

NIGERIA

UNHCR WEEKLY UPDATE

30 January- 6 February 2015

KEY FIGURES

1.5 million IDPs

Internally Displaced People

981,416 IDPs

officially registered IDPs (NEMA)

2,120 Refugees

Refugees and Asylum seekers of mixed nationalities as of 17 January 2015

FUNDING

USD 6,088,647.67

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

24% FUNDED



PRIORITIES

- Profiling of IDPs
- Protection monitoring
- Capacity building in CCCM and protection
- Advocacy for policy and legal framework
- Implementation of comprehensive durable solutions for refugees
- Support for RSD



(Photo: In Maiduguri, epicenter of the displacement crises, uprooted population heads for unknown destination ©UHNCR)

- The security situation in the country continues to be volatile not only in the North East but all over the country especially with the approach of the general elections coming up in less than two weeks. This election is taking place at a very difficult time, when after almost 14 years of rule by the country's dominant party, the People's Democratic Party (PDP), Nigeria faces scary challenges on many fronts: the recent precipitous decline in oil revenue, the growing lack of confidence by the general public, and the menacing intensity of a ravaging insurgency. For all these and other reasons, some political pundits and populace were opting for a postponement of the elections.
- However, Nigeria's influential Council of State has decided to press ahead with presidential elections on 14 February, rejecting calls for a postponement. The decision was preceded by controversies and demonstrations in the federal capital city of Abuja. The manifestation of discontent was mostly from the main opposition All Progressives Congress (APC), which accused the governing Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) of trying to escape an impending defeat at the polls. From all indications, postponement would have been more catastrophic given the already high level of political engagement and preparedness. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that Africa's most populous nation whose electioneering is pegged along ethnic innuendos and religious sentiments will be held amidst violence hard as national and international efforts have been harnessed to calm the emotionally charged campaigns.

Operational Context

- Nigeria's national security adviser had called for a delay to allow more time for voter card distribution. One participant at the crucial State Council, the governor of Imo state Rochas Okorocha said election officials had insisted they were "very ready" to proceed with the elections. President Goodluck Jonathan is facing a strong challenge from former military ruler Muhammadu Buhari in the vote, expected to be the most tightly contested since military rule ended in 1999. The Council of State - includes the main presidential candidates, ex-leaders, state governors and election officials - met in the capital, Abuja, on 5 February 2015 to discuss the election. The date remains February 14. The Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, reportedly reassured the council members that it is prepared to conduct the election even though it has been receiving bashing criticisms bordering on its unpreparedness to fairly organize the election. INEC extended its deadline for voters to collect their cards to 8 February. Only 44 million out of 68.8 million have been distributed so far, with just a week to go before the poll. Several of Nigeria's smaller opposition parties, as well as national security adviser Sambo Dasuki, had been urging a postponement of the poll. By the time we were preparing this report, the Nigerian Council of State had put to rest arguments for and against postponement of the February general elections, clearing doubts and consequently rekindling campaign trails across the country.
- In the run-up to the election, the insurgents have witnessed dwindling fortunes in their macabre activities. The turn of events comes in the wake of effective Chadian engagement to battle the extremist group coupled with Cameroon's determination to expel them from its territory. On February 4, the Chadian army reported that it killed 200 rebels losing nine of its soldiers in clashes in Nigerian rebel-controlled town of Gamboru. Earlier, Cameroon soldiers clashed with elements of the group on the border town of Fotokol as the fighters fled an offensive by Chad's army. In a related development, reports from Borno State, northern Nigeria are vehement that the Nigerian military on 3 February surrounded not fewer than 6000 members of the Islamist militants group in Madagali and Gulak areas of the State. According to a series of tweets posted on a twitter account, the Nigerian Army is using all forms of military tactics and methods against the dreaded terrorist sect which has resulted to trapping thousands of the insurgents. Last week, Chadian forces were reportedly operating inside Nigeria against the insurgency. And they seemed to be making a lightning success in their operation, because they are reported to have regained Mallam Fatori, after two days of fighting. Mallam Fatori, a commercial hub known for fishing and farming in the remote north of Borno State near the border with Niger was captured by the insurgents on 7 November 2014.
- On 1 February, Nigerian Armed Forces and the Civilian Joint Task Force repelled insurgent attack on Maiduguri. This was the second attack on Maiduguri by the sect in 8 days aimed at taking over the Borno State capital. The attack which happened just hours after the President's campaign rally, left an estimated 82 people including civilians dead and scores injured, though independent sources estimate a higher number of casualties. The latest attack on the town was said to have been coordinated simultaneously at four major points of entry into Maiduguri: Ngom (the border with Mafa), Dalwa (the border with Konduga), Molai (the border with Damboa) and Jawuri (around Njimtilo, border with Kaga on the Damaturu road). Several weapons, arms and ammunition including two armoured vehicles and two artillery guns as well as 17 Hilux vehicles were recovered from the insurgents during the battle.
- On Friday, January 30, the African Union endorsed plans for a regional force of 7,500 troops to fight the insurgents. Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Benin recently agreed to work together against the militants with the formation of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF). Multinational forces led by Chadian troops in late January started an operation that has forced out the insurgents from Nigerian border towns of Kingallam in Kukawa Local Government Area and Malam Fatori in Abadam Local Government Area as well as from Mafa, Marte, Gamboru and Ngala. The joint forces are also reported to be dislodging the insurgents from Gworza, Damboa and the Sambisa forest in a renewed effort to free Borno state from the insurgents and have elections hold in the state.

- On Tuesday 3 February, the United Nations Security Council condemned the escalation of attacks by the sect; especially the February 1 attack on Maiduguri, the Borno State capital. The UN urged the regions to enhance regional military operations and coordination to effectively and immediately combat the insurgents. The council said the increasing attacks in the Lake Chad Basin region, including the one against the Chadian Army contingent deployed to fight the sect in Cameroon called for serious attention. As we report, France's troops are coordinating a counter offensive from the Niger's Defense and Security Forces following the first incursion into the country by the extremists. If and only if this momentum is maintained, the region and why not the entire World will begin to have a respite from the nemesis.

IDP Operation

- Following reports of grave SGBV cases and human rights abuses in IDP camps, UNHCR is engaged in discussions with various stakeholders in view of planning an emergency assessment mission to the camps. UNHCR is considering the issues seriously with all the relevant humanitarian and human rights actors.
- Within the framework of his familiarization contact with humanitarian actors in Nigeria, the newly appointed Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator (DHC) for Nigeria Mohamamed El Munir A. Safiieldin on the 2 February 2015 met with UNHCR Representative to Nigeria and ECOWAS in presence of some senior staff. His visit aimed at learning from UNHCR's perspective the ongoing displacement crises in Nigeria, UNHCR's expectations regarding his role with specific reference to the north east zone. After presenting an overview of UNHCR's operation in the country, the Representative expressed optimism that his arrival on the scene at this point in time is vital to further effective coordination of humanitarian coordination on the field. The new DHC lauded the globally accepted field performance of UNHCR and expressed the hope of benefitting from UNHCR's rich experience in Nigeria.
- The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) on the 31 January 2015, delivered relief assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the Taraba capital of Jalingo in collaboration with the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) Taraba State Chapter. Delivering the items, Director General of NEMA Muhammad Sani Sidi said the Agency was determined to sustain efforts at building synergy with the stakeholders for transparency and efficient management of disasters in the country. He assured that NEMA as an Agency of the Federal Government would continue to carry out its mandates by engaging with stakeholders that include governmental, non-governmental and faith based organizations. In this regard, he said the Agency has initiated the process of mapping all non-governmental organizations engaged in disaster management in the country. The Director General of NEMA who was represented by the Head of its Gombe operations Alhaji Saidu Ahmed Minim conveyed the concern of the Federal Government over the plights of the IDPs and assured them of continued support to enable them return to their communities and resume normal life.
- Government agencies are struggling to reassure about half a million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the town of their safety and continued humanitarian support. Some IDPs hosted in Maiduguri were leaving the town towards Damaturu, Gombe and parts of Adamawa which they considered safer.
- The number of unverified newly displaced people in Borno State is on the increase as fighting intensifies between insurgents and the multinational forces led by Chadian troops. About 36,000 new IDPs who are fleeing their homes because of the fighting in Abadam, Gamboru, Ngala, Dikwa and Gworza are moving towards Maiduguri and Mubi and Gombi in Adamawa state. Out of this number a yet to be verified few have been registered by NEMA and other humanitarian partners in the established camps in Maiduguri while majority have sought shelter among local communities around Maiduguri and Jere in Borno state and Mubi and Gombi in Adamawa state. The overwhelming

majority of this population is in Maiduguri and Jere. All newly registered IDPs have received some form of assistance and humanitarian response in the form of food and non-food items from NEMA and other humanitarian partners.

- Access constraints make it difficult to obtain and verify data as most of the roads to the affected Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Borno state are currently inaccessible. The Maiduguri Airport remains closed to commercial flights limiting access in and out of Borno State. Access to Maiduguri has been limited to only one route which is sporadically subject to insurgent attacks. Overall access is limited in 20 out of 27 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Borno State.

Refugee Operation

NTR

External Relations

- NTR:

Funding Requirements

Funding Situation: (funding Pie chart to be updated in the next issue)

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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Link: data.unhcr.org/NigeriaSituation