

## PROFILING INTERNAL FORCED MIGRANTS IN NORTH-EASTERN NIGERIA: A GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS

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### ABSTRACT

*The objective of this paper is to characterise internal forced migrants displaced in North Eastern part of Nigeria as the result of conflicts, and natural disasters. It was estimated that nearly 1.8 million out of the total of more than 2.1 million internally displaced people in Nigeria dwell in this region. Data obtained from the United Nations International Organisation for Migration (IOM, Nigeria), was used to attain the research's goal using Geo-Information techniques (GIS analysis) and statistical analysis. Results revealed that 55 percent of internally displaced people are female while 45 percent are male; it also revealed that 60 percent of IDPs in Northeast Nigeria are dwelling in host communities, while the remaining 40 percent are found in formal and informal camps. The study also revealed that 99.9 percent of the migrants flee because of conflicts and communal clashes, while 0.1 percent escape due to natural disaster. It further revealed that the majority of IDPs were displaced in the year 2015 due to an increase in the number of conflicts and insurgent activities in the region. Finally, this research found that Borno state has the highest number*



*of IDPs, formal and informal camps, and host community settlements.*

**Keywords:** *camp; GIS; IDPs, migration; profiling; shelter*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The term ‘forced migrant’ has emerged in recent years through the academic scholarship and policymaking, which refers to a person who has been forced to leave his or her habitual place of residential origin for reason natural or human-induced reasons (Turton, 2006). Hansen (1996) adduced that forced migration has turn out to be a new problem-oriented academic field of enquiry, encompassing the fields of Geography, Economics, Environmental Management, Sociology, Anthropology, Political Science, Law and International Relations.

Forced migration is the results of war, famine and political tussles. These disruptions have increased globally in the last three decades (Pumariega, Rothe, & Pumariega, 2005). According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), the number of displaced people around the world has almost doubled from 33.9 million in 1997 to 65.6 million in 2016 (UNHCR, 2017), out of which 40.3 million were internally displaced people or Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), 22.5 million refugees and 2.8 million asylum seekers.

Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), defines internal forced migrants, which is also referred to as IDPs as:

“Person or groups of people who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of, or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognised state border (IDMC 2012).”

In this study, the terms internal forced migrants and IDPs are used interchangeably.

IDMC (2017) reported that at the end of 2016, there were about 40.3 million internally displaced people around the world; as a result of conflicts and violence. The report further shown that the number has almost doubled that of the year 2000 and has dramatically increased in the last five years. However, IDMC stated that this number does not include the number of unknown people that were forced to migrate as a result of disaster prior to, or in 2016. Similarly, the UNHCR (2017) has stated that the number of internally displaced people around the world has drastically increased from 35.8 million in 2012 to 65.3 million in 2015, precisely because of conflicts in the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa (Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, etc.) and other regions of the world.

Nigeria has been a moderately peaceful, serene, multi-cultural, liberal and progressive country, blessed with abundant natural resources and skilled human resources. These create an avenue for its citizens and non-citizens to live in peace and harmony with one another (Joda & Olowoselu, 2015). However, in recent years the country has been plagued with numerous insurgencies that had led to untold human carnage. Lenshie & Henry (2016) reported that these insurgent activities have led to the killing and forceful displacement of many people. Migration here is seen as a strategy adopted by those people who have been obliged to flee their origin anticipating that by migrating, they are moving to a secure new destination that would provide them with shelter, safety, better quality of life and better opportunities (IOM, 2008 cited in Siddiqui 2014). Among the most recent insurgent activities causing havoc and forced migration in North-Eastern parts of Nigeria are the activities of Boko Haram Islamist group.

Boko Haram is a Hausa Language – a local Nigerian language – phrase, which means ‘Western education is forbidden’ is an insurgent group also known by its formal name as ‘*The Jama’atu Ahlus-Sunnah lidda Awati Wal Jihad*’ which means ‘Group of the People of Sunnah for Preaching and Jihad’. Boko Haram group was founded in 2001 with headquarters in Borno State, North-Eastern Nigeria. The group opposed western culture, western education, and influence in Nigeria (Adeyemi 2014; Joda & Olowoselu 2015; Oyeniyi 2013). Boko Haram has been particularly active in Northeastern, Nigeria. They have also carried attacks in the neighbouring Niger Republic, Cameroon Republic and Republic of Chad (Abdulrasheed,

Onuselogu, & Obioma, 2015; Aliyu, Moorthy, & Bin Idris, 2015) and subsequently initiated many people to flee away from their origin because of insecurity situation. Ibeanu (2015) reported that the activities of Boko Haram had led to a rising number of death and the forceful migration of more than a million people within the North-Eastern region.

United Nation International Organisation for Migration (IOM) (2018) and IDMC (2018) reported that there are about 2.1 million internally displaced people in Nigeria and about 1.8 million are found in North East region. National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) however, disclosed that over 80 percent of internal forced migration in Nigeria is caused as the result of Boko Haram activities. (Shettima, 2015). In addition, Ibeanu (2015) noted that over 90 percent of internal forced migration in North East region is caused by the activities of Boko Haram, while the remaining is caused as a result of natural disasters and vendetta.

This research is aimed at profiling internal forced migrants in North-East Nigeria using Geo-information (GIS techniques), in order to understand their spatial characteristics and distribution.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Profiling internal forced migrants would help us reveal where the migrants are located, by determining whether they live in formal or informal camps or host communities. Profiling approach identifies certain information about the migrants; such information could be their demographic information such as age, gender, ethnicity, marital status, and year of migration. The process employed spatio-temporal connectors in determining the areas with the highest number of IDP and their spatial distribution pattern. Over the years, profiling approach has been used to increase knowledge and understanding about forced migration (Jacobsen & Furst Nichols, 2011). Profiling was first introduced by IDMC in the late 1990s and has since been accepted and extensively being used by Joint IDP Profiling Services (JIPS), UNHCR, IOM and other Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) (Laczko & Anich, 2011).

## **RATIONALE FOR PROFILING INTERNAL FORCED MIGRANTS**

Sequel to 1951 UNHCR convention held in Geneva, there was a severe concern by humanitarian and donor support agencies, government organisations and NGOs who were anxious to provide support, assistance and protection to forced migrants. However, these agencies were faced with difficulties in identifying and supporting these individuals (Jacobsen & Furst Nichols, 2011); this is because of the large number of internal forced migrants, who usually go unnoticed when they arrive at their new destination for shelter as they share the same characteristics with the inhabitants of the host location and have the same citizenship right, only that they were forced to flee their residential areas as economic migrants. Jacobsen & Nichols, (2011) observed that forced migrants in general, intentionally prefer to shun away from getting in contact with these agencies, simply because they do not want to be identified as forced migrants, this is even more common with internal forced migrants.

Therefore, government organisations and NGOs demanding to know their numbers, are left with estimates of significant but unknown figures who are out of view. Thus, the need for profiling in order to identify, characterise and document their exact numbers. Therefore, profiling in migration studies assist in addressing the following key issues:

1. Identifying internal forced migrants' demographic information  
Profiling process is a clear definition of identifying demographic characteristics of migrants: age, gender, residential place of origin, and reasons for displacement among many others. Accordingly, Malamassam (2016) found that demographic variables play an essential role in determining migrants' decision to move from point of origin to a new destination. This demographic information consequently informs the government and other humanitarian agencies regarding the areas where considerable assistance is needed.
2. Differentiating internal forced migrants  
Profiling migrants assist governments and humanitarian agencies in classifying and distinguishing them in order to provide them with the necessary assistance they may require based on their needs.

3. Mapping the distribution of internal forced migrants.

Profiling migrants assist governments and humanitarian agencies to map the spatial distribution, migration flow pattern, originating and destination points of forced migration. These provide easy access to displaced people as their geographical locations have already been known and mapped through the profiling process.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

### **Study Area**

The North-Eastern region of Nigeria is one of the six geopolitical regions and formerly an administrative area in Nigeria. It was founded on 27th May 1967 from the Northern part of the country with headquarters in Maiduguri, the present capital city of Borno state. The North East was divided into three states; Bauchi, Borno and Gongola states in 1978 and was further divided in 1991 to comprise of six states namely, Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe State. The region covers a land area of about 280,419 KM<sup>2</sup> and located between longitude 09°02' – 14°38' East and Latitude 06°30' – 13°42' North. It shares international borders with Niger Republic, Republic of Chad and Cameroon Republic and internal border with North West and North Central Regions of Nigeria. The population of the region was estimated around 24.5 million inhabitants (National Population Commission Projected 2011 population). The region sheltered about 1.4 million IDPs in June 2015 (IDMC 2015) and an estimated 4.6 million are in need of humanitarian assistance (European Commission for Humanitarian Aid 2016). In terms of socioeconomic activities, the region is ranked as the lowest in Nigeria and had a poverty rate of 69 percent in 2010, which is the highest in the country (National Bureau of Statistics 2010). A map of the study area is shown in Figure 1.

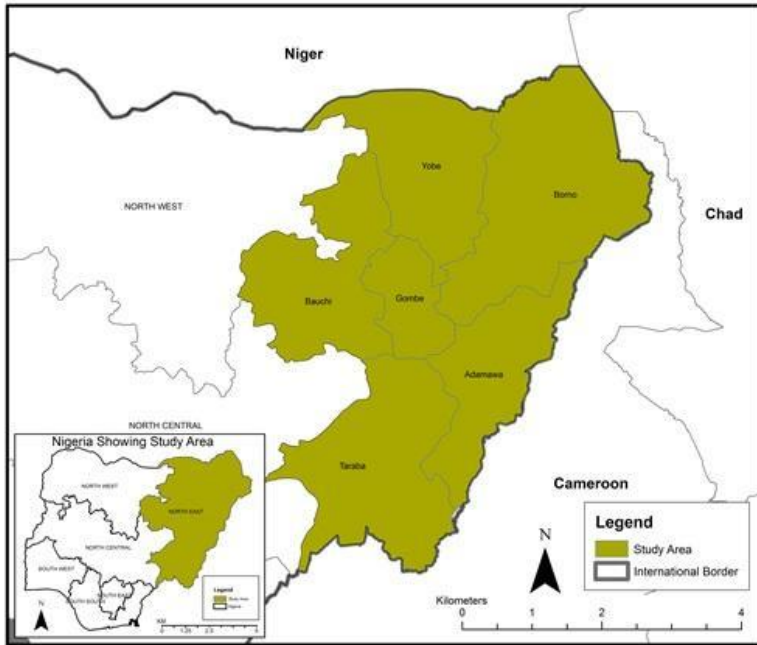


Figure 1: Study Area

## Method

This study adopts a descriptive quantitative research approach, to which Williams (2011) explained that descriptive research approach is an essential research method that studies a situation as it exists in its present form. The approach involves gathering data that describe an event, organising, tabulating, depicting and describing the data, usually using visual aids such as graphs, charts and maps. Secondary data was used to achieve the objective of this study. Digital Tracking Matrix round 21 (DTM 21) data sets collected by the IOM Nigeria in February 2018 was used. Various statistical and GIS analysis were then carried out on the datasets in order to achieve the study objective.

Digital Tracking Matrix is a programme initiated by IOM in September 2014 in Nigeria with collaboration from Nigerian National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Adamawa and Borno state; State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), with the aim to collect,

organise and disseminate data on IDPs, refugees and returnees in Nigeria. The first collected dataset was made available in December 2014 and was tagged DTM Nigeria Round 1; subsequently, datasets on forced migration were quarterly collected and updated every year, from various parts of the country, as of April 2018 when this research was conducted, DTM round 21 which was collected and made available in February 2018, is the most recent of the DTM records.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Data for DTM round 21 was collected from 2,244 locations. These include 1,987 host communities and 257 formal and informal camps in the study area. A total of 1,782,490 were identified as IDPs in the study area. Table 1 presents IDPs distribution and number of shelters per state in the study area.

**Table 1: IDPs Distribution & Number of Shelters Per State**

State	Number of Shelters	Number of Males	Number of Females	Total Population
Adamawa	474	76,520	87,630	164,150
Bauchi	329	25,034	28,275	53,309
Borno	609	609,109	755,430	1,364,539
Gombe	187	15,156	16,753	31 909
Taraba	228	28,858	34,414	63,272
Yobe	417	45,705	87,4443	105,311
Total	2,244	800,382	982,108	1,782,490

Source: IOM – DTM 21 (February 2018)

## SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF IDPS BY STATE OF DWELLING

Result of IDP analysis by state of dwelling has shown that 76.55 percent are dwelling in Borno State, 9.21 percent are living in Adamawa State, 5.91 percent in Yobe State, 3.55 percent in Taraba state, 2.99 percent in Bauchi State and 1.79 percent in Gombe State. The distribution is presented in a map in Figure 2.



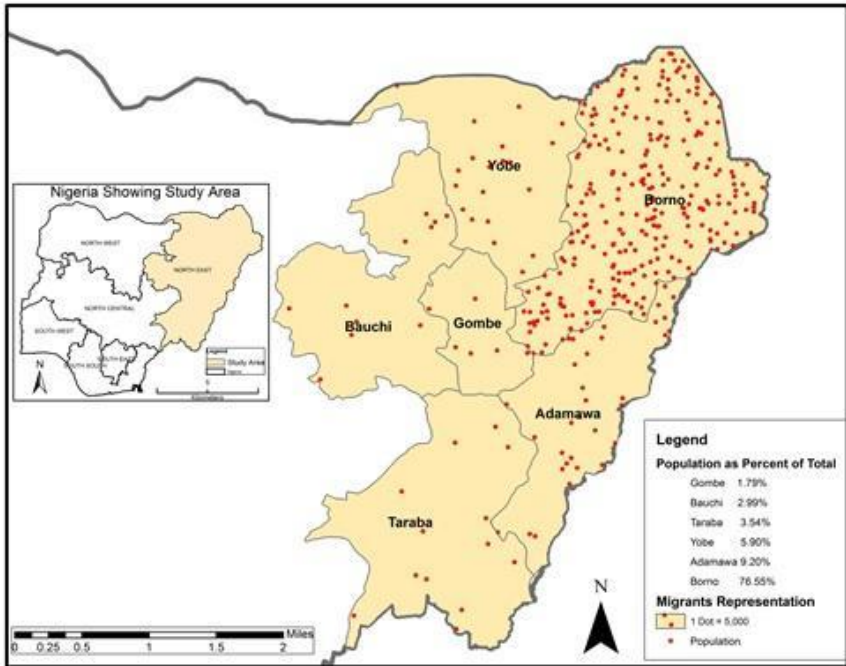


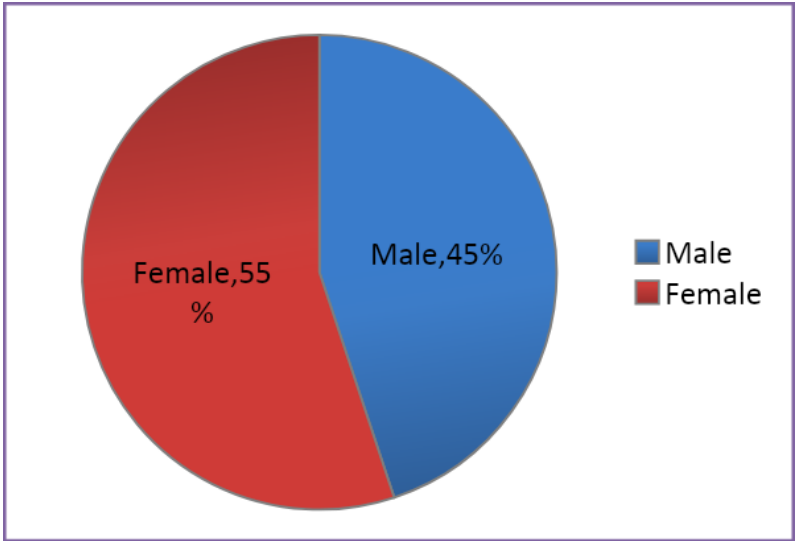
Figure 2: Distribution of Internal Forced Migrants by State of Dwelling

Source: IOM Nigeria (DTM 21)

## DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

A detailed visual demographic characteristic of IDPs is presented and discussed with figures below.

The first demographic variable analysed is gender classification of IDPs in the study area. The result, as presented in figure 3, shows 55 percent are female, while 45 percent are male. These show that there are more female than male internal forced migrants in North-East, Nigeria. This finding is aligned with the previous findings by Ojo & Fanto (2017) and Torres (2002) citing that more females than males are found dwelling in IDP and refugee camps. Similarly, Manchanda (2004) found that about 52 percent of forced migrant in South Asia are females.



**Figure 3: Gender Distribution of Internal Forced Migrants**

Source: IOM Nigeria (DTM 21)

Gender and age classification of IDPs dwelling in the study area was further analysed in order to know the gender and age proportion of IDPs in this region. It is worthy to state that this study adopts the age classification used by IOM for DTM record dissemination. Findings revealed that 38.67 percent of IDPs in North-East Nigeria are between the ages of 18 – 59 years; within this age group, 19.08 percent are male, while 19.59 percent are females. Additionally, 4.79 percent are above 60 years, with 2.47 percent for male and 2.32 percent for female, in the same vein 6.58 percent are under a year old; with 3.33 percent male and 3.25 females. Result of the analysis is presented in Figure 4 below.

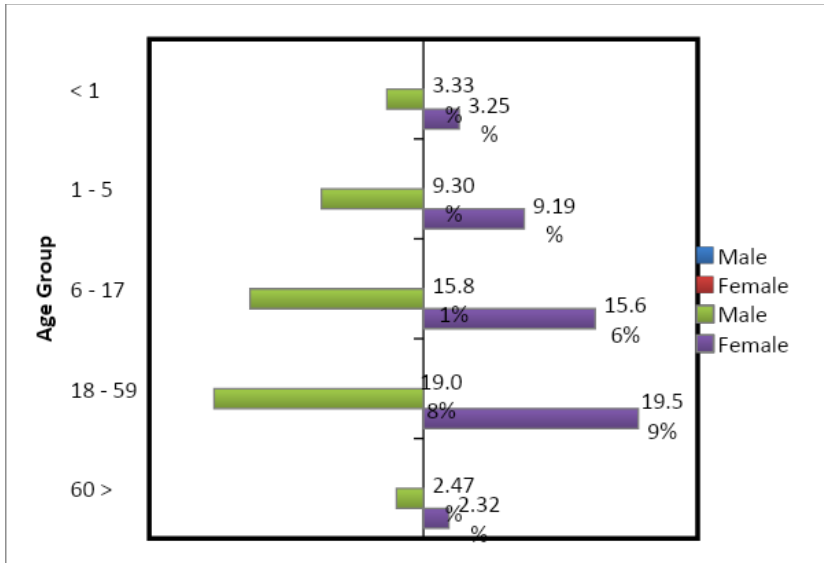
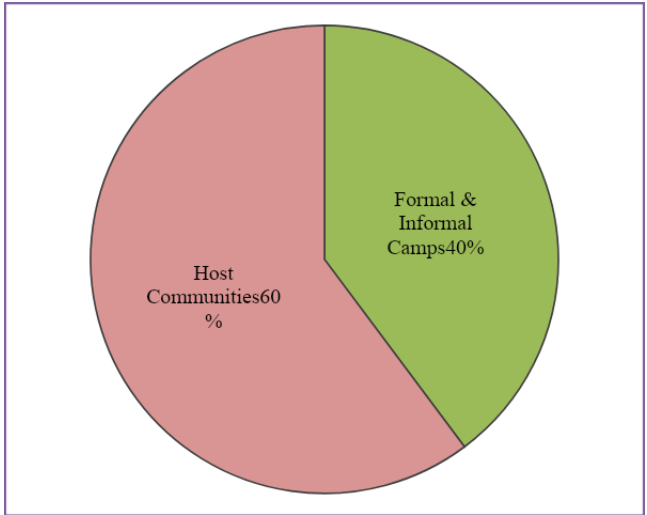


Figure 4: Pyramid Age & Gender Distribution IDPs

Source: IOM Nigeria (DTM 21)

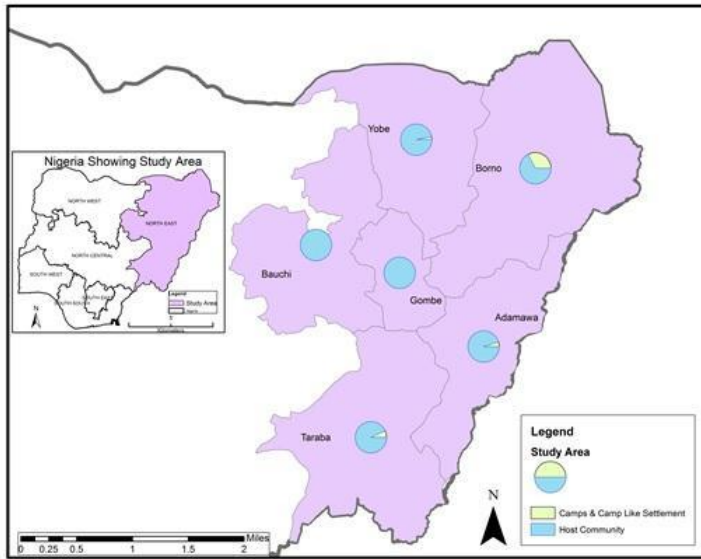
Taking into consideration that internal forced migrants' dwell in different types of shelter, this study examines the types of shelter IDP and the distribution in this region. The result of the analysis found that 60 percent are dwelling in host communities, spatially distributed across the six states in the region, while 40 percent are living in formal and informal camps. Formal camps are managed by federal and state government and are found in Adamawa, Borno, Taraba and Yobe state. The result of the analysis is shown in Figure 5.



**Figure 5: Shelter Type of Internal Forced Migrants**

Source: IOM Nigeria (DTM 21)

In the same vein, a map of the study area was also used to show the distribution pattern of IDPs shelter type in each state, as shown in Figure 6 below. The result reveals that in Adamawa state, 95 percent of IDPs dwell in host communities, while 5 percent are living in formal and informal camps. Whereas, in Taraba state, 93 percent of IDPs are living in host communities, while seven percent are living in formal and informal camp. Similarly, in Yobe state, 97 percent are living in host communities, while three percent are dwelling in camps. However, in Borno state, the result reveals that 67 percent are dwelling in host communities, while 33 percent are living in formal and informal camps. Conversely, the distribution in Bauchi and Gombe state are slightly different as all the internal forced migrants in these states are dwelling in host communities.

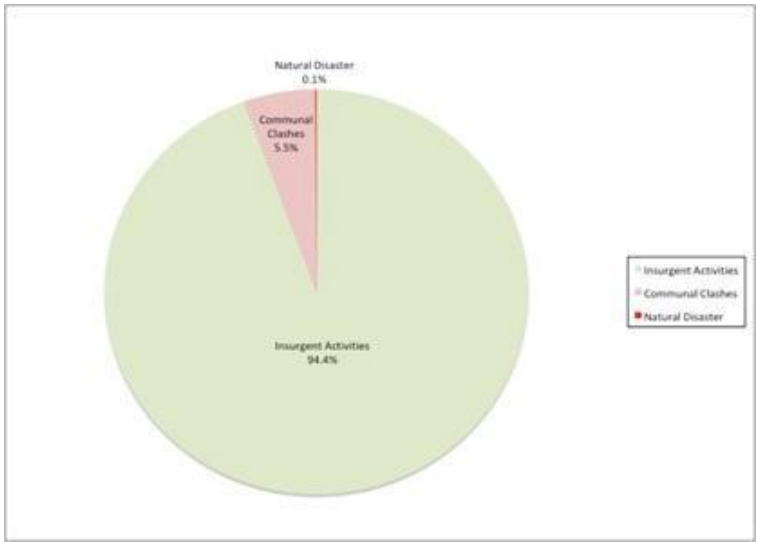


**Figure 6: IDPs Shelter Type Distribution per State**

Source: IOM Nigeria (DTM 21)

## CAUSES OF FORCEFUL MIGRATION

Armed conflict remains the main reason for forced migration around the world (Ferris, 2012; IDMC, 2016; Mbanugo, 2012; Mohammed, 2017; Walicki Swain & Bilak, 2015). Results of this study reveal that conflict-induced forced migration is the main reason for internal forced migration in the study area. As presented in figure 7, the result shows that 94.4 percent are displaced because of insurgent activities, 5.5 percent because of communal clashes and 0.1 percent by natural disasters.

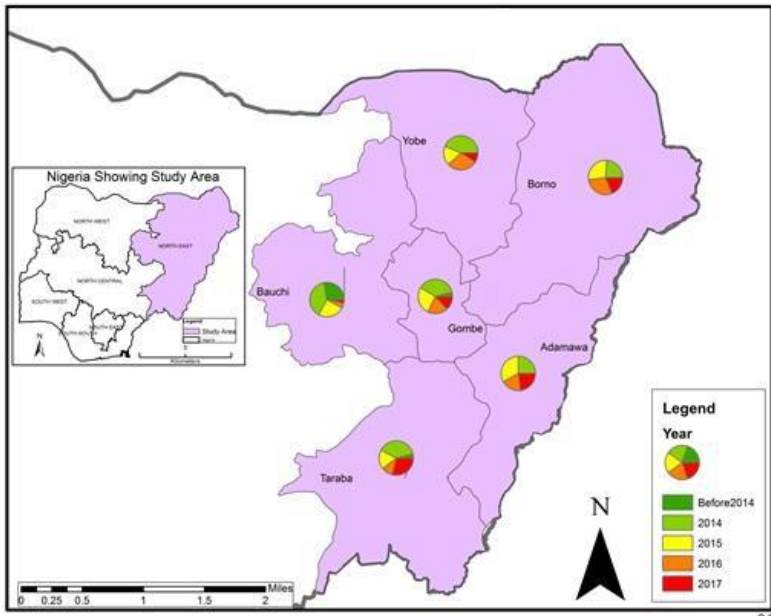


**Figure 7: Reason for Internal Displacement**

Source: IOM Nigeria (DTM 21)

## **YEAR OF FORCED DISPLACEMENT**

The objective here is to determine the year of forced migration by IDPs in the study area. Taking into consideration that internal forced migration is connected with temporal characteristics, this study analyse the distribution of IDPs by their year of first displacement. The result presented in Figure 8 has shown that, prior to 2014 only Bauchi, Gombe and Taraba states had some IDPs dwelling in those states, while from 2014 to 2017 all the six states had recorded a significant number of internal forced migrants. Thus, this could be attributed to the insurgent activities and insecurity situation in the region.



**Figure 8: Temporal Distribution of Internal Forced Migration by State Dwelling**

Source: IOM Nigeria (DTM 21)

The analysis of the temporal distribution of IDPs within the years under study is shown in figure 9. The result shows that the year 2015 has the highest number of IDPs in the study area with a representation of 31 percent; this is followed by 2014 with a representation of 20 percent, whereas 19 percent of the internal forced migrants dwelling in the North-East Nigeria flee their habitual residential origin in the year 2016. However, only one percent of IDPs in the study area stated that they were internally displaced before the year 2014.

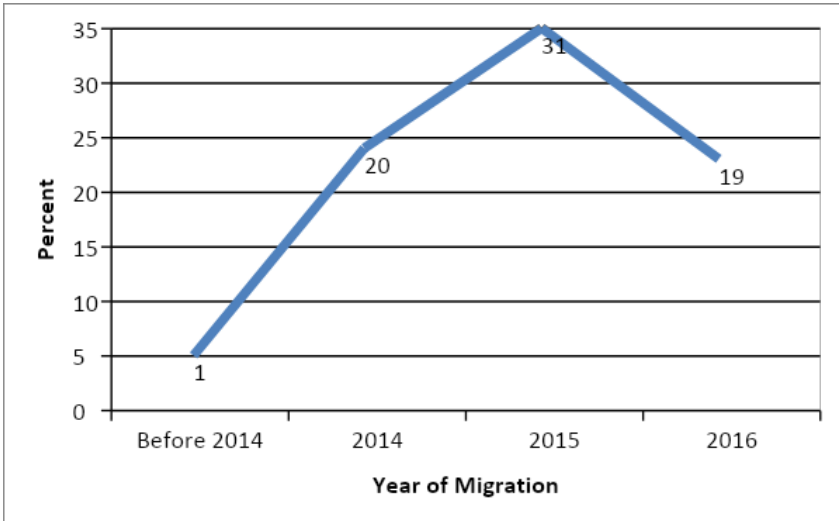


Figure 9: Temporal Distribution of IDPs Year of First Displacement

Source: IOM Nigeria (DTM 21)

## CONCLUSION

The North East region of Nigeria has intensely been faced with a sizeable number of IDPs in Nigeria; which is caused by the activities of Boko Haram insurgent group in the area. As a result, this made the study area, a hub of IDPs in Nigeria, to produced and sheltered the highest number of internally displaced people in the history of the country. NEMA (2016) reported that this region produced 86 percent of the total population of internal forced migrants in Nigeria.

This study profile and characterise IDPs in North East, Nigeria. Data was sourced from United Nations Agency – International Organisation for Migration, Nigeria, specifically DTM 21, was used. The study found that 94 percent of IDPs in this region were displaced because of insurgent activities in the area, it was also found that Borno state has the highest number of IDPs in the study area in general. Moreover, more female IDPs than male was found in the study area, this finding is therefore in consistence with discoveries from around the world, example is Manchanda (2004), who also



found more female forced migrants than males in South Asia. This study also found that majority of IDPs dwelling in the study area, are between the ages of 18 – 59 years.

The findings from this research also indicated that majority of IDPs in the study area are dwelling in host communities. Besides that, it was also found that, armed conflict and insurgent activities are the major causes of internal forced migration. Finally, it was discovered that an overwhelming proportion of IDPs in the study area were displaced in 2015.

The findings of this study have created the need for additional research that would utilise Geo-information techniques in studying internal displacement from geographical perspective.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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