

**Crises Trajectory Issue Brief:**

# **Stakeholders' Perspective on Intersecting Crises and Resilience in Borno State:**

**A Decade of Conflict, Displacement, and Response**



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## Acknowledgement

The authors are grateful to the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), particularly the Better Assistance in Crises Research (BASIC) and Data and Evidence to End Extreme Poverty (DEEP) programmes, for financial support. The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of FCDO.

This brief is part of a wider mixed-methods research project on poverty dynamics amidst multiple crises in Nigeria, supported by the BASIC and DEEP programmes. The authors would like to thank Andrew Shepherd (CPAN/IDS) and Vidya Diwakar for their insightful comments on an earlier draft. All errors remain the authors' own.



# 1.0 Introduction

Over the past decade, Borno State in northeastern Nigeria has been at the epicentre of a complex humanitarian crisis driven by protracted armed conflict, widespread displacement, and fragile governance structures. The rise of the Boko Haram insurgency in 2009 triggered a wave of violence, leading to the loss of over 40,000 lives, and the displacement of over 2 million people within and beyond Nigeria's borders. A 2016 World Bank evaluation of North East Nigeria estimated that the damage caused by the conflict to infrastructure and social services throughout Borno State amounts to nearly US\$6.9 billion. The destruction of infrastructure encompasses various facilities, including schools, healthcare centers, bridges, and military installations. While military operations and regional interventions have pushed back insurgent groups in some areas, pockets of insecurity remain, hindering recovery and the safe return of displaced populations. In addition to security challenges, communities in Borno face deep-rooted issues such as poverty, food insecurity, and limited access to education and health services, conditions that have been further worsened by climate stress and weak institutional capacity.

This issue brief summarizes stakeholder consensus on the various crises within a broader socio-political context: past and anticipated crises, identifies preparedness and response options, and gains insights on proposed strategies for addressing intersecting crises, drawing on perspectives from Borno's civil society organizations (CSOs) and government agencies to inform resilient, forward-looking interventions.

# 2.0 Methods

The study employed the Delphi methodology; a structured communication technique designed for forecasting and achieving expert consensus through iterative rounds of data collection. A diverse panel of experts, comprising government officials and representatives from civil society organizations (CSOs) in Borno State, participated in multiple focus group discussions (FGDs). The guiding questions addressed: (i) the most severe crises in the past five years (2020–2024); (ii) likely recurring and emerging crises in the next five years (2025–2030); (iii) gaps in past preparedness efforts; (iv) strategic actions to prevent future impoverishment and escalation; and (v) priority policy recommendations. Responses were anonymized and aggregated thematically or statistically after each round, and shared with participants to allow for refinement of inputs based on group feedback, continuing until a predefined level of consensus was reached or a set number of rounds had been completed.

Fig: 1 Crises Trajectory Focus Group Discussion



Fig: 2 Crises Trajectory Findings Validation Meeting



**28th April 2025**  
**Consensus Crisis Trajectory Mitigation Planning Technical Working Group**  
**(10 Government And 5 Civil Society Organization Participants)**



The research process was developed collaboratively through discussions within a broader mixed-methods research team, which refined the conceptual framework, focus areas, and methodological approach to ensure alignment with Borno's complex crisis dynamics. This iterative development integrated qualitative impact assessments and timeline mapping to rank crises based on likelihood of exposure (estimated affected population and frequency) and severity of impact (scale of harm, including deaths, displacement, and systemic disruption). Crises were scored from 2020 to 2024 (Rank 1 = 7 points, Rank 2 = 6 points, ..., Rank 7 = 1 point) and summed over the period, with classifications informed by both government (Federal, State, and Local) and CSO perspectives (advocacy, rights-based, humanitarian, faith-based, human rights-focused, and service delivery/community-based). The crises ranking was derived from group consensus during the FGDs. The scope encompassed historical analysis (2020–2025) and forward-looking projections (2025–2030), ensuring a comprehensive understanding of past trends and future risks.

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## 3.0 Definition of Key Concept

- **Crises:** Situations of severe disruption or instability that threaten the well-being, security, or survival of communities or populations, often involving multiple overlapping factors such as violence, displacement, and resource scarcity.
- **Child Trafficking:** The illegal recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation, including forced labour, sexual exploitation, or other forms of abuse, often exacerbated by displacement and the breakdown of protection systems.
- Baby factories are illegal operations where women, often forcibly confined, are impregnated to produce babies for sale. These babies may be sold for adoption, ritual purposes, or other exploitative uses.
- Organ Harvesting refers to the illegal and unethical practice of forcibly removing organs from individuals, often without their consent, for transplantation or sale on the black market.
- **Farmer-Herder Conflict:** A specific form of communal conflict arising from competition and disputes over land and water resources between sedentary farming communities and nomadic or semi-nomadic herders, often exacerbated by environmental pressures, demographic changes, and weak governance.
- Banditry refers to armed robbery and criminal violence by organized groups, often overlapping with communal conflicts and contributing to insecurity in affected regions.
- **Climate & Environmental Hazards:** These refer to natural or human-induced phenomena such as floods, droughts, desertification, rising sea levels, erosion, and extreme weather events intensified by climate change. In Nigeria, these hazards disrupt ecosystems, degrade land and water resources, and increase vulnerability to displacement and conflict.
- **Food & Livelihood Crisis:** This describes situations where agricultural productivity and food security are severely compromised due to environmental degradation, conflict, or displacement, leading to hunger, poverty, and loss of income for farming and pastoral communities.
- **Forced Displacement / Population Movement:** The involuntary movement of people from their habitual homes due to conflict, violence, environmental hazards, or economic hardship. In Nigeria, displacement is often caused by a combination of climate impacts and insecurity, resulting in large numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees.
- **Abduction / Kidnapping:** The unlawful seizure and detention of individuals, often linked to insurgency, banditry, or criminal groups. This contributes to insecurity, trauma, and further displacement in affected areas.

- **Gender-Based Violence:** Violence directed at individuals based on their gender, including sexual violence, domestic abuse, and exploitation, which often escalates in displacement settings where protection systems are weak.
- **Explosives:** Refers to the use or threat of bombs, landmines, or explosive devices in conflict zones, exacerbating insecurity and causing casualties, destruction, and displacement.
- **Health & Social Systems Breakdown:** The collapse or severe disruption of healthcare, education, and social services due to conflict, displacement, or environmental disasters, undermining community resilience and well-being.
- **Resettlement Displacement Crises:** Situations where displaced populations are relocated, either voluntarily or forcibly, often to camps or new settlements, sometimes leading to protracted displacement and social challenges.
- **Insurgency:** Armed rebellion against established authorities, often involving militant groups that contribute to widespread violence, insecurity, and displacement.
- **Displacement:** The broader phenomenon of people being forced to leave their homes, whether temporarily or permanently, due to any combination of the above factors.
- **Food Crises:** Acute situations where food availability, access, or utilization is severely compromised, often linked to environmental hazards, conflict, and displacement, resulting in malnutrition and hunger.
- **Malnutrition:** A condition resulting from insufficient or unbalanced intake of nutrients, leading to impaired physical and cognitive development, weakened immunity, and increased vulnerability to disease. It is often exacerbated by food insecurity caused by conflict, displacement, and economic hardship.
- **Removal of Fuel Subsidy:** The government policy of eliminating or reducing subsidies on fuel prices, leading to higher fuel costs for consumers.
- **Devaluation of Naira:** The reduction in the official exchange rate value of Nigeria's currency, the naira, relative to foreign currencies.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Key Crises with Greatest Negative Impacts Over the Last 5 Years (2020–2024)

Over the past five years, the most persistent and destructive crisis in Borno State has been conflict and insecurity, driven by insurgency and armed group attacks, particularly in high-risk areas such as Gwoza, Chibok, Damboa, Shani, and Hawul. With a total score of 46 and appearing 10 times in crisis rankings from 2020 to 2024, this category represents the highest threat in terms of both frequency and severity. The pervasive nature of this crisis affects both rural and urban communities, leading to widespread displacement, loss of life, and disruption of social structures. Armed violence has created an atmosphere of constant fear, hindered humanitarian access, and significantly slowed development progress.

The second most critical crisis cluster comprises climate and environmental hazards, including recurrent flooding, environmental degradation, and the broader impacts of climate change. With a high score of 36 and appearing nine times, these hazards have consistently exhibited high exposure levels over the years. Seasonal floods, in particular, have devastated agricultural activities and homes, especially in communities lacking resilient infrastructure. As climate change intensifies, the state faces increasing vulnerability to disasters, with long-term environmental changes exacerbating displacement, food insecurity, and health issues.



Food and livelihood crises, ranked third with a score of 33, reflect the compounded impact of conflict and environmental stressors. Issues such as food insecurity, malnutrition, and farmer-herder conflict have been persistent, appearing seven times and registering a very high severity of impact. These crises disproportionately affect vulnerable groups, particularly women and children, and often trigger secondary problems such as child labour and school dropouts. Conflict limits access to farmland and markets, while climate-related losses further reduce household resilience and deepen poverty levels across affected communities.

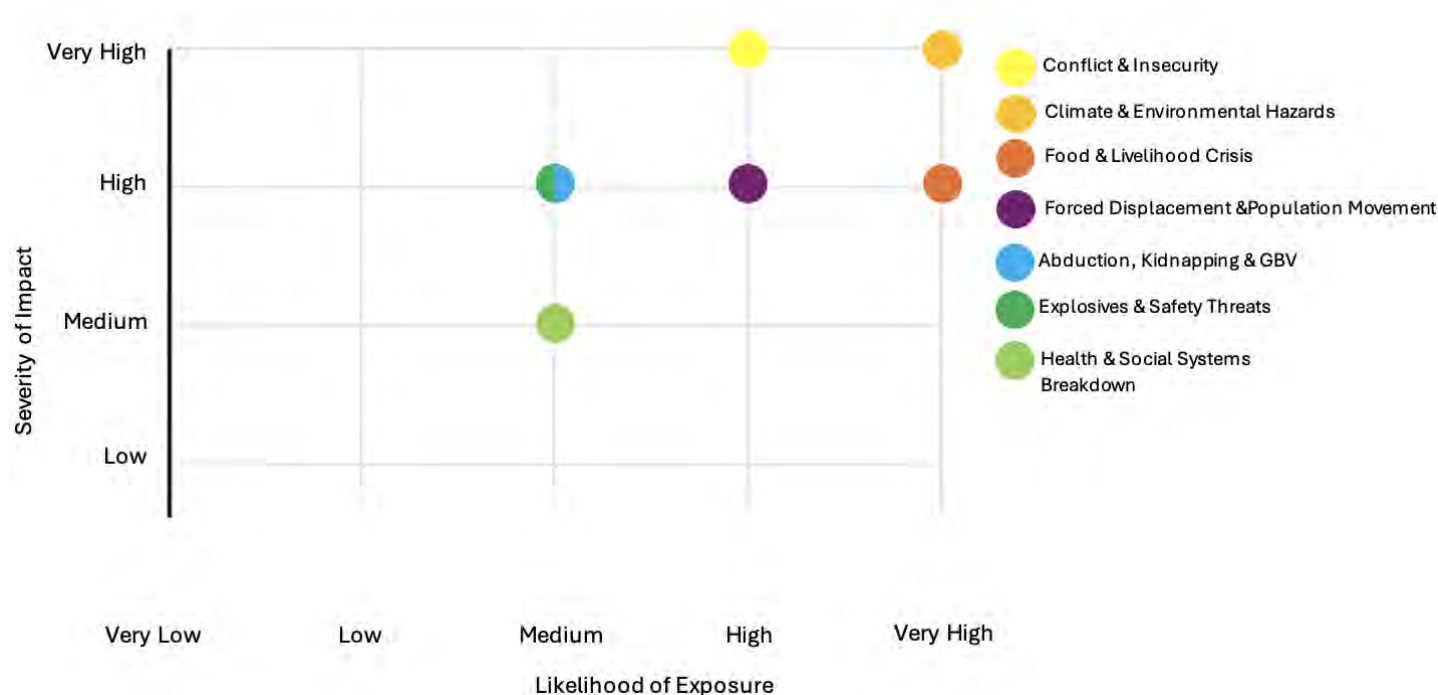
Several interconnected but somewhat lower-frequency crises have also had significant impacts. These include forced displacement, abduction, and gender-based violence (GBV), explosive threats, and the breakdown of health and social systems. Forced displacement, primarily driven by conflict and flooding, disrupts communities and places a burden on host areas. Abduction and GBV, including organ harvesting, have raised serious protection concerns. Explosives such as landmines and improvised explosive devices (IEDs), while less frequent, are highly lethal and hinder humanitarian operations. Failures in health systems, epidemics, and disruptions in education further compound vulnerabilities, weakening the overall capacity of communities to recover from recurring shocks. Together, these layered crises create a complex emergency landscape in the state.

**Table 1: Crisis Rankings (2020–2024 Combined CSOs and Government)**

Rank	Crisis Classification	Sub-Issues identified	Notes	Total Score	Frequency of Appearance	Likelihood of Exposure	Severity of Impact
1	Conflict & Insecurity	Insurgency/Armed Group Attacks, Criminality, Youth Restiveness/Gangsterism, Electoral Violence	Ranked 1st or 2nd in all years it appeared	46	10 times	Very High	Very High
2	Climate & Environmental Hazards	Flooding, Climate Change, Environmental Degradation	Ranked consistently in the top 3	36	9 times	Very High	High
3	Food & Livelihood Crisis	Food Insecurity, Malnutrition, Farmer-Herder Conflict, removal of fuel subsidy, and devaluation of Naira	Often ranked 2nd or 3rd	33	7 times	High	Very High
4	Forced Displacement	Displacement, Refugee/IDP Movement, educational breakdown	Mid-range crisis, rising over time	21	4 times	High	High
	& Population Movement						
5	Abduction, Kidnapping & GBV	Abduction, Kidnapping, Organ Harvesting, Baby Factories	Ranked lower but consistently included	22	7 times	Medium	High
6	Explosives & Safety Threats	Landmines, Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs)	Mid-to-lower rankings throughout the years	12	4 times	Medium	High
7	Health & Social Systems Breakdown	Cholera/Epidemics, Covid-19, Economic Crisis, Pest Outbreak	Always ranked last when included	17	9 times	Medium	Medium

**Note:** The total score is calculated by assigning each crisis a score based on its rank for the years 2020 to 2024 (Rank 1 = 7 points, Rank 2 = 6 points, ..., Rank 7 = 1 point). We then sum the scores over the five years. The crises are also ranked based on a qualitative assessment of the likelihood of exposure (estimated number of people affected and frequency) and the severity of impact (scale of harm, including deaths, displacement, and systemic disruption). Each crisis receives a score on a scale of 1–5 for both metrics (1 = Very Low, 5 = Very High), and a combined score is used to rank them.

**Figure 1: Crises Heat Map by Likelihood and Severity (2020 – 2024 Combined CSOs and Government)**



**Source:** Created from the FGD Dataset.

## 4.2 Expected Recurrent and New Crises (2025–2030)

As shown in Table 2, Borno State continues to face a convergence of persistent crises carried over from the past five years into 2025, with food insecurity and pest outbreaks rated as having very high likelihood and severe impact. Insecurity driven by Boko Haram, ISWAP, and banditry remains an extreme threat across most LGAs, displacing millions and limiting access to livelihoods, with the recent attack on Marte LGA underscoring ongoing military vulnerabilities. Kidnappings, abductions, and youth unrest, though less visible, have severe and growing impacts on education and humanitarian operations, fuelled by economic desperation and lack of opportunities. Meanwhile, flooding and climate change-related disasters, including the Alau Dam collapse that displaced 70% of Maiduguri (NEMA 2024), continue to recur due to extreme weather, deforestation, and infringement on approved urban planning and land use, reinforcing displacement and disease outbreaks like cholera. Farmer-herder conflicts, exacerbated by desertification and competition for resources, are intensifying, particularly in rural areas.

**Table 2: Crises Carried Over from the Past 5 Years to 2025**

Crisis	Likelihood of Exposure	Severity of Impact
Food Insecurity/Pest Outbreaks	Very High	Severe
Insecurity	High	Extreme
Flooding/Climate Change	High	Severe
Kidnapping/Abduction	Moderate	Severe
Farmer-Herder Crises	Moderate	Moderate-Severe
Youth attack/criminality	Moderate	Moderate

**Note:** The crises are ranked based on a qualitative assessment of likelihood of exposure (estimated number of people affected and how frequently) and severity of impact (scale of harm, including deaths, displacement, and systemic disruption). Each crisis is scored on a scale of 1–5 for both metrics (1=Low, 5 =Very High), and a combined score is used to rank them.



Emerging crises in the state are compounding existing vulnerabilities, particularly among the over 3 million internally displaced persons (IDPs). Organ harvesting, child trafficking, and GBV are on the rise, targeting women and children for exploitation in the context of not only economic desperation and weak governance but also because of prolonged conflict and displacement that erode social structures and protection systems. The ongoing insurgency creates lawless environments where armed groups exploit vulnerable populations for profit and control. Additionally, breakdowns in community cohesion and inadequate security responses enable these crimes to flourish as part of broader networks of violence and exploitation.

The closure of IDP camps and forced reintegration into insecure areas, impacting over 160,000 returnees and leaving 0.9 million still displaced, has intensified exposure to these threats, enabling criminal networks to flourish. Boko Haram and ISWAP abductions continue to undermine reintegration and peacebuilding. These dynamics are intersecting with a growing public health crisis. The FGD participants observed that kidney-related illnesses and other non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as hypertension are increasing due to contaminated water from flooding, disrupted dialysis services, and the rise of illegal organ trade. Similarly, HIV/AIDS is resurging in IDP camps, driven by conflict-related GBV and limited access to antiretroviral therapy (ART), contributing to long-term health deterioration and stigma. In recent years, Borno State has recorded a significant number of new HIV cases within IDP camps. For example, 512 new HIV cases were reported in Borno's IDP camps in a single year, according to the Borno Agency for the Control of HIV/AIDS (BOSACA). The total number of people living with HIV in Borno is estimated at over 50,000, with IDPs identified as a particularly vulnerable group due to overcrowded living conditions, poor sanitation, and disrupted sexual and reproductive health services.

Reintegration challenges further strain community resilience as inadequate support structures leave returnees vulnerable to renewed violence, exploitation, and food insecurity. Simultaneously, youth unrest is deeply intertwined with the ongoing insurgency, displacement, and protracted crises. Youth are both victims and targets of violence, abduction, and exploitation, while also being key actors in peacebuilding efforts. Unemployment and ineffective reintegration programs heighten the risk of recruitment into armed groups or escalation, especially through social media.

**Table 3: Newly Anticipated Crises (2025 and beyond)**

Crisis	Likelihood of Exposure	Severity of Impact	Description
Reintegration Challenges	High	Severe	Forced reintegration of IDPs into insecure areas exposes them to violence, poverty, and trafficking, undermining peacebuilding efforts. The reconciliation process between the repentant and the community may lead to another conflict.
Organ Harvesting/ Child Trafficking/GBV	Moderate	Severe	Growing trafficking networks exploit IDPs, with organ harvesting targeting vulnerable groups, causing irreversible harm and intersecting with insecurity and reintegration.
Health Crises (Kidney-Related)	Moderate	Severe	Rising CKD due to contaminated water and disrupted healthcare, compounded by organ trafficking, leads to high mortality and ethical concerns.
HIV/AIDS Crisis	Moderate	Severe	Resurgent HIV prevalence in IDP camps due to GBV and disrupted access, with severe health and social consequences.

**Note:** The crises are ranked based on a qualitative assessment of likelihood of exposure (estimated number of people affected and how frequently) and severity of impact (scale of harm, including deaths, displacement, and systemic disruption). Each crisis is scored on a scale of 1–5 for both metrics (1 = Very Low, 5 = Very High), and a combined score is used to rank them.

### 4.3 Key Intersecting Crises and Impacts

Borno faces a web of compounding crises that undermine development. Resettlement and displacement intersect, as poorly planned returns leave communities without infrastructure or livelihoods, perpetuating poverty. Floods, malnutrition, and food insecurity are particularly devastating. Flooding destroys crops and contaminates water sources, leading to hunger and disease, which particularly affect children, pregnant women, and the elderly. Cyclical floods and droughts in Borno exacerbate poverty by devastating the agricultural livelihoods, which are the backbone of over 70% of the region's population. Floods destroy crops, livestock, and irrigation systems, while droughts cause crop failures and water scarcity, directly reducing household income and food security. Additionally, prolonged droughts have reduced water availability and agricultural output, pushing many families into debt and increasing competition over scarce resources, which fuels local conflicts and social instability.

The intersection of insurgency, displacement, and food crises has profoundly disrupted access to farmland, leading to a cascade of devastating consequences for food production and security. Insurgent activities, including violence and territorial control, have forced farmers to abandon their fields, drastically reducing agricultural output. This decline in farming has triggered widespread food insecurity, as communities struggle to produce or access sufficient food. Displaced populations, often living in temporary camps or on urban fringes, become heavily reliant on humanitarian aid, which is frequently inadequate to meet the scale of their needs. This reliance is unsustainable, as aid organizations face funding shortages and logistical challenges in conflict zones. The resulting food shortages exacerbate hunger and malnutrition, creating a vicious cycle that undermines both physical health and economic stability, with long-term implications for affected regions.

*“We are witnessing the harsh reality of compounded crises in Borno. When we resettle displaced persons without basic infrastructure, we're setting them up for failure. People return, but there's nothing to return to. Then flooding comes, wipes out crops, and spreads disease. The worst hit are children and pregnant women. And before they can recover, drought hits. It's a cycle we see every year. Without better planning, stronger infrastructure, and sustained support, we're not rebuilding, we're recycling suffering.” (FGD participant, MDA, Borno State)*

The compounding effects of insecurity, abductions, kidnappings, landmines, and flooding further intensify the humanitarian crisis. Landmines, a lingering threat from insurgent activities, render vast tracts of farmland unusable, as farmers risk death or injury to cultivate their fields. Abductions and kidnappings create a climate of fear, driving families to flee their homes and abandon their livelihoods. Meanwhile, flooding, worsened by climate change, devastates agricultural infrastructure, destroys crops, and displaces entire communities. These combined threats not only disrupt immediate food production but also erode the economic foundations of affected areas. Displaced populations face ongoing cycles of poverty, as they lose access to land, tools, and markets, perpetuating economic instability and deepening the humanitarian crisis.

*“The challenges we're dealing with are various forms of crises. Insurgency has driven people off their farmlands, and those who try to return risk stepping on landmines or being abducted. Food production is collapsing, and most displaced people now depend on aid that can't meet their needs. We're seeing hunger rise, not just because of poverty, but because the land itself is unsafe.” (FGD participant, MDAs, Borno State)*





The food crisis is further aggravated by the intersection of flooding, malnutrition, and food insecurity, which creates a deadly synergy. Flooding destroys crops, disrupts supply chains, and displaces communities, leaving them without reliable access to food and essential resources. This leads to acute malnutrition, particularly among children and vulnerable groups, as food scarcity becomes a persistent issue. The loss of livelihoods due to flooding and displacement forces families to prioritize immediate survival over long-term agricultural planning, further reducing food production. In some cases, drought compounds these challenges, creating a dual threat to farming. The resulting hunger and land crises not only threaten immediate survival but also hinder recovery efforts, as communities struggle to rebuild in the face of recurring environmental and conflict-related disruptions.

The lack of access to education, driven by insecurity and displacement, intersects with these crises to fuel gangsterism and criminality, posing a significant threat to social stability. Schools in conflict-affected areas are often destroyed, abandoned, or repurposed as shelters, leaving children and youth without educational opportunities. Displaced populations, particularly young people, face limited prospects for employment or personal development, making them vulnerable to recruitment by armed groups or criminal gangs. This perpetuates a cycle of violence and insecurity, as disenfranchised youth turn to criminality as a means of survival or empowerment. The absence of education not only undermines individual potential but also hinders long-term peacebuilding and economic recovery, as communities lose the human capital necessary to rebuild a stable and prosperous state. The challenges of resettlement and ongoing displacement crises create additional barriers to recovery. Displaced populations often face difficulties reintegrating into their original communities or establishing new livelihoods in resettlement areas. The loss of farmland, coupled with continuous poverty, traps families in a cycle of economic hardship. Resettlement programs, when poorly planned or underfunded, fail to provide sustainable solutions, leaving communities vulnerable to further displacement.



Table 4: Intersecting Crises and Impacts

Intersecting Crises	Likelihood of Intersection	Severity of Impact	Key Impacts
Insurgency-Displacement-Food Crises	Very High	Severe	Reduced farming activities, food crises
Flooding-Malnutrition -Food Insecurity	Very High	Severe	Loss of livelihood, displacement, drought, hunger, and land crises
Insecurity-Abduction/Kidnapping + Landmines-Flooding	High	Severe	Loss of life, displacement, and economic crises
Resettlement -Displacement Crises	High	High	Reduced livelihood, continuous poverty
Lack of Education – Gangsterism and Criminality	Medium	High	Increased gangsterism and criminality

*Note: The crises are ranked based on a qualitative assessment of likelihood of exposure (estimated number of people affected and how frequently) and severity of impact (scale of harm, including deaths, displacement, and systemic disruption). Each crisis is scored on a scale of 1–5 for both metrics (1= Low, 5 = Very High), and a combined score is used to rank them.*

4.4 Responses and Preparation Options for Recent Crises: CSOs vs MDAs

Institutional responses to intersecting crises in Borno State, Nigeria, from 2020 to 2024, demonstrate a combination of proactive and reactive measures by CSOs and MDAs. CSOs have, over the years, focused on community-driven preparedness, including training in climate-resilient farming, landmine detection, and conflict mediation, as evident in their responses to flooding, insecurity, and food insecurity. For instance, in 2024, CSOs implemented afforestation and awareness campaigns to mitigate flooding and climate change impacts, while also providing rapid food aid and cash transfers during crises. Post-crisis, CSOs emphasized and embarked on psychosocial support, reintegration, and advocacy, as evidenced by their work in 2022 to reintegrate victims of baby factories and advocate for anti-trafficking laws. These efforts leverage local knowledge and flexibility, enabling CSOs to address immediate community needs and build resilience. However, their effectiveness is often hampered by limited funding and restricted access to insecure areas, which constrains their ability to scale interventions or sustain long-term programs.

*“The farmer-herder conflict is no longer about isolated disputes; it is now a structural crisis fuelled by climate-induced resource scarcity. As desertification worsens, herders are moving southward, and the pressure on fertile land is increasing. Without proactive land use planning and conflict resolution mechanisms, these clashes may become more frequent and deadlier, especially across vulnerable LGAs.” (FGD participant, MDA, Borno State)*

Government interventions, by contrast, are more structural and resource-intensive, focusing on the state's presence in Local Government Areas (LGAs) and empowerment programs. For example, in 2023, the government strengthened LGA security outposts and cleared waterways to prepare for floods and cholera while deploying military and medical supplies during crises. Post-crisis, MDAs have rebuilt infrastructure and supported agricultural recovery, as seen in 2021 with the reconstruction of schools and markets to address economic thuggery and malnutrition. Borno State's establishment of agro-rangers and the Borno Model's 25-year recovery plan for IDP resettlement in 2020 highlight the government's capacity to coordinate large-scale responses and implement durable solutions. The state's data management centre, along with collaborations with NEMA and SEMA, further enhances coordination, ensuring efficient resource allocation.

In security-related crises, including abductions and landmines, CSOs and MDAs deploy complementary approaches. CSOs focus on rapid response, psychosocial support, reintegration, and legal aid, as seen in the 2023–2024 response to armed group attacks. Community peace dialogues and justice reform advocacy contribute to conflict prevention. Meanwhile, MDAs establish LGA security posts, conduct military operations, and lead reconstruction efforts. Military enforcement in 2020 and the 2022 repatriation of IDPs demonstrate state-led crisis management, while the 2024 durable solutions compact aimed to stabilize displacement.

In flood-prone LGAs like Jere and Konduga, CSOs have tackled flooding and malnutrition through afforestation, climate-resilient farming, and hygiene promotion. During crises, they coordinate food distribution, and post-crisis, they establish nutrition centres and advocate for flood-resistant infrastructure. These efforts are often undermined by funding gaps and insecurity-related access issues. In contrast, MDAs implement broader interventions such as waterway clearance, palliative distribution, and infrastructure rebuilding. The state's 10-year transformation plan (2020-2030) and education reforms exemplify long-term recovery strategies, although execution remains threatened by delays and corruption.

The following table outlines responses to Nigeria's intersecting crises from 2020 to 2024, disaggregated into three temporal phases: "Before," "During," and "After." The "Before" phase captures preventive measures to mitigate risks and build resilience, such as awareness campaigns and infrastructure development. The "During" phase focuses on immediate actions taken during crises, including emergency aid and security deployments. The "After" phase addresses recovery and long-term solutions, such as rebuilding infrastructure and supporting reintegration. This framework, applied to actions by Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), provides a structured approach to understanding how stakeholders address complex challenges like flooding, insecurity, and economic crises, ensuring a comprehensive response cycle.

**Table 5: CSO and Government Institutional Preparedness and Response**

Year	Intersecting Crises	Actor	Response	Before	During	After
2024	Flooding-Climate Change, Armed Organized Group Attacks-Abduction-IED, Food Insecurity-Economic Crises	CSOs	Afforestation, awareness (Flooding); Improve security response/tools (Insecurity); Cash transfers, advocacy (Food Insecurity)	Community training on climate-resilient farming, early warning systems for floods, conflict mediation	Rapid response with food aid, cash transfers, community-based surveillance	Ppsychosocial support, advocacy for economic recovery
		MDAs	Government presence in LGAs, empowering programs	Establish agro-rangers, clear waterways, develop early warning systems	Deploy flood response teams, distribute palliatives, enhance security patrols	Rebuild infrastructure, provide agricultural inputs, implement skill acquisition programs
2023	Armed Organized Group Attacks-Landmine-Abduction, Flood-Cholera-Malnutrition	CSOs	Improve security response/tools; awareness	Train communities on landmine detection, promote drought-resistant crops, cholera awareness campaigns	Provide emergency food aid, medical support for cholera, security awareness campaigns	Reintegration of abductees, afforestation, nutrition programs
		MDAs	Government presence in LGAs, empowering programs	Strengthen LGA security outposts, clear waterways, conduct cholera prevention campaigns	Deploy military, distribute medical supplies, provide food relief	Reconstruct damaged infrastructure, support agricultural recovery, train health workers
2022	Insecurity-Landmines-Displacement, Baby Factories-Displacement	CSOs	Improve security response/tools; Strengthen reintegration, legal assistance	Community surveillance training, awareness on baby factories, safe migration campaigns	Provide legal aid for displaced persons, emergency shelters, and security monitoring	Psychosocial support, reintegration of victims, advocacy for anti-trafficking laws
		MDAs	Government presence in LGAs, empowering programs	Establish IDP camp security, train anti-trafficking task forces, and enhance LGA governance	Manage IDP camps, distribute relief materials, and conduct anti-trafficking raids	Resettle IDPs, provide vocational training, and strengthen legal frameworks against trafficking
2021	Insecurity-Landmines, Climate Change-Flood-Malnutrition, Economic Thuggery	CSOs	Improve security response/tools; awareness	Train communities on landmine risks, promote climate-smart agriculture, and conduct anti-thuggery campaigns	Deliver emergency food and medical aid, support flood evacuation, and monitor security threats	Provide nutrition programs, and advocate for youth employment
		MDAs	Government presence in LGAs, empowering programs	Deploy security to high-risk areas, clear drainage systems, and establish youth empowerment schemes	Distribute palliatives, evacuate flood victims, and arrest perpetrators of thuggery	Rebuild schools and markets, provide agricultural support, and implement job creation programs



Year	Intersecting Crises	Actor	Response	Before	During	After
2020	COVID-19- Youth Restiveness, Insecurity- Abduction- Landmines	CSOs	Improve security response/tools; Strengthen reintegration	Conduct COVID-19 awareness, train youth on conflict resolution, and establish community security networks	Provide PPE and food aid, support abductee rescue operations, and monitor landmine risks	Reintegrate youth and abductees, provide psychosocial support, and advocate for post-COVID recovery
		MDAs	Government presence in LGAs, empowering programs	Set up isolation centres, enhance LGA security, and launch youth engagement programs	Enforce COVID-19 protocols, deploy military for abductee rescue, and distribute relief. Borno Model.	Build health and security infrastructure, provide startup kits for youth, and resettle affected communities

**Source: Created from the FGD Dataset.**



Despite these efforts, significant preparedness gaps persist for both CSOs and MDAs. CSOs face challenges in securing consistent funding, which restricts their ability to maintain early warning systems or expand community training programs, such as those for landmine detection in 2023 or safe migration in 2022. Additionally, their reliance on external partnerships leads to fragmented responses, as seen in the inconsistent scaling of nutrition programs post-2021 floods. MDAs, meanwhile, struggle with inadequate infrastructure maintenance, such as poorly sustained drainage systems that exacerbate flooding annually. The lack of comprehensive risk assessments before crises, particularly for intersecting issues like insecurity and climate change in 2024, limits proactive planning. Both actors also face challenges in integrating long-term climate adaptation into their strategies, resilient agriculture often implemented reactively rather than pre-emptively.

Coordination between CSOs and MDAs remains a critical gap, despite some successes. Borno's joint humanitarian coordination meetings and NEMA-SEMA collaborations are effective but not consistently replicated across all LGAs or crisis types due to gaps in communication, lack of formalized frameworks for cooperation, and sometimes uncooperative government ministries that impose bureaucratic obstacles on CSOs. Additionally, the lack of consistent funding, transparency, and supportive policies further hampers sustained collaboration, as seen in other contexts where CSOs face restrictions, political influence, and limited engagement in policy dialogue. Similarly, in 2022, anti-trafficking efforts by MDAs and CSOs operated in parallel rather than synergistically, reducing their impact on baby factories. Weak data-sharing mechanisms and overlapping mandates further complicate coordinated responses, particularly during complex crises like floods and cholera in 2023, where rapid medical supply distribution was delayed due to poor inter-agency communication.

## Box 1: Policy Learning and Missed Opportunities

The prolonged crisis has compelled government agencies, civil society organizations (CSOs), and international actors to adapt strategies in real time, often through trial and error. There are issues regarding coordination mechanisms, community engagement, and the importance of conflict-sensitive programming. However, despite these adaptive efforts, many of the same vulnerabilities persist, pointing to gaps in institutional memory, continuity of interventions, and the translation of lessons into long-term policy frameworks. Stakeholders consistently emphasized that intersecting crises—such as insecurity, climate shocks, food insecurity, and forced displacement—are not isolated events but mutually reinforcing stressors that demand integrated responses. Yet, policy implementation often remains siloed, with sector-specific interventions failing to account for the complex and compounding nature of these challenges. For example, climate adaptation and food security programs are not always linked with conflict prevention or displacement solutions. This fragmentation undermines resilience-building efforts and leads to short-term fixes rather than sustainable recovery. Stakeholders argue that opportunities to connect humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding agendas are repeatedly missed.

The perspectives gathered also underscore a disconnect between top-down policy decisions and the lived realities of communities in Borno. While frameworks and plans may exist on paper, implementation is hindered by weak local governance, security constraints, and limited funding. There were calls for greater inclusion of affected populations in decision-making and monitoring processes to ensure that policies reflect their needs and priorities. In sum, while the past decade has produced a wealth of experience in crisis response, the failure to institutionalize these lessons into cohesive, inclusive, and forward-looking policy represents a major missed opportunity to build long-term resilience in Borno State.

### 4.5 Forward-Looking Crises Intersections and Response Options

It is observed that there is a predominance of complementarity rather than true collaboration between CSOs and MDAs in the state regarding security-related crises. This is largely considered to stem from structural and systemic challenges. Despite the establishment of coordination frameworks like the Borno State Agency for Coordination of Sustainable Development and Humanitarian Response (BACSDAHR), which aims to harmonize activities and foster alignment with state development plans, actual co-governance remains limited due to unclear role definitions, limited trust, and competition for resources among actors. The subsequent paragraphs and Table 6 present various anticipatory, absorptive, and adaptive measures for addressing the intersecting crises in the state.



**1. Integrated Rapid Response Networks Must Be Community-Driven and Multi-Sectoral:** To effectively respond to intersecting crises such as flooding, disease outbreaks, and insecurity, rapid response systems must be integrated, mobile, and rooted in local capacities. Government agencies must swiftly deploy EOCs and mobile clinics, particularly in hotspots like Jere and Konduga, to address cholera, malnutrition, and displacement. CSOs should leverage community radios to disseminate evacuation alerts and must provide psychosocial support through trusted community networks. For insurgency-related threats, safe corridors and trauma counselling must be delivered in tandem, with MDAs leading rescue operations and CSOs ensuring survivor outreach. Across all crises, these networks should combine security, health, and humanitarian actors, and coordination must be improved to overcome past bottlenecks such as those experienced during the delayed 2024 flood response.

**2. Resilient Infrastructure Must Be Climate-Smart and Conflict-Sensitive:** Borno State's infrastructure strategy must prioritize resilience to both environmental shocks and conflict. Flood-prone LGAs such as Jere and Konduga should benefit from flood-resistant farmlands, drainage systems, and climate-adaptive agricultural inputs. MDAs must invest in demining roads and rehabilitating schools and markets to rebuild livelihoods, particularly in conflict-affected areas like Bama. CSOs can amplify local voices to shape designs and must lead maintenance training to ensure sustainability. Economic stabilization infrastructure, such as irrigation systems and trade roads, must be constructed in areas prone to thuggery, like Maiduguri, while community centres and shelters must be built to support displaced and trafficked populations. Public infrastructure should integrate anti-trafficking surveillance and environmental safety features to prevent further crises.

**3. Community-Led Resilience Must Anchor Social Cohesion and Local Solutions:** Long-term recovery must be grounded in community-led mechanisms that rebuild trust, mediate conflict, and foster inclusion. Traditional leaders, youth councils, and women's cooperatives should be at the centre of these processes, especially in areas where displacement, food insecurity, or thuggery have strained social fabrics. For instance, in Jere and Maiduguri, CSOs must train youth in peacebuilding and cooperative farming to deter violence and economic desperation. Local watch groups should be empowered to detect trafficking risks, while survivor-led peer networks must drive social reintegration efforts. Unlike top-down interventions, community-led initiatives must address the root causes of unrest, including social exclusion, and should be formally recognized and resourced by MDAs.

**4. Tech-Enabled Early Warning Should Predict (Not Just React) and Enable Early Response:** Technology must be central to crisis prevention strategy, enabling authorities to anticipate and act on complex, layered risks. MDAs should integrate GIS tools, IOM displacement data, and mobile-based Early Warning Systems (EWS) to detect threats such as insurgencies, landmine risks, and floods. CSOs can train communities to use mobile apps for real-time alerts and must ensure these platforms are locally accessible. For instance, flood forecasts in Jere or insurgent tracking in Bama must trigger early evacuations and resource pre-positioning. Economic and social stress indicators should also be monitored through data dashboards, enabling early responses to youth restiveness or food shortages. All actors must prioritize data sharing and platform harmonization to avoid duplication and blind spots. Hence, there must be an early response.

**5. Economic Recovery Must Be Inclusive, Sustainable, and Scaled:** To break the cycle of crisis in Borno, economic recovery programs must go beyond short-term aid and foster inclusive, diversified livelihoods. CSOs should facilitate cooperatives for women and youth in displaced communities, focusing on non-agricultural trades such as tailoring and renewable energy repair. MDAs must expand access to vocational training, microfinance, and public works programs, particularly in Maiduguri, where unemployment fuels restiveness. In flood-affected areas like Dikwa, Ngala, Marte, and Kala-Balge, livelihood diversification into climate-resilient agriculture must be promoted through both CSO-led training and MDA-backed trade facilitation. Economic reintegration programs should be sensitive to survivors of trafficking and conflict, ensuring market access and social protection. Sustainable recovery must be the foundation of all interventions, not an afterthought.



**6. Funding and Governance priority:** To effectively respond to complex crises ranging from insurgency and flooding to food insecurity, trafficking, and youth restiveness, funding must be strategic, diversified, and locally anchored. Governments at all levels must prioritize timely, transparent budget allocations for disaster risk reduction, social protection, and economic recovery, ensuring that state-led frameworks, such as the Borno Model, are fully resourced. Local governments, now receiving direct federal transfers, should be empowered to manage crisis response funds with accountability measures in place. CSOs can unlock targeted funding from climate, humanitarian, and development sources by aligning with global frameworks (e.g., GCF, HRP, ILO). Meanwhile, donors must rebalance aid to support both immediate relief and long-term resilience, including mental health, anti-trafficking, and youth livelihoods. Innovative financing such as pooled donor funds, diaspora bonds, and private sector incentives should be pursued to close persistent gaps, while governance reforms must enforce coordination and reduce bureaucratic delays that have previously stalled timely crisis responses.

**7. Co-creation strategies:** between CSOs and MDAs should prioritize joint planning, inclusive decision-making, and sustained collaboration. CSOs can convene joint planning sessions with MDAs and communities to map shared goals and crisis priorities, facilitate community feedback loops and multi-stakeholder dialogue during crisis response, and establish permanent CSO–MDA engagement platforms at the Ward, LGA, and state levels to promote joint learning, evaluation, and policy co-design. Meanwhile, MDAs should clarify roles within coordination frameworks such as BACSDAHR and allocate inclusive planning spaces to CSOs, involve CSOs in real-time decision-making through Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) and crisis committees for joint field monitoring, and institutionalize co-governance by embedding CSO–MDA structures in policy development and review processes.



**Table 6: Summary of Strategic Options to Address Structural Crises in Borno State**

Response Area	Crises Addressed	Actor	Before (Anticipate)	During (Absorb)	After (Adapt)
1. Rapid Response Networks	Floods, climate change, epidemics, insurgency, abductions, displacement, malnutrition, food insecurity, youth unrest, organ trade	CSOs	Set up alerts; train volunteers and retrain security personnel.	Deploy mobile clinics, trauma support, and cash aid	Strengthen local hubs; scale training
		MDAs	Establish EOCs; pre-position supplies	Lead rescue, WASH, and health support via EOCs	Embed EOC protocols in LGA planning
2. Resilient Infrastructure	Floods, conflict damage, and displacement	CSOs	Advocate for safe infrastructure; train locals and improve road access.	Support shelter upkeep; protect infrastructure	Promote inclusive designs; monitor maintenance
		MDAs	Build flood-safe roads, demined farms	Emergency repairs; secure logistics	Rebuild resilient public assets
3. Tech-Enabled Early Warning	Floods, epidemics, insurgency, and trafficking	CSOs	Train on apps; map risk zones	Share real-time alerts; gather field data	Expand training; use data in planning
		MDAs	Link IOM/BSEMA data; GIS for risks	Respond via EOCs; use local data	Institutionalize GIS/EWS in LGAs
4. Economic Recovery	Poverty, displacement, and youth unrest	CSOs	Train cooperatives in climate trades	Produce during crises; train youth	Strengthen market links; scale cooperatives
		MDAs	Policies on co-ops, microfinance	Distribute support, reopen GEEP	Integrate recovery into LGA planning
5. Funding & Governance	Underfunding, weak systems	CSOs	Advocate diversified funds; budget tracking	Mobilize aid access; monitor use	Push for inclusive, accountable governance
		MDAs	Create joint funding pools	Coordinate aid; enforce transparency	Reform systems; embed accountability
6. Co-creation Strategies	All crises	CSOs	Joint planning with MDAs/communities	Enable feedback & dialogue platforms	Formalize engagement & co-design mechanisms
		MDAs	Clarify roles; open planning to CSOs	Include CSOs in EOCs & monitoring	Institutionalize co-governance

**Source:** Created from the FGD Dataset.



## 5.0 Conclusion

Borno State's decade-long crisis has evolved into a complex web of intersecting challenges, including protracted insurgency, climate-induced disasters, food insecurity, displacement, and public health emergencies that continue to erode community resilience. Persistent exposure to high-severity crises, such as armed conflict, recurrent flooding, and malnutrition, underscores the urgent need for integrated, proactive, and context-specific response strategies. Both CSOs and government agencies have made significant efforts in crisis mitigation; however, gaps in coordination, funding, early warning systems, and long-term development planning remain. Without a shift from reactive to anticipatory crisis governance, including scalable interventions and strengthened local institutions, Borno's humanitarian situation will stay cyclical and entrenched. Moving forward, building resilience in Borno requires more than emergency responses; it demands systemic transformation that addresses root causes and fosters an inclusive recovery. This includes investing in youth empowerment, sustainable livelihoods, and climate-resilient infrastructure, as well as strengthening surveillance, data systems, and multi-sector collaboration. The Borno Model's recovery framework offers a foundational pathway, but its success hinges on consistent execution, community engagement, and accountability. Prioritizing education, conflict mediation, and rehabilitation for displaced and traumatized populations can catalyse peacebuilding and reduce the appeal of extremist and criminal networks.





# Annex

## **Respondents' Demography and Profile**

Among the Civil Society Organization (CSO) respondents, 80% were male (4 respondents) and 20% were female (1 respondent). In terms of age, 40% were in the 30–40 years range (2 respondents), while 60% were in the 51–60 years range (3 respondents). Educational qualifications revealed that 20% held a BSc/HND (1 respondent), 60% had a PGD/MSc (3 respondents), and 20% possessed a PhD (1 respondent). Regarding experience in the NGO/Civil Society sector, 40% had 11–15 years of experience (2 respondents), another 40% had 16–20 years (2 respondents), and 20% had over 21 years (1 respondent). For government respondents, 66.7% were male (6 respondents) and 33.3% were female (3 respondents). The majority were aged 51–60 years (55.6%, 5 respondents), followed by 33.3% in the 41–50 years range (3 respondents), and 11.1% were aged 61 years and above (1 respondent). In terms of educational background, 66.7% held a BSc/HND (6 respondents), while 33.3% held a PGD/MSc (3 respondents). Regarding public service experience, 22.2% had 11–15 years (2 respondents), whereas 77.8% had over 21 years of experience (7 respondents).

## **Current Roles and Designations of FGD Participants**

For the FGD participants from CSOs, the current positions or roles in the organization are as follows: 80% of respondents (4) hold the position of Executive Director, while 20% (1 respondent) serves as a Program Manager. For government participants, the roles or designations within the public service include: 11.1% (1 respondent) as a Board Member, 11.1% (1 respondent) as Deputy Director/Head of Training and Technical Services, 33.3% (3 respondents) as Directors, 11.1% (1 respondent) as Director of Youth Empowerment, 11.1% (1 respondent) as Disaster Manager/Head of the Relief & Rehabilitation Unit at NEMA North East Zonal Office with additional roles, and 22.2% (2 respondents) as Social Welfare Officers.

## **MDA Affiliation and Type of Organization**

The FGD participants represent a range of Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), with one respondent each from Borno State ADP, Agency for Coordination of Sustainable Development and Humanitarian Response, Information and Internal Security, Ministry of Youth, Sports, and Poverty Alleviation, National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Primary Health Care (PHC), PHC Department, State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), and State Universal Basic Education (SUBEB), each accounting for 11.1%. In terms of organization type, 20% of respondents are affiliated with advocacy, humanitarian/psychosocial, and community-based organizations, while the remaining 80% are involved in humanitarian work, including advocacy, humanitarian services, and delivery focused on community-based, protection, and human rights issues.

## **Key Areas of Policy and Programmatic Focus**

The CSOs represented in the FGD participants focus on various areas of work, including education, livelihood, governance, protection, and empowerment (20%); education, WASH, livelihood, health, and nutrition (20%); governance and youth (20%); health, GBV, education/livelihood, and youth/women empowerment (20%); and health, livelihood, governance, and education (20%). On the government side, key areas of focus include disaster management, coordination, assessment, planning, emergency relief, rehabilitation operations, and capacity building (11.1%); food security and disaster management (11.1%); internal security (11.1%);



management and social welfare (11.1%); planning, research, and statistics (11.1%); social security (11.1%); social welfare (11.1%); social welfare, planning, guidance, counseling, and youth empowerment (11.1%); and ensuring quality education at the basic level (11.1%).

### **Levels of Policy Influence and Geographical Coverage**

The CSO participants operate across diverse geographical areas, including all 27 LGAs of Borno and all Northern states in Nigeria (20%), Bama, Gwoza, Dikwa, Monguno, and Maiduguri (20%), and LGAs such as MMC, Jere, Gwoza, Konduga, Mafa, Biu, Shani, Kwaya Kusar, Hawul, and Dikwa (20%). They also include MMC, Jere, Magumeri, Monguno, and Konduga (20%), as well as the Northeast and Northwest (20%). Regarding governance and decision-making influence, responses vary from involvement at all levels (local, state, and national) (11.1%) to a more conditional approach depending on the level (local government, state, and national) (11.1%). Other responses include a focus at the local level (22.2%), state level (22.2%), and both state and local government (11.1%), along with state and national levels, particularly in youth development policy (11.1%).