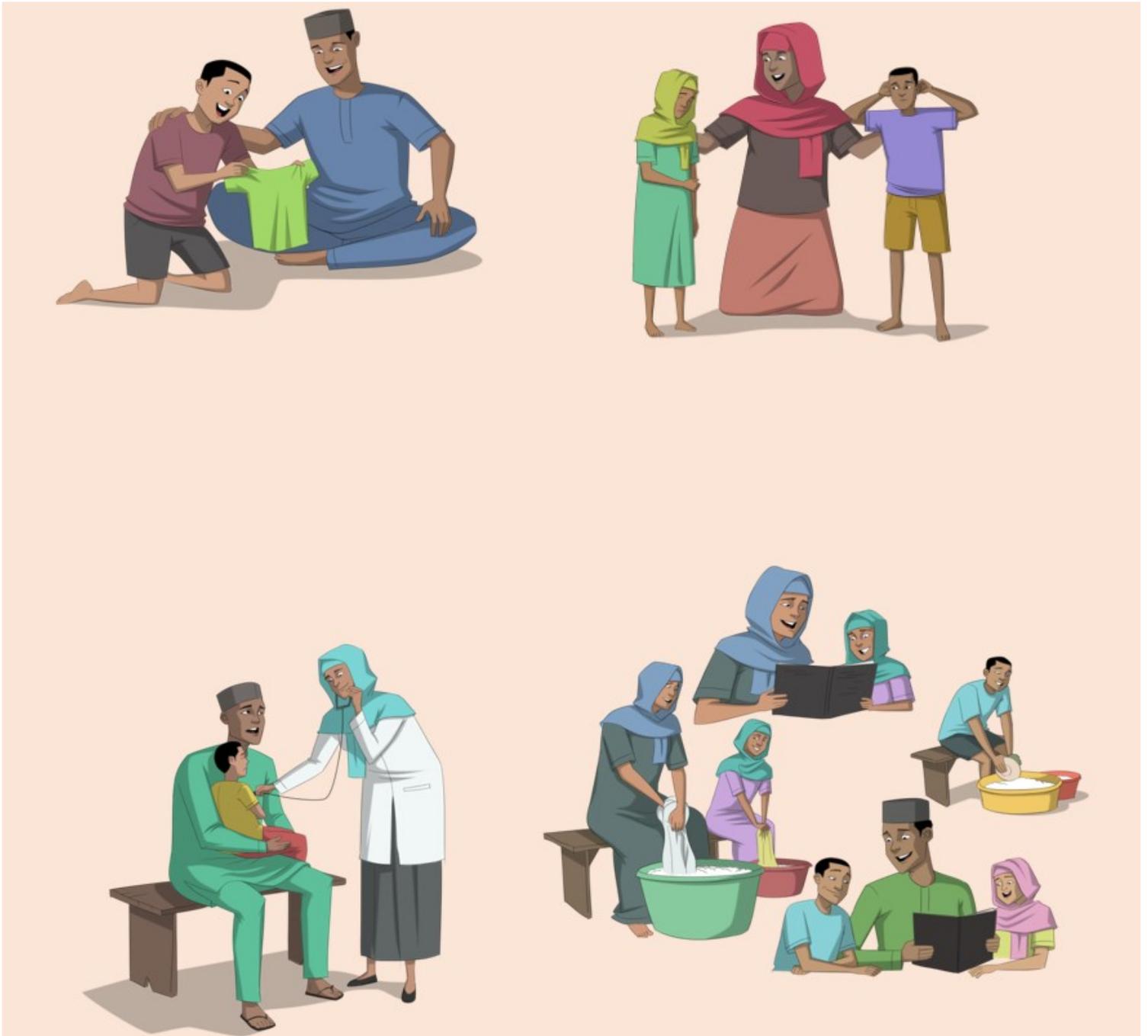


# Child Protection Sub-Sector, NE Nigeria

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## Quarterly Report April — June 2020





## Introduction

This report covers the period of April – June 2020 and includes implementation of child protection activities carried within but not limited to the COVID-19 context. The report includes reference to the perception survey conducted by the Child Protection Sub-Sector (CPSS) on the initial impact of COVID-19 on the well-being of children and child protection service delivery in March to May 2020.

This quarterly report also includes a section on *Partners' Highlights and Children and Community Voices* which includes human interest stories from some of the children and community members who have benefited from child protection services in the humanitarian response.

## Key highlights on the situation of children

A total of 71, 30, and 373 *Almajiri* boys were relocated to and reunified in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states respectively, following the decision by the Northern Governors Forum to ban the *Almajiri* system in northern Nigeria. These relocation movements put the health and protection of children at risk given the ongoing pandemic and highlighted the need to address care and protection for children without parental care. The *Almajiri* system involves parents sending their children, mostly boys, to distant locations for the purpose of acquiring religious (Koranic) education. While parents believe they are fulfilling their obligation to provide religious and moral education to their children free of charge, *Almajiri* children were often sent by their teachers (mallams) to beg in the streets and form a significant portion of children without parental care at risk of abuse, exploitation and neglect.

Access to alternative care for children whose caregivers who had to be isolated or quarantined due to COVID-19 proved to be a challenge mainly due to stigma. This was in addition to the limited or lack of access to food and other basic goods for families whose primary breadwinners had to be isolated or quarantined.

A total of 109 boys who were released from administrative custody for their alleged association with non-state armed groups were reunified with their families and will receive community-based reintegration support.

Increased armed conflict attacks particularly in some LGAs in Borno highlighted the risks not only of children and other members of the affected population, but to child protection workers amongst other humanitarian actors. During the reporting period, some of the attacks resulted in temporary withdrawal of staff from some LGAs in Borno as a safety measure. The well-being of child protection workers was further threatened by the COVID-19 pandemic that resulted in additional stress in their personal and professional lives.

## COVID-19 and child protection service delivery

Between March and June 2020, a total of 639 positive cases had been reported in north-east Nigeria., out of which 29 positive cases were children.

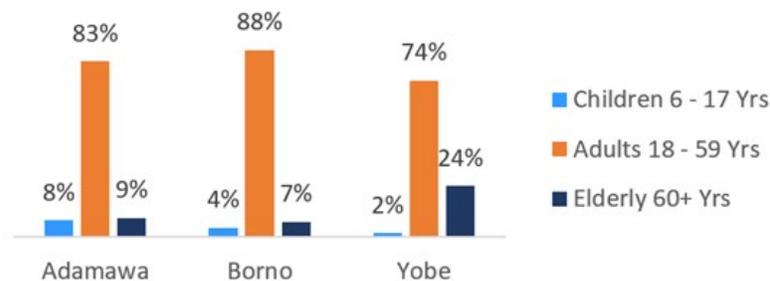


Figure 1: Percentage of cases tested positive for COVID-19 per age group in north-east Nigeria between March and June 2020 (source: Health Sector, north-east Nigeria).

While child protection actors adapted modalities to ensure the safe provision of prioritized child protection services including remote case management and psychosocial support services, this was limited to locations where telecommunication was available. Stigma associated with COVID-19 complicated the provision of alternative care for children whose parents had to be isolated or quarantined due to COVID-19. On the other hand, the general lack of belief in the existence of COVID-19 particularly amongst children proved to be a challenge for providing prioritized child protection services activities whilst adhering to physical distancing and other control measures.

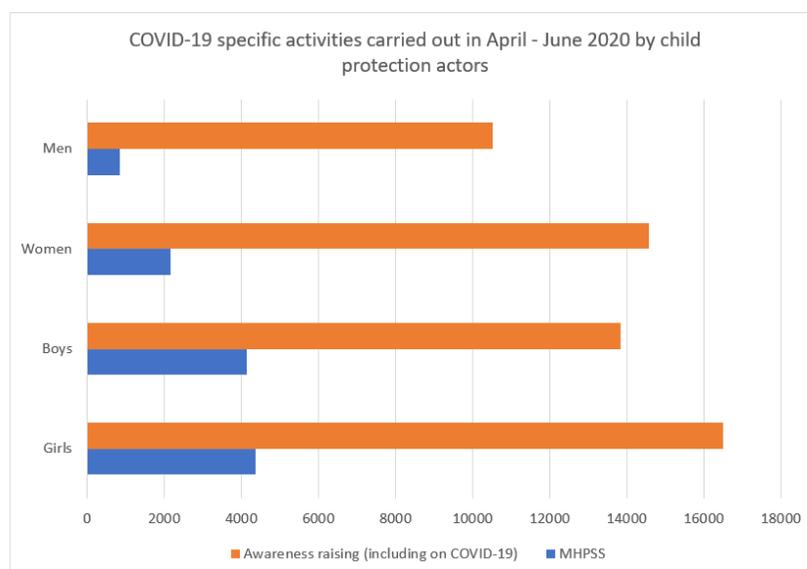
To support education of children and communities on the protection of children at community level, the CPSS developed and disseminated context-appropriate posters on abuse, exploitation, neglect and violence and on how these protection risks can be prevented and mitigated. This included specific material related to the context of the pandemic particularly on positive parenting and combating stigma. These were made available in local languages with the support of Translators Without Borders. The CPSS disseminated the *COVID-19 Handbook for Children developed by the Federal Ministry of Health and UNICEF Nigeria*. The Handbook explains what COVID-19 is, how it is spread and related prevention measures in a child friendly manner and was made available in English and Hausa.

To support the adaptation of modalities for the delivery of psychosocial support for children within the context of the pandemic, the CPSS compiled and disseminated activities and games which could be done at home, within the community or in child friendly spaces within the context of north-east Nigeria.

The CPSS) contributed to the development of [the Guidelines for Isolation/Quarantine Centers in north-east Nigeria](#) issued by the Protection Sector which include specific provisions for the protection and well-being of children and measures to ensure the safety, dignity and well-being of other persons in isolation and quarantine centers.

## COVID-19 and child protection service delivery (continued)

The CPSS conducted a perception survey in early June 2020 to understand the [perceptions of child protection actors on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the well-being of children](#), the capacities of families to care and provide for children and the effects of the pandemic and related prevention and restrictions measures including lockdowns on child protection service delivery in north-east Nigeria. The survey covered the period of March to May 2020 and was limited to the perceptions of child protection actors; given the COVID-19 context, it was not feasible to collect information directly from the children and community members. The survey provides recommendations to be implemented by the state governments in north-east Nigeria, child protection actors and actors in other sectors, among others, to improve the well-being of children and access to and quality of child protection services within the context of the pandemic.



## Improving quality of child protection services

During the reporting period, CPSS supported the Adamawa, Borno and Yobe State state governments to prepare for and provide basic services to the *Almajiri* children in temporary shelters including food, water, health care and COVID-19 testing, as well as how to document the children for the eventual reunification with their families. The Sub-Sector also supported the development of guidelines to ensure that State Government actors apply minimum basic health and child protection standards before, during and after returning the children to their states of origin and to support safe family reunification. A total of 71, 30, and 373 *Almajiri* boys were relocated to and reunified in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states respectively, following the decision by the Northern Governors Forum to ban the *Almajiri* system in northern Nigeria. Only six (6) boys tested positive for COVID-19 in Borno and were cared during the requisite isolation period before being reunified with their families; none of the boys in Adamawa and Yobe tested positive. The children were relocated from Adamawa, Gombe, Kano and Nasarawa states. Borno and Yobe states did not relocate any *Almajiri* children to their states during the reporting period.



## Strengthening coordination and accelerating localization

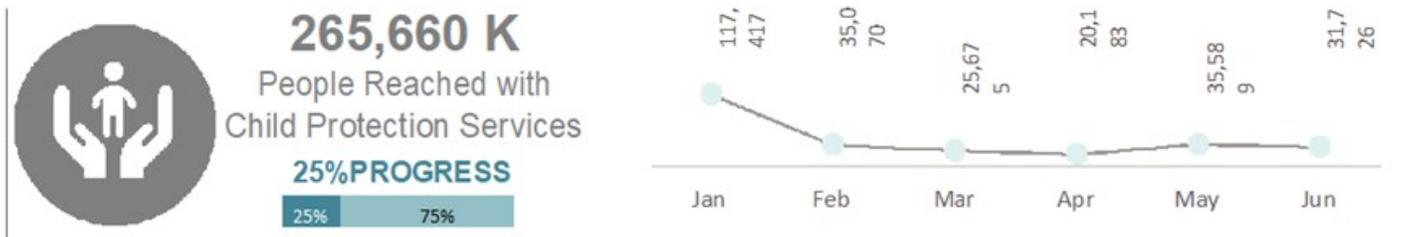
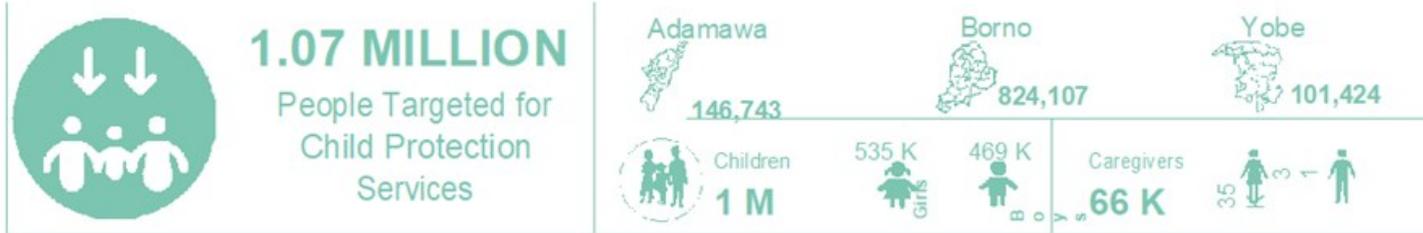
As part of the CPSS's localization initiatives, \$20,000USD was made available by the Global Child Protection Area of Responsibility (CP AOR) for child protection national NGOs (NNGOs). A total of 19 NNGOs received protective personal equipment (PPE) for child protection workers and two (2) NNGOs were awarded individual grants through a competitive process to implement safe child protection services within the COVID-19 pandemic response. The CPSS developed posters on abuse, exploitation, neglect and violence to be used by facilitators in educating children and communities on these risks and on how they can be prevented and mitigated. Additional posters on positive parenting within and outside the context of the COVID-19 pandemic were also developed and on non-discrimination and stigmatization of persons directly affected by COVID-19, emphasizing the need to seek medical help. The CPSS printed and distributed banners of these posters as well as megaphones to NNGOs to support safe awareness activities at community level.

## Enhancing integration of child protection and cross-sectoral collaboration

The CPSS held webinars with the Education and Nutrition Sectors on the integration of child protection into education and nutrition programming. The webinar with nutrition actors focused on the linkages between child protection and nutrition with practical examples of integrated programming. The education webinar focused on the education COVID-19 response and integration of child protection into this response. This resulted in representatives from the CPSS being added to the Education Sector Technical Working Group on COVID-19 to provide technical guidance on child protection integration.

The CPSS facilitated the training of 40 health workers (17 female, 23 male) in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe on child protection; the training was aimed at understanding what child protection means, the linkages to health and to know and understand how these risks can be prevented and/or mitigated through mainstreaming child protection into health programming particularly within the COVID-19 context.

# Response Monitoring Dashboard January—June 2020



Child protection (CP) actors in northeast Nigeria provided 202,592 children (girls: 102,715 & boys: 99,877) with CP services during the period of January to June 2020. This included 170,266 children who received psychosocial and mental health support services; 6,919 unaccompanied, separated and children facing other protection risks who received integrated case management services; 1,620 child beneficiaries of community reintegration services and 23,787 children/adolescents who were sensitized on child protection issues. Furthermore, 63,068 adults/caregivers (Women: 36,092 & Men: 26,976) also received CP support services during the reporting period.

**Case Management for Vulnerable Children** **41%**

INDICATOR	Progress
Family tracing and reunification of separated and unaccompanied children	32% 285
Placement of children affected by protection risks in alternative care	23% 1,001
Provision of specialized support services to children facing protection risks	70% 2,438
Provision of specialized support services to children living with disabilities	12% 29

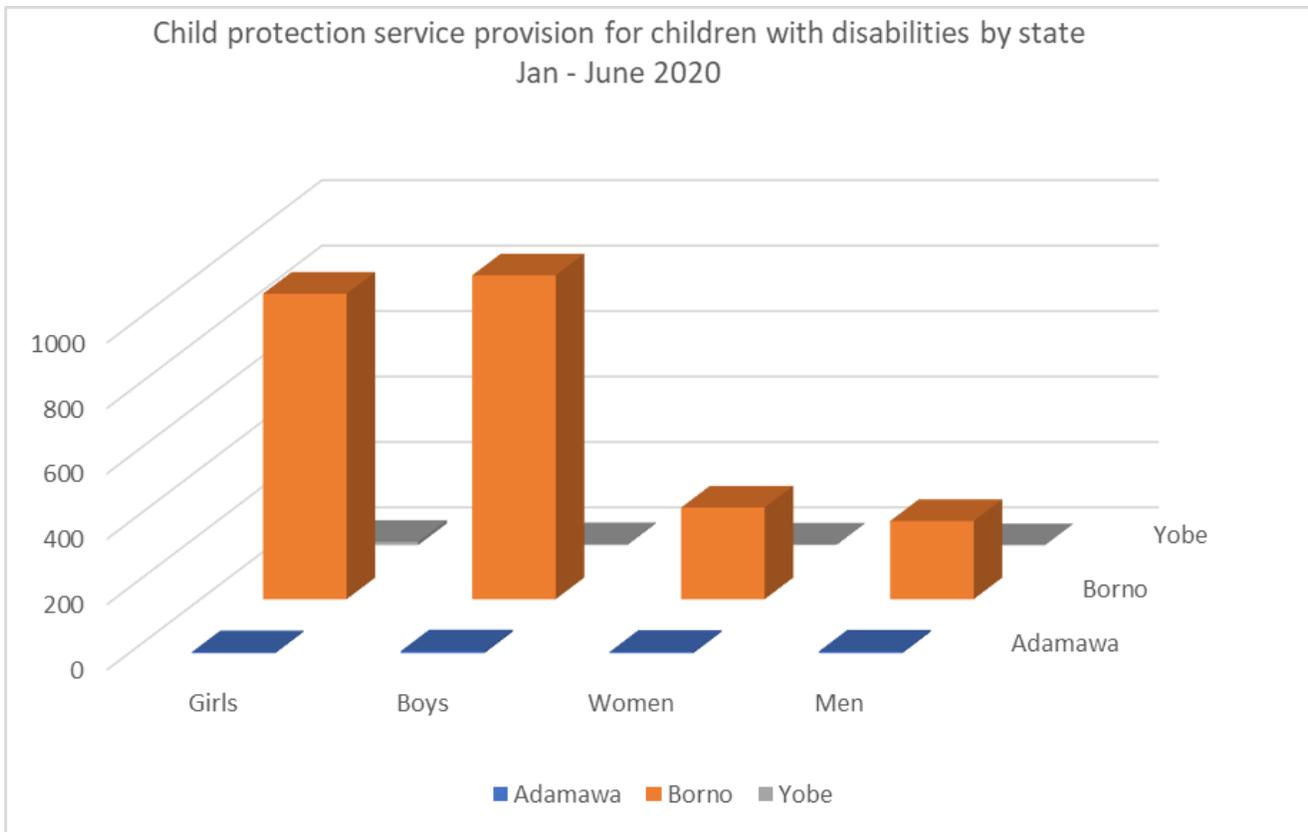
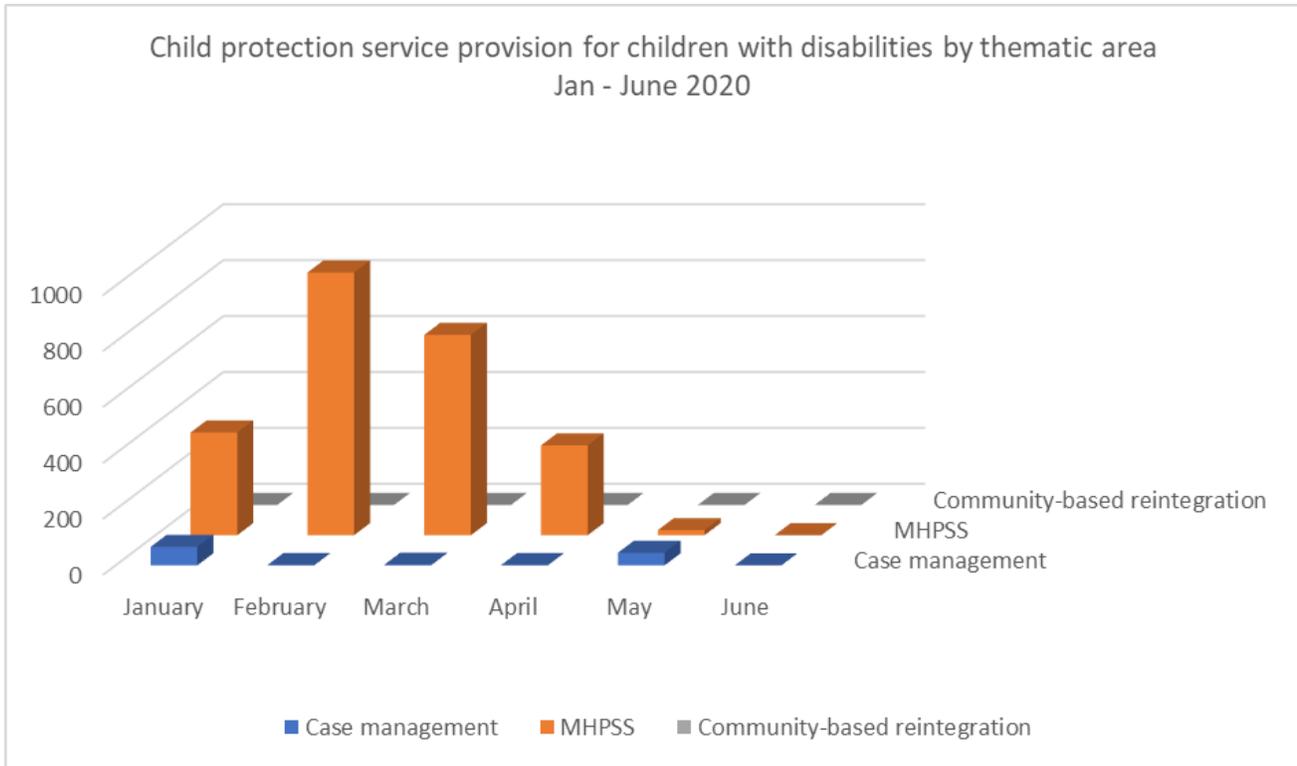
**Psychosocial and Mental Health Support** **28%**

INDICATOR	Progress
Psychosocial support services provision to children and adolescents	31% 170,192
Mental health support services to children and adolescents	5% 74
Psychosocial support services and mental health services provision to caregivers of vulnerable children	59% 14,703
Awareness raising and sensitization of community members and caregivers of conflict-affected children on child care and protection	19% 46,559

**Community-Based Reintegration Services** **5%**

INDICATOR	Progress
Provision of community-based reintegration assistance to children and youth affected by grave child rights violations	37% 1,620
Awareness raising and sensitization of conflict-affected children, children affected by grave child rights violations and caregivers of affected children on grave child rights violations	13% 24,176





## Partners' Highlights and Children and Community Voices

*\*Names and locations in the stories shared by children and caregivers have been changed to protect their identities.*

### Center for Protection of Women and Girls (CEPROWAG)

CEPROWAG reached a total of 9,318 IDPs (2,151 girls, 1,883 boys, 3,310 women and 1,974 men) in NYSC and Dalori I IDP camps in Borno with **messaging on COVID-19, transmission methods, control measures, how the pandemic can exacerbate protection risks for children and how these risks can be mitigated and responded to**. These activities were conducted with the involvement of community-based child protection committee members (CPC), women leaders, other community leaders and the youth. Pre-recorded messages in Hausa and Kanuri were used in addition to banners on COVID-19 and child protection which were provided by the CPSS as part of the localization initiatives.

To **support vulnerable households to cushion the socio-economic effects of the pandemic**, CEPROWAG provided 100 vulnerable households caring for the most vulnerable children with basic food and non-food items in NYSC and Dalori I IDP camps. The families were selected based on vulnerability criteria and with the community volunteers who regularly work in the communities; they included child-headed households, vulnerable families caring for children with disabilities and other marginalized children and children at risk. A total of 20 caregivers (17 women, 3 men) providing alternative to unaccompanied, separated and other vulnerable children were educated on positive parenting and the need to be sensitive to the needs and concerns of not only their biological children, but also other children in their care.



Training of child protection committee members in Dalori 1 Camp, MMC, Borno

As part of **strengthening community-based child protection mechanisms**, CEPROWAG trained 60 (40 F, 20M) child protection committee members in NYSC and Dalori I camps to support the identification of vulnerable children and provision of adequate care during the COVID-19 pandemic. Several issues around the prevalent child protection concerns within their various camps and the need for CPC members to be role models to other parents were discussed.

CEPROWAG was one of the recipient organizations for the Global CP AoR localization funding for NNGOs for the COVID-19 child protection response.

### Center for Community Health and Development (CHAD) International

CHAD, in partnership with UNICEF, commemorated the International Day of the African Child through a one-hour radio programme on Radio Nigeria 102.5 under the theme *Access to a Child Friendly Justice System in Africa*. The radio session focused on the history of the Day of the African Child, the relevance of its

## CHAD (continued)

commemoration, the right to child-friendly justice as enshrined in Articles 7 and 17 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child 1999, and the roles and responsibilities in ensuring access to child-friendly justice systems. The session featured English, Hausa and Kanuri speaking panelists and listeners who called into the programme appreciated the initiative. Messaging on COVID-19 was also incorporated into the programme.



Sharing key messages on COVID19 prevention and prevention of sexual abuse and exploitation (PSEA)

In addition to COVID-19 messaging targeting children and community members, CHAD also **educated children and community members on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse** and distributed information, education and communication materials (IEC) on reporting mechanisms and referral pathways in Bama, Banki, Damboa, Dikwa, Mafa and Ngala in partnership with UNICEF.

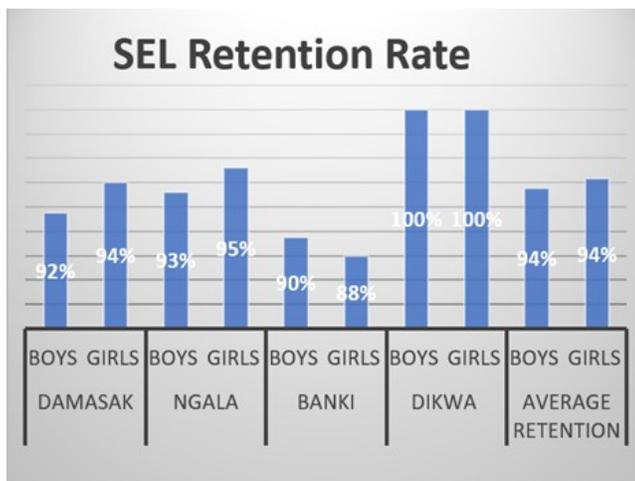
### ***Reunification story of a girl who got separated from her family following an attack by an armed group in her community.***

Abba Mohammed (not his real name) was 5 years old when his father, who was an Islamic scholar, divorced his mother and left for another LGA in Borno. Though physically sound at birth, Abba became partially paralyzed early on in his childhood due to health complications and couldn't walk and play like other children. After some years, his father returned to their village which was in one of the border LGAs in Yobe to take him and his younger sibling, Adamu, to the LGA in Borno where the father had been residing since the divorce. After moving, one evening, armed men stormed their settlement and everybody ran. *“At that time, my brother and I were living together with several other boys who were also learning under our father’s instructions. We all ran, I had a walking stick that I used to help me move and with that, my brother and I fled into the bush. We were there for four days until the military in coalition with the hunters’ union stormed an AOG hideout and liberated those that were abducted during the attack. We came back to the settlement only to discover that our father was one of those murdered during the attack”*, Abba recounted. Abba and his brother were both registered and their cases managed by CHAD child protection staff who tried to laboriously trace their grandfather with whom they had lived after their mother remarried.

In May 2020, their grandfather and an uncle were traced. The CHAD family tracing and reunification team worked with the uncle to take the children back to their village of origin and in June 2020, the two boys were reunified with their grandfather; he was just as shocked as he was filled with joy to see his grandsons again. *“I didn’t know if they were alive or dead, we heard about the attack where their father was killed and it has been over six years since he came to take them; we weren’t sure of anything, I’m just getting to know that their father died in one of the attacks and I feel sad but seeing Abba and Adamu is a consolation”*, he said.

## FHI360

During the reporting period, FHI 360, with the support of USAID/OFDA provided case management services to 34 children (19 females, 15 males) across all field locations of Banki, Damasak, Dikwa, and Ngala. Within the period, **25 cases (11 females, 14 males) were closed having met the set case management goals, received necessary services applicable to the cases and with no new protection concerns.** Children whose cases had been closed and their caregivers were informed of the channel of reporting should new concerns emerge. FHI 360 also supported the referral and linkage to other services for other vulnerable children and their caregivers at risk of abuse, exploitation, and neglect. Across the four (4) LGAs, 59 children (32 females, 27 males) were referred for and accessed various services such as healthcare, shelter, psychosocial support, food, reintegration services for children formerly associated with armed groups, NFI, livelihoods and access to justice.



Using the *Safe Healing and Learning Space* approach, FHI360 conducted **social emotional learning (SEL) classes for children aged 6-11 years across the four (4) LGAs.** During the period, 400 children (200 boys, 200 girls - 25 children per class) were enrolled for the 9-month program to improve their social and emotional skills. Through the SLHS approach, children learn to build positive relationships, address their internal and external conflict/crisis that may arise, to have the ability to regulate their emotions most especially in the face of distress, and the ability to identify and set future life goals for themselves. These skills are cast on the 5 main compe-

tencies of SEL: brain-building, emotion regulation, positive social skills, conflict resolution, and perseverance. The SEL classes were conducted using the toolkit adapted from the IRC toolkit. As captured on the chart, **both boys and girls had an average attendance retention rate of 94%.** In the first assessment conducted after 6 weeks of the session, 5% of the children showed unsatisfactory performance, 21% need improvement, 47% met expectation, 24% exceed expectation and 7% were exceptional. The SEL facilitators noticed that some children who had challenges paying attention initially, eventually had a good attention span and were able to listen and participate in the classes.

A boy attending the SEL said, *“I am grateful I am a part of this class. It has taught me how to be respectful to my parent and siblings, and I have stopped fighting and insulting the people around me”.* This was validated by his caregiver who said, *“I first noticed a change in the attitude of my boy when I sent him to buy some items for me at a nearby shop; he said I will not go and walked away but he immediately returned and said I was taught in school (SHLS) to respect my parent. He apologized for his first action and went on the errand. He presently relates better with his younger ones, is very obedient now, goes to SHLS and whenever I send him on errands, he obeys and does as instructed without grumbling or verbally insulting me. I’m grateful for his time at the SHLS,”* she said.

## FHI360 (continued)

FHI360 conducted structured **positive parenting sessions for 140 caregivers (95 females, 45 males) of children aged 6-11 years and 12-17 years**. Topics discussed include family rules and routines, discipline with dignity talking, storytelling and playing games, and understanding children's psychosocial needs understanding parent stress, coping and healing strategy, and understanding brain development. Three caregivers stated they have learned the importance of spending time with their children. **Others said that they had not been making time to spend with their children but after the sessions, they would create time in the evening to tell**



Community volunteers during a mentoring and coaching session in Dikwa. Credit: Moris Dauda

**them stories about their culture and to find out if there are issues the children would like to discuss.** These structured activities are complemented by community-based parenting skills for caregivers who have been enrolled in the structured classes. FHI360 reached 105 caregivers (69 females, 36 males) with community-based parenting skills sessions in the four LGAs.

**Outdoor activities were scaled down due to the COVID-19 pandemic.** Within the reporting period, 260 new participants (135 boys and 125 girls) and an average participation of 286 (137 boys and 149 girls) were recorded in recreational and other educational activities to include games, sports, and storytelling. Before each activity, FHI360 educated children about child protection and child abuse. In Banki, Dikwa, and Ngala, FHI 360 put on hold the outdoor activities due to the pandemic and difficulty in maintaining social distancing as the activities attract large numbers of children, mostly up to 200 children at a given time in the IDP camps. In Damasak where FHI360 works within the host community, activities continued as it was possible to guide the children to maintain physical distancing with as few as 10 children in the space at a time. Children were engaged in individual tasks that would not bring them closer together.

## Goal Prime Organization Nigeria (GPON)

In partnership with UNICEF and in collaboration with the Borno Ministry for Women Affairs and Social Development, **GPON reached a total of 267 adolescent boys formerly associated with armed groups with life-skills education using the UNICEF Adolescent Kit for Expression and Innovation at the Bulumkutu Transit Centre.** The boys also accessed livelihood skills training and mentorship in cap-making, tailoring, shoe cobbling, electrical works & barbing. Education on COVID-19 and related prevention measures was also delivered using the *IASC storybook for Children on COVID-19*.

## GPON (continued)



*Almajiri boys at the Hajj Camp, Maiduguri*

GPON provided **psychosocial support to 27 boys** at the Hajj Camp in Maiduguri who were relocated from Adamawa, Gombe and Kano back to Borno as part of the **Almajiri relocation processes**.

With funding from the Global CP AOR, GPON, reached, 1,000 boys and 1,000 girls during the reporting period with COVID-19 messaging specifically targeting children. GPON used the *IASC Storybook for Children on COVID-19* and worked with 40 adolescents (20 boys and 20 girls) to conduct peer to peer education. GPON also trained 30 community-based volunteers and 20 teachers using the COVID-19 IEC materials developed and shared by the CPSS

and the Health Sector. The training aimed at build capacity the community volunteers on COVID-19 education including prevention and mitigation measures.

## International Rescue Committee (IRC)

The IRC with funding from OFDA and DFID reached a total of 8,200 persons (1,907 girls, 1,805 boys, 2,752 women and 1,736 men) through **COVID-19 awareness sessions and on the increased protection risks facing children** using the audio and visual materials developed and disseminated by the CPSS and the Health across Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. The sessions were held in small groups of 15 persons, in open spaces with strict observation of physical distancing, the use face masks and maintenance of proper hygiene.

With funding from OFDA and DFID, the IRC enrolled 340 caregivers (290 female, 50 male) including **eight (8) women with disabilities** in the *Families Make the Difference (FMD)* programme; this is **IRC's positive parenting skills intervention aimed at creating a safe and supportive environment for children and adolescents** through improving parents' stress management skills, positive parenting practices, and strategies for supporting children and adolescents with psychosocial needs.

Through *Brighter Future*, an OFDA-funded **child protection, health and nutrition integrated programme**, IRC screened 4,096 children (2,177 girls, 1,919 boys) for child protection concerns at the Out-patient Therapeutic Program (OTP) sites in Adamawa (Michika), Borno (Monguno, Konduga, MMC/Jere), Yobe (Gujba, Damaturu). The **caregivers of the malnourished children were engaged in group and individual parenting sessions using the IRC parenting skills toolkit at the OTPs** while maintaining social distance and COVID-19 mitigation and preventive protocols.

## IRC (continued)

A total of 1,130 adolescents (628 girls, 502 boys) inclusive of 4 girls and 2 boys with disabilities aged 10-19 years participated in the IRC's *Supporting Adolescents and their Families in Emergencies (SAFE)*, while 390 children (196 girls, 194 boys) were enrolled in the *Safe Healing and Learning Space (SHLS)* intervention funded by DFID and OFDA. The sessions are age and sex appropriate and aim to provide adolescent and younger boys and girls with essential health and safety information, to encourage participation, to develop social and emotional skills, to build healthy relationships, how to resolve conflict,



*Young adolescents during household PSS sessions organized by IRC*

build their brains and to link them with available support services. The caregivers' sessions provided caregivers with information on how the physical, emotional, and psychosocial changes adolescents and younger children experience may impact the way they behave so that they are able to support and protect the adolescents under their care. They were also **informed of available services within their communities which can support their adolescents**. Additional information on signs, symptoms and preventive measures on COVID-19 was also delivered, while the sessions are held in small groups of 10 participants per session with strict observance of social distancing and the use of open spaces within the community and at household level with the supervision of community-based facilitators.

## Plan International

Plan International, with technical guidance from the CPSS Coordinator, facilitated **training for 40 health workers (17 females, 23 male) in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe**. The training targeted workers at isolation centers with objective of enabling them to understand what child protection means, the linkages to health and to know, how these risks can be prevented and/or mitigated through mainstreaming CP into health programming particularly within the COVID-19 context. The training also **emphasized the need for accessible child-friendly health services including appropriate referrals for secondary and tertiary health services**. The evaluation at the end of the training showed that participants had increased their understanding from an average of 57% to 79 % respectively.

During the reporting period, Plan International reached a total of 35 (32 women, 3 men) vulnerable caregivers with livelihood skills training and start-up kits in Damboa and a total of 25 adolescent girls between the ages were provided livelihoods start-up kits in Rann. This was aimed at **enhancing livelihood capacities of households and to contribute to the prevention of and address risks of sexual exploitation**. In addition, Plan International provided 125 caregivers (117 women, 8 men, including 3 women and 3 men with disabilities) with unconditional cash transfer in Rann to support household income and mitigate child protection risks. A total of 125 caregivers (88 women, 37 men including 42 persons with disabilities) also benefitted from similar cash programming in Damboa. Plan International's activities during the reporting period were supported by DFID, ECHO and GFFO.

## Save the Children International (SCI)

Through SCI's Healing and Education Through the Arts (HEART) approach which involves **art-based activities designed and integrated into the child friendly space**, SCI reached 1,994 children (1001 boys, 993 girls) between the ages of 3 – 17 years across MMC, Jere, Konduga, Kaga and Magumeri LGAs in Borno. The activities are supervised by trained facilitators and animators using the HEART manual for implementation that is engaging, fun and flexible for learning. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, SCI modified its programs by providing services at individual and family level whilst adhering to the guidelines for curbing the spread of the virus.

SCI's activities during the reporting period were supported by IHA/GAC CANADA, Nigeria Joint Response (Dutch Relief Alliance), the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and OFDA.

## Street Child of Nigeria (SCON)

With funding from the Nigeria Humanitarian Fund (NHF), SCON reached a total of 2,553 children and community members (1,047 girls, 963 boys, 321 women and 222 men) with COVID-19 education in Gwoza, Jere and MMC LGAs. SCON provided handwashing stations, water containers and soaps at community level for use by children and other community members; additionally, hand sanitizers and face masks were provided to SCON staff and volunteers.

During the reporting period, SCON managed a total 711 child protection cases in Gwoza, Jere, MMC and Monguno. This included 12 children (9 girls, 3 boys) formerly associated with armed groups who were also assisted with livelihoods skills training.

One of the cases involved Mustafa (not his real name), an 8-year-old boy., who had suffered physical violence from his caregiver. The caregiver was unable to provide for him consistently due to limited access to income and Mustafa ended up hawking to help make ends meet; he did not attend school. As a result of where he was sleeping, Mustafa would regularly fall sick with malaria. SCON provided positive parenting sessions to Mustafa's caregiver and also supported the household to access non-food items as well as livelihood support. With time, the caregiver was able to provide for Mustafa who no longer hawked and had enrolled in school. The physical abuse also stopped.

SCON's activities during the reporting period were supported by ECHO (in partnership with UNICEF and ROHI) and the NHF.

## Terres des Hommes - Nigeria (TdH)

Within the COVID-19 context, TdH case workers continued case management through community-based child protection focal points and community volunteers who supported the identification and follow up of cases. A total of 274 children (161 girls and 113 boys) in Dikwa, Mafa and Pulka with medium to high risk protection concerns were reached with case management services and other cross-sectoral services. The protection and other concerns included child marriage, child labour, neglect, family separation, vulnerable caregivers, association with armed groups, and teenage pregnancies, severe psychological distress, emotional and physical violence, malnutrition, disability and serious health issues.

TdH piloted the use of e-vouchers making use of the Red Rose E-voucher Platform to improve the quality of protection services in Dikwa LGA. The e-voucher allows children and their families to choose desired

food and non-food items themselves, thereby empowering them and increasing their participation in their own recovery. Families of 150 (72 girls and 78 boys) of children provided with case management services in Dikwa were referred for e-voucher assistance. Each family was provided with an e-voucher card with financial provision (top-up) to benefit three rounds of food and NFI distribution of 18,000 Naira each from one of seven pre-selected and vetted vendors in Dikwa. Before each



*Caregivers exchanging e-voucher card with vendors to access food and NFIs in Dikwa*

distribution, beneficiaries were sensitized on COVID-19 risks and mitigation measures. Messages on posters in Hausa, Kanuri and English were printed and distributed to each of the households and vendors. All the beneficiaries received face masks which were worn during distributions. Vendors provided hand washing facilities to be used by all beneficiaries accessing their business outlets.

Owing to COVID-19 restrictions, TdH **adapted the structured PSS for children and adolescents to home-based PSS using sex and age-segregated for small groups of 7 children or adolescents** (between 5 and 12 and 13 and 17 years) with each volunteer managing 28 children within family clusters. The children attended a 2-hour session per week in the afternoon (Mondays and Wednesdays) on traditional games, storytelling, dance, songs; skipping rope, drawing, alphabet/numerical puzzle game, Ludo and building blocks. PSS sessions also included COVID-19 education, getting to know each other, relationship with peers and family, community safety mapping, gender roles, healthy nutrition and personal hygiene. TdH reached a total of 662 children including 470 young children and 172 adolescents (343 girls, 319 boys).



## TdH (continued)

TdH identified caregivers and brought them together in Emotional Support Groups at Bolori II, Dikwa, Pulka and Mafa, to share conflict-related personal experiences and offer one another emotional comfort and moral support through participation in activities that strengthen and enhance their resilience. The **caregivers were provided with life skills information and referral services to meet their day to day needs which enhanced their psychosocial well-being.** TdH used emotional support group to help caregivers improve their knowledge on positive parenting. The topics covered include: COVID-19 risks and mitigation, psychosocial wellbeing (getting to know each other, getting to know me, how I help me and how I present myself), positive parenting: changing needs as children grows, parenting styles, positive parenting skills and parent child communication. Due to COVID 19 risks and mitigation measures, the numbers of caregivers targeted for each session was reduced to 15 persons. Information and risk communication messages were incorporated in the PSS curriculum for caregivers. Each batch of caregivers were engaged for a cycle of four weeks to complete the curriculum. The participants were divided into small groups of 7 women and 7 men. TdH reached a total of 435 caregivers (235 women, 205 men)..

During the reporting period, **TdH worked with community caregivers, stakeholders and adolescent youth between to identify vulnerabilities and risks facing youth and their challenges to social and economic integration.** Six (6) focus group discussions comprising 12 individuals were held with youths and caregivers in the three project locations during which insecurity, lack of marketable skills, low family income, and lack of educational opportunities were identified as the major risks facing the youth. They stated that **youths' involvement in basic economically viable activities will contribute in building their resilience, coping strategies, self-esteem and decision-making** and recommended activities that are geared towards building their skills in income generation, improvement of their livelihood source and economic empowerment. Beneficiaries were identified and registered using vulnerability criteria that was disseminated within the community. Local artisans and craftsmen have been identified and recruited and the skills training commenced with 109 adolescents (58 girls, 51 boys) participating in Dikwa and Mafa. The trainings will last for three or four months depending on the trade area.

TdH's activities during the reporting period were supported by the Dutch Relief Alliance (DRA) Nigeria Joint Response, ECHO, the NHF and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

## United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

In partnership with the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, UNICEF supported provision of **interim-care based reintegration services for a total of 109 boys formerly associated with armed groups (CAAG)** in April – June 2020. UNICEF also supported the reunification of the 109 boys back to their families and communities and will benefit from community-based reintegration services along with other identified vulnerable children within the communities. During the reporting period, a total of 427 children (98 girls and 239 boys) and 215 young adults (154 women, 131 men) formerly associated with armed groups benefited from community-based reintegration support from UNICEF in partnership with Neem Foundation and Search for Common Ground.

## UNICEF (continued)

With technical guidance from the CPSS, **UNICEF supported the Adamawa and Borno MWASD and the Yobe Ministry of Youth Sports, Social and Community Development to reunify a total of 474 Almajiri boys with their families in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe**, following the decision by the Northern Governors Forum to ban the Almajiri system in northern Nigeria. With the support of the CPSS, UNICEF supported the state ministries to **develop and implement guidelines for the protection and care of the Almajiri children before, during and after the relocation processes**, whilst emphasizing the need to prioritize the best interests of the child during the COVID-19 pandemic.

UNICEF issued a report on titled [\*Psychosocial Support for Children: A Rapid Needs Assessment in North-East Nigeria\*](#). The assessment was aimed at consulting children, community members and other stakeholders to better understand the psychosocial support needs of children affected by the conflict in northeast Nigeria. The report highlights manifestations and perceptions of psychosocial and mental distress amongst children, perceptions on causal factors and vulnerabilities, main barriers to accessing psychosocial support and recommendations for programming for improved access and quality.

UNICEF's activities during the reporting period were supported by EU, the UNICEF French National Committee, the German Government, the Norwegian Government, the NHF, the UNICEF Spanish National Committee, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and USAID.



*Children attending CPS activities in one of the child friendly spaces supported by UNICEF*

**The Child Protection Sub-Sector wishes to thank all governmental, private, Nigerian and international donors for their contributions that have enabled child protection service delivery to vulnerable children and communities in north-east Nigeria.**