Multi-Sectoral Rapid Needs and Markets Assessment

NORTHEAST NIGERIA EMERGENCY

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**Contact:** Erik Heinonen, Emergency Program Manager, CRS Nigeria, erik.heinonen@crs.org
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In May 2013, the Government of Nigeria declared a State of Emergency in the northeastern states of Yobe, Borno and Adamawa in response to the ongoing Boko Haram insurgency. Over half a decade of conflict across Northeast Nigeria has led to widespread violence, mass displacement, market and agricultural interruptions, a decline or halt in public services, and destruction of infrastructure, property and livelihoods. Despite advances by Nigerian military to secure former Boko Haram-controlled territory, humanitarian needs remain extremely high for displaced and other conflict-affected populations, as insecurity and other constraints have limited humanitarian access for many locations. Borno State has experienced the largest displacement as a result of the Boko Haram crisis, currently hosting 1.4 million internally displaced people (IDPs), with an additional 200,000 Borno residents displaced into neighboring Nigerian states and other countries.¹

Since September 2016, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) has provided critical food, nutrition, shelter, agriculture and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) assistance to IDPs, returnees and those hosting them in communities and informal settlements in Borno State, and food and WASH assistance in Yobe State.² Humanitarian assistance, funded by the USAID Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), Food for Peace (FFP) and private donors, has reached 13,236 households and 71,363 individuals across the two states.

As the security situation has stabilized in portions of Yobe and Borno State, CRS has expanded its services to areas that have not received humanitarian assistance. After expanding provision of aid to Benisheik to the west of Maiduguri Metropolitan Council (MMC) in early 2017, CRS in April began conducting assessment activities in Gubio LGA, approximately 100 km to the north of MMC. Initial CRS assessment activities, focusing on Gubio town, which has drawn approximately 1500 IDP households from adjacent rural areas, included a rapid market assessment and a security assessment, followed by a rapid multi-sectoral technical assessment. Conducted by CRS technical staff, with the support of partner-organization enumerators, the assessment comprised key informant interviews, focus-group discussions, and transect walks, with the goal of determining key community needs and the functionality of local markets. Additional household-level data was collected during registration of beneficiaries for a privately funded food and agricultural assistance pilot project beginning in mid-May.

The assessment activities found that in Gubio town food insecurity is a common problem among displaced and returnee households, as well as in the host community itself. Focus group participants and key informants named food as the community’s greatest need, and initial registration data found that 65 percent of households were experiencing moderate levels of hunger, and 76 percent of households’ Reduced Coping Strategy Index (RCSI) scores were high. In general, mean household hunger scores and RCSI scores were slightly higher among IDPs and returnees as compared to host community households. Due to insecurity in rural areas, food production activities have been substantially reduced in recent years, and the Gubio main market has been closed for security reasons. These factors, and the general lack of non-agricultural livelihood options appear to play an important role in food insecurity. Food and non-food item vendors that continue to operate small shops in Gubio, including seed and agricultural tool vendors, nevertheless report being able to increase their stock of goods within a 1-2 week period to meet an increase in demand. The assessment did not find evidence of major shelter and WASH needs; however, further verification of water quality is recommended, and spot verifications of the cleanliness of drinking containers suggests that further assessment of WASH knowledge, attitude and practices is warranted.

¹ UN OCHA, “Nigeria: Borno Displacement Profile as of 10th October 2016,”
² Kassoum Ouattara, Market Assessment Report (CRS, July 2016)
BACKGROUND
In May 2013, the Government of Nigeria declared a State of Emergency in the northeastern states of Yobe, Borno and Adamawa in response to the ongoing Boko Haram insurgency. Over half a decade of conflict across Northeast Nigeria has led to widespread violence, mass displacement, market and agricultural interruptions, a decline or halt in public services, and destruction of infrastructure, property and livelihoods. Despite continuing advances by Nigerian military to secure former Boko Haram-controlled territory, humanitarian needs remain extremely high for displaced and other conflict-affected populations, as insecurity and other constraints have limited humanitarian access for many locations. Borno State has experienced the largest displacement as a result of the Boko Haram crisis, currently hosting 1.4 million internally displaced people (IDPs) with an additional 200,000 Borno residents displaced into neighboring Nigerian states and other countries. The Assessment Capacities Project (ACAPS) estimated in summer 2016 that some 4.5 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance in Borno, of whom 2.2 million resided in Maiduguri.

Since September 2016, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) has provided critical food, nutrition, shelter, agriculture and WASH assistance to IDPs, returnees and those hosting them in communities and informal settlements in Borno State and food and WASH assistance in Yobe State. Humanitarian assistance, funded by the USAID Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), Food for Peace (FFP) and private donors, has reached 13,236 households and 71,363 individuals across the two states.

While Maiduguri continues to host a large number of those displaced by the insurgency, other LGA centers across the state have also have also drawn IDPs, primarily those fleeing form rural areas where security levels are generally lower. Gubio, located 100 km to the north of Maiduguri, is among the LGA centers that continues to host IDPs fleeing from rural areas, and with improvement in the security situation since late 2016, has also begun to see the return of residents who had fled the area for Maiduguri earlier in the conflict.

In the final months of 2016, NGOs began to have access to Gubio LGA, and the World Food Program (WFP) completed a series of food distributions in the town of Gubio. Since that time, however, there has been little to no humanitarian support provided in Gubio town. CRS initiated assessment activities in April 2017, conducting a rapid market assessment and a security assessment, before later conducting a multi-sectoral rapid assessment to better understand needs related to shelter, WASH, livelihoods, and health.

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5 Kassoum Ouattara, Market Assessment Report (CRS, July 2016)
METHODOLOGY
Assessment activities were conducted during three visits to Gubio, each affording approximately four hours of time on site due to security considerations. Data was collected using several methods—direct observation, focus groups and key informant interviews—with the goal of gathering information from different sources such that triangulation or verification of key findings was possible. The initial rapid market assessment was conducted by a CRS Markets Officer, supported by Markets team assistants, and comprised interviews with 14 food and non-food item vendors. The security assessment was conducted by the CRS security team, supported by the CRS Head of Operations, with information drawn from key informant interviews and observation.

Members of the multi-sectoral rapid technical assessment team were selected based on their previous work in the respective sector, including a CRS Shelter/WASH officer, a CRS Agriculture and Livelihoods officer, and a CRS MEAL Officer. Two enumerators from CRS-partner, the Federation of Muslim Woman Association of Nigeria (FOMWAN), with experience conducting beneficiary registration were also engaged to assist with focus-group discussions. Transect walks were completed in three different areas of Gubio town, with the Shelter/WASH assessment, visiting every fifth compound to observe shelter types and WASH conditions. The Shelter/WASH team also visited boreholes to check function and water volume. Key informants were identified through discussion with local government officials, and focus-group discussions were organized with the help of the community leader responsible for the Gubio 1 Atari neighborhood.

Additional data related to household food security is presented in the sections below that was collected during the initial phase of registration of beneficiaries for privately funded food and agricultural assistance activities. Household-level data was collected from 605 households, living in the southeastern portion of Gubio town, where CRS decided to begin registration after discussions with community leaders regarding the portion of the town where need was felt to be greatest. As such, these data should be not interpreted as necessarily representative of Gubio in its entirety. Data was collected by enumerators during house-to-house visits during the period May 22-27, with all host community households eligible to be registered, in addition to IDP and returnee households. Sixty-one percent of those registered were host-community households, 16 percent were IDP households and 23 percent were returnee households.

FINDINGS
Shelter
During transect walks, assessment staff noted that families in Gubio most commonly live in compounds, with a primary dwelling that is generally a well-constructed, fully built house. IDPs tend to live in the compound of relatives or other hosts, and have constructed dwellings with mud walls and a thatched roof, similar to the dwellings generally constructed by households in rural areas. During the course of transect walks, the assessment team came across only two makeshift shelters, of the sort commonly constructed by IDPs in the urban center of Maiduguri from straw and dried plant stalks. These two makeshift shelters accounted for less than 2 percent of all shelters observed during transect walks.
Overall, 105 shelters were counted within 67 compounds visited by the assessment team during transect walks (1.5 dwellings: 1 compound).

During registration, activities, 46 percent of those registered were found to be living in permanent structure, 35 percent had constructed a shelter within a compound, and 14 percent were living in dwelling of a host family.

**Water**

According to key informants, Gubio has eight boreholes, all of which are powered by generators, connected to the national electric grid. The boreholes provide many households with piped-in water. The assessment team was able to visit six of the boreholes, and found that two of the six had taps for water collection. Three of the boreholes were assessed for water production capacity, with two producing 5000 liters per day, and one producing 3000 liters per day. It was not possible to easily estimate the population of the area served by the respective boreholes.

The assessment team also found that many open wells exist, coming across 10 during three transect walks. Wells were estimated to be approximately 5-6 meters in depth, and are fed with water pumped in from one of the eight boreholes. The open wells observed were not covered to prevent contamination.

Both female and male focus-group participants said that water quality is not a problem in Gubio, and that water is safe to drink; however, water quality was not tested by the team as part of assessment activities. With regard to quantity of water available, female focus-group participants said that at times generators do not function, meaning the network of boreholes do not produce sufficient water for the entire community. Male focus-group participants also said the quantity was not always sufficient. These findings were confirmed by the community leader of Gubio 1 Atari, who said there

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*Gubio is served by eight boreholes, with generator-driven pumps that are powered by the electric grid. Focus group participants say that the water supply is sufficient for household needs, as long as the generators are functioning.*
were some problems with water quantity, stemming from problems with the electrical grid, but that there were no problems with water quality. The community leader suggested a solar-powered pump-system as a solution to problems with the grid-powered generators used to facilitate water pumping.

**Sanitation**

Based on transect walks and driving through Gubio, the assessment team rated the overall level of sanitation as acceptable. While no public latrines were observed, the team found evidence of open defecation in only one location, an abandoned structure, opposite a school. Non-improved pit latrines appear to be a common place for defecation, frequently observed by team members visiting compounds during transect walks. Focus-group participants, also said that overall the number of latrines per individual was not sufficient, estimating that there were about 20 people per latrine. The community leader of Gubio 1 Atari confirmed that every household has a latrine, but that there are often too many people using a given latrine.

Stagnate water, while not deemed as a major problem in Gubio by the assessment team in terms of its prevalence, was noted at two of Gubio’s water points, where puddling was observed. Overall, the team reported seeing very little garbage during transect walks.

While sanitation conditions were observed to be largely acceptable across Gubio and water quality appears to be good, the assessment team did note that many of the water transport and storage containers they observed during transect walks were not clean.

**Hygiene**

According to focus-group respondents, there are no public bathing places in Gubio, and the community leader of Gubio 1 Atari confirmed that there are no public bathing places.

**Health**

The key informant engaged in public health and provision of health care in Gubio reported that malaria, anemia, measles and typhoid fever are the major illnesses affecting returnees and IDPs,
with malaria and measles having become more common problems in recent months. No cases of cholera have been reported in recent times, according to key informants. Female focus-group participants confirmed that malaria, measles and typhoid were major health problems among IDPs and returnees. In particular, measles was said to affect very young children (0-1 year old), while malaria and typhoid affected adults. Both male and female focus-group participants said malaria, measles and typhoid had all become more common in recent months.

With regard to health care, there are three health centers in Gubio as well as two dispensaries. Malaria, measles, typhoid and cholera can be treated locally, while severe medical cases can be referred or transferred to Maiduguri, according to Gubio’s senior health supervisor.

The major barrier for IDPs and returnees to seeking medical care, in the view of the senior health supervisor, is limited knowledge of what services exist, where or how to access them, and when the services are needed. Of note, focus-group participants said they went to the clinic when they were sick or ill, but said there was only one clinic in Gubio.

In terms of greatest needs, health officials say increased supply of basic drugs, mosquito nets and supplements are most needed at present. Focus group participants also noted insufficient supplies of drugs in Gubio.

**Malnutrition**

The local health-care system receives support from the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) and WFP with regard to malnutrition; however, the senior health coordinator for Gubio says that additional support is needed in mobilization and sensitization of community members in relation to malnutrition.

**Food security**

Food was described as the overwhelming priority by those participating in focus-group discussions. Participants reported that everyone in Gubio was experiencing some degree of food insecurity, but noted that IDPs are generally the most food insecure.

Data collected during the initial round of beneficiary registration for the CRS food and agriculture assistance pilot found that among 605 households, 3 percent were experiencing severe hunger, 65 percent were experiencing moderate hunger, and 32 percent were experiencing light to no hunger, based on household hunger score methodology. Mean household hunger scores (scale 1-6) were higher among IDPs (2.15) and returnees (2.21) as compared to host community households (1.8). A similar pattern was observed with regard to food-related coping-strategy use. Based on the Reduced Coping Strategy Index, 76 percent of all households were determined be utilizing a high-level of coping strategies (score of 10 or above), 15 percent were utilizing a medium level (score of 4-9), and 3 percent were utilizing a low-level of coping strategies or not utilizing coping strategies (score of 0-3). The mean RCSI score among IDPs and returnees were 18.8 and 19.1, respectively, while the mean among host community households was 14.2. Mean food consumption scores were similar across IDP (19.4), returnee (20.4) and host community (20.2) households, denoting on average, poor dietary diversity, but not far from reaching borderline acceptability (score of 21.5-35).

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7 Food Consumption Analysis: Calculation and Use of Food Consumption Scores in Food Security Analysis, VAM, 2008.
Focus group participants reported that food insecurity is in part a function of limited access to food, due to the closure of main market in Gubio, and reduced agricultural production in the region in recent years due to instability.

**Markets**
According to focus-group discussion participants, Gubio’s main market has been closed for some time at the request of security forces, and they do much of their local shopping at small shops, where they buy basic food items, such as rice and cooking oil. Overall, the supply of household NFIs and hygiene NFIs (e.g. bathing soap, laundry soap) is very limited, and it is often necessary to go to Maiduguri to purchase NFIs, according to both male and female focus-group participants.

**Livelihoods**
Most households that are able to generate income do so through petty trading, such as sale of groundnuts and cowpeas. This is generally done by women. Male focus-group participants mention sale of firewood and dried grass as means of generating income.

Female focus-group participants describe primary barriers to generating income as being lack of capital, low technical skill level (i.e. few have skills or experiencing in activities such as tailoring, catering). Male focus-group participants said that insecurity was the primary barrier to engaging in income-generating activities.

**Agriculture**
In the past, households engaged in farming, but most have stopped the last two years due to the insurgency and lack of farm inputs, according to focus group participants and the community leader of Gubio 1 Atari. The latter estimated that 95 percent of people in Gubio have farmland. Similarly, focus-group participants say they don’t garden at present, but they said the primary barrier is insufficiency of water. If water could be accessed, focus group participants said it would be possible to grow garden vegetables. Focus group participants said that it would be possible to obtain land for use for gardening close where they live, or in fields near to town. The community leader of Gubio 1 Atari confirmed that community members would likely be open to giving IDPs land to farm or for gardening.

Due to the closure of local markets, focus-group discussion participants said seeds for farming and gardening would have to be purchased in Maiduguri. According to the community leader of Gubio 1 Atari, small quantities of seeds can be purchased in Gubio, but larger amounts most be purchased in Maiduguri, with the market in Gubio closed. He also noted that fertilizer can be found in Gubio only when the government supplies it. Common crops grown by those living in and around Gubio are sorghum, millet and cowpeas.

Overall, insufficiency of water for cultivation and lack of farm inputs were said to be the major barriers to gardening or farming.

With regard to livestock, female focus-group participants said before the insurgency it was common to keep goats and chickens, but that most people lost all their animals as a result of the insurgency, and have had no capital to subsequently invest in livestock. Male focus-group participants noted that host-community members keep cows and sheep in addition to goats and chickens. In general, fodder during the dry season, access to water, and insufficient access to medication were said to be the major challenges facing those engaged in raising livestock.
Agricultural inputs

During visits to five shops of agricultural vendors, the assessment team found that tools and seeds were not sold together, but rather shops specialize in either seeds or farming implements. Overall, all five vendors estimated that approximately 50-60 shops in Gubio sell agricultural inputs of one sort or another.

The seed vendors visited by the assessment team maintain similar inventories of seed, including millet, groundnut, and sorghum, with one selling cowpeas and one selling beans. Millet and groundnut were said to be the most commonly purchased seeds for both shops, with beans and cowpeas also said to be popular. Both shop owners said farming is more prevalent than maintaining a garden. Lack of access to fertilizer and insecticide were viewed as major challenges for local farmers, on the part of vendors. With regard to supply, one vendor said he purchased his seed from nearby villages, while the other mostly procured seed from Maiduguri, with the exception of groundnut, which he sourced locally. Both reported re-stocking daily, with one confident in being able to increase stocks to serve a large number of new customers, and the other saying he could stock-up to serve a smaller increase in customers. Both felt they could increase their stocks in one week.

Three shops, all located near the roadside, sold agricultural implements, with hoes, shovels, rakes, axes and machetes being their most common items in stock. All three vendors said axes and hoes were the most commonly purchased tools, and all three sourced their agricultural implements from Maiduguri. One vendor reported re-stocking weekly, while the other two usually re-stocked twice a month. All three felt they could increase their inventory to accommodate a large increase in customers, but they would need 1-2 weeks to procure additional inventory. All three cited accessing credit, and “charges of transport,” as potential barriers to increasing their inventory to accommodate an increase in customers.

While the main market in Gubio has been closed due to the security situation, many vendors continue to operate small shops, selling both food and non-food items. Agricultural vendors source most of their inventory from Maiduguri.
Needs and plans for the future
Female focus-group participants mentioned a variety of needs on the part of IDPs, including shelter, food, health, nutrition and NFIs (this may be reflective of the topics discussed over the course of the focus group, before greatest needs were discussed at the conclusion). For returnees, food, NFI and capital for business start-up were mentioned as primary needs. Overall, focus-group participants felt that everyone in the community is facing challenges, and should be considered vulnerable, although during the male focus group, in which three of the four participants were IDPs, participants said that IDPs and returnees were more vulnerable overall. Male focus-group participants said that for IDPs, shelter, food and NFIs were the great needs, while for returnees NFIs and shelter were the greatest need.

With regard to plans for priorities for the future, female focus-group participants mentioned “getting a good place to settle,” ensuring their children could continue their education, and ensuring their children’s health. Men said their greatest priority is securing agricultural inputs to begin farming. Men also mentioned accessing capital for investment in other business activities and having better health care as priorities.

Population movement
Key informants and focus-group participants feel that the number of returnees may increase in the future, with people returning from Maiduguri, because they have access to farm land in Gubio. They note, as well, that decreased security in the countryside could also cause greater displacement of households to Gubio.

Existing support
According to the community leader of Gubio 1 Atari, the National Emergency Management Agency NEMA and Red Cross conducted a one-off registration of beneficiaries, but have not returned. Red Cross also distributed jerry cans, cooking pots, mats and mattresses at one point to some community member. WHO did a one-time distribution of soap and detergent, and NEMA did a one-time distribution of food products. No construction or hygiene sensitization is currently taking place. One organization has been doing MUAC screening, but the community leader was not sure of the organization’s name.

CONCLUSIONS
While infrastructure in Gubio town has not sustained substantial damage due to insurgent activities, and the town has been able to absorb the arrival of an estimated 1500 IDP households, without the appearance of informal camps or settlements, food insecurity is a widespread problem across IDPs, returnees and the broader host community. Food insecurity appears to be linked to reduced agricultural output in recent years, reduction in commerce along the Damasak-Maiduguri road, the closure of the Gubio market, and lack of income on the part of local residents, who have few non-agriculture livelihood options. Market closures, disrupted supply chains, and reduced demand have also affected the supply of hygiene and household NFIs and agricultural inputs, although local vendors generally said they are able to increase their inventory in a short-period of time if necessary. The assessment did not find evidence of major shelter and WASH needs; however, further verification is necessary to ensure that water quality is, in fact, acceptable, while spot verifications of the cleanliness of drinking containers suggests that further research into WASH knowledge, attitude and practices is warranted.