

New Central African refugees arrive in Chad



Enregistrements des nouveaux réfugiés à Diba Photo ©UNHCR/ A. Ngargoune

Gore, 20 April 2017 (UNHCR) - Since the beginning of April, several waves of Central African refugees totaling 1,209 people have arrived in Chad, mainly in the border village of Sourou. They are welcomed by the local population and the authorities despite the fact the border with the Central African Republic (CAR) is officially closed.

Earlier this week, a new group of Central Africans fleeing tension in the north-west of their country found refuge in Chad where the UN refugee agency, UNHCR, and its partners organized their transfer away from the border.

The new refugees say they are fleeing the volatile security situation, which they believe is caused by the presence and actions of anti-Balaka and ex-Seleka fighters who compete for control of border villages.

At the beginning of the month, following the attack on the village of Ngaoundaye about ten kilometers from the border with Chad, a thousand Central Africans flocked to Chad.

Between 4 and 8 April 2017, UNHCR and its partners transferred 351 of them to the Diba site, 45 km from the border. The others then decided to stay at the border to monitor the situation or go back to their village following the regain of the control of the situation in Ngaoundaye by the Minusca peacekeepers.



A group of the last wave of new refugees awaiting to be registered

Some of the new refugees who arrived this week came from the same villages as those of the previous wave (Bang, Ngaoundaye, Bilé and Bolélé) while others of Peulh ethnicity (Bororo) mainly came from the village of Ndim, between Ngaoundaye and Bocaranga, in the north-west of the CAR.

Following an assessment by a multifunctional team, 366 new refugees, more than 90% of whom were women and children, were

transferred from Sourou to the Diba and Vom sites on 18 and 19 April 2017.

UNHCR, its government partner CNARR, WFP and partner NGOs will continue to carry out screening, transfer and registration activities. 227 new arrivals are awaiting transfer at the border and 265 others spontaneously came to Diba where assistance is provided.

Access by car to the Chadian village of Sourou located at the border between Chad, CAR and Cameroon is beginning to be difficult following the first rains of the year.

Upon arrival in Diba, refugees are registered, given hot meals and non-food items. While waiting to be moved to a new site, some are hosted by refugee households who have already settled or housed in big communal tent.

This new site called Diba 2 of about 5 hectares is close to a village and 2 km from the sites of Diba 1 and Vom where already some 2000 refugees reside including over 1700 who fled similar situation in June and July last year and the 351 who were relocated from the border early this month.

UNHCR and its partners will carry out the construction of shelters, latrines and water points to make this site allocated by the local administrative and traditional authorities Mbaibokoum viable. This will require additional resources.

Among this week's new arrivals, there are four women who gave birth in difficult conditions upon their arrival at the border.

49 unaccompanied and separated children were registered. For children of school age, UNHCR and its partners are working with local education officials for their enrolment.

UNHCR welcomes the understanding and solidarity shown by the authorities and the Chadian populations towards these new refugees despite the closure of the border with the Central African Republic. For the Head of the UNHCR Sub-Office in Gore, Mbili Ambaoumba, this gesture "illustrates the commitment of the Chadian authorities to the protection of asylum seekers and refugees". He also highlighted the work done on the ground by the civilian and military authorities for the reception, registration and transfer of new arrivals.



Pré-enregistrement des nouveaux arrivants à la frontière

With nearly 400,000 refugees on its territory, including more than 71,000 Central Africans, Chad is one of the main refugee host countries in Africa and the world.