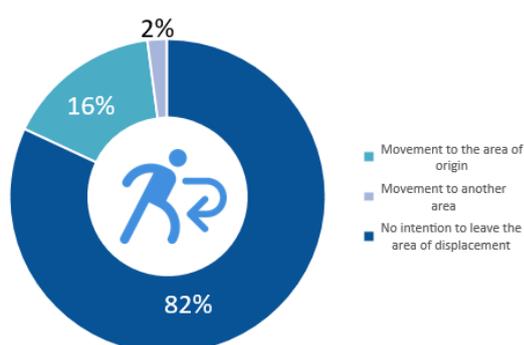
Graph: Increase of returnee population tracked by DTM per country since 2016 ⁴⁹



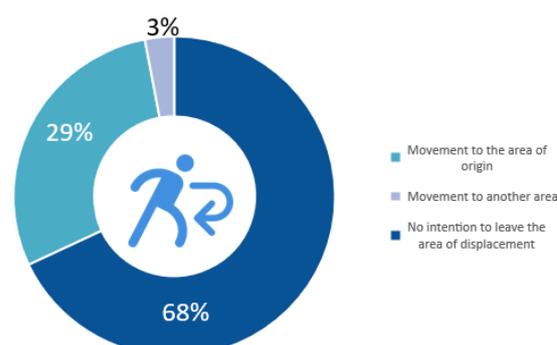
The trend of an increasing returnee population in the Lake Chad Basin is raising new questions on the push and pull factors that are driving and hindering these return movements. **DTM Return Intention Surveys (RIS) in Niger (conducted in December 2017), Cameroon (conducted in November 2018), and in Chad (conducted in February 2018), have revealed that the majority of the displaced populations indicated the intention to remain in their current location of displacement** (82% of displaced persons in Niger, 68% of internally displaced persons in Cameroon and more than 99% of displaced households in Chad⁵⁰). Of the remaining displaced persons who intend to leave the current place of displacement, the vast majority expressed the wish to return to their location of origin, if conditions allow it (92% in Niger and 76% in Cameroon).

Graph: Intentions of displaced populations in Niger and Cameroon

Niger:



Cameroon:



82 per cent of the displaced people in Niger and 71 per cent of the displaced population in Cameroon who do not intend to leave their current location and wish to remain in the area of displacement indicated that the main factor required to facilitate their return is the presence of security forces in locations of origin. Other factors were the delivery humanitarian assistance in areas of origin, reconstruction of damaged shelter and the improvement of access to basic services.

⁴⁹ The increase in returnee population in Chad is largely due to the expansion of DTM's geographical scope in the Lac region. As illustrated in the graph of page 37 the majority of these return movements occurred in 2015 and 2016.

⁵⁰ IOM DTM (2018), *Profil des personnes déplacées – Région du Lac, Tchad*

In Niger, the three main reasons preventing the immediate return of displaced populations to locations of origin are: pending decisions of local authorities or traditional leaders (72%), the lack of financial means to return (39%) and the pending feedback on the evolution of the situation from people that already have returned (35%). In Cameroon, the three main reasons hindering displaced populations from returning to areas of origin are: continuous fear (64%), continued feeling of insecurity in locations of origin (31%) and the absence of security forces in areas of origin (29%).⁵¹

Return trends, especially in the case of former IDPs, are explained by the advances made by security forces in the past year, as well as potential returns for economic and food security purposes (agriculture). While most returns are motivated by improved security, returns may further have been fueled by the limited availability of basic services, of livelihood opportunities, and of assistance during displacement as well as limited economic capacities of host communities in certain areas. Former IDPs often return home with limited resources to an area where their houses and belongings have been damaged or stolen. Significant assistance is likely needed to ensure the durable reintegration of these populations, and to ensure that they have the means to meet their basic needs and to prevent further displacement.

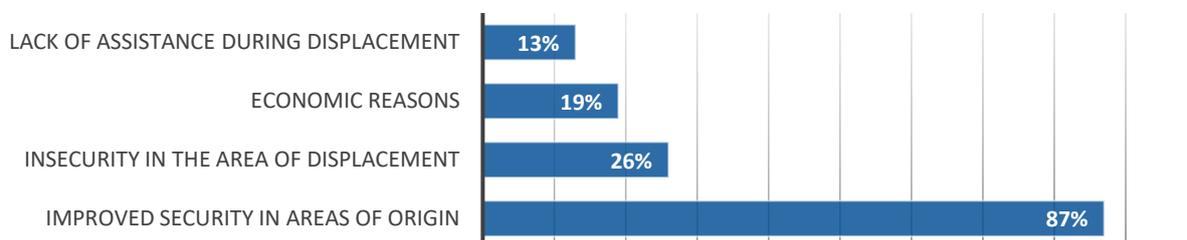
The return trends described above are reflected in the Return Intention Survey conducted in Cameroon.⁵² The three main requirements for return of IDPs that were cited include: presence of security forces in the area of origin (71%), international assistance in locations of origin (30%) and the improvement of access to basic services (31%).⁵³

Graph: Motivation for return of IDPs in Cameroon



The Return Intention Survey conducted in Niger revealed that return trends were motivated by improved security in areas of origin (87%), insecurity in the area of displacement (26%), economic reasons (19%) and the lack of assistance during displacement (13%).

Graph: Motivation for return of IDPs in Niger



⁵¹ Responses were not exclusive

⁵² IOM DTM (2018), *Return Intention Survey in the Far North Region of Cameroon – November 2018*

⁵³ Responses were not exclusive

Questions on return intentions in Chad⁵⁴ demonstrated that none of the internally displaced households wished to return to areas of origin. The factors necessary for a possible return of displaced populations are shown in the graphic below. 45 per cent of respondents would consider a return if the presence of security forces in the area of origin was assured and 45 per cent of respondents stated they would consider a return if they would receive assistance in locations of origin. 20 per cent would consider a return if they would have improved access to basic services and 19 per cent would return home if they would be assisted with the rehabilitation of damaged houses.

Graph: Motivation for return of IDPs in Chad

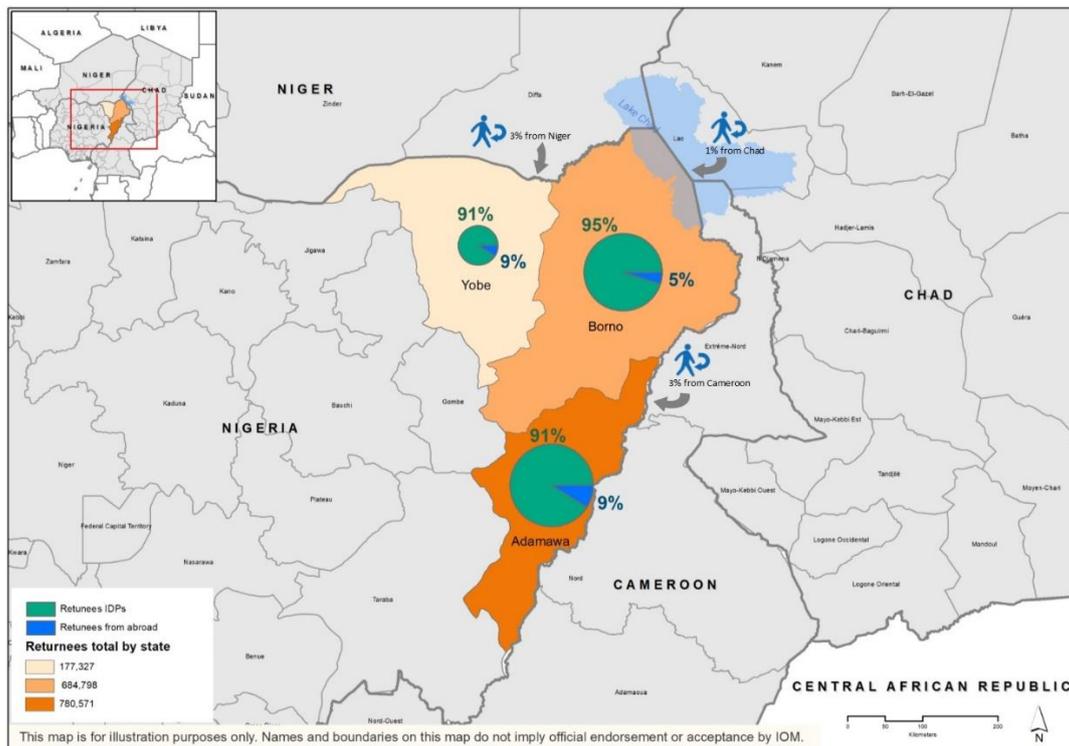


NIGERIA: 1,642,696 returned individuals or 45 per cent of the displaced population in Nigeria

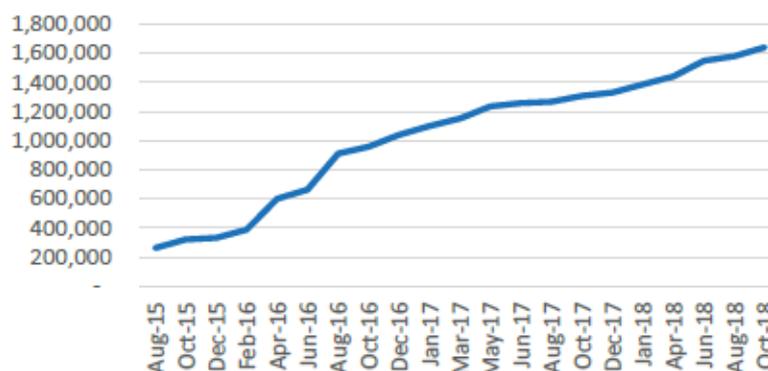
In October 2018, a return assessment was conducted in 204 wards in 41 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of the States Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. 1,642,696 returnees were identified. This represents a 4 per cent increase since the DTM round in August 2018 when 1,580,093 returnees were identified. This increase is in-line with the upward trend since DTM started recording data on returnees in August 2015. Most returnees identified are residing in the State of Adamawa (47%) followed by Borno (42%) and Yobe (11%). The returnee caseload identified in Nigeria is mostly comprised of former IDPs (1,518,534 individuals or 92%); the remaining returnees are refugees who returned to Nigeria from Cameroon (50,279 individuals or 3%), Chad (16,3831 individuals or 1%) and Niger (57,500 or 4%).

⁵⁴ IOM DTM (2018), *Profil des personnes déplacées – Région du Lac, Tchad*

Map: Number of returnees per State in Nigeria

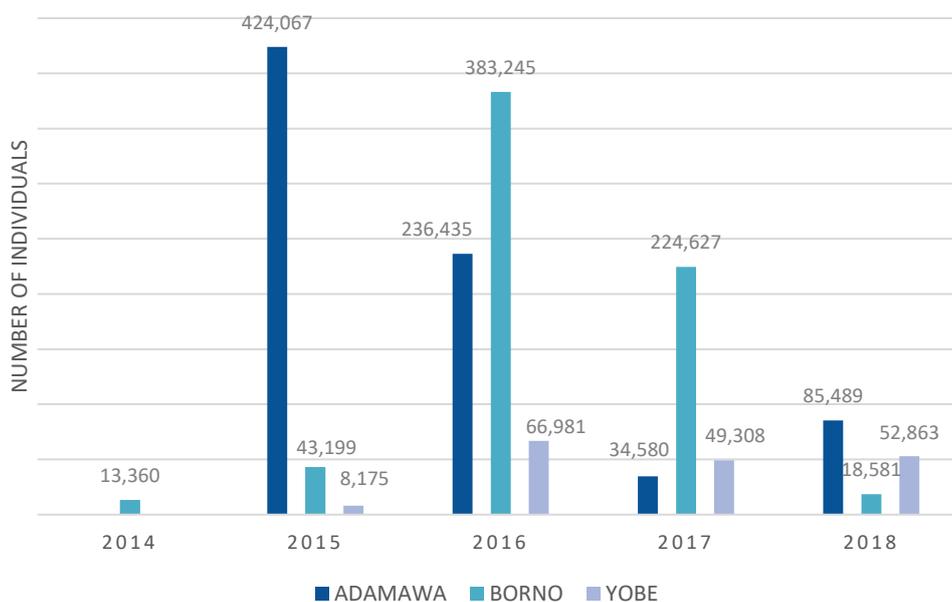


Graph: Number of returnees in Nigeria since DTM started recording data on returnees in August 2015



The main year of return was 2016 when a total of 686,661 individuals returned to their locations of origin, followed by 2015 with a total of 475,441 returnees and 2017 with 308,515 returnees. In 2018, 156,933 return movements were recorded by DTM until October. The vast majority of returnees are residing in the states of Adamawa (780,571 individuals or 48%) and Borno (684,798 individuals or 42%). 177,327 individuals or 10 per cent of returnees in Nigeria are residing in Yobe state.

Graph: Returnees per State and year of return in Nigeria

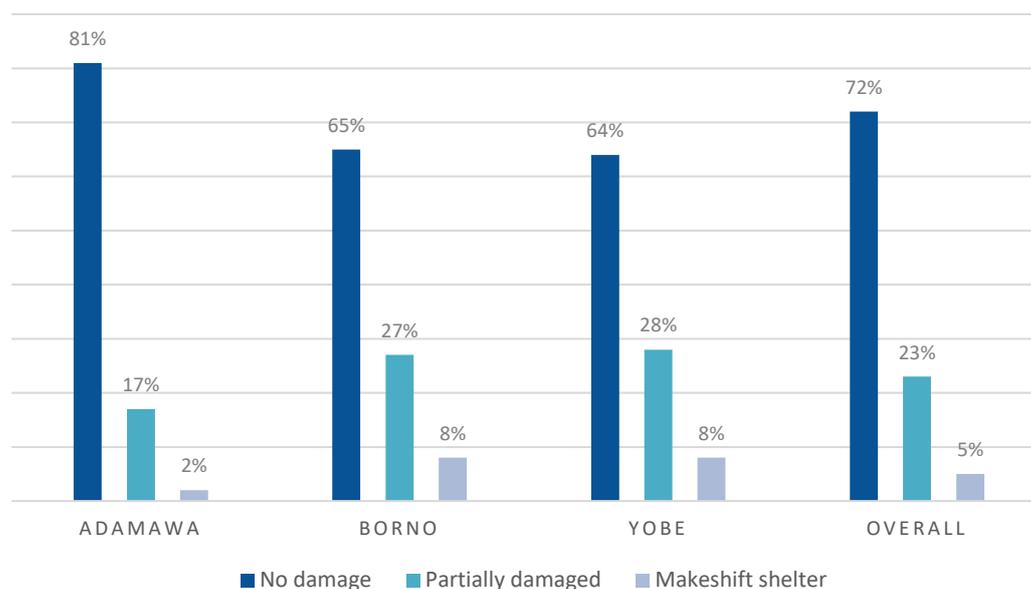


While important returns occurred during in 2017 and 2018, it is noteworthy that areas of return shifted from one year to the next. In 2015, almost all returns recorded were towards or within Adamawa State while 2016 and 2017 witnessed the majority of returns towards or within Borno State. In a context where 95 per cent of returnees were initially displaced because of reasons related to the conflict, these return trends are strongly linked to the evolution of the security situation.

In 2015, Borno State was still embroiled in the conflict against Non-State Armed Groups, which controlled large swathes of the State’s territory. This explains why only a very low number of displaced people decided to return to Borno State. Adamawa State was enjoying a relatively more stable and secure situation, which was reflecting in a significant number of displaced individuals returning to this state. In turn, the increased number of returns between in 2016 and 2017 to Borno can be attributed to the improved security in North East Nigeria, especially in Borno State, following significant military operations conducted by the Nigerian military as well as the subsequent loss of territory by the Non-State Armed Groups.

In Nigeria, shelter conditions were also assessed in areas of return. Analysis demonstrates that 71 per cent of the shelters were not damaged, 23 per cent were partially damaged and five per cent of the shelters assessed were makeshift shelters. Borno, the state in northeastern Nigeria that is most affected by the ongoing conflict, continues to have the highest proportion of returnees residing in makeshift shelters (68%).

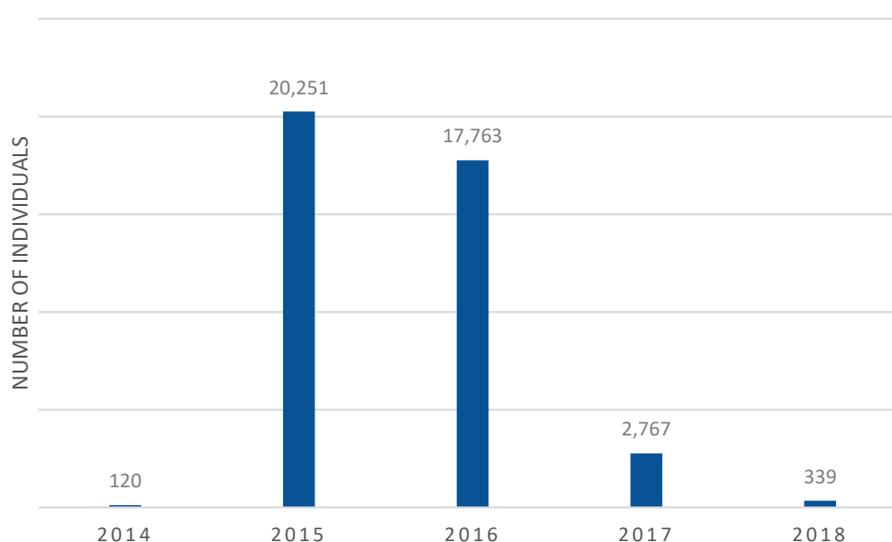
Graph: Shelter conditions in areas of return per state



CHAD: 41,240 returned individuals or 25 per cent of the displaced population in Chad

Chad currently hosts a returnee population of an estimated 41,240 individuals or 2 per cent of the total returnee population in the Lake Chad Basin. 14,942 returned individuals or 36 per cent were displaced within the borders of Chad while another 26,298 individuals or 64 per cent returned from abroad. 63 per cent of the cross-border returnees or 16,512 individuals returned from Niger, while 37 per cent or 9,786 individuals returned from Nigeria.

Graph: Year of return movement in Chad



Lots of these migrants originated from the Lac region and had settled in Niger and Nigeria for economic purposes, such as fishing, trade and cattle farming (because of the increased access to grazing land). Some of these migrants were established in neighboring countries for years and had families and stable livelihoods in the countries hosting them. However, the insecurity resulting from the conflict in Nigeria since mid-2014 and in Niger in 2015 triggered returns of Chadians from these two countries to their or their parents' land.

As the crisis caused massive displacement in Chad, people fled their insular or island villages to the mainland. The context of the crisis has evolved in the southern area of the lake and significant numbers of IDPs have left their locations of displacement to return to areas of origins on the islands in the lake. According to REACH⁵⁵, the great majority of the returned IDPs wish to stay on the islands which they call home. This is regardless of difficult access to land, education, WASH services and income generating activities.⁵⁶

CAMEROON: 100,925 returned individuals or 26 per cent of the displaced population in Cameroon

While the majority of returnees identified are former Cameroonian IDPs who returned to their place of habitual residence (91,035 individuals or 90%), Cameroon also hosts returnees who returned home from Nigeria (9,421 individuals or 10%), the Central African Republic (426 individuals or less than 1%) and Chad (43 individuals or less than 1%).

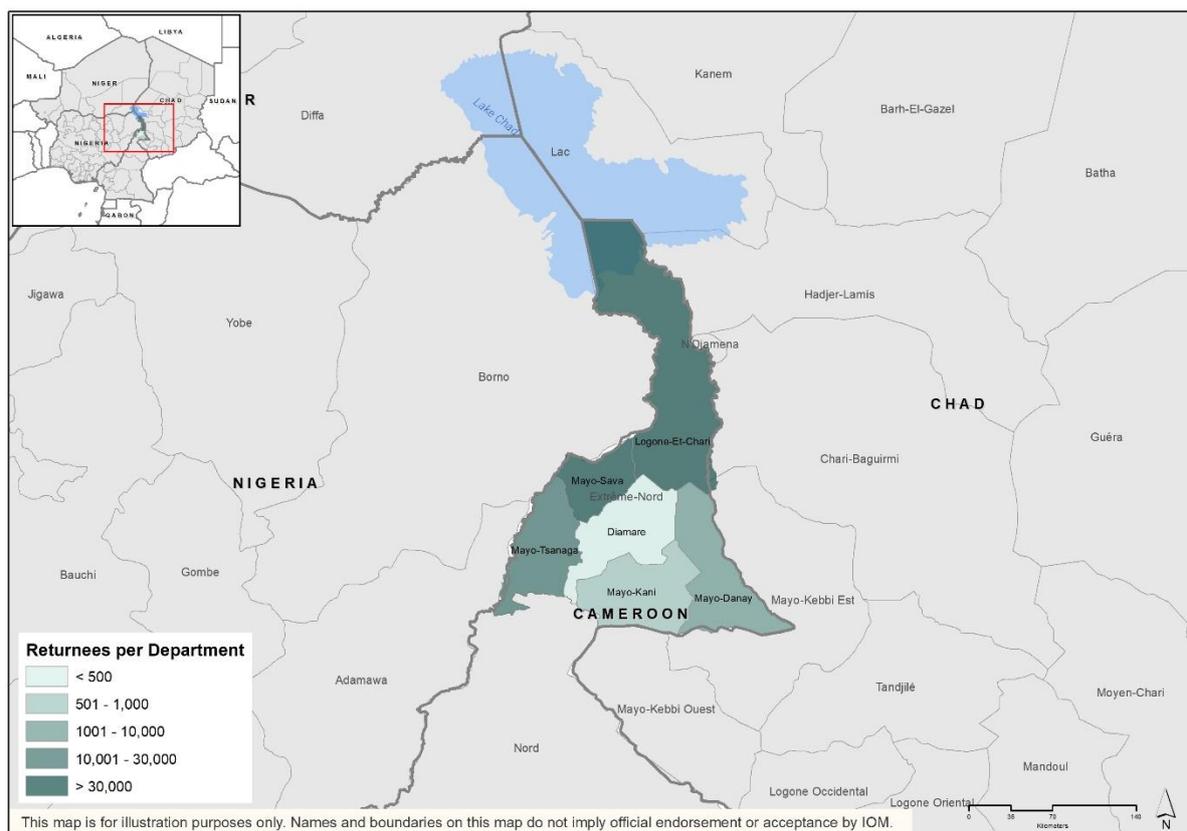
Among the 91,035 returnees who were displaced in Cameroon, 85,300 individuals or 93 per cent were displaced within their department of origin, while 4,203 individuals or 5 per cent were displaced in another department. 1,532 individuals or 2 per cent were displaced in other regions (Nord and Adamaoua).

Almost all returnees live in all the Far North region of Cameroon. The largest numbers of returnees were observed in the Logone-et-Chari (31,532 individuals or 31%), Mayo-Sava (30,497 individuals or 30%) and Mayo-Tsanaga (29,754 individuals or 30%). Other returnees were identified in Mayo-Danay (8,221 individuals or 8%) Mayo-Kani (579 individuals or 1%) and Diamaré (342 individuals or 0.3%)

⁵⁵ REACH is a joint initiative of IMPACT, its sister-organisation ACTED, and the United Nations Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNOSAT). REACH was created in 2010 to facilitate the development of information tools and products that enhance the humanitarian community's decision-making and planning capacity.

⁵⁶ REACH (2018), *Evaluation des dynamiques de déplacement et des besoins essentiels des populations revenues dans la cuvette Sud du Lac*

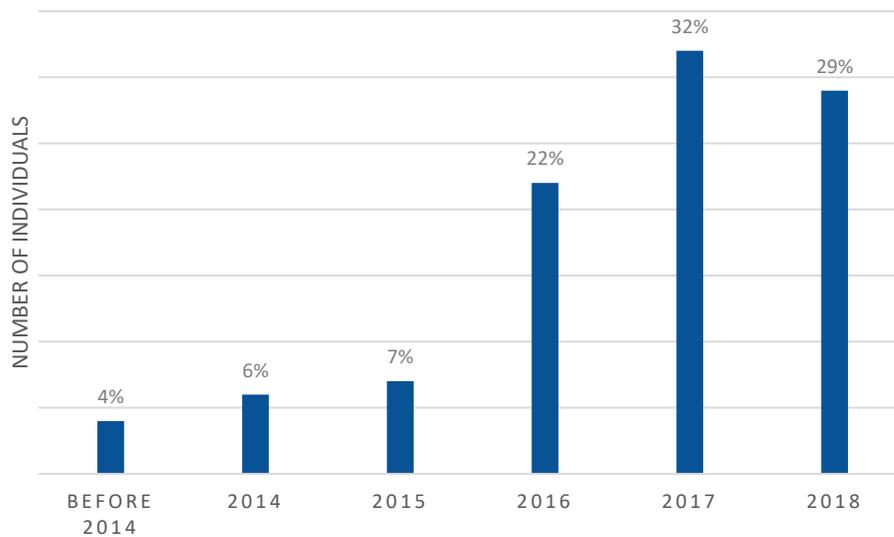
Map: Number of returnees per State in Cameroon



Since late 2016, the number of returnees in Cameroon increased significantly (35,665 individuals in December 2016 vs. 100,925 individuals in October 2018). This is due to the improvement of security in areas of origin as well as limited access to basic services and livelihood during displacement. 37 per cent or 37,600 returnees stated that they returned home because the security situation in areas of origin improved significantly. 31 per cent or 30,993 returnees mentioned the accessibility to cultivable land in locations of origin as the main reason for their return home. 10 per cent said that the lack of livelihood opportunities in locations of displacement is the primary reason why they have returned home while 9 per cent declared that the location of displacement was no longer secure. Other reasons for displaced populations to return home include the lack of assistance during the time of displacement (3%) and tensions with host communities (6%).

In addition, the great majority of the Far North population relies on agriculture to generate income and farming in areas of displacement can prove difficult due to the limited availability of and access to farming land. As such, it is probable that returns occurred in anticipation of the rainy season, which is the main sowing season. The number of **unregistered refugees** arriving in Cameroon went from 23,430 in December 2016 to 41,763 individuals in October 2018.

Graph: Year of return movement in Cameroon



The main year of return for Cameroon was 2017 with a total of 32,765 returned individuals, representing 32 per cent of the return movements that occurred in Cameroon to date. Other returns occurred before 2014 (4,089 returnees or 4%), 2014 (5,638 returnees or 6%), 2015 (7,055 individuals or 7%), 2016 (22,070 returnees or 22%) and 2018 (29,308 individuals until July or 29%). Return movements have been observed in 66 per cent of the villages assessed during the last round. These have mainly been triggered by improved security in the areas of origin and increased access to cultivable land.



An IDP teacher in Maiduguri, Borno, Nigeria

Conclusion: a growing trend towards return

The research for this report was motivated by the need to create an advocacy tool with accurate and up-to-date information on the different displacement patterns resulting from the highly complex interactions between the conflict and Non-State Armed Groups, climate change and communal clashes in the Lake Chad Basin. The purpose is to understand and to provide a clear overview of the different dynamics and human mobility trends in the region in order to deliver relevant and targeted humanitarian assistance in a timely manner.

The Lake Chad Basin humanitarian emergency has evolved to be one of the most severe in the world. Now more than nine years into the crisis, an estimated 10.7 million depend on humanitarian assistance for their survival and 4,471,459 individuals have been forced to leave their homes. The vast majority, almost 2.5 million individuals, remain displaced within the borders of their own country while over 1.8 million individuals have returned to areas of origin and around 160,000 individuals are out of camp refugees.

Compared to the previous analysis in 2016, the total number of displacement affected populations tracked by the DTM has increased by 22.2 per cent. While the number of IDPs has remained very much alike (a 2% increase), the returnee population has increased by almost 80 per cent or over 800,000 individuals. This remarkable development illustrates the growing trend towards return movements in the Lake Chad Basin and calls for increased attention to the plight of returnee populations in regions of origin.

The shift to a phase of high return movements presents a major challenge for humanitarian and development actors. In order to assist and protect returnees, effective strategies to promote self-reliance and support livelihood opportunities in locations of origin need to be put in place. Therefore, to ensure sustainable return movements, it is essential to increasingly measure the needs, demographics and socio-economic profiles of the returnee populations, as well as their access to services, education, governance and public affairs at the community level.

Returnees are often falsely considered to have reached a durable solution and therefore, not to be part of the displaced population. However, the return process does not end in the act of arriving back home, but requires finding ways that will enable returnees to reintegrate, live in safety and rebuild their lives. By including returnees in the displaced population, this report wishes to emphasize that, although displaced individuals have returned to their areas of origin, continued engagement and collaboration between humanitarian and development actors is required to achieve durable solutions for returnees. Only when returnees no longer have any specific assistance and protection needs that are linked to their displacement, and can enjoy their human rights without discrimination, has a durable solution been achieved. Returning to locations of origin ultimately implies another complicated reintegration process.



For more information, please visit:

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Contact:

Regional Office, West and Central Africa, rodakarepcteam@iom.int

Cameroon, dtmcameroon@iom.int

Chad, dtmchad@iom.int

Niger, dtmniger@iom.int

Nigeria, dtmnigeria@iom.int

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