

NIGERIA

UNHCR WEEKLY UPDATE

1-9 January 2015

KEY FIGURES

1.5 million IDPs

Internally Displaced People

868,335 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



- The security situation in north east Nigeria remains volatile and unpredictable with persistent attacks by the insurgents. In the meantime, the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) has identified about 128 unaccompanied children in various internally displaced persons (IDPs) camps in Adamawa. The head of NEMA special ad-hoc committee on IDPs in Adamawa, Alhaji Sa'ad Bello, disclosed in an interview with newsmen in Yola, 6 January 2015. (Photo above: Displaced family seeks refuge at the National Youth Service ©UNHCR / L. Wiseberg, in Yola, Adamawa State).
- The armed and security forces have however been making frantic efforts to pre-empt the attacks and nipping them in the bud. On 1 January 2015 a suicide bomber blew himself up at the gates of a church in Nigeria's north eastern city of Gombe during a New Year service, wounding eight people. On 3 January 2015 the anti-bomb squad defused a bomb close to the residence of the National President of Jamatul Islam Bida Waikamatu Sunnah (JIBWIS), Sheik Yahaya Jingir in Jos, capital of Plateau State.

Operational Context

- The security measures so far taken by the authorities have proved insufficient as the insurgents continue their attacks unperturbed. The insurgents have reportedly captured all local government councils in Borno north, according to Hausa service of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) monitored in Abuja 7 January 2015. The report indicates that the local councils are now under the sect's control. The militants stormed a key multinational military base in Baga, Borno State killing undisclosed number of people and seizing weapons and vehicles as soldiers and the residents fled the area for safety. A senator representing the constituency, Maina Ma'aji Lawan confirmed to the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) that the insurgents' attacked Baga and surrounding towns. It is feared that as many as 2000 people may have been killed in the attack. Reports said Government troops abandoned the military base in Baga in an earlier attack on 3 January 2015 when the militants launched and ousted the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF), made up of troops from Nigeria, Chad and Niger set up in 1998 to fight trans-border crime in the Lake Chad region. The force more recently took on the insurgents. Thousands have fled Baga many to Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State, and others to neighbouring Chad. A large number reportedly drown as they crossed Lake Chad following the raid on 3 January 2015. The attack came as they were speculations that there was a respite from insurgent activities. Elsewhere in the country, the perennial community violence of Jos, capital of the middle belt Plateau State erupted once more Newspaper reports said no fewer than 10 people were killed and 30 houses burnt in Mangu local government area of Plateau State 3 January 2015 as a result of hostility between Fulani herdsmen and the indigenes.
- Meanwhile full-fledged campaigns have taken over ahead of the February 2015 general elections amidst apprehensions of possible violence judging from the 2011 precedence as well as current comments by politicians. It is against this background that Nigeria's president Goodluck Jonathan has declared that nemesis awaits anyone who may want to trouble the nation before, during and after the 2015 general elections. The president said he was ready to deal with troublemakers who may want to repeat the post-2011 elections violence that erupted in some parts of the country.
- President Jonathan launched the People's Democratic Party, PDP's national campaign in the country's commercial capital Lagos on 8 January 2015, saying the party has kept its promises even though there is still more to do. Meanwhile, the main opposition All Progressives Congress (APC) presidential candidate retired Gen. Muhammadu Buhari choose the Atlantic seaside resort town and capital of River State Port Harcourt to launch his party's campaign According to him the ruling PDP government headed by President Goodluck Jonathan has ruined Nigeria.
- On its part, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) says measures have been put in place to ensure that Nigeria's February general elections will be of high integrity and difficult for anyone to manipulate. A spokesman for the electoral body, Mr Kayode Idowu, gave the assurance 4 January 2015 while making comments about the preparedness of the commission ahead of the general elections. His remarks came even they have been intermittent rumours of stuffed ballot boxes in some parts of the country.

In a related development, the Adamawa, Borno and Yobe governors rose from an expanded emergency security meeting with President Goodluck Jonathan on 6 January 2015 forcefully sounding a note of optimism that elections must hold in the volatile north-east in February 2015. There have been fears in many quarters that the general elections may not hold in the zone because of the insurgency. President Goodluck Jonathan had on May 14, 2013 declared a six-month emergency rule in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states and renewed it twice at the peak of the insurgency activities. His attempt to further extend the emergency rule in November 2014 was rejected by the National Assembly. At the end of the Tuesday meeting which was also attended by security chiefs and relevant ministers, the governors argued that if elections could be held recently in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and other war-torn places then the North-East should not be an exception.

- According to a timetable established by the Independent National Electoral Commission, Presidential and National Assembly-elections will hold 14 February, 2015 while Governorship and State House of Assembly are fixed for 28

February, 2015. The run-off election to the office of the President or Governor of a State (if any) will be held within 7 days after the announcement of the result of the election in accordance with the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended).

IDP Operation

- The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) said it has identified about 128 unaccompanied children in various Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camps in Adamawa. The Head of NEMA Special Ad-Hoc Committee on IDPs in Adamawa, Alhaji Sa’ad Bello, said this in an interview with newsmen in Yola 5 January 2015. Bello said so far, only seven of the children had been reunited with their parents or relations. He also said that it was not clear whether the children lost their parents during insurgent’s attacks on their villages. Also speaking at the occasion, the Executive Secretary of Adamawa State Emergency Management Agency ADSEMA, Mallam Haruna Furo, said efforts were being made to bring home people who crossed into the neighbouring Cameroon during the attacks. He said some of the children might see their parents or relations among those to be brought back to Nigeria.(NAN).
- The Borno State Government says it has evacuated 705 displaced persons who fled Gamboru town in Ngala local government area, LGA, for Fotokol in the Republic of Cameroon. The Chairman of Ngala LGA, Alhaji Abdulrahman Abdulkarim, who received the refugees in Maiduguri within the reporting period, added that in November they received the first batch of 2,500 returnees from Cameroon and are expecting 1000 more returnees According to the official, most of the returnees are youths, women and children and are routinely screened by members of the Civilian-Joint Task Force JTF, before allowing reconnection with others in IDP camps.
- More than 304 Gwoza residents of Borno State who fled to Abuja due to insurgency and registered as internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) have decried protracted neglect by the Federal Government. Newspapers reports alleged that the IDPs are living in poor conditions. A youth representative and Deputy to the Gwoza IDPs’ Camp at Kuchi Goro village, Federal capital Territory, FCT, Martins Yakubu said they were being challenged by rising threats of insecurity around to the camp. He said even though they were receiving assistance from humanitarian organisations they were regularly confronted with challenges of what they describe as miscreants who are taking advantage of their situation. The IDPs appealed to government and well-meaning organisations to relocate them from the camp and save them from miscreants.
- Displaced persons from Ngala Local Government Area of Borno State, currently taking refuge in various camps within the Maiduguri metropolis, have indicated their intention to return home for the general elections. The displaced persons, who spoke through a political leader from the area, Alhaji Abba Gambo, lamented that 40 days to elections, the federal government was yet to recapture areas taken over by Boko Haram insurgents. Meanwhile, the National Emergency Management Agency, NEMA has advised the internally displaced persons, IDPS camped in various strategic official camps in Adamawa State not to be hasty in returning back to their displaced abodes until the security agencies declare such areas safe and secured for inhabitation. The NEMA camp coordinator of IDPS in charge of Adamawa State, Alhaji Sa’ad Bello gave the advice in an interview with journalists in the state capital Yola 7 January 2015 stressing that people who want to go back to these areas and those who want to sponsor people back should seek for clearance from respective authorities before embarking on such journeys.
- Security experts and former Commissioners of Police have warned security agencies to place the thousands of Internally Displaced Persons in the Federal Capital Territory under watch in order to weed out suspected Boko Haram members that may be hiding amongst them. A former CP in charge of FCT, Lawrence Alobi, stated that it was

necessary for security agencies to scrutinize the IDPs and monitor the goings-on in their camps in order to check insurgents that may want to use the place to perpetrate attacks against Abuja. According to him, insurgents could hide among the refugees, hence the need for the IDP camps to be placed under tight security watch to prevent suspected insurgents from using them as breeding grounds

Refugee Operation

- UNHCR will on 12 January facilitate the voluntary repatriation of some 368 Cameroon refugees who have freely chosen to return to their native villages of Yve and Okerika tribes in Akwaya sub-division of the South West region of Cameroon after six years of stay in Benue State. The decision by UNHCR to assist the refugees was taken following a series of consultations with the Cameroonian authorities and UNHCR Branch Office in Yaounde to ensure that their areas of return are now conducive in terms of security and socio-economic infrastructure UNHCR staff is in Benue State where the refugees are hosted. 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 and voluntary return cash grant of USD 150 per adult refugee or USD 100 per minor refugee

External Relations

NTR

■ Funding Requirements

Funding Situation

The funding situation will be updated in the next weekly.

Contacts:

Mr. Hanson Ghandi Tamfu, External Relations / PI Officer BO Abuja, TAMFU@unhcr.org, Tel: +234 (0) 92916667; Cell +234 9027573068

Angele Dikongue-Atangana, UNHCR Representative to Nigeria & ECOWAS, DIKONGUE@unhcr.org, Tel: +234 (0) 92916667; Cell +234 8181530428

Links:data.unhcr.org/NigeriaSituation