

NIGERIA

UNHCR WEEKLY UPDATE

10 – 15 November 2014

KEY FIGURES

650,000 IDPs

Internally Displaced People

6,000 IDPs

Households provided with NFIs in 2014

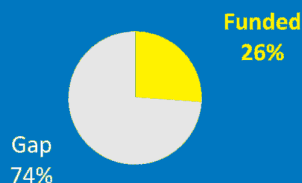
2,777 Refugees

Refugees of mixed nationalities

FUNDING

USD 5,473,649

For 2014 Operation



PRIORITIES

- Protection Sector Working Group meetings for IDP engagement
- Donor briefing sessions on 24 Operation, and 2015 Planning
- Missions to assess situation of IDPs
- Forging Strategic partnerships

HIGHLIGHTS



- Increasing violence continues to menace north-east Nigeria from Boko Haram insurgency. In late October and early November 2014, violence has left hundreds dead, leaving children and women destitute for care and support (See photo above). On Monday morning, 10 November, insurgents bombed a secondary school at Potiskum that left 47 students dead and 80 others injured in Yobe State. On the same day, insurgents carried out a night raid and overrun Maiha town in Adamawa State. Two days later, on 12 November, a female suicide bomber died in an attempted bombing of the Federal College of Education, Kontogora, Niger State, in north-central Nigeria. No student died in the attack but some sustained various degrees of injuries. On 15 November, insurgents captured Hong, a town in Adamawa State. They killed several residents and burnt down a police station. Incessant attacks cause extensive displacement and paralyze all life.
- Press reports allege militants now resort to the use of child soldiers and women as human shields in a quest to weaken the government's counter-insurgency. Reports also allege that captives resisting conscription are raped or killed. In most cases, say reports, teenagers are forced to take the frontline, ambush or conduct suicide bombings. Meanwhile, in a presidential declaration to run for a second term in office, Nigeria's President Jonathan Goodluck has promised to tackle insurgency and end what he has described as a 'senseless war' and 'criminal violence'. The President committed himself at a rally in Abuja on 11 November ahead of the polls scheduled for February 2015. For incident map location, please visit: <http://naijahidi.org/mobile>. (Photo above: IDPs at Girei Primary School, Yola, Adamawa State. ©UHNCR / M. Solomon Oseghale Jnr.)

Operational Context

- The Nigeria Operation is classified under Level I Emergency since August 2014. New IDP estimate figures are at 1.5 million from 650,000 in May 2014. There are 2,777 refugees and asylum-seekers of mixed nationalities in Nigeria.
- Insurgency in Nigeria's northeast continues to menace and displace people internally and across borders. From late October to the second week of November, the north-east has experienced at least five consecutive attacks, killing many civilians and displacing thousands of families. In less than two weeks, insurgents have overrun the towns of Mubi and Maiha in Adamawa State. Other towns fell under the control of insurgents in previous raids. There are fears across the country that insecurity is likely to escalate beyond the current levels ahead of the elections coming this February 2015. Apart from targeting civilians and military installations, the UN and staff remain direct targets. Insurgents started to overrun and take control of towns during 2013. By November this year, militants had captured parts of Borno State which borders Chad, Niger and Cameroon, Adamawa borders Cameroon and Yobe borders Niger. Nearly 100,000 Nigerians from these states have fled to neighbouring countries to seek safety and protection.
- The incumbent President's declaration to run for a second term has however questions linger on whether Mr. Goodluck Jonathan would match words with action. Many think the president has run out of luck to stamp out insurgency in this populous but divided nation. A ceasefire announced on 17 October has suffered a serious false start with a fresh wave of bombings in Africa's biggest economy. Now unconfirmed reports suggest a state of emergency could be extended to other states before the elections in order to give the military the opportunity to fend off possible incursions beyond the north-east states. Already four out of the 36 federal states will reportedly be excluded from voting. The government frets more states could be forced out from participating in the election if it does not employ further marshal control. Even more disturbing of late leading to the federal government to mediate has been the growing inter-ethnic clashes in the Middle Belt. The Fulani, traditionally known for their stick-wielding skills, now use modern lethal weaponry. Analysts suspect the change in the use of weapons is linked to Boko Haram insurgency.

Condition of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

- During a recent UNHCR mission together with the Nigerian Red Cross Society (NRCS) to Yola found that the vast majority of the displaced persons appears weak, malnourished, unwell, traumatised and express a feeling of abandonment. Some of them have been displaced several times as a result of repeated armed raids of their villages either for food, recruitment, cattle rustling or for religious dominance. UNHCR and the NRCS assisted to transport some 35 IDP patients of all age groups to Yola General Hospital and Girei Community Health Centre for immediate medical care. According to the mission, what compounds the already debilitated health condition of IDPs, mostly patients, pregnant women and lactating mothers and their children, were the markedly inadequate medical supplies and the deserted health facilities. Medical centres are also under-staffed because medical personnel have fled the areas as a direct result of armed conflict. Generally, IDPs live in deplorable conditions that require urgent attention to alleviate their plight. However, in addition to previous displacements, it's estimated that some 1.5 million - way beyond the official figure of 650,000 - have been displaced in Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe States.
- These people sleep rough, eat inadequately, are poorly clothed, some are ill from different ailments and live in fear of the next attack. (Photo Right, Yola: *As a direct result of insurgency and counter-insurgency operations, north-east Nigeria is highly militarized such that access to persons in urgent need of assistance is also seriously compromised.* ©UNHCR / M. Solomon Oseghale Jnr.)



UNHCR Operational Response

Activities

- A recent mission by UNHCR to Yola in Adamawa State from 8 – 11 November 2014 found that while some of the relief assistance requirements are available in government-run stores, the capacity of the State Emergency Management Agency and partners to manage and distribute supplies is overwhelmed by the huge displacement numbers. Generally, water and food are in limited supplies. The extent of the displacement is still unknown because of the challenges of access to most of the affected areas. In most cases, IDPs have sought shelter in public buildings including schools and make-shift camps. The majority of the displaced have taken refuge with relatives and friends across towns and villages but whose coping capacity has already been overstretched (Photo above: Aid workers of UNHCR's partner, the Nigerian Red Cross Society, wait to distribute non-food items of mattresses, blankets, soap, drugs and clothing. NEMA has stocked up NFIs in response to IDP assistance needs; however, the capacity of the government and the humanitarian actors has been overwhelmed by the sheer numbers of IDPs and the highly dynamic situation. ©UNHCR / M. Solomon Oseghale Jnr.)



Protection

Protection Sector

- Protection Sector Working Group (PSWG) held a meeting on 12 November 2014 to discuss a range of critical issues surrounding displacement in the northeast and in the Middle Belt. The meeting agreed to hold a workshop on 14 November 2014 to update its protection strategy to reflect the new emergency situations. The workshop took place at the offices of the National Human Rights Commission which chairs and co-leads the PSWG. A draft should be available for circulation and discussion within the next two weeks. PSWG includes governmental agencies, UN agencies and international and national NGOs.

Expected Achievements and Impact

- Two main issues of concern are strengthening the capacity of the protection sector with respect to information collection, monitoring, analysis and reporting and ensuring greater coordination of programmatic work to produce a more effective protection response.

Water and Sanitation

- The government is working hard to get some of the essential requirements for IDPs in settlements and declared camps. However, few achievements have been recorded under this sector. IDPs continue to need adequate drinking water and sanitation facilities. (Photo Right: UNHCR's partner, NEMA puts up water tanks at a state education facility that houses nearly 5,000 IDPs in Adamawa State. ©UNHCR / M. Solomon Oseghale Jnr.)



Shelter and NFIs

- IDPs have occupied public buildings or live with host families where they have found shelter. While there are some NFIs available, the government and humanitarian actors are unable to distribute them on the ground due to a lack of access because of insecurity. In some IDP settlements where stocks are available, the resources available are not commensurate with the overall displacement..
- The UNHCR mission to Adamawa State (8 – 11 November 2014), found IDPs at Girei primary school living in overcrowded conditions. They crammed together in classrooms where they found temporary shelter. The mission estimated at least 3,300 IDPs occupied the primary school premises. Many of them, including children and vulnerable people are forced to stay outside the classrooms because of the inadequate space. Although some use mats, others sit and sleep on bare ground under the scorching heat during day and in extreme cold during night.
- Many Children, including the old and young adults are sick due to the harsh and extreme weather conditions they are exposed to and go without medical treatment. The UNHCR team on mission to Yola mobilized personal resources to transport the sick to the hospital to receive medical attention and drugs. The Girei education facility lacks running water, and other basic necessities. IDPs are overstretched fetching food supplies to feed their families.
- IDPs settled at NYSC premises appear more coordinated with proper security arrangement in place. At this settlement, an estimated 8,000 or more IDPs occupy the centre hall and available room in hostels. Some use beds, others mats, they have found at the state facility. The premises have adequate water, a well-stocked food store, toilets and kitchen. However, the facilities at this complex also appear to be overstretched because there not enough beds, blankets, sleeping mats to around IDPs.

Photo Right: Exhausted families find shade under a tree but they have to endure extreme cold during the night. Shelter provision remains one of the biggest challenges because of the overwhelming numbers of the displaced persons. Here at Girei primary school in Yola, Adamawa State, some 3,000 IDPs cram in classroom. ©UHNCR / M. Solomon Oseghale Jnr.)



OUTSTANDING ISSUES / CHALLENGES

Staffing level

- Although the Nigeria Operation has been classified under Level I emergency, the office is challenged by the thin staffing level with only two international staff based in Abuja, the federal capital. National staff constitute 13 in Abuja Branch Office, 5 in Lagos Field Office and another 5 in the newly established Bauchi Sub -Office.
- The Branch Office in Abuja has since the operation moved to Level I emergency category, requested for a Senior Protection Officer, Security Field Advisor and Programme Officer. As of 14 November 2014, only the Programme Officer has taken up duties at the Branch Office in Abuja. There remains an urgent need to beef up the staffing level, especially with regards to protection. Although presence in Bauchi is not fully realized, there is an imperative need to secure a head of sub office to manage, monitor, report, interact with partners and respond to the various operational challenges.
- Given that the security situation is escalating to worrying levels, coupled with the upcoming elections, the Nigeria Operation urgently warrants the services of a professional field security advisor for the safety of staff and people of concern. Bauchi is security Level IV and requires a properly defined evacuation plan especially with the already tense elections that are likely to turn rough and violent even before voting takes place in February 2014. The 10 November 2014 UNDSS daily security briefing, reported that out of five security incidents, three involved UN personnel of different agencies. Suffice to say that the UN is a target of insurgency; therefore, the safety of personnel needs to be guaranteed even with the minimum requirements.

Communications

- With the security situation in the country reaching new worrying levels, there is urgent need to secure reliable radio communication for staff, especially those in Bauchi Sub Office, the state that came under attack by insurgents a few weeks ago. Bauchi is classified security Level IV. In the unlikely event of evacuation, staff have to be taken by road to Gombe, some two hours of driving from Bauchi.

Budget Requirements & Funding Situation

- For 2015, UNHCR Nigeria does not have a budget for Pillar IV (IDPs). In August 2014, the High Commissioner authorized UNHCR Nigeria to engage with IDP response. However, with the inadequate funding, in addition to the very low staffing level, the provision of especially protection services and material assistance was adversely affected.

MISSIONS

- As a result of the operational expansion, the UNHCR Branch Office in Nigeria has commissioned several missions to support the operation. Requested missions are also in view of the slow, bureaucratic process to secure staff on any contractual arrangement. As a result and in order to mitigate the impact of the low staffing level versus the expanding operation, the Branch Office has engaged the following services to support its operation:
 - Laurie Wiseberg, Senior Protection Officer, ProCap Global Protection Cluster. Her terms of reference include supporting the protection working group in Nigeria, updating its protection strategy, assisting in the establishment of protection working groups in the field or in the areas of conflict.
 - David Nthengwe, Senior Regional Donor Relations Officer from Dakar is on mission to Nigeria to support the operation with the increasing external and reporting requirements, including with donor proposal submissions, field missions, donor and press briefings, finalise communication and donor relations strategy and assist with training of staff on basic communication skills, UNHCR and donor visibility, etc. These are among other activities for which a staff appointed recently has yet to arrive.
 - A UNHCR mission took place in Adamawa State from 8 to 11 November 2014. The mission objective was to assess reports of refoulement conducted in collaboration with the Cameroonian and Nigerian local authorities. The mission also assessed the condition of internally displaced persons (IDPs) most of whom have found shelter in Yola, capital of Adamawa State in north-east Nigeria.
 - The European Commission, UNHCR's one of the donors, undertook a mission to Adamawa Federal State in Yola between 12 and 13 November 2014. ECHO was accompanied by IRC, OXFAM and ICRC to assess the condition of Nigerians who were transported from Cameroon.
 - UNHCR Nigeria has planned a series of briefings to donors, press and ECOWAS embassies between November and early December 2014. Briefings are routinely conducted at the end of each the year to appraise donors and media of UNHCR's operations of the outgoing year, its funding situation and next year's planned activities.

PARTNERSHIPS AND COORDINATION

Coordination

- At the national level in Nigeria, and as a result of the deepening humanitarian crisis, coordination with others is beginning to take hold with UN agencies, NGOs and designated government agencies responsible for the management and protection of IDPs, as well as the humanitarian response assistance for the displaced. Coordination involving the countries affected by the Nigeria Situation – Cameroon, Chad and Niger – aims to oversee the efficient delivery of protection and material assistance to refugees and IDPs in the affected countries. The aim is to: a) Coordinate and oversee the protection and assistance responses; b) Facilitate strategic planning, tactical or operational synergies, complementarities and collaboration with Governmental, UN system, NGOs, donors, civil society partners or other stakeholders.

Working in partnership

- While UNHCR is engaged in strategic partnerships with others in order to complement support and response to people of concern. There are currently additional efforts to involve especially state agencies and national NGOs that can assume responsibility for the effective protection and assistance support of those in need.
- In this context, UNHCR in Nigeria works closely with designated Government agencies, UN and NGO partners to coordinate humanitarian assistance towards IDPs and Refugees: **(For IDPs)** National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA); National Human Rights Commission (NHRC); National Commission for Refugees, Migration and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI); State Emergency Management Agencies (SEMA); National Red Cross Society (NRCS) of Gombe, Yobe, Borno, Benue and Bauchi; Federal Capital Territory –FCT- Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); as well as other **UN Agencies**. UNHCR also works with **working/implementing partners: (For Refugees)** NCFRMI; Justice Development and Peace Commission (JDPC); Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN); **NGOs:** CARITAS, Jama'atul Nasarul Islam (JNI), Action Aid. As part of the UN Country Team's response UNHCR has been co-leading the Protection Sector Working Group (PSWG) in Abuja with NHRC.
- UNHCR collaborates with ECOWAS through a Memorandum of Understanding framework signed in 2001 with ECOWAS Commission in the following areas: Durable solutions / free movement and right of residence for asylum seekers and refugees, peace and security, ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF), Strengthening Humanitarian Emergency Prevention and Response Capacity, conflict resolution/peace building, refugee protection, asylum-migration nexus in West Africa, women and children, strengthening links with civil society organizations associated with ECOWAS. UNHCR is also in the process of expanding its partnership with ECOWAS Court of Justice and ECOWAS Parliament.

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Links: data.unhcr.org/NigeriaSituation