

Population Movements

The number of individuals who returned to Nigeria from Cameroon has slightly increased by **226** following the completion of the registration process by the National Immigration Service supported by UNHCR on 28 May. The total number is now **12,428** individuals in **3,083** households; more than **98 per cent** of them arriving through Banki in Borno State and the rest coming through the Sahuda entry point in Adamawa State. Remaining family members of returnees relocated from Banki to Pulka were scheduled to re-join the rest of their family on 1 June. But UNHCR monitors indicate over-crowdedness, severe water shortages and restriction of free movement outside the main Pulka Town remain principle concerns for humanitarian aid agencies. Since 2015, more than **270,000** Nigerians driven by the insurgency in the North-East have returned from Cameroon, Niger and Chad.

Situation Analysis

Since the 22nd of May, there have been no reported spontaneous returns by UNHCR staff and partners currently stationed in Banki and other border entry points. This could be linked to the joint mission to Minawao, Cameroon and key messages provided to refugees by UNHCR and its Nigerian and Cameroonian government counterparts. While this remains an assumption, UNHCR and its government and NGO partners remain positive that refugees in Cameroon and other countries in the region will understand the complexity of the current situation in Nigeria's North-East and the impact on their safety and dignity upon return. UNHCR and the two governments will continue to advise refugees not to undertake any further hasty movements until conditions in the areas of return are improved as provided for under the Tripartite Agreement signed in March 2017. On the 31st of May, UNHCR and the Government of Nigeria held a joint-debriefing with other members of the humanitarian community, donors, diplomatic missions, civic society organizations and the media on the outcome of the joint-mission to Cameroon.

Response Efforts

UNHCR and partners are working to respond to the emergency situation of the latest influx of refugee returnees. UNHCR is distributing non-food items (NFIs) in Banki to approximately 10,000 individuals in 2,000 households. Additional emergency stock of NFIs are being sent to Pulka, Bama and Gwoza. The kit includes, mattresses, cooking sets, spoons, cups, buckets and jerry cans. Additionally, more than 1,000 emergency shelters materials are being repositioned to Banki, Pulka, Bama and Gwoza to respond to the influx.

The UNHCR is working with UNICEF, WFP, IOM, INTERSOS and its local Protection partner, Action Initiative for Peace and Development (AIPD) to review operational challenges that impact the effectiveness of response including access to new arrivals after screening, data collection and effective use of resources to avoid duplication of interventions. UNHCR is advocating with other humanitarian agencies to intervene in areas where they have expertise and resources.

Key Operational Challenges

Humanitarian access outside main administrative areas remains a challenge, and movement of UN and other humanitarian staff and items by road is not the best option. These developments continue to undermine the effectiveness of humanitarian response. The lack of resources also limits the response capacity of UNHCR and its partners to address the critical needs of returnees.