

ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES AMID CLIMATE, CONFLICT, AND DISPLACEMENT IN NORTHWEST NIGERIA



BACKGROUND

The Northwest region of Nigeria is increasingly experiencing the compounded effects of climate change, protracted insecurity, and displacement, all of which are placing immense strain on basic services and community resilience. In recent years, rising temperatures, erratic rainfall, flooding, and drought have intensified existing vulnerabilities, disrupting education, health services, and community protection mechanisms¹. These climate shocks have intersected with long-standing socio-economic and security challenges, leading to increased school dropout rates, poor health outcomes, and rising protection risks, particularly for women, girls, and displaced populations².

While communities across states such as Zamfara, Sokoto, Kebbi, and Katsina report the presence of schools, health facilities, and protection systems, access to and functionality of these services remain inconsistent and often unreliable. Households in hard-to-reach, conflict-affected, and recently displaced areas face greater barriers, including economic hardship, long travel distances, insecurity, and limited social support structures. The impacts are especially severe for out-of-school children, pregnant women, adolescent girls, and people with disabilities, groups that require inclusive, localised, and climate-responsive programming³.

This factsheet presents key findings on the state of education, health, and protection in climate-affected communities across Northwest Nigeria, providing evidence to shape inclusive policies and sustainable service delivery models.

METHODOLOGY

The assessment adopted a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis to explore climate-related vulnerabilities across six states in Northwest Nigeria (Jigawa, Sokoto, Kebbi, Katsina, Kano, and Zamfara). In each target state, structured surveys were conducted across selected Local Government Areas (LGAs), incorporating a balanced representation of urban and rural communities to ensure geographic and contextual diversity.

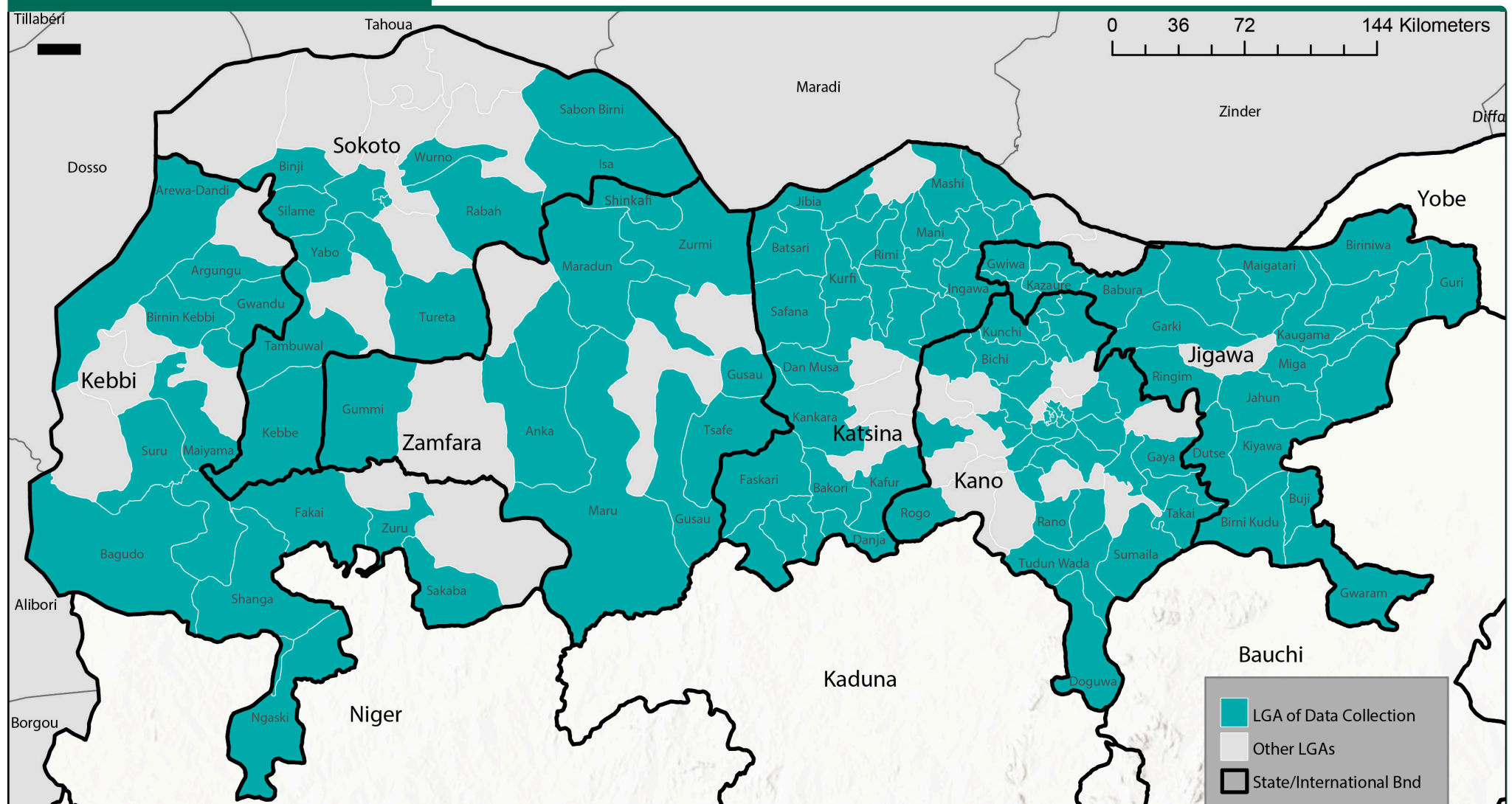
The assessment collected 508 community-based key informant interviews (KIIs) across 481 communities in 138 LGAs spanning six Northwest states of Nigeria, between the months of April and May 2025. Using a community-centred design, the study examines climate impacts, vulnerabilities, and local adaptation strategies. Urban and rural communities were deliberately represented, with security constraints carefully considered throughout implementation. Informants, including community leaders, farmers, and market actors, were purposively selected to reflect grounded perspectives. Their responses reveal community-level trends in livelihoods, access to essential services, and environmental challenges, offering a rich blend of structured data and contextual narratives that explain emerging patterns.

This information product presents findings on access to essential services in the assessed areas, capturing the situation as reported during the field visit. The table below provides a detailed breakdown of the assessed communities.

| State | Number of LGAs Accessed | Number of Communities Accessed |
|---------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Kano | 36 | 115 |
| katsina | 30 | 110 |
| Jigawa | 26 | 83 |
| Sokoto | 20 | 73 |
| Kebbi | 14 | 61 |
| Zamfara | 12 | 39 |
| Total | 138 | 481 |

KEY FINDINGS

COVERAGE MAP



Climate as a Driver of Multi-sectoral Vulnerability: Shocks such as flooding and drought are disrupting basic services and worsening households' vulnerability across assessed areas. Shocks are compounding in access to water, walking distance to get water, loss of income, decrease in crop yield and increase in food price and insecurity

Education Disrupted by Economic and Environmental Barriers: While most communities reported functional schools, economic hardship, insecurity and distance to school continue to prevent consistent school attendance.

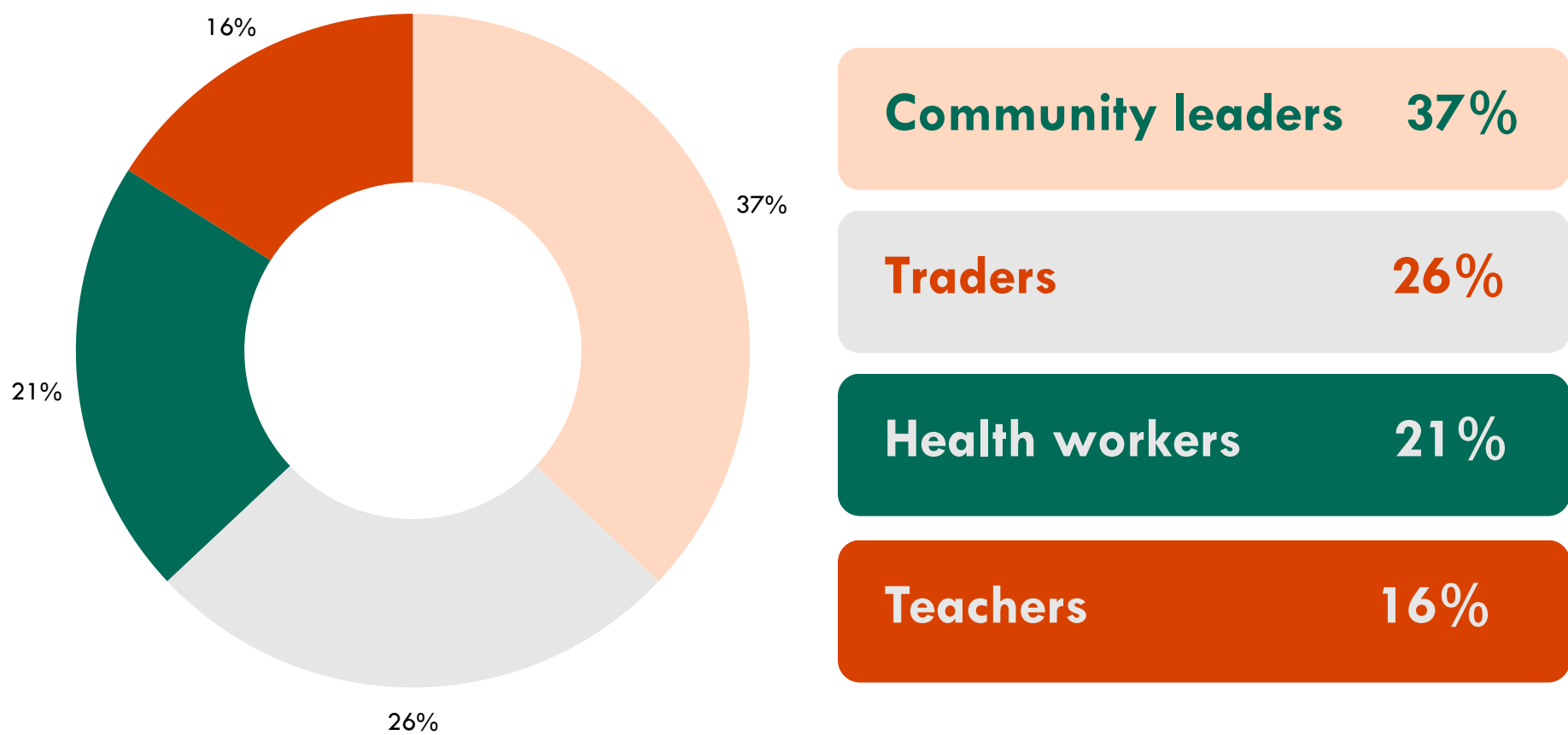
KEY FINDINGS

Healthcare Access, Undermined by Distance: Though health facilities exist in many communities, long travel times remain a significant barrier. Communities also reported non-functional health centres.

Protection Systems Weak Where Risks are Highest: Community protection mechanisms exist in most states, but are often only partially functional. Reports of GBV, especially in Zamfara and Sokoto, remain a safety concern faced by women and girls. While Physical violence was reported as the most significant security concern for men and boys

DEMOGRAPHY AND DISPLACEMENT

Proportion respondent by role / position in the community:



40%

of respondent reported that some households in their communities had been displaced in the past 2 - 3 years

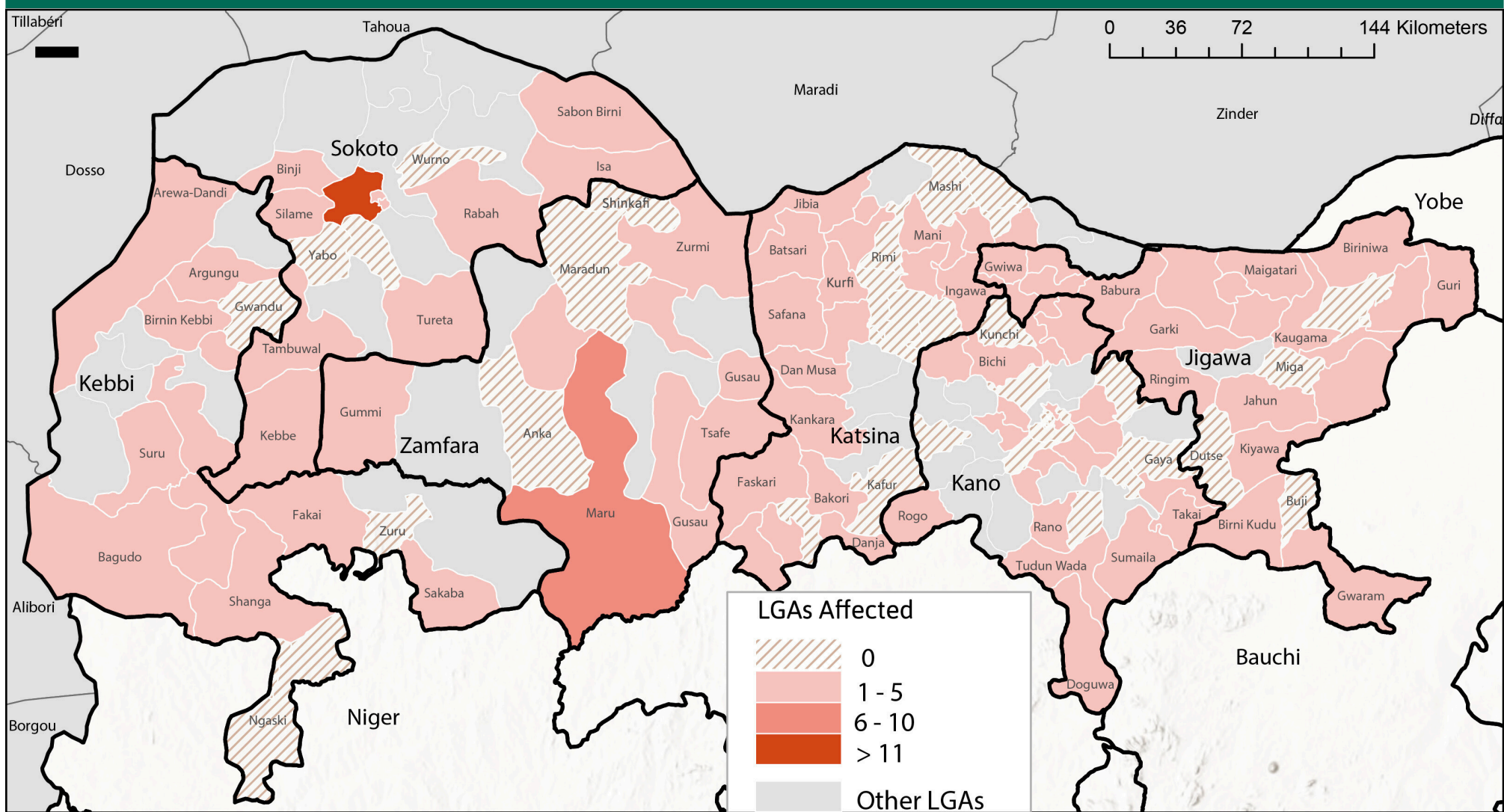
Household displacement rates were highest in Zamfara (53%), followed by Sokoto (49%), Jigawa (44%), and Katsina (40%).

DEMOGRAPHY AND DISPLACEMENT

57%

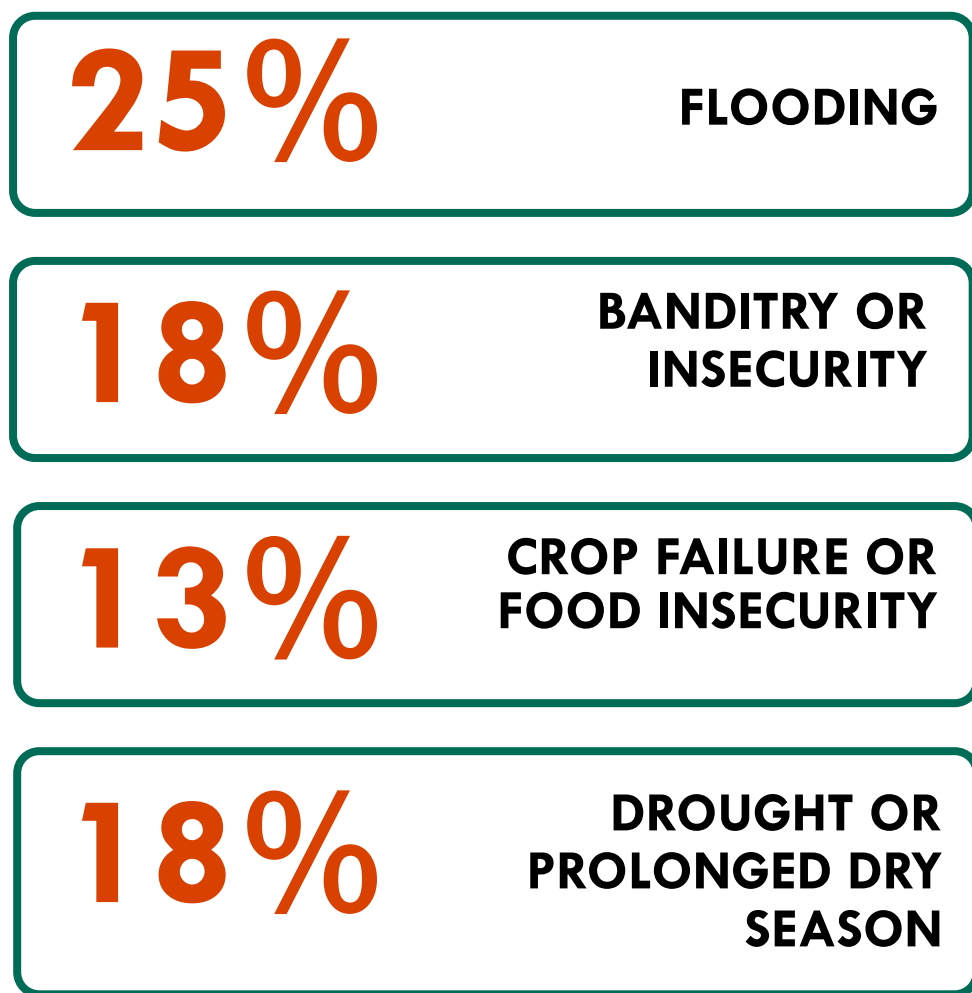
of respondents reported that displaced individuals were able to return or resettle, supported by available community assistance.

Communities reporting that people move in and out of the community due to environmental challenges:



PRIMARY CAUSES OF DISPLACEMENT

Top 4 primary causes of displacement include:



4 most reported host communities response to influx of displaced persons:



Are there any government or NGO programs helping with climate adaptation?



PRIMARY CAUSES OF DISPLACEMENT

Top 5 most cited climate-related shocks contributing to displacement were:



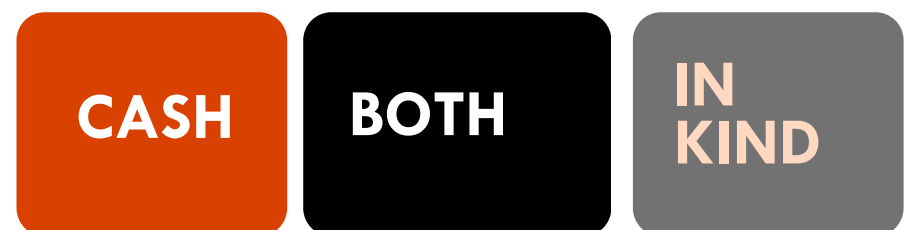
Are there functioning markets in or near this community where people can buy food and essential items?



YES

NO

Community preferred means of receiving cash or physical goods during emergencies:



WATER ACCESS

TENSIONS OVER WATER ACCESS

Findings indicate that water access remains a contested issue in many areas. **40%** of communities reported experiencing some form of tension or dispute related to water. The most frequently cited causes include disputes between neighboring communities over shared rivers or streams **18%**, as well as disagreements between farmers and herders over irrigation or livestock watering points **21%**. Tensions were also driven by long queues and limited collection hours at water points **21%**, alongside reports of women and children facing risks or harassment while fetching water from distant locations **16%**

TRENDS IN ACCESS TO WATER



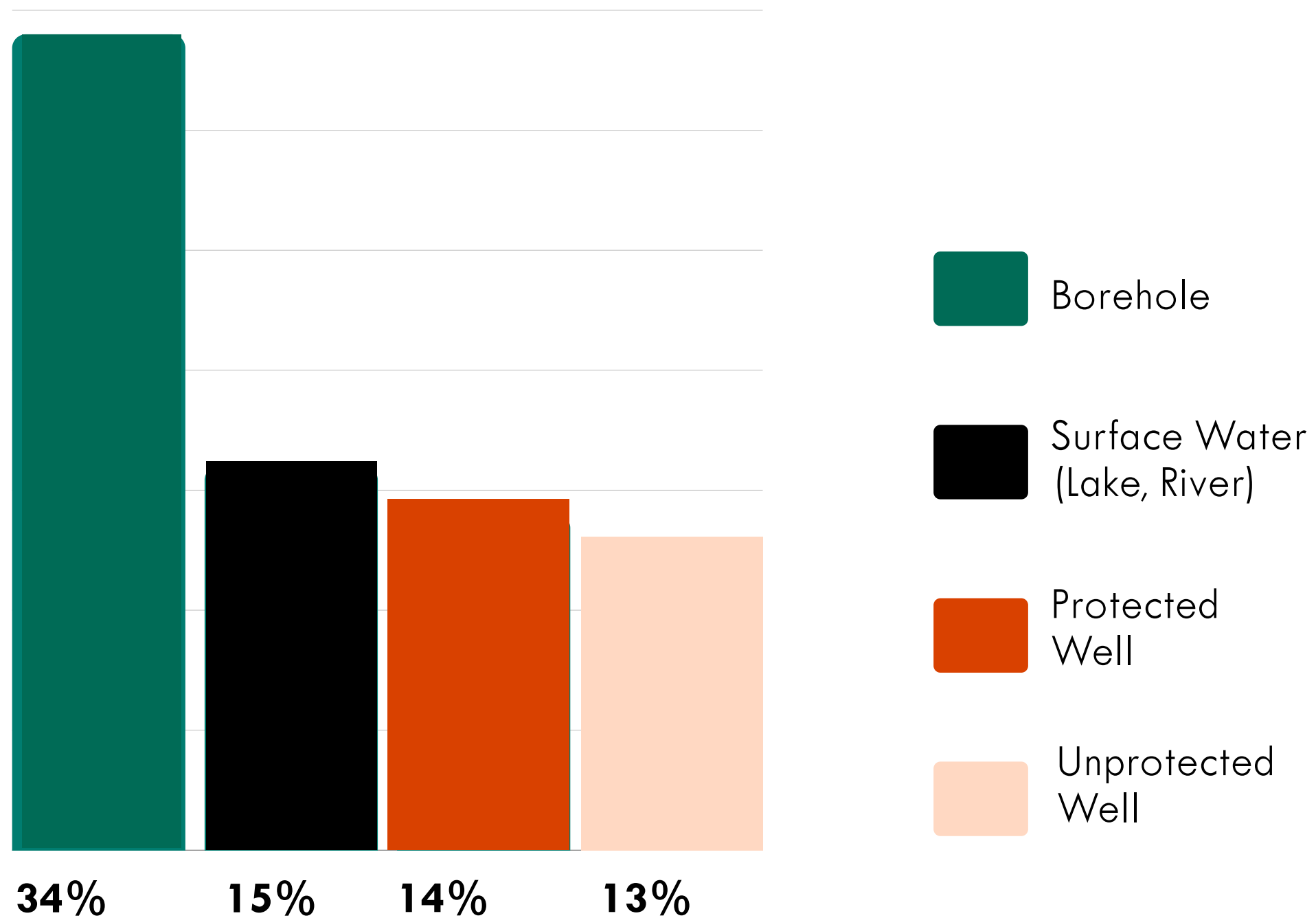
of respondents reported that, within the past 12 months, households in their community experienced longer walking distances to access water due to drought or reduced water sources.

Proportion of respondents who reported the current average round-trip time it takes households in their community to fetch water:

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| 15 to 30 minutes | 64% |
| 30min to 1 hour | 25% |
| 1- 2 hours | 08% |
| More than 3 hours | 02% |
| 2-3 hours | 01% |

WATER ACCESS

Main reported source of water used by households, livestock, and for farming activities in their community.



COMMUNITY INTERVENTIONS TO ADDRESS SCARCITY

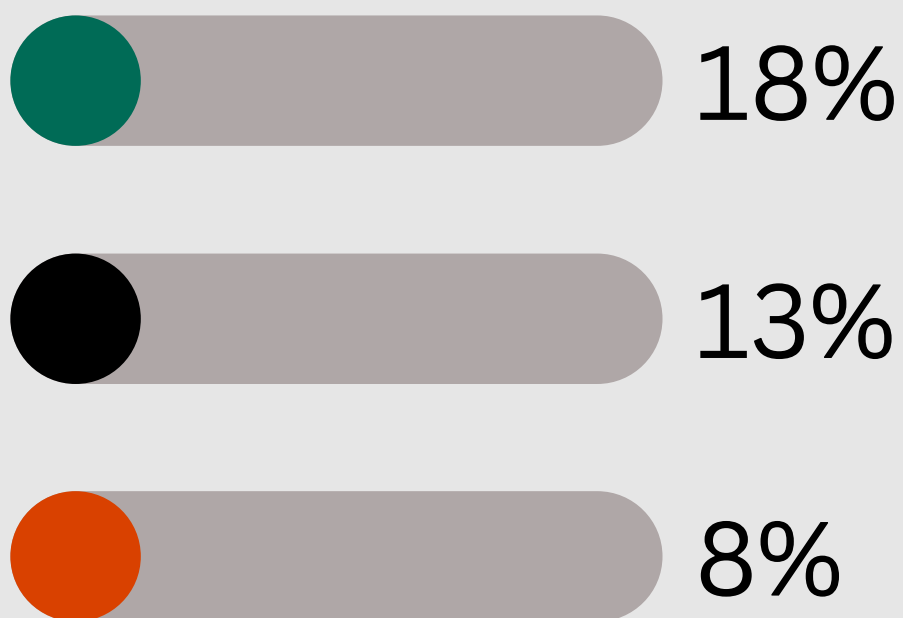
Various strategies are being implemented by communities and local authorities to address the worsening scarcity. Construction and rehabilitation of boreholes were the most frequently mentioned interventions, reported by 32% of respondents. This is followed by the drilling of new hand pumps or wells (22%) and the installation of rainwater harvesting systems (8%). Only 7% of communities reported the use of solar-powered water systems, while 5% have formed community-led water management committees. A small number of communities (3%) indicated that no measures were in place to address water scarcity.

PROTECTION

64% of respondents reported the presence of community protection structures in their community.

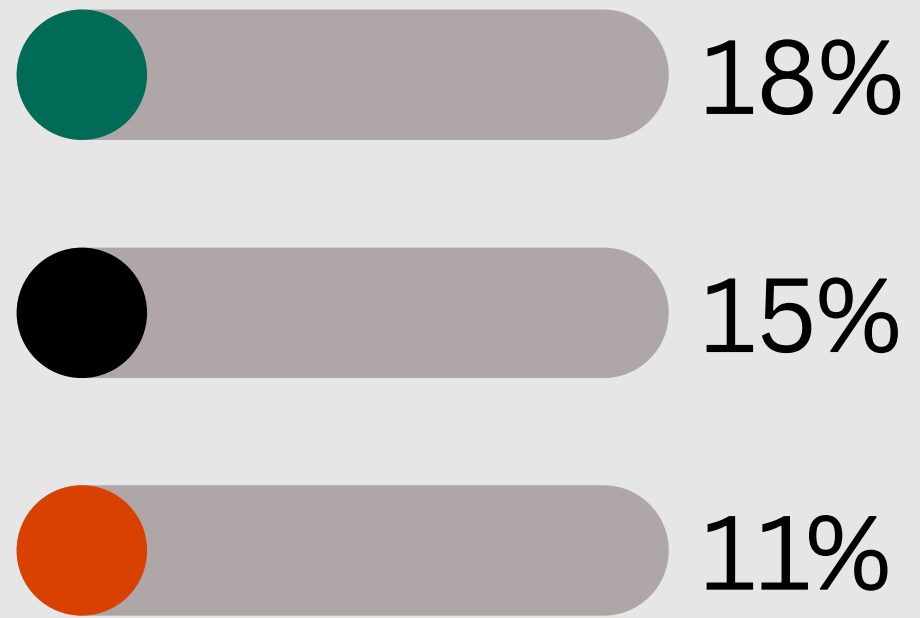
of the 64% that reported a protection structure existing in the community, only 51% of that structure was reported as fully functional. 45% reported partially functional. While 3% reported to be non-functional, with 2% not sure if the structure is functional or not.

Top 3 common safety and security concerns faced by women, and girls in this community:



- Sexual violence (including rape, attempted rape and harassment)
- Physical violence
- Killings

Top 3 common safety and security concerns faced by men, and boys in this community:



- Physical violence
- Killings
- Armed attacks/Attack by armed group

HEALTHCARE ACCESS

Proportion of respondents reported a functional health facility in their community:

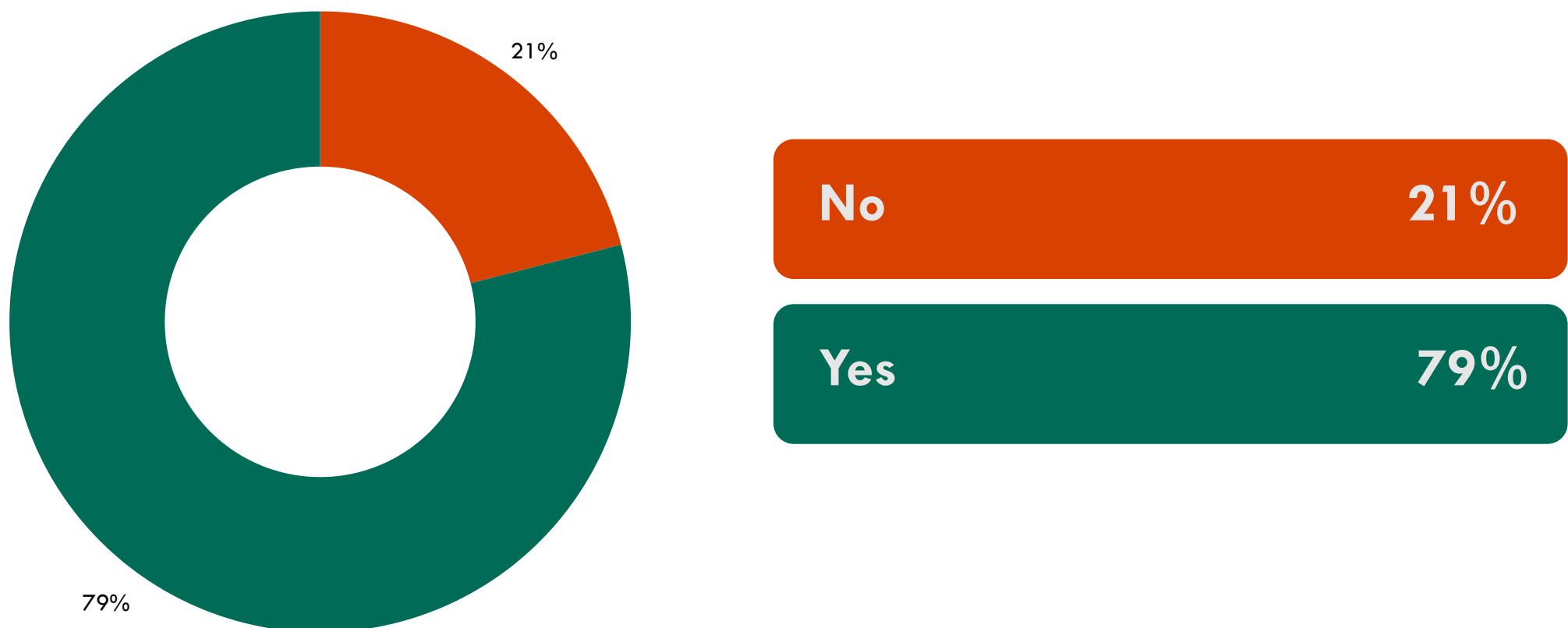


Proportion of assessed communities reporting a functional health facility by state:

| State | No | Yes, functional | Yes, but not functional |
|---------|-----|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Jigawa | 20% | 76% | 04% |
| Kano | 06% | 86% | 11% |
| Katsina | 03% | 91% | 06% |
| Kebbi | 19% | 71% | 10% |
| Sokoto | 11% | 75% | 15% |
| Zamfara | 13% | 80% | 08% |

HEALTHCARE ACCESS

Proportion of respondents who reported that maternal and child health services are both available and accessible in their community.

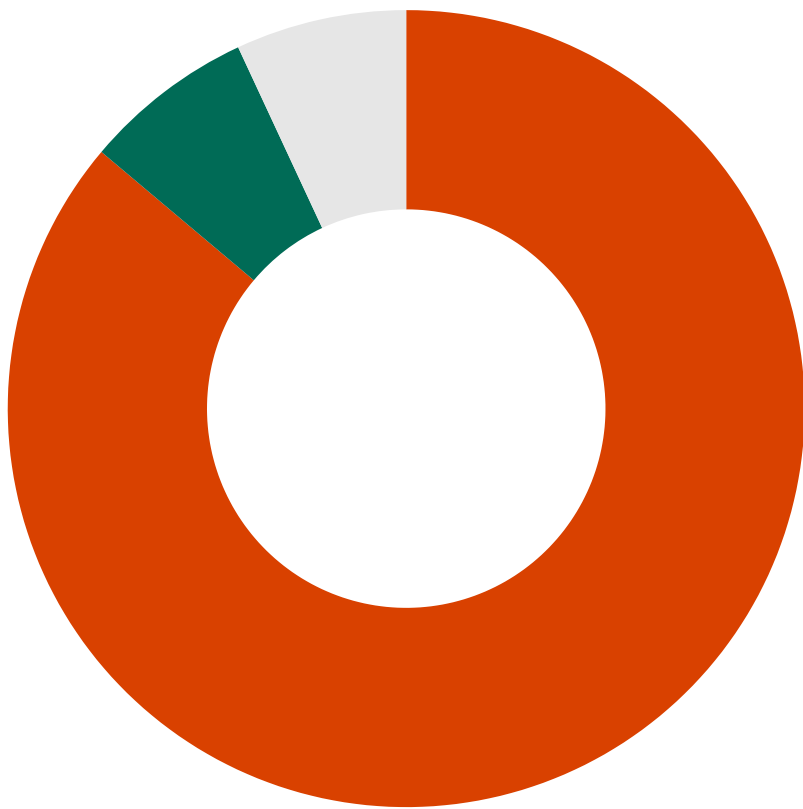


Accessibility to maternal and child health services was lowest in **Kebbi (32%)**, **Sokoto (32%)**, and **Zamfara (28%)**, compounding the risks and severe gap for women and children in reported communities.

Travel time remains a major barrier in Zamfara, 20% of communities travel more than 30 minutes to a health facility, with 13% traveling 1–2 hours, posing critical risks during emergencies. Mean while, Katsina (31%) and Kebbi (29%) states, reported travel time more than 30 minutes to a functional health facility.

EDUCATION ACCESS

Proportion of respondents reported a functional school in their community:



While 87–96% of communities report having schools in states like Jigawa, Katsina, Zamfara, and Kano, some areas in Sokoto (15%) and Kebbi (10%) still lack any form of schooling infrastructure.

Most report challenges are affecting school attendance:

| | |
|---|-----|
| School fees and/or cost of materials | 15% |
| Parents are either unaware of education opportunities available | 13% |
| Child working at home / farm or outside | 11% |
| Security concerns of child travelling or being at school | 10% |
| Distance to school too far / lack transportation | 09% |

EDUCATION ACCESS

67% reported that there are **No** learning programs for out of school children.

Only 25–42% of communities reported any form of alternative or accelerated learning programs, with Kano (25%) and Sokoto (29%) among the lowest.

Insecurity during school commutes was a concern in Sokoto (30%), Zamfara (25%), and Katsina (19%), while distance to school too far / lack transportation were highlighted in Katsina (23%) and Kebbi (17%) respectively.

[ANNEX : Analysis Tables for all reported questions, by States](#)

References: 1. [Climate Change](#) 2. [Nigeria humanitarian](#) 3. [Aid beyond politics](#)

About FACT: FACT's Programmed Evaluation and Assessment, Research and Learning (PEARL) undertakes holistic information management activities across different sectors of humanitarian and development program cycles, including but not limited to third-party monitoring, programmatic outcome and impact evaluations, needs and situation assessments, response monitoring, and organizational systems strengthening.