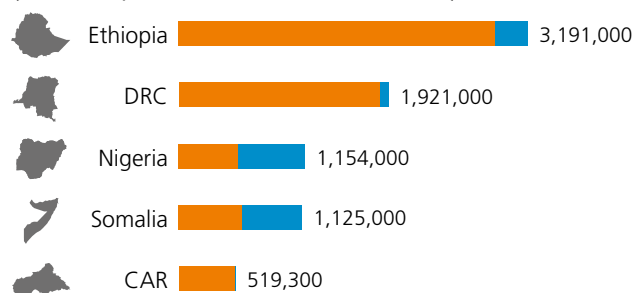


## SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA



Conflict 7,446,000  
Disasters 2,611,000  
36% of the global total

### 5 COUNTRIES WITH MOST NEW DISPLACEMENT (conflict, violence and disasters)



Sub-Saharan Africa experienced ongoing as well as new conflict and violence throughout 2018 and in addition, suffered droughts, floods and storms that forced millions of people to flee their homes. Around 7.4 million new displacements associated with conflict and violence and 2.6 million associated with disasters were recorded, more than any other region and accounting for 36 per cent of all displacements worldwide. Ethiopia, DRC, Nigeria, Somalia and CAR were the countries worst affected. Around 16.5 million people were living in internal displacement in Sub-Saharan Africa as a result of conflict as of the end of the year. This figure once again shows that protracted displacement is a significant issue for many countries.

Against a backdrop of important and many positive political changes, 2.9 million new displacements associated with conflict were recorded in **Ethiopia**, the highest figure in the world and four times as many as in 2017. Old conflicts became more entrenched and new conflicts escalated along various state borders, prompting the government to establish a new Ministry of Peace in response to the increasing violence (see Ethiopia spotlight, p.14).<sup>10</sup> Disasters also triggered 296,000 new displacements, many of them associated with flooding in the Somali region.<sup>11</sup>

More than 1.8 million new displacements associated with conflict were recorded in **DRC**, primarily in North and South Kivu, Tanganyika and Kasai Central provinces, where conflict and insecurity continued. The province of Ituri had been embroiled in conflict between 1999 and 2007 and had since been relatively peaceful, but

intercommunal violence reignited in December 2017, leading to 60 deaths and more than 576,000 new displacements. What rekindled the conflict is unclear, but a national political crisis, the disintegration of state authority and the increasing activity of politically-motivated militias may all have been contributing factors.<sup>12</sup> The western province of Mai-Ndombe also experienced an outbreak of intercommunal violence between 16 and 18 December 2018, when at least 535 people were killed in a massacre and around 12,000 people displaced from the town of Yumbi.<sup>13</sup>

More than three million people were thought to be living in internal displacement as of the end of 2018 in DRC, a highly conservative figure that does not capture the whole country. There are hopes that presidential elections that took place on 30 December after a two-year delay will help to stabilise the political situation.<sup>14</sup>

More than 578,000 new displacements associated with conflict and violence were recorded in **Somalia**, the highest figure in a decade and the result of three main factors. Evictions from urban centres, mainly of IDPs, accounted for about 44 per cent of the figure. Driven by a lack of adequate housing and informal tenure agreements in increasingly crowded areas, the number of evictions reached a record high.<sup>15</sup> Tensions between Somaliland and Puntland over the disputed regions of Sool and Sanaag also flared, and Al Shabaab fighters clashed with government and African Union troops, particularly in the southern regions of Middle and Lower Shabelle.<sup>16</sup>

In addition, around 547,000 new displacements associated with disasters were recorded in Somalia. Almost half of the figure, or 249,000, were associated with drought, mainly in the southern regions of Bay, Lower Shabelle and Bakool, as people moved from rural areas in search of water and livelihood opportunities. Above average rainfall also caused flooding in southern and central areas of the country during the rainy season in April and May, triggering around 289,000 new displacements. Some families in remote villages were cut off from the rest of the country for months, leaving them in particularly vulnerable conditions.<sup>17</sup>

Conflict and violence in the north-eastern and Middle Belt regions of **Nigeria** triggered 541,000 new displacements in 2018, and floods inundated 80 per cent of the country, triggering 600,000. Clashes between northern herders and southern farmers competing for scarce resources have taken place in Middle Belt since 2014, but the violence escalated significantly last year, triggering 200,000 new displacements. Whole villages and herder settlements were burnt down and hundreds of people were killed, making the conflict more deadly than the Boko Haram insurgency.<sup>18</sup>

Fighting between the government and armed opposition groups in the north-east of the country entered its tenth year, triggering 341,000 new displacements. Despite the ongoing insecurity, the government insists that Boko Haram is near defeat and has been promoting returns to some parts of the north-east. At least 311,000 IDPs were recorded as having returned in 2018, along with more than 30,000 Nigerian refugees returning from Cameroon.<sup>19</sup> Based on data on housing conditions of returnees, however, at least 86,000 people returned to partially damaged housing or makeshift shelters. Around two million people were thought to be living in displacement as a result of conflict as of the end of the year (Nigeria spotlight, p.18).

Other countries in the Lake Chad Basin also continued to be affected by the Boko Haram insurgency, with more than 52,000 new displacements recorded in **Niger** and 22,000 in **Cameroon**. There was not enough reliable information to compile an estimate for new displacements for **Chad** for 2018, but displacement is thought to be ongoing in the country.

The impact of Boko Haram in **Cameroon** was overshadowed by 437,000 new displacements in the Northwest and Southwest regions, where tensions over govern-

ment moves to impose French on the anglophone population that had been simmering since 2016 erupted into armed conflict between separatists and the military (Cameroon spotlight, p.16).

Continued fighting between armed groups in **CAR** triggered 510,000 new displacements in 2018, leaving around 641,000 people living in internal displacement as of the end of the year. Clashes in Ouham Pende, Ouaka and Haut-Kotto prefectures triggered the majority of the displacement, including in the urban centres of Bambari and Bria. The government signed a peace deal with 14 armed factions in February 2019, raising hopes that levels of violence and displacement would decrease in the future.

In **South Sudan**, more than 321,000 new displacements associated with conflict were recorded during the year, leaving almost 1.9 million people living in internal displacement as of December. The two main parties to the conflict signed a peace deal in September 2018, but there was no immediate reduction in violence.<sup>20</sup>

Clashes in neighbouring **Sudan** between the government and the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) triggered 41,000 new displacements in the Jebel Marra mountains at the intersection between South, North and Central Darfur. Torrential rains and landslides also triggered 420 new displacements in the same area in early September.<sup>21</sup> SLM/A declared a unilateral three-month ceasefire the same month to allow humanitarian access to those affected.<sup>22</sup>

Around 5,600 returns to the five states that make up the Darfur region were recorded in 2018, but a lack of information about people's circumstances and reports of returnees being attacked raised serious questions about their sustainability.<sup>23</sup> The Sudanese government is also working with the international community to convert a number of displacement camps into residential areas, leading to IDPs' de facto local integration – a positive move though the outcome remains to be seen.<sup>24</sup>

Around 126,000 new displacements associated with conflict and violence were recorded in **Mali**, 42,000 in **Burkina Faso**, 5,000 in **Ghana**, 3,500 in **Benin** and 3,000 in **Sierra Leone**, between them accounting for a significant increase in the overall figure for West Africa compared to 2017. Inter-communal clashes in Mali between Fulani herders and Dogon and Bambara farmers escalated during the year, and intra-community

*Internally displaced people return to their homes in Kipese, a small town situated in North Kivu province, which was affected by armed conflict in May 2018. Photo: NRC/Martin Lukongo, July 2018*



violence among the Fulani and attacks by extremist groups added to the instability. Many villages were looted and torched, making returns more challenging. Armed Islamist groups have increased their presence in Burkina Faso since 2016, prompting counterterrorism operations in 2017 and 2018 that led to numerous allegations of extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests and the abuse of suspects in custody.<sup>25</sup>

Small to medium-scale disasters affected many countries in the region in 2018, events that tend not to receive enough attention or resources despite their severe impacts on people and local economies. Around 336,000 new displacements were recorded in **Kenya** as heavy rains led to flooding in all of the country's 47 counties. Thousands of hectares of farmland were inundated and livestock killed, threatening the livelihoods of pastoralists and farmers alike.<sup>26</sup> At least six dams burst, triggering around 12,000 new displacements. Flooding also led to 158,000 new displacements in **Uganda**,

121,000 in **Sudan**, 56,000 in **Ghana**, 15,000 in **Liberia** and 3,000 in **Côte d'Ivoire**.

These significant levels of displacement occurred despite policy progress in the region. 2019 marks the tenth anniversary of the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa.<sup>27</sup> Also known as the Kampala Convention, it is the world's only legally binding regional instrument on internal displacement. Renewed commitment to its provisions on the part of African Union member states is needed, however, given that new and protracted displacement continue to be a major challenge. **Niger** should be commended for becoming the first country to incorporate the convention into its domestic legislation, when parliament voted unanimously to adopt a national law on internal displacement in December 2018.<sup>28</sup>

## Urban perspectives

Internal displacement in Sub-Saharan Africa takes place against the backdrop of unprecedented urbanisation. The region is still substantially rural with 40 per cent of its population living in cities, but this is set to change considerably in the coming years.<sup>29</sup> African cities are among the fastest growing in the world and some, including Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, Kampala in Uganda, Abuja in Nigeria, Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso and Bamako in Mali, are expected to double in size by 2035.<sup>30</sup>

The rapid and unplanned nature of much of this urbanisation has the potential to aggravate existing challenges and create new ones. Many of the region's urban dwellers have little or no access to water and sanitation.<sup>31</sup> Millions of people live in inadequate housing in overcrowded, underserved and marginalised neighbourhoods, in conditions of high exposure and vulnerability to hazards and displacement risk.<sup>32</sup> Some cities are also trying to cope with significant influxes of IDPs from rural areas.

Urban floods are a major challenge. Six of the ten largest flooding events that triggered displacement in 2018 were in Sub-Saharan Africa, and urban areas bore the brunt of the impacts. Thousands of people were displaced during the rainy season in cities including Beledweyne in Somalia and Lagos in Nigeria. IDMC's flood displacement risk model suggests that floods are likely to displace on average 2.7 million people in the region at any given year in the future, two-thirds of them in urban and peri-urban areas.

When crises hit, local authorities often struggle to respond to the needs of those affected, including IDPs.<sup>33</sup> They tend to be understaffed and underfunded, and rely on resources provided by national authorities and in some cases the international humanitarian community. Response capacity also varies between smaller and larger cities, an issue that needs to be considered in future interventions and investments that aim to tackle the challenges associated with urban displacement.<sup>34</sup>

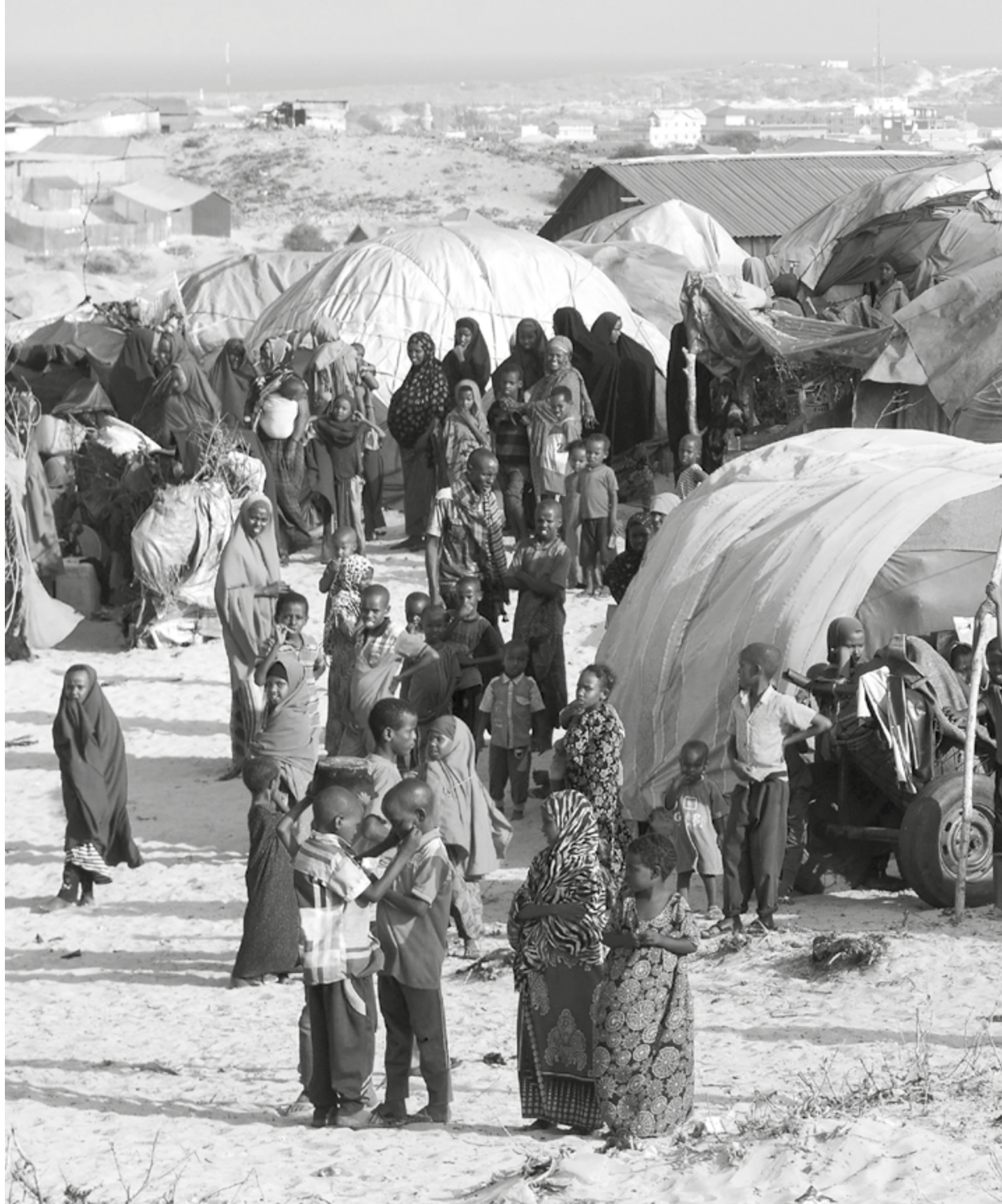
The municipal governments of Maiduguri in Nigeria and Mogadishu in Somalia have taken some positive steps to this end. IDPs in both cities face specific vulnerabilities related to their displacement, including access to employment and livelihoods and the risk of forced evic-

tions. In response, the local government in Maiduguri has collaborated with Nigeria's central bank to set up entrepreneurship centres for unemployed young people and IDPs. In Mogadishu, the Banadir regional authority has worked with the UN and the private sector to create a durable solutions unit to support employment creation and entrepreneurship programmes for IDPs.<sup>35</sup>

Such initiatives serve as examples to other local governments of their potential to facilitate durable solutions. Urbanisation in Sub-Saharan Africa will continue to play a major role in shaping the region's development. It has the potential to bring significant social and economic benefits, including alleviating poverty and inequality and reducing the risks and impacts of displacement.<sup>36</sup> To do so, the role of local authorities must be leveraged.



*Somali families that fled conflict and drought live in crowded and unhealthy conditions in a shelter camp in Kismayo in southern Somalia. With shelters made only of plastic, cloth and sticks, families here are vulnerable to flooding and insecurity. Photo: NRC/Jepsen, February 2019*



## SPOTLIGHT

# ETHIOPIA

## New waves of conflict cause unprecedented displacement

Ethiopia had the highest number of new internal displacements associated with conflict worldwide in 2018. The country's crisis has been deepening steadily since 2016, but conflict and intercommunal violence escalated significantly and spread to new areas last year, triggering almost 2.9 million new displacements, four times the figure for 2017. Conflict and displacement were recorded along three of the Oromia region's borders, with the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' (SNNP) region in the south-west, the Benishangul-Gumuz region in the north-west and the Somali region in the east. Urban centres were also affected, including Addis Ababa and Jijiga, the capital of the Somali region.<sup>37</sup>

This unprecedented rise in new displacement comes against the backdrop of significant political change in the country, with a new prime minister taking power in April 2018. The new government ended the country's state of emergency, released political prisoners and forged a peace deal with Eritrea.<sup>38</sup> It has also been praised for abandoning past practices including the excessive use of force to curb protests and for its cooperation with aid agencies in responding to acute humanitarian needs. By doing so the new government has acknowledged the presence of conflict-induced IDPs within its border. A crucial step towards addressing their plight.<sup>39</sup>

After two decades of relative calm, the most significant displacement was triggered by inter-communal violence between the Guji and Gedeo ethnic groups that erupted in April and again in June in the West Guji zone of Oromia and the Gedeo zone of SNNP. Underlying ethnic tensions were aggravated by competition for land and scarce resources.<sup>40</sup> The conflict left hundreds of thousands of people sheltering in overcrowded collective centres, where humanitarian agencies struggled to provide food, health, water and sanitation for the rapidly growing displaced population. The government collaborated with the agencies, who had no previous



presence in the south of the country, to set up and coordinate a large-scale response.<sup>41</sup>

Ethnic violence also broke out between Oromos, Amharas and Gumuz in Benishangul Gumuz in October following the killing of three local police officers.<sup>42</sup> Around 62,000 new displacements were recorded between October and December. Humanitarian needs were acute, but insecurity hampered agencies' access and only one aid delivery was reported.<sup>43</sup>

Fighting and displacement that began along the border between the Oromia and Somali regions in 2017 continued unabated last year. Conflict over the disputed border was aggravated by drought, which increased competition for scarce resources, leading to the displacement of ethnic Oromos living in the Somali region and ethnic Somalis living in Oromia. Hundreds of thousands of new displacements were recorded. Heavy fighting in the Oromo town of Moyale between the Somali Garreh and Oromi Borenas sub-clans triggered around 80,000 new displacements in two weeks in December. The town also suffered significant damage. Its hospital was destroyed and its shops and banks looted.<sup>44</sup>

Inter-communal violence in Jijiga, a previously calm and vibrant city, led to the displacement of 140,000 people in just a few days in August, of whom 35,000 remained in the city and sheltered in and around churches. Jijiga was inaccessible for several weeks as a result of the insecurity, but economic activity had resumed by the middle of the month and many people returned once the situation had stabilised.<sup>45</sup> Clashes on the outskirts of Addis





*Displaced women attending a focus group discussion on beneficiary satisfaction in Guji Zone, Oromia Region. Photo: Rikka Tupaz / UN Migration Agency (IOM) 2017*

Ababa in September, when Oromo youth flocked to the capital to welcome Oromo Liberation Front fighters returning from Eritrea, displaced 15,000 people.<sup>46</sup>

Ethiopia's new government has put a number of measures in place in response to the country's displacement crisis, including peace-building activities to promote voluntary returns and programmes to support those who prefer to integrate into their host communities or settle elsewhere.<sup>47</sup> A minister for peace has also been appointed. A durable solutions strategy for the Somali region was developed in 2017 in line with the Guiding Principles and the Kampala Convention, a regional treaty on IDPs' protection and assistance.<sup>48</sup>

The government has been criticised, however, for encouraging premature returns to regions not yet safe and for not doing enough to protect civilians.<sup>49</sup> Nor has Ethiopia ratified the Kampala Convention yet. In light of the country's growing internal displacement crisis and in the spirit of improving policies to tackle the phenomenon, the tenth anniversary of the convention's adoption in 2019 presents an ideal opportunity to do so.

## SPOTLIGHT

## CAMEROON

## A deepening but neglected crisis

Boko Haram's regional insurgency continued to cause displacement in Cameroon in 2018, but events in the Far North region were all but eclipsed by an internal conflict that erupted in the Northwest and Southwest regions, home to the country's anglophone minority. A protest movement that began in 2016 escalated into fighting between armed separatists and the country's military, triggering around 437,000 new displacements during the year. Another 30,000 people fled across the border into Nigeria.

The Northwest and Southwest regions, with a population of four million people, have long been marginalised and have experienced occasional outbreaks of violence as the government suppressed protests. The latest violence has its roots in a strike declared by lawyers' and teachers' trade unions over the government's efforts to impose French on the two sectors. Cameroon's security forces launched a violent crackdown on protests in support of the strike, and numerous anglophone activists were arrested, including 47 in Nigeria.

This repression in turn led elements of the opposition to take up arms, and separatist groups calling for an independent Ambazonia Republic have engaged in armed confrontation with the military since January 2018. The government has responded with full-blown counterinsurgency operations. It has been accused of engaging in extrajudicial executions, excessive use of force, the torture and ill-treatment of suspected separatists and other detainees and the burning of homes and property.<sup>50</sup>

Military operations have been recorded in more than 100 villages in the Southwest and Northwest regions since October 2017.<sup>51</sup> Most if not all of the inhabitants of the villages targeted have fled, and around 80 per cent are thought to have sought refuge in the forest, where they have no access to shelter, water or sanitation.<sup>52</sup> Meme Division in the Southwest region has borne the brunt of the crisis, producing and hosting the majority of IDPs.



Education has been severely disrupted. Many schools shut down as part of the initial protests, and armed groups have banned them from reopening. They have also burned some schools down, and threatened others who did not comply with the ban. Around 42,500 children are thought to be out of school as a result, and the figure is expected to rise to 311,000 in 2019.<sup>53</sup>

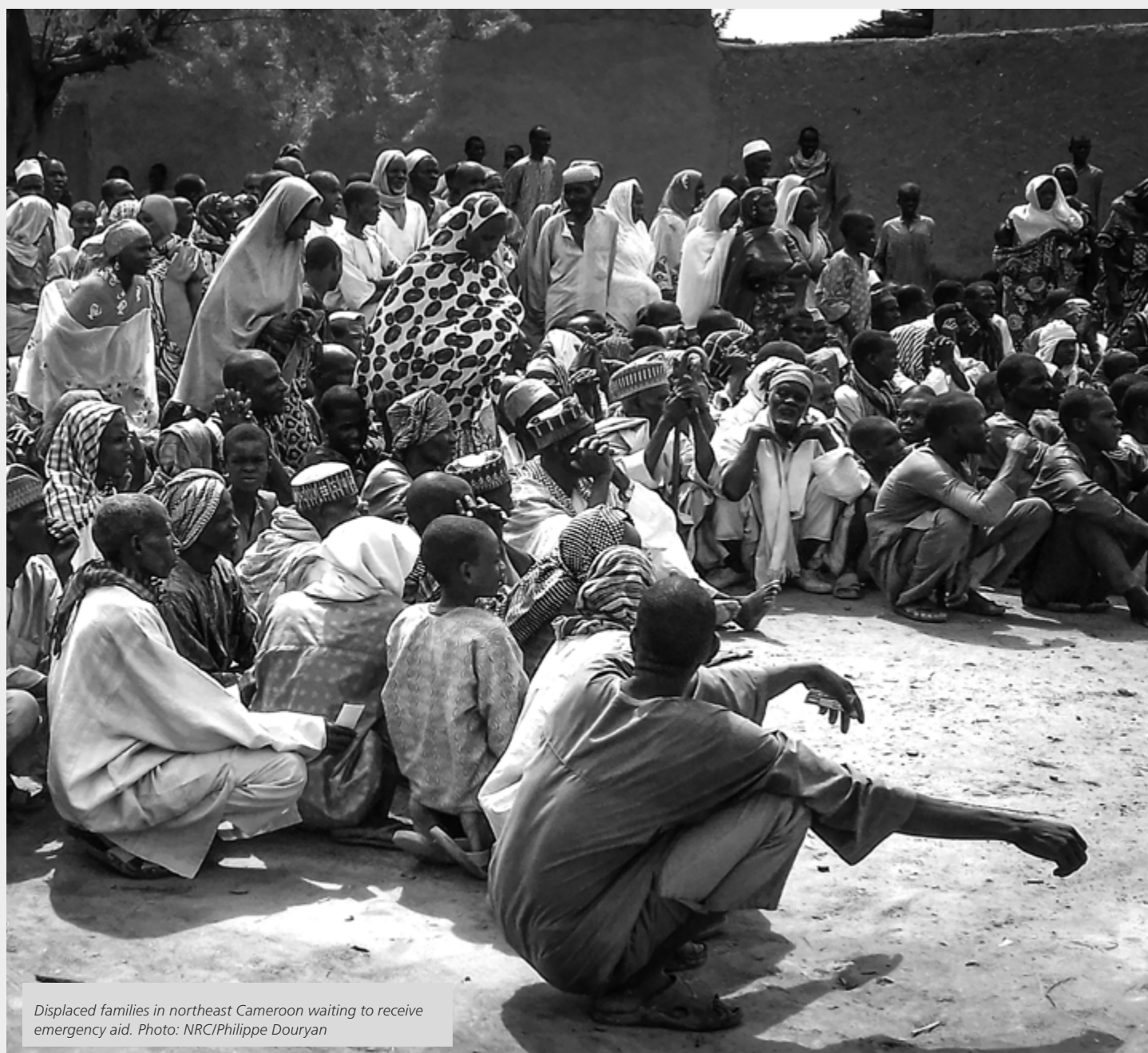
The insecurity and violence have also undermined people's livelihoods. The majority of the population depends on agriculture and small-scale trade for a living, and people's inability to access their land and markets as a result of displacement has led to serious food shortages.<sup>54</sup>

Humanitarian needs in both the Southwest and Northwest regions are acute, but the response has been limited. Instances of new displacements have even been reported in the Ouest and Littoral regions, as the conflict has spilled over into neighbouring regions. The UN's Humanitarian Response Plan published in May 2018 called for \$15.2 million to reach 160,000 people, but the number of IDPs and others in need has since risen significantly. Very few international agencies are present on the ground, and those who are have had to prioritise the little funding they receive to address the basic needs of the newly displaced people.<sup>55</sup> The



response began to gather pace in the second half of the year, but by the end of the year, only 40 per cent of the requested funding had been secured.<sup>56</sup>

Education lies at the heart of Cameroon's new conflict, and the government has continued to enforce French in anglophone schools despite intense and widespread opposition. Doing so drives the tensions that have triggered violence and displacement. The education sector has been particularly hard hit, but the response has been hampered by limited funding and competing priorities.<sup>57</sup> More humanitarian assistance will reduce the impact on those affected, particularly children, but a political solution to the conflict is key to preventing further displacement.



*Displaced families in northeast Cameroon waiting to receive emergency aid. Photo: NRC/Philippe Douryan*

## SPOTLIGHT

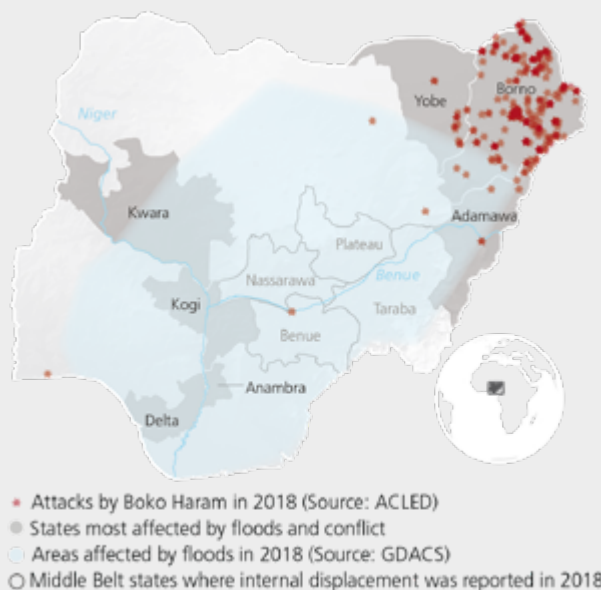
# NIGERIA

## Floods and conflict converged to deepen an existing crisis

More than 541,000 new displacements associated with conflict and violence were recorded in Nigeria in 2018, bringing the number of people living in displacement as of the end of the year to 2.2 million. Ongoing conflict in north-eastern states and new conflict between herders and farmers over scarce resources in the Middle Belt led to 341,000 and 200,000 new displacements, respectively. Thirty-four of Nigeria's thirty-six states were also affected by flooding as the banks of the Benue and Niger rivers burst, triggering 600,000 new displacements and submerging thousands of homes.<sup>58</sup>

Despite official insistence that Boko Haram is close to defeat, attacks by armed opposition groups continued last year, particularly in the north-eastern states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe.<sup>59</sup> About 90 per cent of IDPs, or just over two million, were living in the north-east of the country as of the end of 2018. An estimated 832,000 people also continue to live in areas under the control of armed groups in the north-east and remain inaccessible to aid workers.<sup>60</sup> Humanitarian access has been severely restricted throughout the ten years of conflict, despite organisations' efforts to negotiate entry points.

Over 311,000 movements were reported as returns by data providers in 2018; however, these are not considered sustainable as IDPs are returning to damaged or destroyed housing, or are still living in areas plagued by security risks. The Nigerian government is investing in reconstruction initiatives to promote IDPs' return.<sup>61</sup> In the Bama area of Borno state, it built or renovated around 10,000 homes, more than 150 classrooms and more than 50 hand water pumps. It approved the return of 120,000 IDPs in March 2018, but armed groups are still active in the area.<sup>62</sup> Concerns about the volatile security situation led the UN and the Borno state governor to sign a returns policy framework, which states that basic services and security must be restored



before IDPs go back to their areas of origin. As such, it is an important step toward ensuring safe, sustainable and dignified returns.<sup>63</sup>

In the Middle Belt, tensions that had been brewing for four years between pastoralists from the north of the region and farmers from the south erupted into armed conflict in 2018, leading to significant violence and destruction. Desertification associated with climate change was a factor, degrading already overstretched pasture and forcing herders to move south in search of grazing land. The conflict in the north-east has also driven herders south. These factors combined with others in 2018 to inflame tensions. New anti-grazing laws in Benue state enraged herders, who were pushed into neighbouring states where they clashed with farmers, and a culture of impunity for past crimes, including killings and the destruction of villages, has aggravated the situation further by encouraging people to take the law into their own hands. Only five people have been tried and sentenced for killings in the region since 2017. The under-reporting of the crisis and the lack of humanitarian presence in the area mean that reported displacement figures are likely to be underestimates.<sup>64</sup>

The majority of the new displacements associated with the Middle Belt conflict were recorded in Benue, Nasarawa and Plateau states. Local emergency management agencies have been responding to the crisis. For example, the Plateau State Emergency Management Agency has been providing food and water to IDPs in camps in the state, but shortages are still reported.<sup>65</sup> Camp residents complain of overcrowding and lack of water. More than 60 per cent of those displaced in the



*Congestion of the Teachers Village camp in Maiduguri, Borno State resulted in lack of shelter and more than 10,000 internally displaced persons had to be moved to a new site. Photo: IOM/Jorge Galindo, March 2019*

region are children, who are out of school.<sup>66</sup> There has been a significant international response to the displacement situation in the north-east, but no significant international presence is engaged with the unfolding Middle Belt crisis.<sup>67</sup>

Nigeria is also highly prone to flooding, which was particularly widespread in 2018. Eighty per cent of the country was inundated at some point during the year, and the government declared a state of emergency in the worst-affected states of Anambra, Delta, Kogi and Niger.<sup>68</sup> Hundreds of thousands of hectares of agricultural land were flooded, harming the livelihoods of farmers who lost crops.<sup>69</sup> In urban areas, poor planning and zoning means many residential areas have been built on exposed river banks and flood plains. This combined with poor drainage systems makes homes highly vulnerable to regular flooding.<sup>70</sup> The Nigerian Red Cross has been at the forefront of the response to those displaced by the flooding.<sup>71</sup>

Nigeria has Sub-Saharan Africa's largest population and economy, but conflict, disasters and development projects cause significant displacement each year.<sup>72</sup> The government was presented with a draft national policy on internal displacement aligned with the Guiding Principles and the Kampala Convention in 2011. Eight years later, however, it is still to be adopted.<sup>73</sup> Designing and implementing policies to reduce people's vulnerability and exposure to displacement and address the needs of those already displaced must be a priority for the government.