

UNHCR NIGERIA WEEKLY UPDATE

23 March 2015

HIGHLIGHTS



(Photo: UNHCR Protection staff discuss possibilities of supporting community IDPs in involved in recycling polythene material into lady handbags in Yola; 21 March 2015 Tamfu @UHNCR)

KEY FIGURES

1,235,294

Internally Displaced People (agreed upon by both IOM and NEMA)

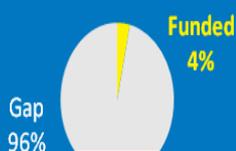
2,120 Refugees

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

FUNDING

USD 23,024,553

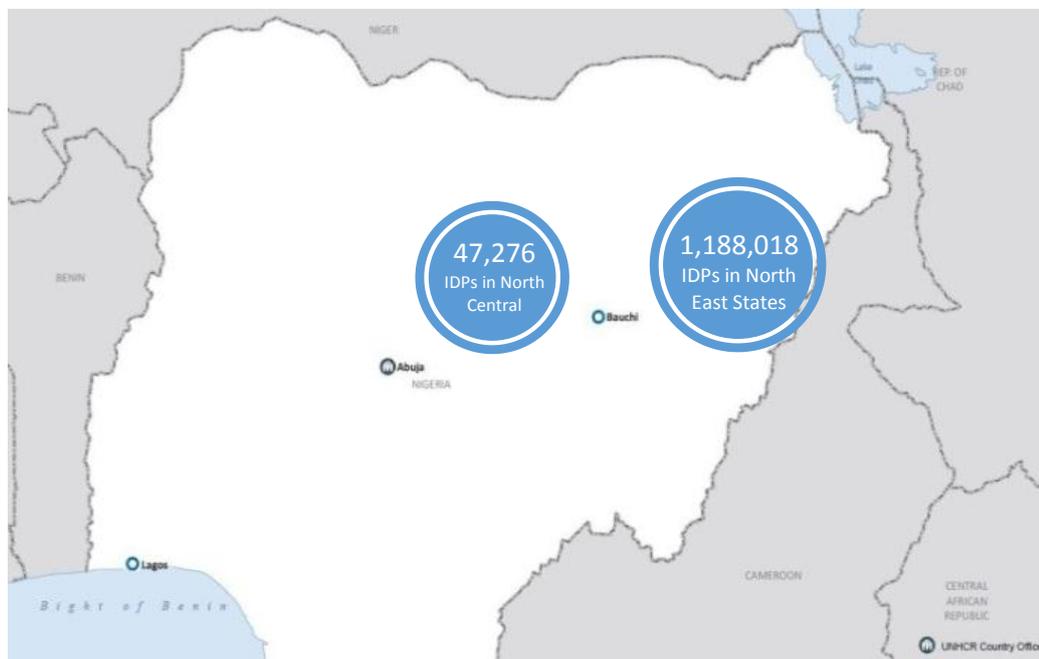
Requested for the situation



PRIORITIES

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

- UNHCR/NHRC conducted a four day training of 314 human rights/protection monitors on addressing human rights and protection concerns in the Northeast and North Central in Makurdi, capital of Benue State.
- UNHCR trains Nigerian Red Cross Society (NRCS) senior staff on targeting techniques of vulnerability criteria ahead of planned distribution of NFIs to 13,000 most vulnerable IDPs in Adamawa and four other States.
- The first State-based Protection Sector Working Group (PSWG) meeting holds in Yola. UNHCR co-chairs the Adamawa PSWG with the Ministry of Women's and Children's Affairs. There are plans to establish same in other States as per the PSWG's Action Plan at the Federal Level.
- INEC dispatches commissioners to Nigeria's 36 States in readiness for the presidential polls as both the national and international community re-emphasize appeals for a non-violent, free and fair election.
- Insurgents bounced back in the Northeast in a renewed defensive move against the MNJTF putting to doubts rekindled hopes for a lull in the six year insurgency.



UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

- The security situation which was thought to be improving returned to its volatility within the week as the terrorists attempted to regain impetus in the North East. Early in the week, there were indications that the rag-tag insurgents recently dislodged from Gambaru, Ngala and Foyi towns in Borno State by Chadian troops may have taken over the towns again. Nonetheless, Nigerian troops on 21 March reportedly quashed a fresh attempt by the insurgents to recapture Bama which was retaken from the militants last week. Meanwhile, soldiers from Niger and Chad earlier in the week reclaimed the Nigerian town of Damasak from the insurgents in yet another victory in the ongoing regional campaign to regain control of north-eastern Nigeria. This is to say that the war is still away from over and the tides are unpredictable. The insurgents are largely on the defensive but are causing a lot of senseless killings as they retreat into the hit and run tactics. At least 70 bodies were found dumped outside the town of Damasak in north-eastern Nigeria; the bodies were strewn beneath the concrete bridge on one of the main roads leading out of the town. .
- Both INEC and the government have given assurances that the polls will hold on schedule. President Goodluck Jonathan reassured Nigerians that the March 28 and April 11 dates set by INEC for the conduct of general elections remain sacrosanct. He has also disclaimed rumors of interim national government (ING) in Nigeria, warning those he claimed are pushing for it that they would face the wrath of the law.
- As part of its watertight preparations for the election, the INEC has accredited the embassies of the United States, the United Kingdom and 105 others for the March 28 and April 11 elections. In the meantime, both the US and British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs have urged all eligible Nigerians to vote, resist those who attempt to incite violence, and come together as one country in defense against terrorist threats. A free, fair and peaceful presidential election, the two foreign statesmen said, may not guarantee a successful democracy, but is nevertheless an essential ingredient – especially now in Nigeria.
- Nigerians as well are very worried about security and violence during the election. A group under the auspices of All Progressives Congress State Publicity Secretaries (CAPS), has called on security agencies to remain neutral, unbiased and professional in the discharge of their duties during the general elections. The group also called on the security agencies to arrest all those involved in the purchase of voter's cards and other related electoral offences.

IDP Operation

- UNHCR and the NHRC have trained 314 monitors at four days of training in Makurdi, Benue State. The training which ran from the 18-21 March 2015 imbued potential human rights monitors with the fundamental knowledge and skills to address Human Rights and protection concerns of IDPs in the Northeast and North Central States. Speaking at the opening ceremony, the UNHCR Representative to Nigeria and ECOWAS, Mrs. Dikongué-Atangana Angèle underscored the supportive and complementary efforts of UNHCR to the Nigerian Government, and stressed that it is the primary responsibility of the Nigerian Government to protect its citizens, including IDPs, which she added the Government is striving to uphold. On his part, the Executive Secretary of the NCHR, Prof. Bem Angwe appreciated UNHCR for the creation and functioning of the PSWG in support of IDPs in Nigeria. The training was facilitated by UNHCR Senior Protection Officer and a Senior Staff from NHRC.



Participants following up presentations at the 4-day training of human rights monitors in Makurdi, Julius Velas@ UNHCR

Participants were drawn from ten central and northern States and included those with a network of NGOs, NHRC, University graduates and unemployed youths.

- UNHCR in Nigeria has held a series of discussions with IDPs in the camps and host communities in Yola aimed at understanding their living conditions in view of plans for the distribution of NFIs to 3,000 most vulnerable households in the State. The visited camps included NYSC and Malkohi, as well as neighboring host communities in the city. IDPs are appreciative of the assistance provided to them so far by the NEMA, SEMA and other humanitarian actors. Following the recapturing of territories of origin, some of the IDPs who have lived long in the camps expressed willingness to return, but lack the financial means to do so. On the other hand, a majority of IDPs are still reticent to return for fear of further attacks by the insurgents. Press reports about the return of the insurgents may fuel their fears over complete security in the intended areas of return.
- Following a decision reached by the Humanitarian Coordination meeting in Adamawa State to set up a PSWG in the State, the first meeting of the PSWG in Adamawa was held on 19 March 2015 largely at the behest of UNHCR in Nigeria. More than twenty participants from at least ten humanitarian organizations including UNHCR, UNICEF, IOM, IRC, and OCHA participated. Among the outcomes was the setting up of a secretariat and the commencement of discussions on the ToRs. The main stakeholders were also identified and two sub groups were created- on Child Protection and SGBV respectively.
- As part of its mission to the Adamawa State UNHCR protection staff trained some ten Nigerian Red Cross Society staff members in Adamawa on targeting techniques and vulnerability criteria. This is in preparation for the upcoming NFIs distribution to 3,000 vulnerable households in Adamawa State. Facilitated by the Protection Officer, the training was conducted on a Training of Trainers (ToT), model and the trainees will further organize restitution sessions with vanguard volunteers in various LGAs. A similar training will be conducted in Gombe and Bauchi subsequently.



Photo: UNHCR protection Officer goes down to the nitty-gritty of vulnerability and targeting criteria with Nigerian Red Cross staff. Tamfu @UNHCR, Yola 20/03/2015

Refugee Operation

- Almost all the remaining Cameroonian refugees in Benue and Cross River States have agreed to voluntarily return to their areas of origin in Cameroon. Meanwhile, UNHCR is planning a second voluntary repatriation exercise for the refugees after the Nigerian elections.
- The National Commission for Refugees is planning a screening mission for the supposed Central African refugees in the second half of April 2015.

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Websites

<http://data.unhcr.org/SahelSituation/country.php?id=502>

<http://nigeria.humanitarianresponse.info/Protection>