

Nigeria | September 2017

mVAM Bulletin #8: While prices increased compared to last year's lean season, the proportion of food insecure households remained constant.

Key Points	Methodology	Food Consumption	Coping Strategies	Prices	In the words of the respondents	Contacts
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Key Points



In spite of the lean season, the number of households with inadequate diets remained constant between January/February and August/September 2017.



Although fewer households are resorting to negative coping strategies, some 42 percent of households reported not having enough food.



Prices increased for all basic commodities between June/July 2016 and August/September 2017.



Photo: WFP/William Olander

Context/Situation Update

The effects of conflict have devastated livelihoods and food security in North-East Nigeria. Currently, 5.1 million people are estimated to be food insecure, with 55,000 people estimated living in famine-like conditions (1). While the United Nations and partners have scaled-up efforts to provide emergency food assistance, humanitarian access in many areas, especially in Borno State, remains a challenge. Prior to this reporting period, the Nigerian Government, UN Agencies, and other key humanitarian actors have increased their assistance from approximately 600,000 beneficiaries in June 2016 to over 2 million people at the onset of the July 2017 lean season (2) (3). Insecurity and access problems continue to limit livelihood opportunities and affect food access at the household level. As July 2017 marks the peak of the lean season, already tenuous household food stocks may be exhausted in the absence of food assistance.

1. Cadre Harmonise Nigeria, March 2017. http://fscluster.org/sites/default/files/documents/fiche-nigeria_mar_2017_final_17march2017.pdf

2. Food Security Sector, July 2017 <http://fscluster.org/nigeria/document/food-security-partner-presence-maps-july>

3. Food Security Sector, June 2016 <http://fscluster.org/nigeria/document/food-security-sector-bulletin-northeast>

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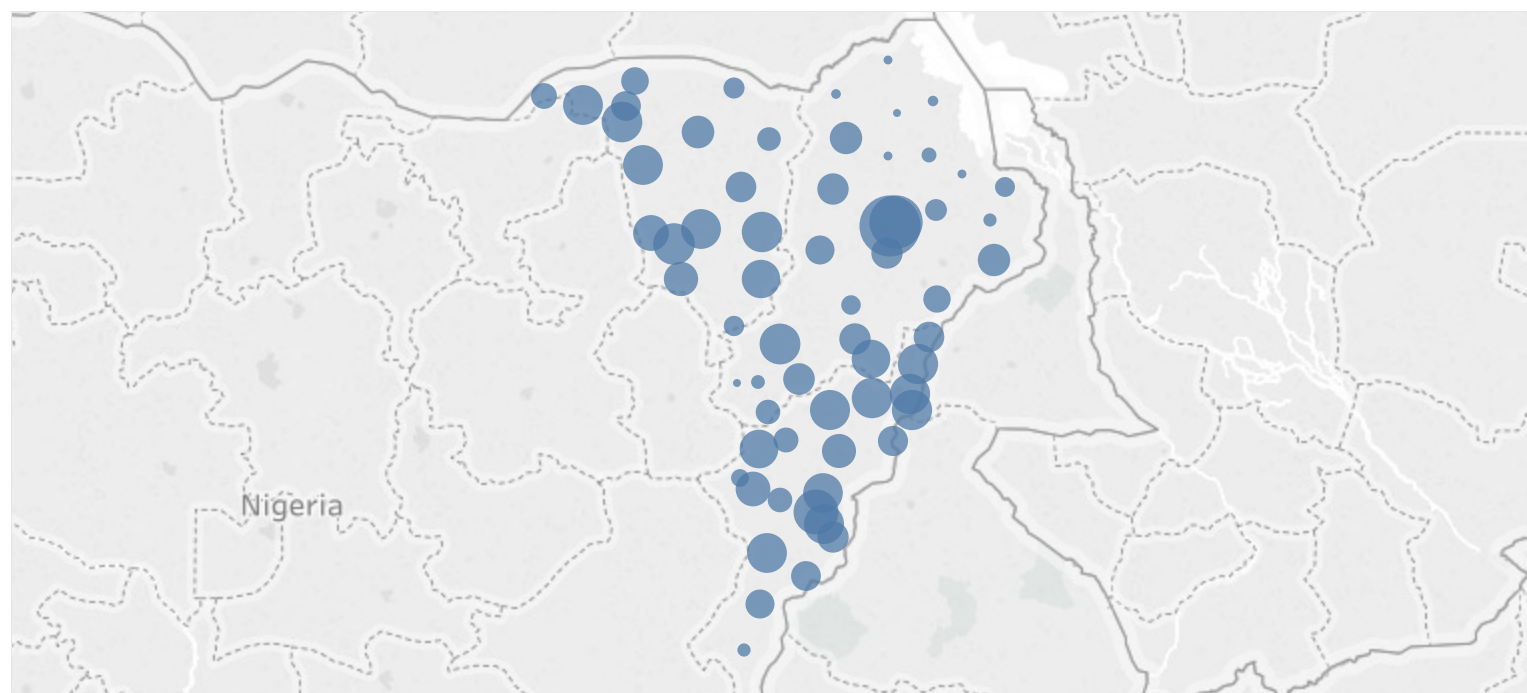
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This round of mVAM remote data collection took place from 2nd of August to 13th of September, 2017, and marked the sixth round of remote household food security and price monitoring in Nigeria using live calls. To estimate food security trends over the last six months and ensure a sufficient sample size in hard-to-reach areas across the northeastern part of the country, two data sources were used to make up the respondent sample frame: (1) phone numbers collected during the February 2017 Emergency Food Security Assessment (<http://bit.ly/2g52H2m>) (EFSA) and (2) numbers from respondents called during the January/February 2017 mVAM survey round (<http://bit.ly/2vfKxQD>) drawn from a mobile-subscriber database covering the three states. A total of 2,380 households were respondents from the EFSA; the additional 1,734 households were from the January/February 2017 mVAM respondent pool. This equated to a total sample size of 4,114 households contacted for August/September 2017.

When interpreting this data, it is important to consider that respondents to mobile surveys are likely to be younger, more educated, and located in more urban areas. As such, the data is not necessarily representative of the larger population, and readers should note these limitations when interpreting figures and trends.

Note: Estimates from Local Government Areas (LGAs) that had a sample size smaller than 25 households are not reported, and readers are cautioned against making inferences from geographic and demographic selections with small sample sizes. Additional methodological information including the questionnaire is available online at http://vam.wfp.org/sites/mvam_monitoring/read_me_nigeria.pdf

Map 1: Number of Responses by LGA, August/September 2017



Households Surveyed

4,114



Displacement status

77% Resident; 23% Displaced



Head of Household

8% Female; 92% Male

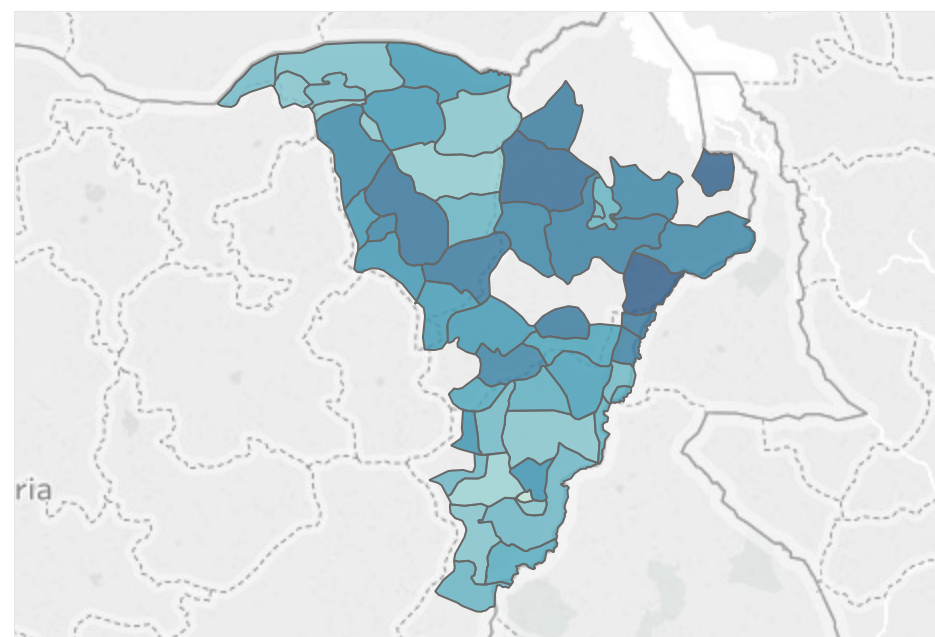
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In spite of the lean season, the number of households with inadequate diets remained constant between January/February and August/September 2017

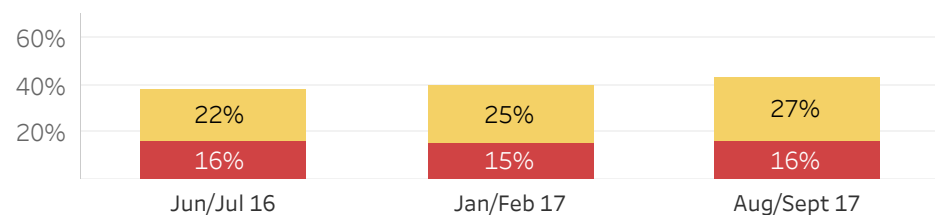
Map 2: Proportion of Households with Poor and Borderline Food Consumption, August/September 2017



Note: Select a Local Government Area on map to filter results below. Press the ESC key to select all areas.



Figure 1: Proportion of Households with Poor and Borderline Food Consumption by Survey Round

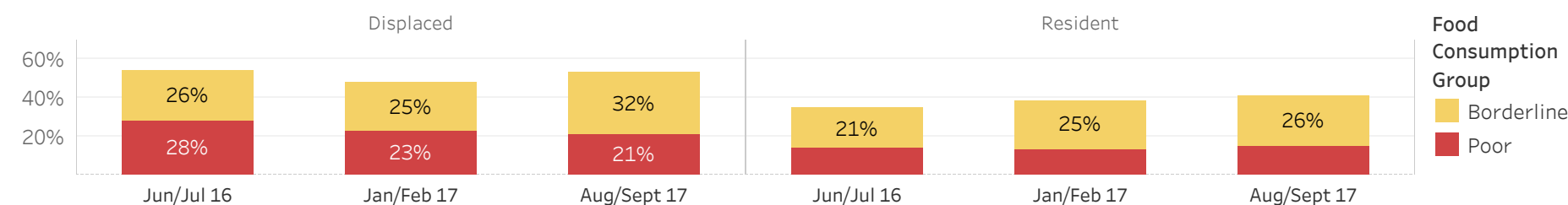


Households were surveyed in the peak of the lean-season, when food availability and access decrease and household stocks are historically at their lowest. In addition, during this same period, insecurity continued to limit land access, agricultural practices, and livelihood opportunities. The security situation was compounded by an early cessation of rainfall and prolonged dry spells, both of which contributed to a poor agricultural harvest from major food baskets within the region (EFSA, September 2017). Between the previous mVAM round six months ago (Jan/Feb 2017) and present, the overall proportion of households with inadequate diets has slightly increased (three percentage points), with the overall number of households exhibiting poor food consumption remaining constant. Increased assistance (in-kind and cash) may have mitigated worsening food insecurity as this trend of stabilization portrays. The Nigerian Government, UN Agencies, and other key humanitarian actors have increased their assistance from approximately 600,000 beneficiaries in June 2016 to roughly 4 million people at the onset of the July 2017 lean season. Data also shows that in urban areas, including Maiduguri, Damaturu and Potiskum, which were likely targeted for food assistance, the proportion of households with poor food consumption decreased.

The proportion of internally displaced (IDP) households with poor food consumption has decreased modestly in the last year (seven percent points) from 28 percent to 21 percent between June/July 2016 and August/September 2017, respectively. The data illustrates a slight increase in the number of IDP households classified as having 'borderline' food consumption (26 percent to 32 percent) between last year and this year. Given the challenges witnessed during this lean season, it is likely that without humanitarian assistance the overall increase in the number of households with inadequate diets (poor and borderline food consumption) would likely have been greater.

Figure 2: Proportion of Households with Poor and Borderline Food Consumption by Demography & Survey Round

Displacement Status

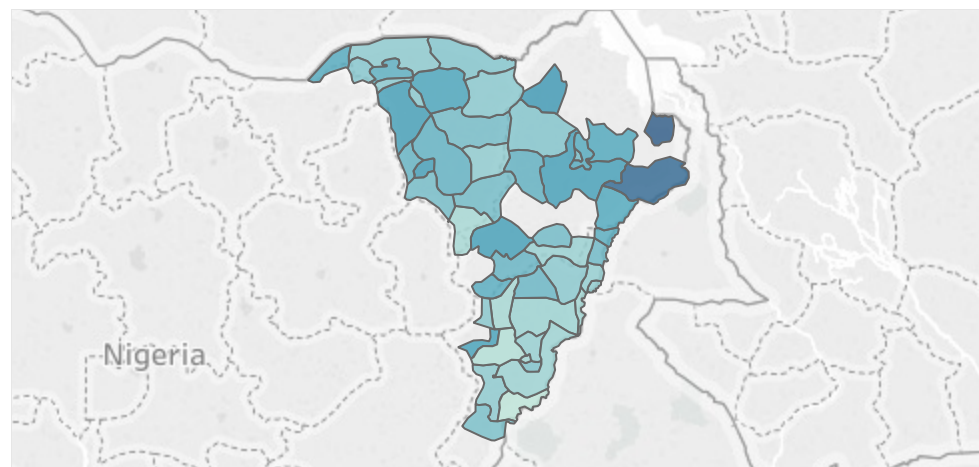


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Map 3: Mean rCSI by Local Government Area, August/September 2017

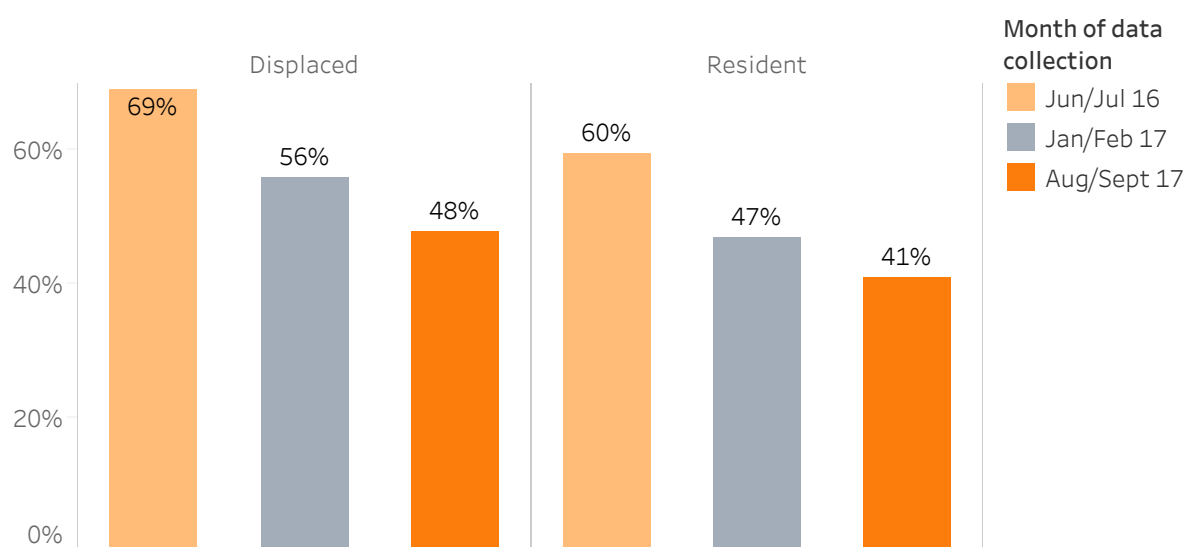


Note: Select a Local Government Area on map to filter results in Figure 3. Press the ESC key to select all areas.



Figure 4: Proportion of Households without enough food by demographic: (Use filter below to change)

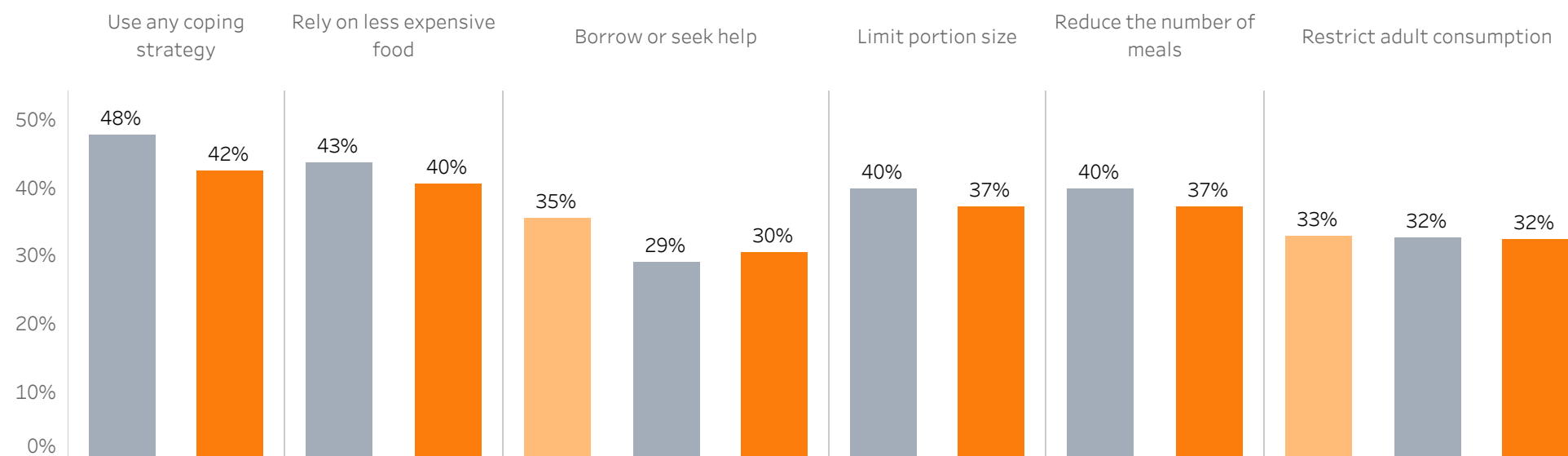
Displacement Status



Between June/July 2016 and August/September 2017, across all three rounds of mVAM data collection, respondents were asked if they were employing negative coping strategies to mitigate their food insecurity. As illustrated in Figure 4, both IDP and resident households employed less negative coping strategies this lean season compared to last year (June/July 2016). The number of IDP households stating that they did not have enough food or money to buy food dropped from 69 percent to 48 percent between the two lean seasons. A similar trend is observed for resident households, with a 19 percentage point drop.

While these trends are positive, nearly half of all female-headed and displaced households stated that they did not have enough food or money to buy food during this round of data collection. Nearly one-third of households still reported using the two most severe coping strategies: (1) borrowing food or money to buy food or relying help from a friend/relative and (2) restricting adult consumption within the household so that children can eat.

Figure 3: Proportion of Households Using Coping Strategies by Survey Round

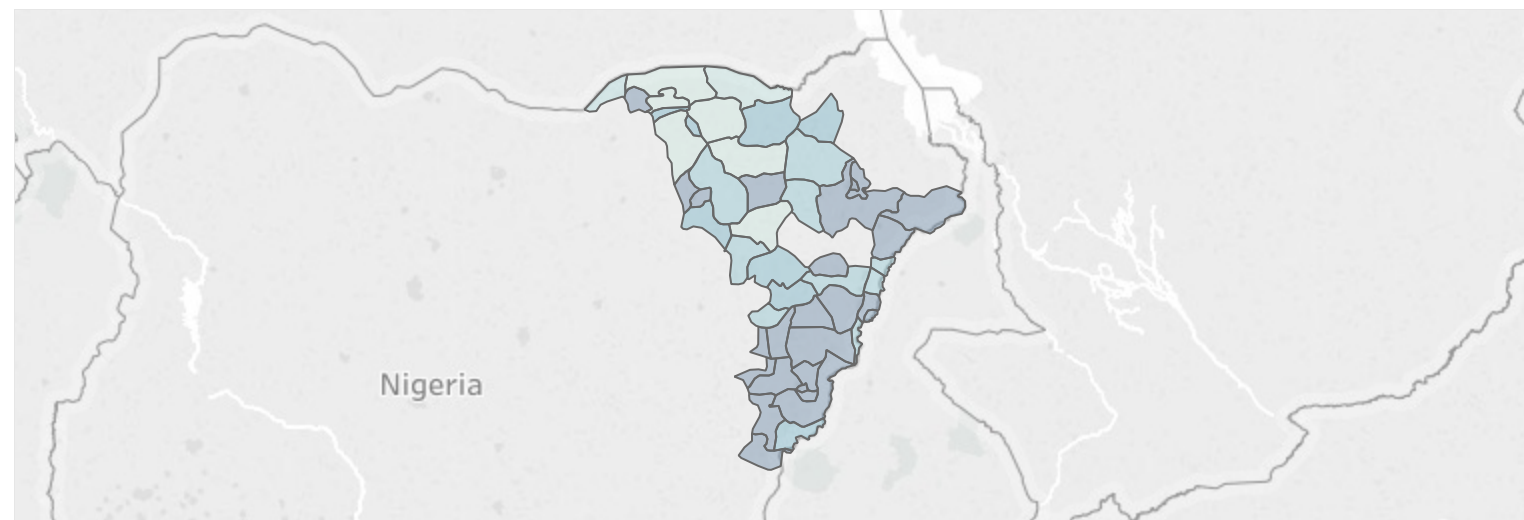


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Map 4: Median Manual Labour Daily Wage Rates by Local Government Area, August/September 2017



Note: Select a Local Government Area on map to filter results below. Press the ESC key to select all areas.

When comparing prices across commodities, a similar trend is observed, with median prices increasing drastically between the 2016 lean season and the January/February 2017 mVAM data collection round. Price fluctuations were less extreme between early 2017 and August/September 2017. Median prices across the LGAs marginally increased for local maize (eight percent), local millet (10 percent), and local sorghum (14 percent). The price of cowpeas jumped from 20 percent (500 Naira to 600 Naira) in January/February 2017 to 33 percent (600 Naira to 800 Naira) in August/September 2017. Compared to the 2016 lean season, the price of cowpeas increased by 60 percent (500 Naira to 800 Naira). The increase in the price of cowpeas and the reduction in wages for manual labour (1000 Naira to 800 Naira) across the LGAs resulted in a 50 percent reduction in the term of trade between June/July 2016 and August/September 2017 and consequently limited the ability of manual labour reliant households to purchase this key staple (1).

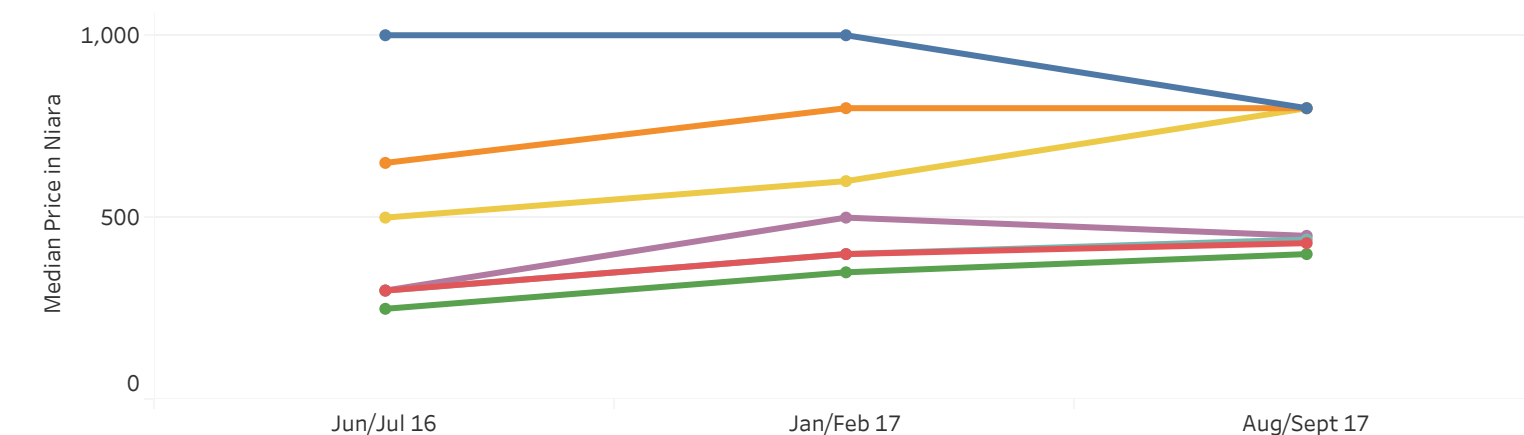
The year-on-year price increase between June/July 2016 and August/September 2017 can be attributed to the low level of cultivation in LGAs that serve as major food baskets in Southern Borno (Akira-Uba and Damboa) and Southern Yobe (Gujba and Gulani). This was underscored by insecurity, limited land access and extended dry spells, which affected the production of crops including cowpeas and contributed to increased market dependency for food access.

(1) Terms of trade (ToT) illustrate purchasing power and are the quantity of a certain food commodity that individuals can barter/purchase for a day's worth of manual labour.

Median Manual Labour Wages



Figure 5: Median Prices of Commodities and Manual Labour



Commodity



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Households reported high food prices and food scarcity but an improved security situation

At the end of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to describe both the food security situation in their community as well as overall security. Respondents reported high food prices and food scarcity as key concerns. In addition, people expressed that the restriction on farming due to previous high levels of insecurity has had a negative impact on food security in their community. That said, many respondents feel that the security situation is now improving.

A few responses from households include:

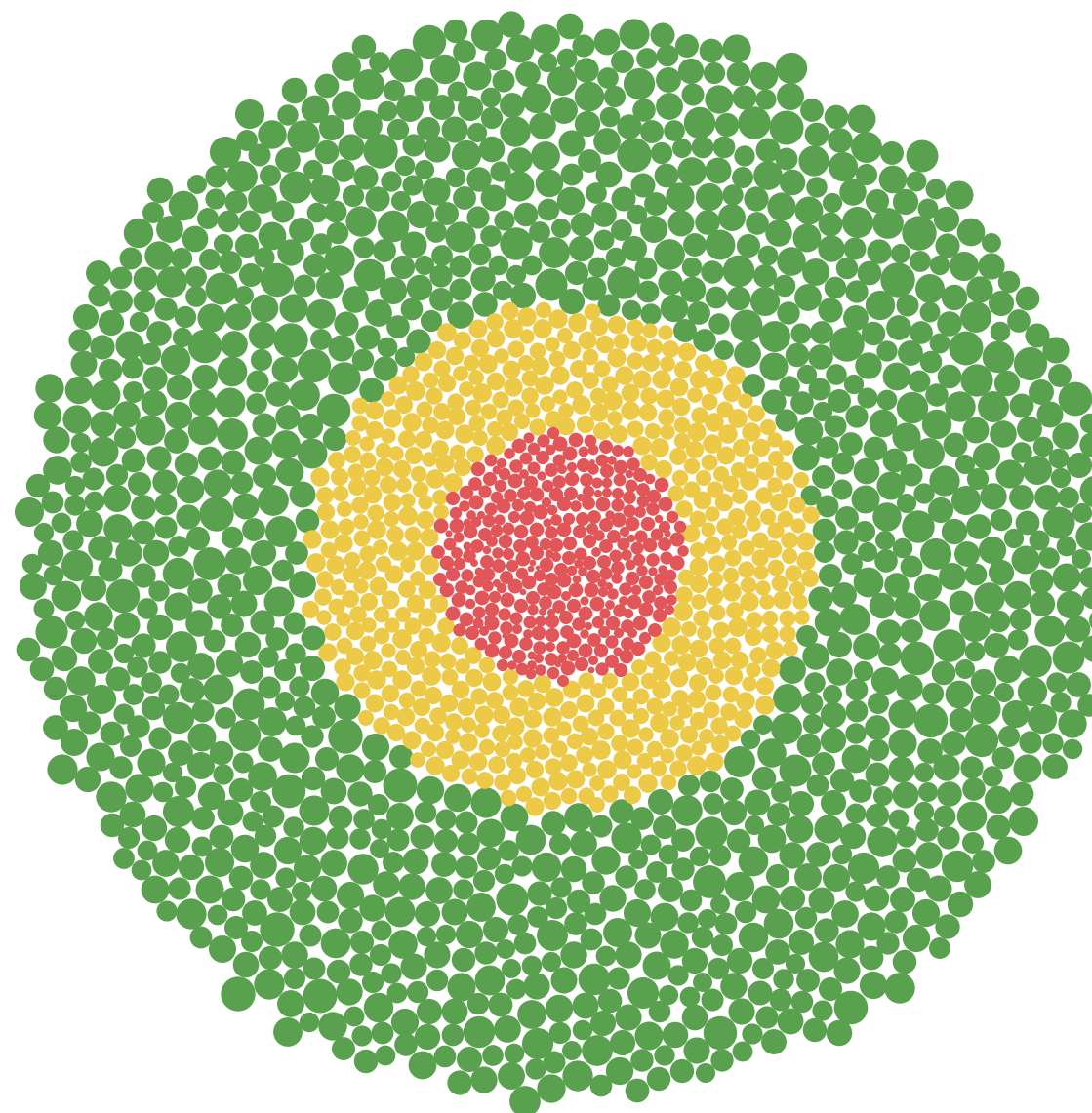
"There is serious scarcity of food items because we could not farm due to insurgency."

"People are suffering here but we thank WFP for help[ing] us with food assistance."

"The security situation has improved very much."

Note: Individual responses can be viewed by hovering over the circles in the graphic below.

Responses can also be filtered by food consumption levels (acceptable, borderline and poor), key words or certain socio-demographic variables.



Food Consumption Group
■ Poor ■ Borderline ■ Acceptable

Filters

Gender of Head of Household



Displacement Status



By State

All

Keyword Search

Food Security

All

Physical Security

All

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