

Security Context

- The security situation in the month of April in the Diffa region deteriorated in comparison to the previous months. On the 10th of April Boko Haram carried out a major attack against a security and defense force (FDS) point close to the village of Gueskerou. The attack resulted in 57 deaths of Boko Haram members, as well as 13 people injured amongst the FDS and civilians.
- The FDS arrested 11 people, including 2 women, on suspicion of association with the insurgent group in N'Guigmi, Gagamari and Malam Kiaridi.
- Throughout the month, a total of 10 civilians were killed by BH in the communes of Bosso and Chetimari.
- Food stocks and medication were stolen from Boudoum, where shops and the health centre were looted, 40km west of Diffa town. 4 shops in Garin Dogo were also looted, and civilian property stolen. In Baroua – a recent combat site, 260 animals (livestock) were also stolen by suspected BH.
- A vehicle of the NGO ACTED, as well as an ambulance of the NGO APBE were mistakenly shot at by security forces while approaching FDS positions. Similarly to the month of March, this highlights the need for better communication between FDS and the humanitarian community.
- Towards the end of the month, internal MNJTF conflict between Chadian and Nigerien armed forces was reported in the region.

Analysis / Impact

- The month of April and increasing numbers of violent attacks emphasize the precarious security situation which persists in the Diffa region. However no direct attacks against humanitarian actors have yet been reported.
- The increasing number of BH incursions, as well as the confrontation and loss of life between BH and the FDS have increased paranoia amongst the FDS, have increased the risks in the region.
- With up to 15 murders, the threat of reprisal attacks has increased, for example in Gagam, where a group of sympathizers were stopped by security forces, and in Gueskerou, where the group suffered a massive defeat. The intimidation of BH has led to heightened fear amongst the populations and humanitarians.
- The efforts of the FDS to increase their capacities to respond result in a certain readiness to use armed force, which exposes the community and humanitarians to the risk of collateral damage. The shooting of two NGO vehicles is a perfect example of this increased risk.
- In addition to increasing 'No Go Zones' imposed by the Security Management Team, at a security meeting on the 26th of April, it was decided to reinstate the obligation of moving with a military escort in the border zones from Gueskerou to Bosso for UN agencies.

Highlights

- UNHCR in Diffa received field missions from several donors in April, including ECHO, the EU and DFID. On the 19th and 20th of April ECHO Regional experts carried out an evaluation mission in Diffa focusing primarily on Protection Coordination. The delegation expressed appreciation for the active engagement of the members of the PWG, and the strategic discussions.
- Additionally, the Regional Bureau for Human Rights (OHCHR) for West Africa also visited Diffa in April. They emphasised the problem of grave human rights violations perpetrated by BH, and their consequences in the region, in particular for the most vulnerable groups in society, including women and children.
- From the 19th to the 21st of April, three training sessions were carried out with the FDS (military, police, and armed guards) on the topic of SGBV and referral pathways, organised by UNHCR. On the 10th of April, a workshop was held by UNHCR and implementing partner (SDO), as well as the Maine Soara Court to inform community mobilizers regarding the risk of an increase in statelessness. This is prior to the Banjul experts meeting scheduled for the 7-9 of May in the Gambia, which will develop an Action Plan for West Africa to End Statelessness, following up on the Abidjan Declaration.

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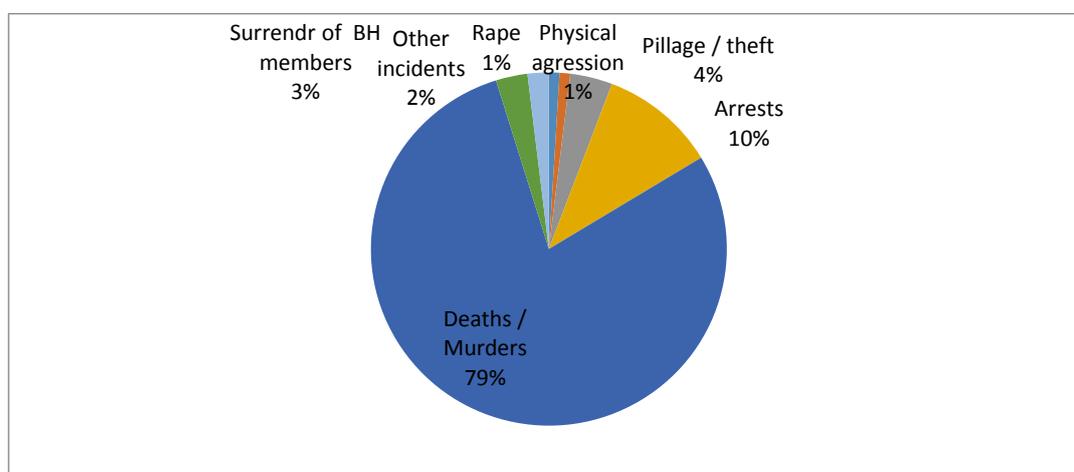
- On the 20th of April, FIDA (ProDaf) carried out a mission to Diffa to exchange with the organisations and the Regional authorities in order to carry out a first analysis regarding the characteristics of a potential target group for a project based on the following axes: Land restoration, access to water, rain dependent agriculture, small livestock rearing, markets, etc.
- The World Bank will conduct a follow-up mission to Niger in May, following two initial missions (October 2016 and January 2017), in partnership with UNHCR. The purpose of these missions is to help the Government prepare Policy Notes that will set out (i) their intended future actions and arrangements towards the refugee populations on their territory, and (ii) to lay out in general terms of how the Government intends to use the financing that the WB may provide.
- UNHCR and the WB will jointly support a consultant to work with the Government, notably the High Authority for the Consolidation of Peace (HACP), who have developed a post-conflict development and resilience strategy for the Diffa region. The aim will be to assist in mapping existing planning documents to identify gaps and needs.
- On April 21st, members of the UNHCR Nigeria (Maiduguri) delegation visited Niger for an informal meeting regarding the shared border at Diffa and in Damasak.

Protection

Protection Monitoring - Analysis

- The month of April saw an increase in the number of arrests and interceptions in civilian areas (north of N'Guigmi, Kablewa market, the Diffa station). Arrests were made of civilians who are assumed informants and spies as well as armed insurgents. A series of denunciations were made by the community, which resulted in the arrests of several presumed BH members and informers.
- An individual thought to be seeking to identify the location of the accommodation established for those ex-combatants who have surrendered, was arrested. This strengthens the preoccupation of the population and the surrendered ex-combatants regarding the possibility of an attack against the accommodation site. They have expressed a desire to be relocated outside of Diffa, further from the border, particularly as the levels of the Komadougou River have significantly fallen since March, making the natural border more accessible.
- This is similar to the situation encountered by Chadian refugees in the region in 1992 who suffered intimidation and attacks from Chad. They were subsequently relocated to Goure, far from the border area. Similar recommendations will be made to the authorities, to construct a new centre in the area of Goudoumaria, with international financing.
- The initial high numbers of ex-combatants surrendering at the beginning of the year has significantly dropped, with just 3 people presenting themselves in April. They cited the reason for surrender due to lack of food, and lack of leadership of the group due to illness of the BH leader.
- In terms of protection incidents, the commune of Diffa witnessed the highest number of incidents in June, followed by Bosso and Chetimari. While the number of incidents declined in Gueskerou, they still have the highest number of BH victims.

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Population Movements

A: Movements to Sayam Forage and Kablewa camps

- In the month of April, a total of 540 people were newly registered in Sayam Forage camp, including 165 people relocated from Diffa on 5th April, 6 births within the camp and spontaneous arrivals, mainly from Garin Wanzam, Toumour and Gueskerou.
- The situation of registration of IDPs in Kablewa has stabilized due to surprise physical checks of households in the camps, by the CNE and the camp managers Karkara. This strategy was established jointly by the Regional Directorate of Civil Status Refugees and Migration (DREC-RM), Karkara, and WFP, under the coordination of UNHCR following problems regarding distributions in the camp since January. A reduction of 40 people in comparison to March was reported. This exercise made it possible to identify cases of fraud / fake households within the camp.

B. Spontaneous IDP returns to village of origin

- Voluntary spontaneous returns of IDPs to their villages of origin were reported in April, including approximately 24 households of 148 people.

C. Inter-site displacements

- Relatively high numbers of inter-site movements were reported in April, including 1,285 people from 211 households (749 women and 536 men). These movements are generally a form of survival strategy of the population, moving from site to site in search of assistance, as well as searching for family members (reunification). In Niger, the control of women's identity documents is not compulsory, making their movement easier than men. However, this has resulted in poor access to documentation for women and girls.

D. Back and forth movement to Nigeria

- Movements from Chetimari in the direction of Damaska, and from Maine Soroa in the direction of Garin Gada were reported in April. These are mainly people moving back and forth in search of assistance and food.
 - 3 focal points at the main entry and exit points (Gagamari and Chetimari);
 - Identifications in Damasak;
 - The elaboration of a data collection form for focal points and monitors;
 - Individual interviews and semi-structured interviews with persons engaging in back and forth movements, both within and outside of the camps.

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E – New / Late Arrivals

- An attack against nomadic populations at Blatourou / Mamouri was carried out in early April. This was followed on the 18th of April, by massive population movement (mainly Peulhs and Bororos or Wodaabes), following the attack and murders by BH. It is estimated that 285 households have moved, including 170 Peulh and 115 Wodaabes, amongst whom are 40 women headed households.
- UNHCR carried out an evaluation mission to confirm the presence of this population about 3km from Kablewa in 2 sites. This will be monitored and priority needs identified.
- Additionally, 145 Nigerians were registered arriving to Garin Wanzam from Fowa in Nigeria, as well as 98 returnees coming from Ladou Doumba in the direction of Boulharde.

Recommendations and Unmet Needs :

- Improve monitoring of back and for the movements of the population to and from Nigeria.
- Monitor communities of new arrivals, including at the two new sites close to Kablewa camp.

SGBV : Prevention and Response

- In the month of April, 11 cases of SGBV were reported and responded to, including 2 cases of rapes of minors, 1 cases of sexual aggression, 4 cases of physical aggression, 2 of psychological violence, 1 case of denial of resources, and 1 case of forced marriage. 7 of the cases reported were within marriage, while 4 of the survivors were children. All of the survivors were women, while 56% reported the incidents themselves. This is a positive sign regarding the progress in terms of understanding of the services available by the beneficiaries.
- In April, a total of 889 people (50% refugees) were reached with sensitization on the types and consequences of SGBV, as well as the services available.
- On the 26th of April, a strategic meeting was held with the focal points for the PSEA (Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse) programme in Diffa. The main topics discussed were: sensitization messages, and ToRs for the focal points, as well as 5 key intervention areas. These include: engagement with the population, prevention, support for victims / survivors, coordination and implication of the government.
- Regarding the establishment of mechanisms to report incidents, following discussions with the community, three proposals were put forward:
 - Reporting of incidents through the IRC SGBV focal points, who are already intervening in the community as regards to SGBV prevention;
 - Reporting of incidents through secure and confidential boxes to be set up at the camps and sites;
 - Reporting of incidents directly to UNHCR staff through a phone number to be made available to the community.
- In an effort to strengthen prevention, 3 trainings were delivered to FDS forces between the 19th and 21st of April. The aim of the trainings was to increase knowledge on concepts of SGBV, and to teach the authorities about individual SGBV case management, as well as raising awareness about protection against sexual exploitation and abuse.

Recommendations and Unmet Needs – SGBV:

- Finalize the ToRs of the PSEA programme focal points.
- Finalize the reporting methodology for the PSEA programme within the communities.

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Registration and Documentation

- On the 25th of April, the registered population of the camp of Sayam Forage was 9,472 people (8,985 refugees and 487 returnees).
- On the same date, the population of the camp of Kablewa was estimated at 16,613 people – mainly IDPs (15,809) and some refugees (477) as well as returnees (204), with 123 persons of other nationalities.
- **RADH project workshop (20th April)**
- The main statelessness related issue in Niger is the lack of identity documents among refugees, returnees and IDPs in the Diffa region of Niger. A study commissioned by UNHCR in 2014 revealed that 82% of the forcibly displaced in the region are not in possession of any identification document. Lack of documentation poses challenges for correct identification of the population as refugees or nationals as well as provision of assistance. Inevitably, some may face difficulties in being recognized as nationals by either Niger or Nigeria. Faced with this situation, UNHCR and the Government of Niger initiated the 'Recensement Administratif a Vocation Humanitaire' (RADH) project.
- The project, whose main aim is the set-up of a biometric database for the entire population of Diffa region, is a protection tool that will provide the ideal opportunity to identify and document persons at risk of statelessness not only in Diffa, but also throughout rest of the country. During the RADH project document validation workshop, Mr. Bazoum Mohamed the Minister of Interior, referring to the afore-mentioned study, informed the audience that, "The same study shows that, according to the Nationality establishment criteria in both Niger and Nigeria, 61% of the surveyed population is ineligible for either nationality, and therefore at risk of statelessness". In the same vein, the RADH project will provide the smart 'Proof of Registration' card for all individuals registered in the course of the first 4-6 months of operations. This will constitute a first step towards providing much needed identity documentation. The Government of Niger has decided to make the project a national priority as recommended during the project validation workshop.

Recommendations and Unmet Needs – Registration and Documentation:

- Sensitization and relocation of the refugee population in Kablewa camp to Sayam Forage camp
- Advocacy for the expansion of the law governing refugee status of Nigerian refugees, to refugees of other nationalities;
- Improvement information exchange mechanism with registration and documentation actors in Nigeria;
- Launch of BIMS biometric registration operation in the region of Diffa.

Protection Coordination

- The main achievements of the Protection Working Group in the month of April in Diffa include:
- "Soft" monitoring tools were developed and validated by the group, while in an effort to develop a formal framework for information exchange between actors, information sharing SOPs were drafted by the group.
- Protection relation key prevention messages were harmonised and validated across the various actors. This is an important step in terms of ensuring similar standards across sites, as well as ensuring quality checks in prevention activities.
- ToRs for protection committees across the region were harmonised across all sectors and approaches were revised for coherency across the operations, sites and actors, enhancing accountability towards the affected population.
- Data collection for the Diffa baseline survey was completed in April. The draft report is expected to be shared on the 15th of May. This is an analysis which will guide the protection sector strategy.
- A Protection Sector Strategic Workshop is planned for the 23-25th of May to develop this communal protection strategy.
- The Global Learning Centre (GLC), UNHCR and the International Organization for the Right to Development facilitated a training in Dakar on the legal framework for refugees in April. The aim was to ensure that future trainers had all

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necessary tool to train at the local or national level on the laws and politics of internal displacement. The training focused on both the development of a law in the context of internal displacement, as well as on the training methodology.

- UNHCR Niger as well as members of the Niger government participated in the workshop and will follow up on the workshop recommendations in order to initiate the creation of a law on internal displacement in Niger.

Education

- Following the significant increase in the population of Sayam Forage in the past months, need for additional construction was identified. The construction works for a block of 3 classrooms for the new Distance Education School, and another block of 3 classrooms for the traditional school in the camp began in April.
- Those students who enrolled for the BECE / Junior Cycle Exams (a total of 72), have all travelled to Kano in Nigeria in April to complete their exams. The exams session will be completed and the students will return to Diffa in May. The students enrolled for the BAC / Senior Cycle Exams will also travel to Nigeria in May. UNHCR ensure the transport and support of the students to travel, however it is planned to open a new Distance Education Examination Centre in the region in the coming months.

WASH

- In Sayam Forage camp, efforts are ongoing to ensure good quality water in adequate quantities to respond to the ever increasing population. In the month of April, the quality of the water remained high. However, due to a short breakdown of the water pumping system, adequate quantities were not provided. However, UNHCR responded rapidly to remedy the problem with the pumping system, in order to avoid a conflict at the water point in the village of Sayam.
- To improve the water provision system to the camp from the village, a mission was carried out in April by WASH experts. A project was launched to extend the system, while the Call for Proposals has already been launched.
- Following the outbreak of the Hepatitis E virus in the Diffa region, sensitization of good hygiene techniques has been prioritized in the camp of Sayam. As well as sanitation operations to eliminate the possibilities for the spread of the disease.
- In Kablewa IDP camp, the situation of water provision remains worrying. Discussions were undertaken with the communal authorities regarding the proper use and maintenance of the pumping station, however it appears that recommendations have not yet been put into practice by the mayor. A proposition to change the manner of managing the water provision system is with the Regional Directorate for Hydraulics. UNHCR intend to improve the system already in place to enhance the water provision capacity at the pumping station.
- As regards to responding to the Hepatitis E epidemic, sensitization on good hygiene practice was carried out throughout the camp, while dysfunctional sanitation infrastructure was removed as it may be a source of contamination of the drinking water.
- Along the same lines of response / prevention to the hepatitis E epidemic, we are strengthening the capacity of the partner in charge on the chlorination technique at all levels and the other urgent WASH actions. However, as adequate quantities of clean drinking water are not yet available to the camp population, UNHCR has made a call to the partners of the WASH Working Group for additional support.

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Recommendations and Unmet Needs – WASH:

- Strengthen the capacities of the partner in terms of chlorination of water in order to prevent an increase in the number of cases of Hepatitis E in the camps.
- Work with the WASH Working Group partners to define the support required to respond to the needs of the population of the camp of Kablewa.
- Encourage the communal authorities in Kablewa to maintain the pumping station in the town which supplies the camp population.
- Improve the existing water supply system for Kablewa.

Shelter & NFI

- In Sayam Forage camp, 208 emergency shelter kits and NFI kits were distributed to respond to the new arrivals – both spontaneous and those relocated from Diffa town.
- In the workshop for the creation of transitional shelters, supported by UNHCR and run by COOPI and a group of youth refugees, 2560 metallic frames, 160 sheeting / tarps and 3,600 mats have been completed. The first of these shelters will be constructed in the last neighbourhood of Sayam Forage at the beginning of May.
- As regards to the urbanization project, the activities of lotissement / development of land parcels is ongoing at the sites in Diffa (110 hectares) and Toumour (50 hectares). The concept of the project has been shared with all communes in the region, while the CAUEC (Comite d'Aménagement de l'Espace Urbain Communal) was established and became operational in April. The project has commenced in the area of Goure for long-term refugees from Chad who have been living there since 1992.
- At the Shelter / NFI Working Group meeting in April, REACH and UNHCR announced that they will launch an evaluation of shelter and NFI needs in May in the region, in order to build upon the results of previous evaluations and to develop a new joint strategy for the WG.

Recommendations and Unmet Needs – Shelter / NFI:

- Speed up the procurement process for plastic sheeting for emergency shelter kits which are in the pipeline in order to increase the distributions and respond to the emergency shelter needs.

Health

- On the 14th of April, the Minister of Health declared a Hepatitis E epidemic in the region of Diffa. At the end of April, there were 252 suspected cases, and 25 deaths (please see latest infographic in annex).
- The humanitarian community, under the leadership of the Regional Directorate for Public Health set up three sub-committees in the region: WASH, health and Communication, to respond to the epidemic. The three sub-groups are currently finalizing a joint multi-sectoral contingency plan.
- UNHCR are rapidly responding within the camps (See WASH section), however, support is needed from the WASH WG, particularly for the camp of Kablewa. To date, all deaths have been of pregnant women, thus sensitization of all populations, but particularly pregnant women is being prioritized.

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- In terms of epidemiological monitoring, in the camp of Sayam Forage in April, there were 16 reported cases of Hepatitis E, 55 cases of acute malnutrition and 5 cases of malaria. In Kablewa, there were 38 cases of Hepatitis E, 17 cases of acute malnutrition and no cases of malaria.
- Throughout the month, 20 patients in Sayam Forage and 9 in Kablewa were evacuated for secondary care. A total of 2,660 patients undertook consultancies in Sayam and 1,706 in Kablewa in April.
- As regards to Reproductive Health, 247 women attended prenatal consultations. In Kablewa, 2 tested positive for HIV and are being provided with follow up care. The number of home births increased in Kablewa, as people could not move to the local health centre in the town at night due to the curfew. Therefore 5 tents were provided at the CSI in Kablewa to host pregnant women who are close to giving birth.
- As regards to nutrition, 121 children are being supported in Sayam Forage camp including 33 new admission to CRENAM and 22 to CRENAS. In Kablewa, 2015 children are being supported, including 2 new admissions to CRENAM and 15 to CRENAS.

Recommendations and Unmet Needs – Health:

- Ensure there is adequate medication available to respond to the needs of those suffering from Hepatitis E;
- Work with the WASH actors in terms of prevention and sensitization of the population to avoid the spread of the epidemic;
- Carry out an exhaustive HIV screening at Kablewa for all of the population, in collaboration with the regional health services.
- Strengthen sensitization on home births and strengthen the referral mechanisms in Kablewa.
- Create a health post within the camp to respond to the emergency needs.

Access to Energy

- Distributions of gas and refills as well as sensitization in the camps continues.
- Outside of the camps, the initial support period of 6 months for gas refills for the beneficiaries of the SEED gas distribution project has finished. The private partner SONIHY has reported that the transition to paying for gas is going well, and the majority of households are continuing to buy refills for the gas bottles in the main centres in Mane Soara, Diffa, Gagamari, Chetimari and N'Guigmi.
- The distribution of 5,000 more gas bottles to newly identified households as part of an extension of the SEED project should go ahead in the coming month after a slight delay.

Camp Coordination and Camp Management

- The evaluation of the initial pilot phase of the Site Management project is currently underway in the Diffa region. A questionnaire, ToRs, Project Description and monthly reporting template have been developed for the project.
- On the 28th of April, an exercise was undertaken to identify the next 10 sites where the project will be scaled up – for the initial 3 pilot sites. The following criteria were used to target the sites: a site recognized by the DREC-MR, and part of the 97 recognised sites; a site hosting a high concentration of displaced population according to the DREC figures; a site affected by protection incidents; a mixed site (refugees, IDPs, returnees); a site with 3-5 smaller sites close by; a site having experienced multiple population movements; etc. Finally the sites identified include: Gagala Peul, Boula Brin, Rimi (commune de Nguigmi) Garin Wanzam, Elh Mainari, N'Gagam, Garin Dogo (commune de Gueskerou), Maina Kaderi, N'Gourtoua (commune de Chetimari), Guidan Kadji (commune de Maine Soara).
- The next steps will be to finalize the action plan and to define a strategy.