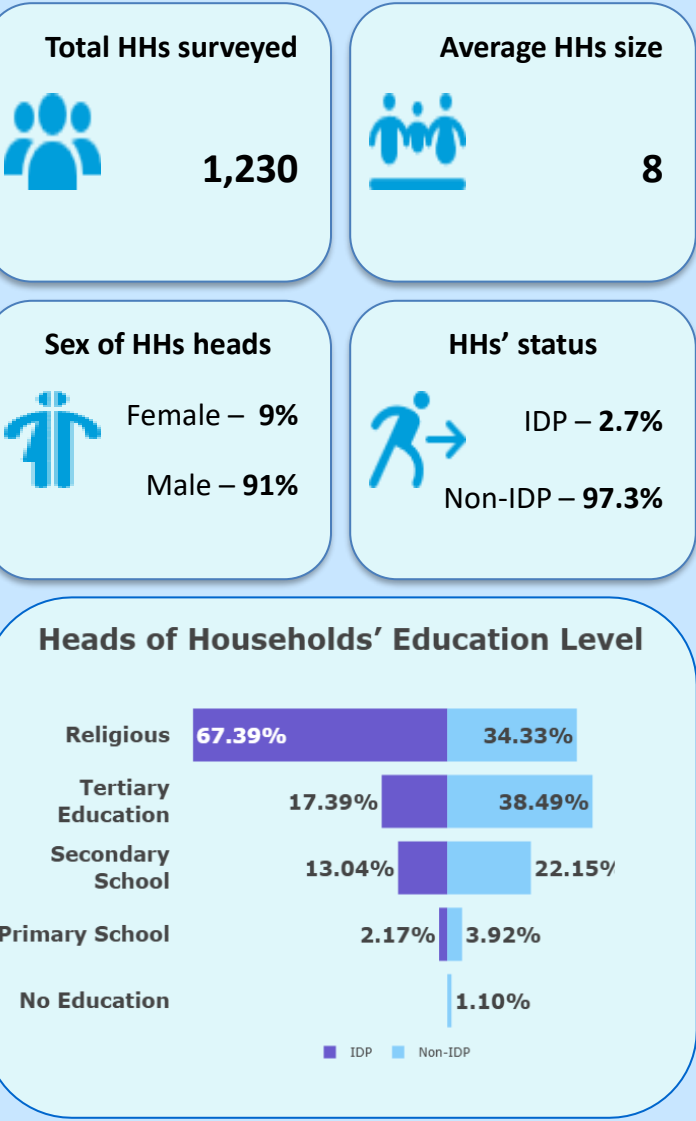


Northeast & Northwest Food Security Situation



HIGHLIGHTS

- Food Consumption Score (FCS):** In May 2026, Inadequate Food Consumption (IFC) in northeast Nigeria stood at 62%, up from 58.7% for April while in the northwest IFC fell to 42.3%, from 47.7% for April 2026. The situation in the northeast and northwest states underscores the impact of depleted household food stocks and insecurity-related access and market constraints. Yobe State recorded the highest inadequate consumption at 80%, followed by Katsina at 61%, though Katsina, Sokoto, and Zamfara showed slight improvements of 3%, 9%, and 4% respectively. Looking ahead, IFC is expected to deteriorate in Adamawa State next quarter, while Borno and Yobe are projected to experience slight stabilization. Detailed forecasts are available on the HungerMapLive platform (<https://hungermap.wfp.org/analytics/mVAM>).
- Reduced Coping Strategy Index (rCSI):** The prevalence of severe reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI >18) was 15.7% for the northeast (up by 2%), and 12% for the northwest (down by 3.7%). The relative stability of these outcomes in both the northeast and northwest indicates that households are consistently adopting negative coping mechanisms due to food shortages and financial challenges. Notably, IDP and non-IDP households recorded an identical severe rCSI rate of 15%. At the state level, Zamfara (22%) and Borno (17%) states remain the worst affected, even as Katsina and Sokoto showed improvements of 15% and 3% respectively. Among the top three food-based coping strategies utilized by households, 95% relied on less preferred food, 77% restricted portion sizes, and 61% reduced meal frequency.
- Livelihood Coping Strategies Index (LCSI):** The prevalence of households relying on crisis or emergency livelihood coping strategies (LCSI) to access food in May 2026 was 65.3% in the Northeast (up by 3.3%) and 54.7% in the Northwest. IDPs recorded the highest adoption of livelihood coping strategies, at 83%. Zamfara and Yobe remained the most affected states, with LCSI prevalence rates of 78% and 76%, respectively. This high prevalence is largely attributable to insecurity, restricted market access, and limited economic opportunities. Katsina State was the only state to record an improvement in May compared with the previous month. The most commonly adopted livelihood coping strategies used to access food in May 2026 included purchasing food on credit (27%), borrowing cash (20%), and reducing health-related expenditures (15%).



Food Consumption Score (FCS)

In May 2026, Inadequate Food Consumption (IFC) in the northeast states of Nigeria stood at 62%, up from 58.7% for April; while in the northwest, IFC fell slightly to 42.3%, from 47.7% for April 2026. The situation in the northeast and northwest states underscores the impact of depleted household food stocks and insecurity-related markets and access constraints. Looking ahead, IFC metrics are projected to worsen in Adamawa and Zamfara states next quarter, whereas Borno, Katsina, Sokoto, and Yobe states should experience minor stabilization.

Food insecurity remained particularly critical in Yobe (80%) and Katsina (61%), where inadequate food consumption significantly exceeded the averages for northeast and northwest. Month-on-month increases were also observed in Borno (+4%) and Adamawa (+3%). In contrast, Sokoto (-9%) and Zamfara (-4%) deviated from the broader trend, recording notable improvements compared with April (Figure. 2 and Map 1). This recent decline breaks a six-month downward trajectory that reversed sharply in March 2026, when escalating global energy and fuel prices triggered by the Middle East crisis drove up local food costs.

Dietary diversity remains heavily skewed toward basic sustenance. In May, households relied on staple foods like tubers and cereals almost daily, averaging 7.0 days per week, complemented regular use of cooking oils at 6.5 days per week. By contrast, nutrient-dense and non-food groups were consumed far less frequently: vegetables averaged 4.0 days, sugar 3.3 days, meat and fish 2.9 days, pulses 2.7 days, fruits 2.0 days, and dairy products just 1.5 days per week.

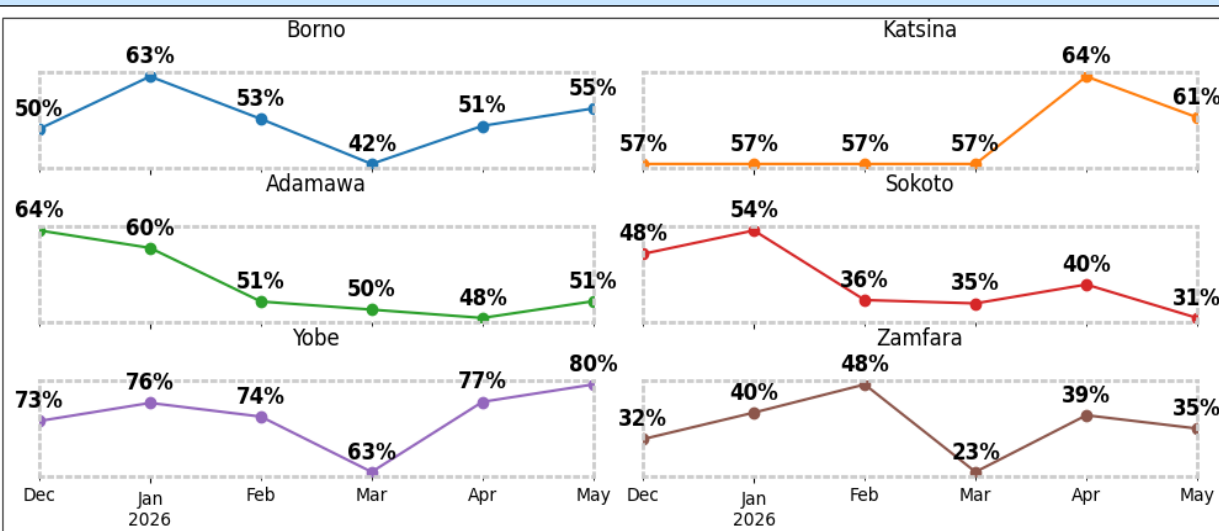
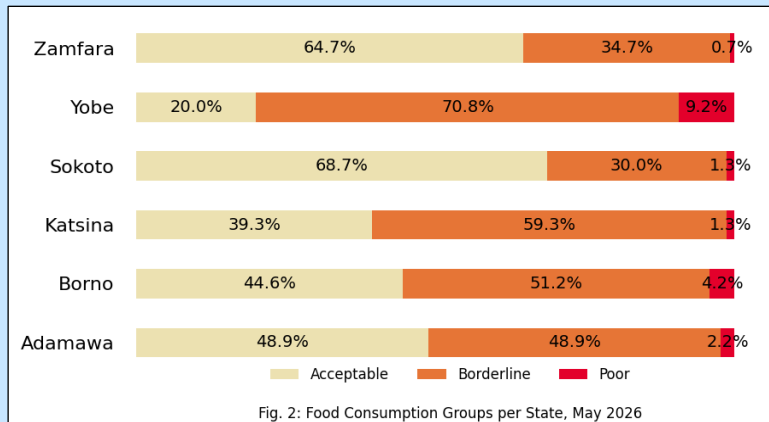
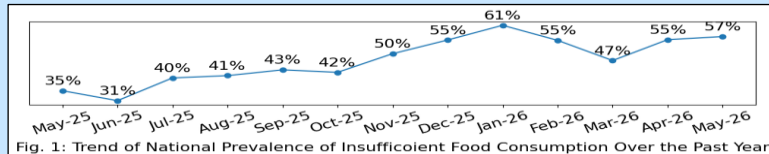
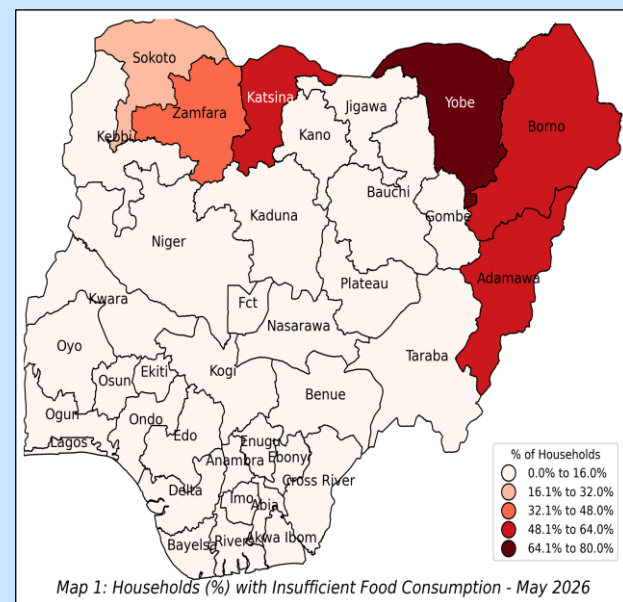


Fig. 3: Last Six Months' Trend of Prevalence of Insufficient Food Consumption per State.



Reduced Coping Strategy Index (rCSI)

In May 2026, the prevalence of severe reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI >18) was 15.7% for the Northeast (NE) (up by 2%), and 12% for the Northwest (NW) (down by 3.7%). The relative stability of these outcomes in both the northeast and northwest indicates that households are consistently adopting negative coping mechanisms due to food shortages and financial challenges (**Figure. 4**). Notably, IDP and non-IDP households recorded the identical rCSI (> 18) rate of 15%. At the state level, Zamfara and Borno states remain the worst affected, even as Katsina and Sokoto showed improvements of 15% and 3%, respectively.

In May 2026, the proportion of households resorting to negative food-based coping mechanisms declined in Katsina (-15%) and Sokoto (-3%), remained unchanged in Borno and Adamawa, but deteriorated in Yobe and Zamfara compared to April (Figure. 5, Figure 6, and Map 2). A retrospective six-month analysis reveals that Adamawa and Katsina states consistently recorded the highest proportion of households driven into these emergency measures in response to acute food or financial challenges (Figure 6).

These coping strategies adopted by vulnerable populations underscored severe dietary strain: 95% relied on less preferred or lower-quality foods, 77% restricted portion sizes, and 61% reduced the frequency of daily meals. Furthermore, household coping mechanisms and informal social support systems appeared to be under significant strain, with 49% of adults reducing their own food intake to prioritize children's consumption, while 40% relied on borrowing food or receiving assistance from relatives and friends.

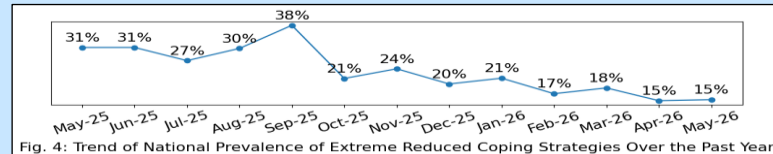


Fig. 4: Trend of National Prevalence of Extreme Reduced Coping Strategies Over the Past Year

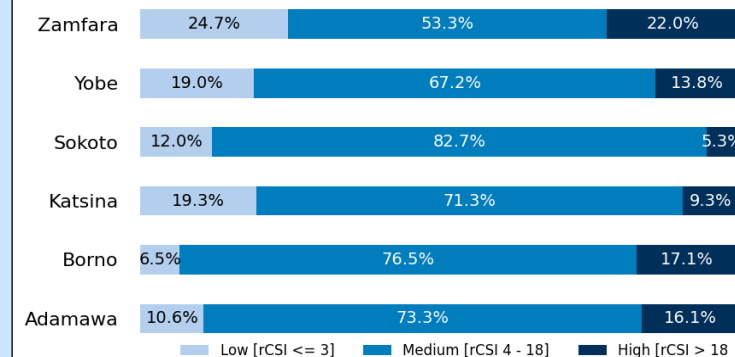


Fig. 5: Food-Based Coping Strategies Categories Adoption per State, May 2026

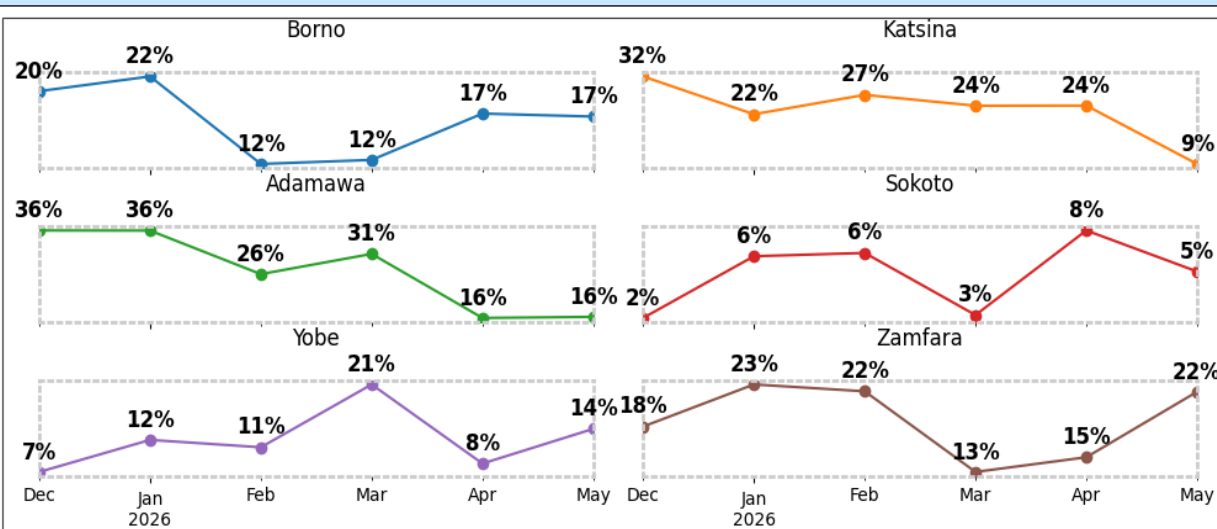
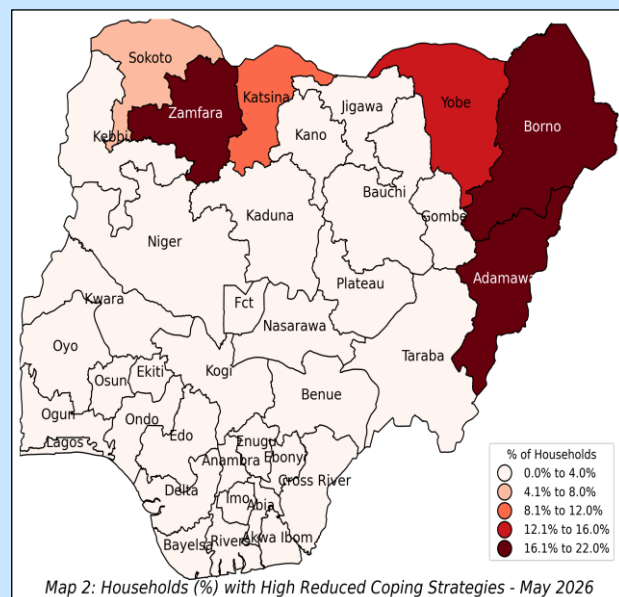


Fig. 6: Last Six Months' Trend of High Food-Based Coping Strategy Adoption per State.



Livelihood Coping Strategies Index (ICSI)

In May 2026, households relying on crisis or emergency livelihood coping strategies (ICSI) reached 65.3% (+3.3%) in the Northeast and 54.7% (-0.67%) in the Northwest. Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) suffered the highest adoption rate at 83%. Zamfara (78%) and Yobe (76%) remained the hardest-hit states due to ongoing insecurity, restricted market access, and scarce economic opportunities. Conversely, only Katsina State recorded a monthly improvement, driven by enhanced food access (Figure 7).

Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) households face the most acute distress, with 83% adopting extreme coping mechanisms due to severely restricted income-generating options. At the state level, Zamfara (78%) and Yobe (76%) remain the most heavily impacted. This widespread reliance on crisis strategies is driven by ongoing insecurity, market access constraints, and limited economic opportunities.

Conversely, Katsina was the only state to show improvement this month. Across the regions, the most common coping strategies in May 2026 included purchasing food on credit (27%), borrowing cash (20%), and cutting health expenditures (15%).

Over the past six months, the proportion of households relying on these survival strategies showed a gradual downward trend in Katsina and Adamawa. Meanwhile, Zamfara state exhibited a steady upward trajectory, while trends in Borno, Sokoto, and Yobe remained largely flat (Figure 9).

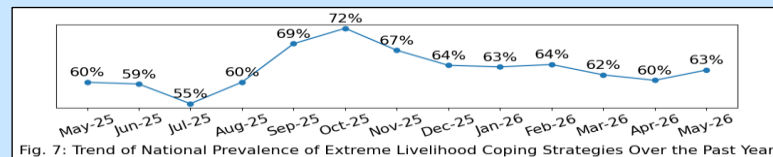


Fig. 7: Trend of National Prevalence of Extreme Livelihood Coping Strategies Over the Past Year

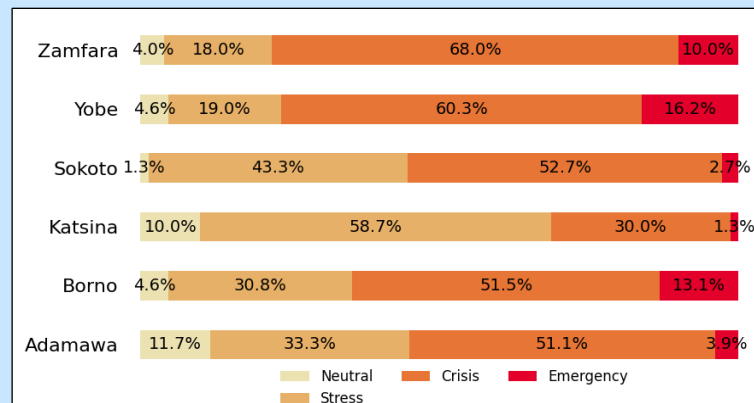


Fig. 8: Livelihood Coping Strategies Categories Adoption per State, May 2026

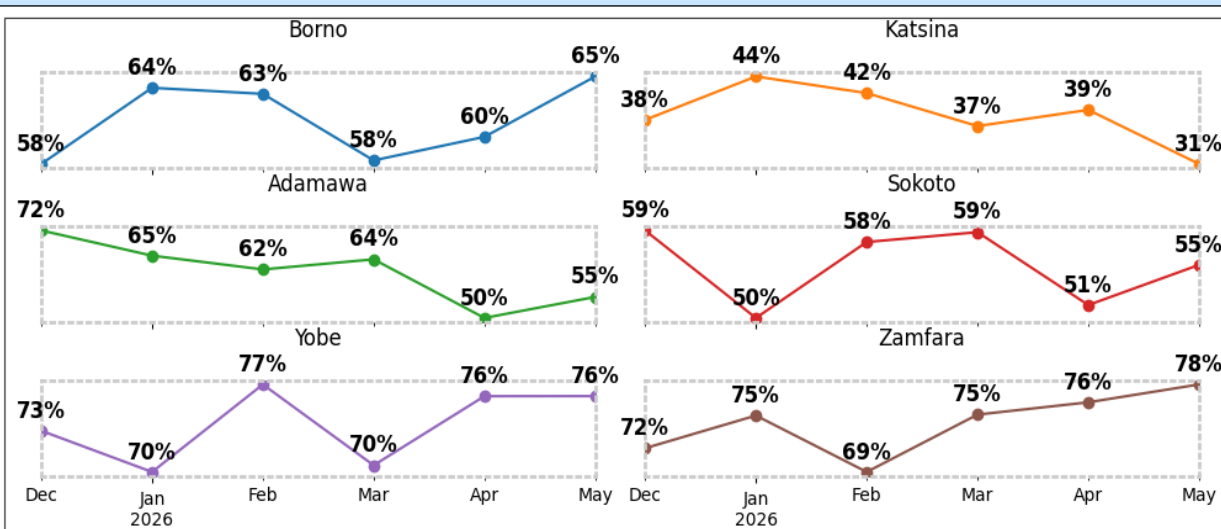
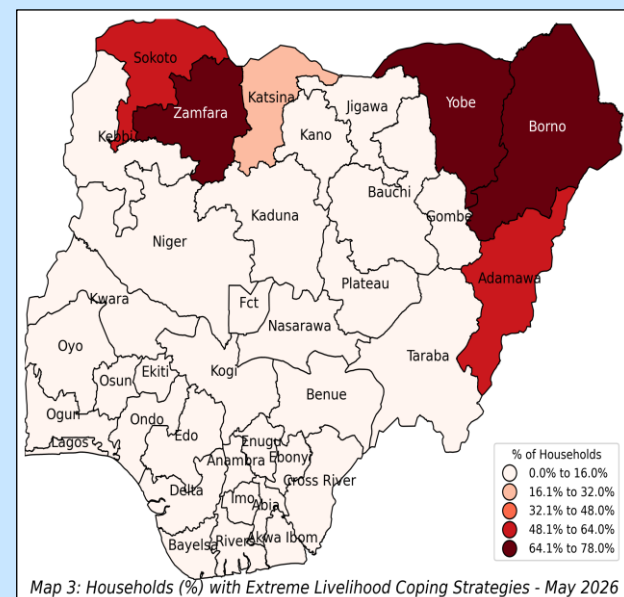


Fig. 9: Last Six Months' Trend of Extreme Livelihood Coping Strategies Adoption per State.



Households' market access and livelihoods

In May 2026, local market access difficulties for northern Nigerian households rose slightly. In the two weeks prior to the survey, 74.8% of households in the Northeast (up 4.9%) and 74.9% in the Northwest (down 0.3%) failed to access a market at least once. This combined regional average of ~74.8% represents a marginal increase from the 72.6% recorded in April 2026. As shown in Figure 10, persistent insecurity drives these market constraints and directly threatens livelihoods by blocking farmland access. Agriculture and unskilled agricultural labor remain the primary livelihood sources for highly vulnerable households, supporting 43.1% of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 31.1% of non-IDPs. While both groups share five of their seven main income sources, a pronounced disparity exists in access to formal employment, which accounts for 11.1% of income sources among non-IDPs compared with none among IDPs.

The combined effects of market disruptions and weakened livelihoods have significantly eroded households' ability to build and maintain food stocks. In May 2026, the proportion of households with no food reserves or reserves lasting less than one week increased to 80.6% in the Northeast (up from 79.4% in April) and 81.1% in the Northwest (up from 75.5% in April). This represents a marked deterioration from the previous month's average of 77.5% (Figure 13). Consequently, more than four in five households across both regions are now facing critically low levels of food availability.

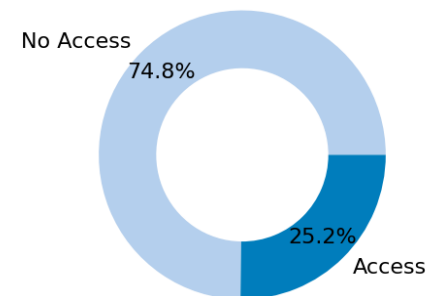


Fig. 10: Households' market access, in the past 14 days before assessment

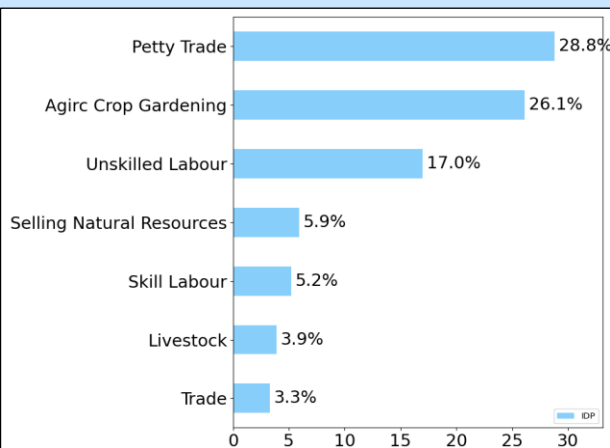


Fig. 11: IDP Households' main income sources, in the last three months

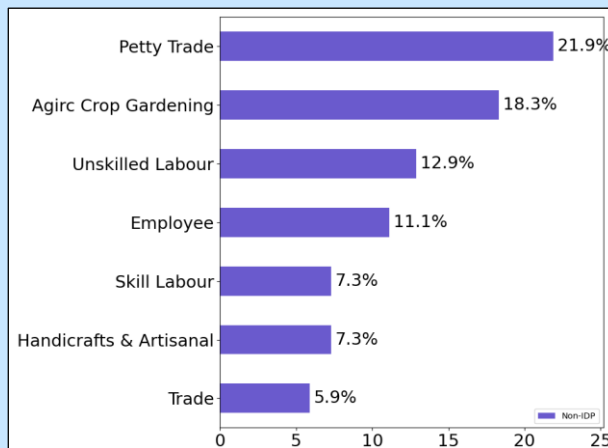


Fig. 12: Non-IDP Households' main income sources, in the last three months

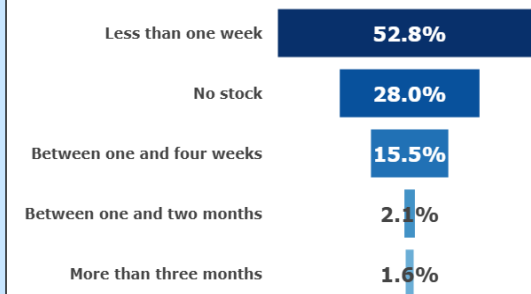


Fig. 13: Households' Food Stocks Duration

METHODOLOGY

This analysis draws on Mobile Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (mVAM) data on food security and nutrition collected from 2,700 randomly selected households across six WFP intervention states, evenly distributed between the northeast (Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe) and the northwest (Katsina, Sokoto, and Zamfara) geopolitical zones of Nigeria. For the month under review (May 2026), an average of 450 households were sampled per state. For the trend analysis, data from approximately 32,400 households sampled through the Mobile Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (mVAM) project covering the last one year before this analysis date were used. The analysis of the trend of armed crisis in northeast and northwest was derived from the Nigeria conflicts events, fatalities and exposure data located on the ACLED site. The data collection was subjected to rigorous data quality checks to ensure the reliability of the data.

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