How does conflict impact education? How do we design education programs that truly are conflict-sensitive? How can we collaboratively analyze, interpret and use data and evidence in order to improve educational programming? These were some of the topics in which over 60 participants immersed themselves over three days in USAID’s Education in Conflict and Crisis Network’s (ECCN) first field workshop — in Abuja, Nigeria from September 14-16, 2015. The workshop aimed to improve participants’ knowledge about, use of, and collaboration around initial and ongoing conflict analysis for education programming in Nigeria.

Over the course of three days, workshop participants — representing USAID, other bi- and multi-lateral donor agencies, UN organizations, local and international non-profit organizations, and high level education and emergency representatives from the Federal level as well as Yobe, Adamawa, Gombe and Bauchi states — focused on conflict sensitive education programming, conflict assessment, and the use of feedback loops to improve education planning and delivery in northern Nigeria.

(Pictured above workshop organizers: Ash Hartwell, Bashir Tukur (MoE) and Wendy Wheaton).

USAID’s Education Crisis Response (ECR) project, implemented by Creative Associates International as well as local and international partners, served as the case study for the workshop. ECR aims to expand enrollment in appropriate, protective and relevant educational options for children and youth affected by violence in the four states.

The workshop offered in-depth examination of feedback loops for problem solving primarily through a problem-solving simulation designed by Ash Hartwell ECCN support staff and adjunct professor at the Center for International Education, University of Massachusetts, an ECCN partner institution.

Working in cross-organizational teams, participants analyzed educational data and identified key issues and priority actions based on these data. Assuming roles — a donor, the State Education Management Agency, an internally displaced mother of several school age children— participants had to design their problem solving approach taking into account multiple stakeholder perspectives. They then shared their priority actions with the larger group