

NIGERIA

UNHCR WEEKLY UPDATE

9 -16 January 2015

KEY FIGURES

1.5 million IDPs

Internally Displaced People

981,416 IDPs

officially registered IDPs (NEMA)

2,533 Refugees

Refugees of mixed nationalities as of 30 June 2014

FUNDING

USD 6,088,647.67

For 2014 Operation (Including the additional requirements for Nigeria Situation)

24% FUNDED



PRIORITIES

- Protection Sector Working Group meetings for IDP engagement
- Consolidating protection strategy
- Broadening UNHCR-ECOWAS scope of partnership
- Donor briefing sessions on 2014 Operation and 2015 Planning
- Continuing IDP assessment missions
- Voluntary repatriation of Cameroonian refugees

HIGHLIGHTS



- Barely one month to the 14th February general elections, the insurgents have stepped up attacks especially in the volatile and unpredictable north east zone. In one of the most deadly and unprecedented attacks in the odious history of the insurgency in Nigeria, 2,000 people were reported dead in Baga town, Borno State on 9 January 2015. The human rights group Amnesty International described the killings as “a disturbing and bloody escalation”. (Photo above: Displaced family seeks refuge at the National Youth Service ©UHNCR in Yola, Adamawa State).
- UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon condemned the killings saying he is appalled by reports of hundreds of civilians killed in Baga town, Borno State, near Nigeria's border with Chad.

Operational Context

- The insurgents' attack in Baga has been described as one of the deadliest terrorist attacks in modern history. The totality of the destruction is yet to be quantified, but by all accounts, it was catastrophic. Amnesty International estimates the death toll may have surpassed 2,000. Nigeria government officials indicated that Baga once a home to 10,000 ostensibly under the protection of a multinational military base is now "virtually non-existent." On 10 January 2015, Amnesty International described the 3 January 2015 attack in Borno State as the deadliest in the history of the insurgents six-year reign of terror in the North-East of Nigeria, saying about 2,000 people may have been killed in the incident. Similarly, the United Nations refugee agency on 9 January reported that some 7,300 Nigerian refugees had arrived in western Chad in the past 10 days, fleeing attacks by insurgents on Baga town and surrounding villages in North-East Nigeria. The UNHCR spokesperson, Adrian Edwards, said UNHCR teams in Chad were at the border and seeking more information on the new arrivals and their needs
- The Baga attack prompted Nigeria's President Goodluck Jonathan to appeal for prayers for the army which in turn called for support in tackling the insurgency especially with the advent of the northeast inferno on Baga- -the worst in the bloody six-year insurgency. Nigeria's military - West Africa's largest has faced repeated criticism for failing to end the six-year Islamist insurgency, as well as allegations of human rights abuses It has however, complained of a lack of adequate weapons and even refused to deploy to take on the better-armed rebels, who want to create a hardline Islamic state in northeast Nigeria. With elections set for next month, Nigeria's government has also been accused by some news media of playing politics with the insurgency, as most of the areas worst affected by the violence are main opposition strongholds. The United States condemned the attacks, saying the group "shows no regard" for human life. The State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said all those responsible for recurring terrorist attacks must be held accountable Cameroon's President Paul Biya call for international support and a coordinated response against Nigerian militant group. The appeal came to the diplomatic community after the release of an insurgent video message threatening Cameroon The country has put up stiff and tenacious resistance against the insurgents in recent weeks. Neighboring Chad who has been suspected of supporting the insurgents immediately pledged military support to Cameroon following its appeal.
- Even as the world was still contemplating the global assault of the week including the Charlie Hebdo massacre in Paris, a major market in Maiduguri, capital of Borno State, came under a suicide bomb on 11 January 2015 afternoon leaving 20 people dead, and 18 others with varied degrees of injuries. Hours later, a suspicious vehicle that had been stopped at a checkpoint outside the city of Potiskum, in neighbouring Yobe, exploded at a police station as its driver was being taken in for questioning. A police officer accompanying the car and the driver were killed, an officer said.
- The insurgency novel strategy of using unsuspecting young girls being employed with increasing frequency by the insurgents to confuse vigilance of the security operatives. Over the past week many have either succeeded or have been nipped in the bud before they engage in the macabre act. However, it was not the case with the 10 year old girl who the insurgents strapped with explosives, she entered a crowded Monday market in Maiduguri and they detonated killing at least 20 people and injuring another 18.on 12 January 2015.As terrorist groups seemingly become more empowered by the lack of international response to their barbarism, the acts they commit are becoming more atrocious by the day. What happened at a Nigerian marketplace over the 12 January is proof of this, as the militants are now doing the unthinkable to a very young girls
- All these are happening amidst campaigns for the general elections which have witnessed the onset of violence arousing fears about a remake of the 2011 elections On 11 January 2015 the campaign buses of President Goodluck Jonathan were burnt in Jos, capital of Plateau state by suspected supporters of the All Progressives Congress, APC. It was against this backdrop that the two main political contenders at the 2015 election signed a non-violence agreement, restating their commitment to violence free elections in the country.
- Meanwhile as doubts continue to reign if elections will actually hold in the north east, President Goodluck Jonathan paid a surprise visit to Maiduguri in what observers said is a campaign strategy. Mr. Jonathan assured some of the

5,000 refugees who fled last-week's violence that his government is working hard to ensure they return to their homes. It was his first visit to the north-east since March 2013. Critics have accused the president of ignoring the victims of violence in the region. He cancelled a trip to the region in 2014.

IDP Operation

- The National Emergency Management Agency revealed it dispatched a team from Abuja to strengthen the provision of humanitarian support to the displaced persons from Baga, Borno State, who fled the recent attacks by Boko Haram in the town. NEMA maintained it has registered 3,200 of the IDPs from Baga as at 10 January 2015 and stated that the displaced individuals were now in Maiduguri and accommodated at a Teachers Village Estate. A statement issued by the agency's Press Officer, Manzo Ezekiel, indicated that NEMA was providing the IDPs with basic support in collaboration with the Borno State Government. He said the creation of the new camp brings the number of camps to 11 where NEMA has been supporting the IDPs with food and non-food items. The other IDPs in the camps are from towns and villages in the state which had been previously displaced by the insurgency. The NEMA special intervention team is led by the Director of search and rescue who joined the staff at the agency's zonal office in Maiduguri to strengthen the humanitarian intervention in the state. The NEMA mission to the north east was expected to tender its report on Friday 16 January 2015.
- The Emergency Management Agency on 11 January warned some Internally Displaced Persons in Adamawa against selling relief materials given to them by the agency. NEMA camps leader in Yola, Alhaji Sa'ad Bello, gave the warning while presenting relief materials to IDPs in Yola, Yola South Local Government Area. Bello said it was unfortunate that report reaching the agency confirmed that some IDPs were seen selling the materials. He said the agency is dismayed by the attitude of some Internally Displaced Persons who are in the habit of selling relief materials given to them by NEMA and warned the agency will not take it lightly with any person involved in such act sellers and the buyers alike. He also warned some IDPs who collect relief materials from various camps with different identity to desist from such behavior fake person or groups parading themselves as IDPs.
- The House of Representatives Wednesday gave indication that it is ready to amend the 2010 Electoral Act with a view to ensure participation of duly registered Internally-Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the nation's general elections. The Deputy Chairman, House Committee on Media and Public Affairs, Victor Afam Ogene, who gave the indication while addressing newsmen after the session of 14 January said the House was "desirous to fast-track the proposed amendment to the Act," a development he said, necessitated the constitution of a conference committee to meet with its Senate counterpart, even as the parliament was embarking on another break through.
- The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) says the number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the country as at Jan. 15, 2015 is 981,416. NEMA's Director, Search and Rescue, Air Commodore Charles Otegbade, gave the figure on 15 January in Abuja while briefing newsmen at the National Information Centre.

Meanwhile, the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) revealed on 15 January that Nigeria is seeking the return of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) (**these are actually refugees**) from neighbouring countries, Chad, Cameroon and Niger- a move which is at variance with international protection principles. The Director of Research and Rescue, NEMA, Air Commandant Charles Onifade, revealed this while addressing journalists alongside the coordinator of the National Information Centre, Mr Mike Omeri, at the centre in Abuja. He disclosed that presently, there are 15,001 IDPs in Cameroon, 2,377 in Chad while the figures of those in Niger is yet to be ascertained stating that plans are on between the Nigerian government and Niger government to settle the people in a particular location.

Refugee Operation

- The UN Refugee Agency in Nigeria is facilitating the return of some 400 Cameroon refugees who have freely chosen to return to their native villages in Akwaya sub-division of the South West region of Cameroon after six years of stay on Nigerian territory. The repatriation started on 12 January 2015 and so far, 34 families of 166 individuals have been repatriated. The team is composed of UNHCR, the National Commission for refugees, NCFR, Representatives of the Cameroon High Commission in Nigeria, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Benue State Government, Obalinku Local Government Area, LGA, of the Cross Rivers State.

The refugees are supported with transportation through designated and agreed routes, luggage allowance of 50kg per individual from Agbatse in Benue State of Nigeria to Lagos (in Akwaya), on the Cameroon border, free vaccination against yellow fever, polio and meningitis and voluntary return cash grant of USD 150 per adult refugee or USD 75 per minor refugee.

If all goes as planned, the exercise will end on Friday 16 January 2015. The refugees arrived in Nigeria in 2008 following inter communal clashes between the Oyives and Olitis in the Akwaya sub division of Cameroon.

External Relations

- On 14 January 2015 the UNHCR Representative in Nigeria and to ECOWAS Mrs. Angèle-Dikongué Atangana met with the USA Regional Refugee Coordinator, Mr. Skye Justice who was accompanied by Mr. Robert Drapcho, the Director, Regional Office of Food for Peace (USAID), and Mr. Michael M. Zeleke Regional Advisor, West Africa and South Africa, Office of the US Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA)

Their visit aimed at learning and understanding from the UNHCR perspective the ongoing forcible displacement crises in Nigeria, what the UN agency for refugees has so far accomplished, is currently implementing and its plans for 2015.

The UNHCR Representative presented an overview of the three prong operations of refugees, the internally displaced persons (IDPs) and collaboration with ECOWAS. She said even though the current refugee figures in Nigeria are relatively small (2,533), refugees' expectations tend to be high, and therefore keep the office quite busy, mainly implementing durable solution activities on their behalf (voluntary repatriation local integration and resettlement). The august visitors congratulated UNHCR as they learnt of the ongoing voluntary repatriation of Cameroon refugees.

Later on 16 January 2015, Mr. Skye Justice held a second round of discussion with UNHCR during which he debriefed the office on the substance of his visit to Nigeria. He outlined a series of meetings which he held with the competent Government institutions, such as NEMA, UN agencies, and other humanitarian organisations. He lauded the level of collaboration between UNHCR, government authorities and other partners.

The US Regional Coordinator expressed keen interest in working with UNHCR on capacity building in the protection and Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) sectors.

The UNHCR Representative seized the opportunity to appreciate the United States which is the highest donor for UNHCR operations and expressed the hope that it will continue to support the Nigeria displacement crises. She reiterated that the Nigerian insurgency and displacement crises are not only a national problem as it has now taken a regional dimension involving Cameroon, Chad, and Niger. The delegation expressed the intention to regularly liaise and follow with the office in Nigeria as the situation it evolves.

Funding Requirements

Funding Situation

Request = \$23,279,882.33 (Pillar 1 = \$ 4,076,902.33 and Pillar 4 = \$ 19,202,980.00)

Funding = \$8,997,075.00 (Pillar 1 = \$ 2,228,789.00 and Pillar 4 = \$ 6,768,286.00) = 39%

Gap = \$ 14,282,807.33 (Pillar 1 = \$ 1,848,113.33 and Pillar 4 = \$ 12,434,694.00) = 61%

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