

WORLD REFUGEE DAY 2019, NIGERIA



The UNHCR staff in Nigeria

“With dedication and commitment to the cause and our mandate”

[This is a documentation to the work done by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and partners in Nigeria to commemorate the World Refugee Day (WRD) in honour of refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), appreciating their resilience and contribution to society. Nigeria is a host to more than 40,000 refugees. There are also 1.9 million Nigerian IDPs. A total of 229,714 Nigerian refugees live in the neighbouring Lake Chad Basin countries.

The year 2019 has been declared by the African Union as “Year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Towards durable solutions to forced displacement in Africa”. The year also coincides with the 50th anniversary of the 1969 OAU Refugee Convention as well as the 10th anniversary of the AU Kampala Convention on IDPs, both of which are key instruments for the protection of and assistance to refugees and IDPs in Africa. The Kampala Convention is of relevance in the Nigeria context marked by a severe “protection crisis” in the North-Eastern part of the country. Nigeria ratified the Kampala Convention in 2012, but yet to domesticate the Convention to give it legal force in Nigeria. Finalisation of the legal and policy framework on internal displacement by domestication of the Convention is urgently needed as the North East situation approaches its ten year anniversary.]



Sadiya Umar Farouq

Federal Commissioner of National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons

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Introduction

The 2019 World Refugee Day celebration provided UNHCR, the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced (NCFRMI), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Refugees, IDPs and other partners the opportunity to amplify and engage the public across operations in Nigeria, on the strength, courage and resilience of refugees, IDPs and returnees. Drawing on the 2019 theme #StepWithRefugees, the commemoration and activities told the refugee story and highlighted the centrality of protection aimed at ensuring equal enjoyment and access to rights of all individuals forced to flee their homes, particularly the most vulnerable women, men, children and the elderly. In Abuja (FCT), Yola (Adamawa State), Adikpo (Benue State), Maiduguri (Borno State), Ogoja and Calabar (Cross Rivers State) Damaturu (Yobe State), Yola (Adamawa State) the voices of refugees, IDP, returnees were amplified through the week long activities implemented to commemorate the WRD. Significantly, the Cross Rivers State Government signed on #WithRefugees, formally committing to inclusion and support for refugees.

The African Union's designation of 2019 as the Year of Refugees, Returnees and IDPs also comes at a time when forced displacement remains a major issue confronting Nigeria, with an estimated 2,001,083 displaced persons (IDPs, refugees, and returnees). The 2019 WRD provided the platform to reiterate the values of the 1969 OAU (now African Union) Refugee Convention on its 50th anniversary, as well as a call for the domestication of 2009 African Union Convention on the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons (Kampala Convention), on its 10th anniversary.

Thirty-three years after Nigeria ratified the 1969 OAU Convention in 1986, which was domesticated by incorporation into the National Commission for Refugees Act; Nigeria, consistent with the positive obligation to make the best efforts to grant asylum under the complementary provisions, has continued to receive and extend effective international protection to thousands of refugees in line with the traditional African hospitality.

As the humanitarian crisis in the North East of Nigeria enters its second decade, with more than 1.9 million IDPs, relevant institutions of Government were called on to end the legal vacuum by adopting a framework for IDP protection, in line with Nigeria's obligations under the Kampala Convention, ratified in 2012. UNHCR will continue to support/call on the Ministry of Justice to finalise the draft IDP Bill; adoption of the Bill by the Federal Executive Council and transmission to the National Assembly; and prompt passage of the Bill into law by the National Assembly. This action by the Government of Nigeria will effectively respond to incidences of violations of rights of IDPs, including sexual and gender-based violence and exploitation, and encourages responsibility and accountability where the rights of IDPs are deprived.

With UNHCR-Nigeria being 22% funded, as of July 2019, leaving funding gaps which are far below expectations (\$100.748 million), it is hoped that the participation of the donors in the WRD activities will also bring increased funding support to sustain a protection-centred humanitarian response in North East Nigeria and support protection and assistance operations for Cameroon refugees in Benue, Cross Rivers, Taraba and Akwa Ibom States.

UNHCR Nigeria organized series of events from 17 June, leading to the official commemoration of the World Refugee Day (WRD) on 20 June 2019. Throughout the country, these events were being supported by the various Nigerian government entities, ECOWAS Commission, donors and other stakeholders.

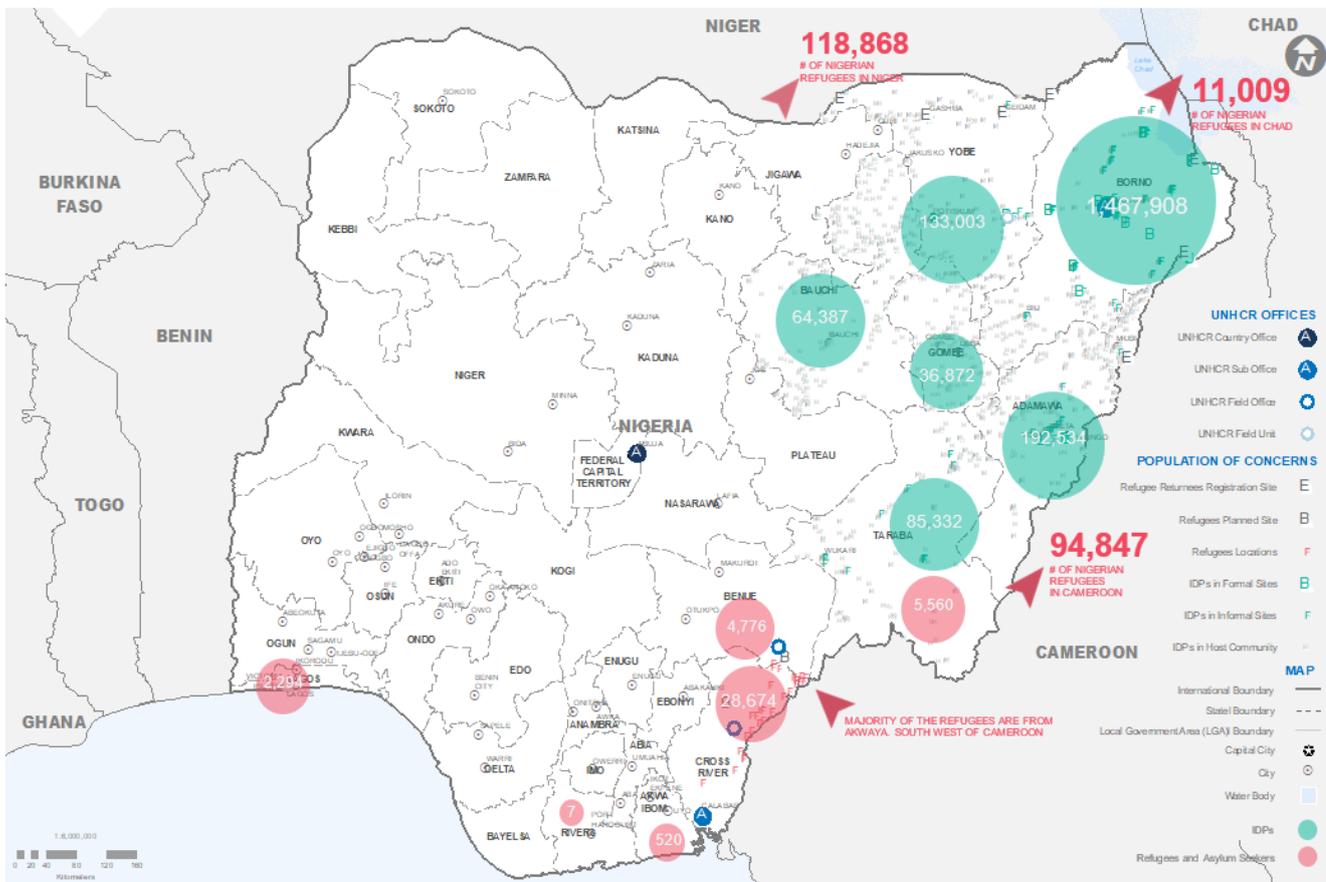


Beautiful display of Art and Dance by the Refugees in Adikpo, Benue, Nigeria. © UNHCR/L. Agiende



IDPs in Maiduguri camp, Nigeria engage in World Refugee Day activities. © UNHCR/ D. Dieguen

UNHCR presence in Nigeria



Sources of Data: OCHA, UNHCR, SEMA, OSM, ICM Creation Date: July 2019. Feedback: rigabim@unhcr.org Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown, and the designation used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

World Refugee Day Activities across Nigeria

Abuja

In Abuja, starting the week with inspiring classroom lectures in three Abuja schools, UNHCR collaborated with NCFRMI and ECOWAS to host a WRD events with the aim of engaging citizens from different walks of life. The official press briefing, live radio and TV programmes ensured that the message of solidarity reached Nigerians in their homes. Further, ECOWAS Commission organized a distribution of Food and Non-food Items (NFIs) to the refugees in Abuja.



IDPs Representative, Halima Mustapha, Addresses the audience during World Refugee Day official commemoration at ECOWAS. © UNHCR/O. Efe

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Speeches

AN ADDRESS BY THE HONOURABLE FEDERAL COMMISSIONER, NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR REFUGEES, MIGRANTS AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (NCFRMI) ON THE OCCASION OF THE WORLD REFUGEES DAY CELEBRATION HELD AT ECOWAS SECRETARIAT, ASOKORO, ABUJA ON THURSDAY, 20th JUNE, 2019

PROTOCOL



Sadiya Umar Farouq

Federal Commissioner of National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons

today, Thursday, 20th June, 2019. I wish to thank the United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the ECOWAS Commission for co-hosting and organizing this event with NCFRMI.

2. For the record, World Refugee Day is observed every year, all over the world on 20th of June in order to raise public awareness about refugee's situations throughout the world. Celebrating this Day, annually, on 20th of June was declared by the United Nations General Assembly in the Resolution 55/76 on 4th day of December, 2000. Following that Resolution, WRD started being celebrated worldwide as an annual event.

3. There is no doubt that the objective of this Day was to support millions of families all over the world who have lost their homes and dear ones because of violence or war. On this Day, we recognize the challenges and hardships that refugees face, we honor their courage and resilience in the face of overwhelming obstacles, and above all, we celebrate their many valuable contributions to Nation building.

4. The theme for 2019 WRD is #StepWithRefugees which is in alignment with the African Union (AU) Year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement in Africa. This year's theme, presupposes that around the

1. I am delighted to be here today and I have the honour to welcome you all to this great event of 2019 World Refugee Day, which is celebrated all over the world,

world, communities, schools, businesses, faith groups and people from all walks of life are taking big and small steps in solidarity with refugees. Therefore, as we celebrate today, we challenge everyone to join together and take a step with refugees.

5. Every day, members of the International Community, Humanitarian Organizations, Civil Society, and individual citizens work tirelessly to assist these vulnerable populations. But as these efforts are being persistently sustained, across the globe, more people are displaced by rising violence, insecurity and persecution than any other time on record. The scale of this human suffering is almost unimaginable. For me, celebrating these target group today is not enough in the face of given realities, therefore the need for the world to adequately respond to refugees unprecedented challenges is beyond question and requires all of us to do more.

6. To do more requires that the root cause of Refugees and IDPs will remain unabated in our contemporary world if conflicts and crisis sustaining it were not resolved and nip at the bud. It is at this point that I wish to appeal to the UN, EU, AU, ECOWAS and all the Stakeholders Organization to up their roles and responsibilities in crisis management especially those hot spots and volatile zone of the world.

7. One of the salient efforts, the International Community must be commended is the advent of Global Compact on Refugees. This Compact presents a political will and ambition of the International community as a whole to strengthen cooperation and solidarity with refugees and affected countries. That the Global Compact is structured its mainstay on easing out pressure of refugees, enhance refugees self-reliance, expand their access to third country solution and support conditions of countries for return in safety and dignity makes the Compact a veritable tool in addressing the plights of refugees.

8. Ladies and Gentlemen, the Nigerian refugee situation since the advent of Boko Haram attack spilled over the borders of north-eastern Nigeria into neighboring countries in 2014, Cameroon, Chad and Niger got drawn into a devastating regional conflict. The Lake Chad Basin region is grappling with a complex humanitarian

emergency. Some 2.4 million people are uprooted, including over 2.1 million internally displaced (IDPs) in North-Eastern Nigeria, over 471,000 IDPs in Cameroon, Chad and Niger and over 228,000 refugees. Despite the efforts of Governments and humanitarian aid, some 4.5 million people remain food insecure and depend on assistance.

9. Recently Nigeria has witnessed an upsurge in the number of asylum seekers and refugees it receives mostly from countries such as Cameroon, Central African Republic, DR Congo, Syria, Turkey, Eritrea etc. Out of these, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Turkey and Syria have the highest presence in Nigeria where much attention has been given to them. There has been remarkable influx of Cameroonians in Cross-River state, Taraba state, Benue State and other surrounding locations. Presently, over 35,000 Cameroonian refugees have been granted Temporary Protection Status (TPS) in Nigeria. This is in addition to 261 urban refugees and 290 asylum seekers living in other parts of Nigeria.

10. With the support of His Excellency, President Muhammadu Buhari, what we are doing for the refugees, as a Commission includes, but not limited to: distribution of various food, non-food items, educational pack, water sanitation, shelter materials, Agricultural input and medical care; trained and retraining of Refugees on various skill acquisition; provide accommodation and help the refugees settled within their host community; fight for their rights to safety, dignity and long-term livelihood empowerment scheme; enrollment of the refugees into the National Health Insurance Scheme, provide variety of lifesaving assistance, safety and protection; and durable solution.

11. In addition, in collaboration with UNHCR, the NCFRMI has commenced the process of issuing the Refugee Convention Travel Documents (CTDs) to refugees. A total of 178 refugees have been referred to the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) for bio-metric capturing. The Commission is in close contact with the NIS and production is ongoing. Those already produced will soon be issued to the beneficiaries upon official unveiling.

12. Above all, I wish to state here also that the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Republic of Cameroon and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in 2017, signed a Tripartite Agreement to

facilitate the return of about 97,000 refugees from Cameroon to Borno and Adamawa States. Nigeria was tasked with facilitating the return of the refugees in safety and dignity, care and maintenance of the returnees as well as provision of durable solution to enable them resettle in Nigeria. In the spirit of the Agreement, the TWG has concluded arrangements to commence voluntary repatriation of 4000 refugees (first batch) after Mr. President has graciously approved both funding and logistics towards the repatriation. In line with this, the TWG has made advanced plans towards the repatriation to Adamawa State, however, the Cameroonian government requested to be given more time for planning to enable all stakeholders involved in this repatriation achieve a better synergy.

13. Let me seize this opportunity to specifically appreciate the UNHCR for scaling up its response and for working with NCFRMI and other authorities in Nigeria towards ensuring that displaced people and returning refugees regain a sense of normal life. This is commendable.

14. Ladies and gentlemen, let me also use this opportunity to specially thank President Muhammadu Buhari for his regime's commitment towards the plights of the Refugees and other Persons of Concern in Nigeria. His unwavering support to the refugees and other POCs remain the corner stone of our success story today. I must acknowledge the role of our Security Agencies, Local and International partners, Civil Society Organization, Embassies, Faith and Community based Organizations, the Security Agencies, Traditional leaders and indeed members of the Press to our Persons of Concern. We commend your unflinching support in partnering with the Commission and Nigeria Government.

15. As I will always say, no one and none of us deserve to be a Refugee or live in Refugee Camps. Those that are there today have been forced by circumstances. To this end, we must know that assisting refugees and those in need is a part of our value system as a Country and we must join force together to take a step with refugees and strive even harder to alleviate their suffering.

Thank you all and God bless.

AN ADDRESS BY THE UNHCR REPRESENTATIVE TO NIGERIA AND ECOWAS ON THE OCCASION OF THE WORLD REFUGEES DAY CELEBRATION HELD AT ECOWAS SECRETARIAT, ASOKORO, ABUJA ON THURSDAY 20th JUNE, 2019

Thematic: Inclusion, solidarity

No Step is Too Small

PROTOCOL

Good morning and thank you for joining us in this day.

Today is World Refugee Day - a moment during the year to reflect on the fact that millions of families are living far from their homes, leaving everything behind- because of war or persecution. These families are not at all different from yours or mine. It is a day to draw attention to the plight of uprooted people, to express human solidarity and support.

UNHCR estimates that 70.8 million people are refugees or have been displaced by violence in their own countries - the highest level that the UN Refugee Agency has seen in its almost 70 years. To put this in perspective, this is double the level of 20 years ago, 2.3 million more than a year ago, and corresponds to a population between that of Thailand and Turkey. Beyond the numbers, there is an individual drama, stories of the brutal human consequences of crises, and also of generosity and solidarity that expresses itself spontaneously.

Every region of the world is impacted in some way and today a volatile mix of political, environmental, economic, ethnic, and territorial factors often combine to ignite conflicts. The sense of belonging is perversely married to the very unfortunate and growing sense of exclusion that generates rejection and violence between communities

When people seek refuge from violence there are international laws which protect them. There is, for the refugees, the 1951 Convention on the protection of refugees, and there is also now the Kampala convention on the protection and assistance to IDPs. Today we also commemorate the 50th anniversary of the refugee convention and the 10th anniversary of the Kampala Convention. After all, IDPs are displaced populations who have not crossed the border. In practical terms, the communities receiving them, welcoming them, also provide protection. We know that 80 percent of refugees are hosted in developing or middle income countries- with some nations hosting more than one million people. This is an enormous task, and an enormous



Jose Antonio Canhandula
UNHCR Representative to Nigeria and ECOWAS

ask- for any country. We are encouraged by those who are leading the way, especially in these challenging times.

Your Excellency Professor
Osinbajo

In Nigeria, UNHCR supports the Government in registering biometrically and provides a range of emergency assistance to

more than 35,000 refugees from Cameroon. UNHCR also delivers legal Protection services to IDPs in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states, in areas most affected by the insurgency.

In emergencies, UNHCR and its partners are on the ground, helping to provide shelter, food, clean water, and medical care, - yet it is the people in local communities who give so much - sometimes over many years. This solidarity/hospitality is essential. But it comes at a price that we ought to acknowledge. Let me give you a simple example in Nigeria: a family of seven in Ikom town, Cross River State, has received in May last year another family of six refugees from Cameroon. When I visited first, things were fine, there was sharing of food. Five months later, when I visited, the Nigerian family had consumed their stock of food faster than they normally would, and their food reserves, normally made to last for nine months, were down to five months. Increased solidarity, increased food insecurity!

As we remember this day the unfortunate situation of our brothers and sisters in the continent and across continents in forced displacement, UNHCR is

troubled by an increasing serious deficit of human solidarity, many a times fostered by state actors, in the name of nationalism. An anti-foreigner, anti-refugee narrative that is taking root in some countries. This narrative runs counter to the professed democratic values they purport to live by, erodes the basic human solidarity and threatens social cohesion and peace in an increasingly interdependent world. However, there is an alternative; – a positive narrative that embraces inclusion, diversity and shared human values. There is still a strong positive narrative backed by millions of acts of solidarity. These actions help ease tensions, build resilience and sustain peace. Actions speak louder than words.

In fact we know that in thousands of communities around the world, individuals are making a difference. People from all walks of life, are unified in their efforts to choose inclusion over exclusion and express humanity.

Ladies and gentlemen

Nigeria continues to receive and welcome refugees, especially from Cameroon, given the current security situation with no foreseen prospects for voluntary return in safety and dignity. As of April 2019, Nigeria counted 38,608 registered refugees and 1,015 asylum seekers, including the 36, 616 Cameroonian refugees in Cross River, Benue, Taraba and Akwa Ibom States; and 2,137 urban refugees.

Unfortunately, these positive steps that so many communities, companies and countries are taking with refugees rarely capture the headlines, yet these inspiring stories of compassion and welcome - need to be told and shared.

UNHCR continues to stress the importance of meeting minimum conditions of return, ensuring that all displaced populations are well informed about security, basic services in their areas of return. We are also working with both governments of Cameroon and Nigeria to ensure that all opportunities of repatriation in safety and dignity to

where that is possible is taken advantage of. As such there is the imminent return of some 4,000 Nigerian refugees to Adamawa State. All such opportunities will be explored, while encouraging states harbouring refugees to not force them to return to situations that have not improved since they fled. Accepting the sacrifice of keeping refugees in countries of asylum is not only an act of solidarity, it is also a recognition that neighbours are linked forever, and what happens to one to-day, may happen to the neighbour tomorrow. In fact, between Nigeria and Cameroon, reciprocal solidarity is a must as both countries harbour refugees from each other situations.

This spirit of participation, of shared responsibility is enshrined in the UN Global Compact on Refugees. The Compact marks a new era of international cooperation and provides a blueprint for better responses; not only humanitarian emergency responses, but also in terms of development to ensure longer term stability in entire regions. All of us have a part to play. We cannot do it alone.

Your Excellency Professor Osinbajo,

Honourable Secretary to the federal Government,

Honourable federal Commissioner

Director of Humanitarian and Social Affairs

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would conclude by saying that no step is too small. If we all take a step with refugees (people forced to flee) together we can make a world of difference. Let us take a step with the refugees, means, let us imagine what they go through. And express human solidarity.

I thank you all for listening and taking the messages to the wider public. A luta continua.

AN ADDRESS BY THE ECOWAS COMMISSIONER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND GENDER ON THE OCCASION OF THE WORLD REFUGEES DAY CELEBRATION HELD AT ECOWAS SECRETARIAT, ASOKORO, ABUJA ON THURSDAY, 20th JUNE 2019

PROTOCOL



Dr. Sintiki Tarfa Ugbe
Director Humanitarian & Social Affairs, ECOWAS

On behalf of the President of the ECOWAS Commission, I am highly delighted to welcome everyone to the commemoration of the World Refugee Day for 2019. We are glad that you are able to find time and join us today at the ECOWAS Commission to identify with those who are forced to flee from their homes as a result of crisis or persecution.

Excellencies, distinguished ladies and gentlemen

It is a rare privilege for me to be part of this important gathering which offers me the opportunity to reflect on, and better appreciate the plight of people forced to flee out of their habitual homes because of no fault of theirs. The World Refugee Day calls for reflection from all humanity and should prod us to identify with refugees and more importantly, to work hard towards implementing strategies to prevent forced displacements in the West African region and the world.

On behalf of the President of the ECOWAS Commission, and all Staff of the Commission, may I convey the appreciation of the Commission for the collective efforts of all stakeholders in organizing this important event. The World Refugee Day activities which seek to proffer solution to forced displacements and protection of displaced population, fall in line with the overall strategic vision of the Commission. The ECOWAS Vision 2020 envisages an ECOWAS of peoples and aimed at human development wherein all ECOWAS citizens are stakeholders in the affairs of our region. The Directorate of Humanitarian and Social Affairs located in the Department of Social Affairs and Gender encapsulates in its programmes, an important definition of the ECOWAS 2020 Vision.

Excellences, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

In affirming this reflection, the vision of the ECOWAS Humanitarian and Social Affairs clearly states as follows: **“A borderless, prosperous and cohesive region with the capacity to effectively prevent, mitigate, prepare for and limit the impact of conflicts and disasters on the citizens and**

residents of the West African region with a view to achieving human centered development.

The above-mentioned evidently links the work of the Humanitarian and Social Affairs to the realization of the all-important Strategic vision 2020 of ECOWAS. This has reinforced the spirit and intention of the ECOWAS Revised Treaty at article 28 and the specific articulation in the ECOWAS Policy relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Peacekeeping and Security at article 40, 41 and 42.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen

It is therefore noteworthy that issues such as addressing the plight of refugees, internally displaced persons and other vulnerable groups form part of the major concern of the ECOWAS Commission. The ECOWAS Commission is committed to preventing causes of displacement through our various political and diplomatic processes as well as mitigating and alleviating the sufferings of our displaced populations in the ECOWAS space. The Commission is highly concerned about our citizens and will work with our partners to ensure that their situations are ameliorated.

The theme for the 2018 World Refugee day is **#StepWithRefugees** and encourages us all to appreciate the distance refugees and other displaced population travel to find safety. The theme for this year calls for further reflection on the challenges faced by refugees. The crisis in North East Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Mali leaves over 2 million people internally displaced and more than 300,000 refugees in our region. Issues of

statelessness and migration are also of paramount concern to us.

In responding to these humanitarian problems, the ECOWAS Commission has been working with Member States and partners in providing sound legal instruments to prevent, manage and mitigate the effects of displacement within the region. Operationally, the Commission has also been responding to issues of displacements through donations and provision of food and non-food items to the affected populations in in the region. To continue standing in solidarity with refugees, the ECOWAS Commission is donating food and non-food items to refugees here in Abuja and also using the occasion to provide assistance to two Federal Government Secondary Schools in FCT, Abuja.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

May I acknowledge the role of our partnerships with the National Commission for refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCRFMI), the UNHCR and other partners. This has enabled us to organise this exceptional event. I therefore express very sincere gratitude to the organisers for a job well done.

We use this opportunity to encourage the refugees and other displaced population in the region ensuring you that you are not alone. Your situations are not unnoticed. We are stepping out with you and will always work with you to find durable solution to minimise displacement in our region and the world.

Finally, I wish to express sincere gratitude to all who made this event a memorable one. I wish you all safe trip back to your destinations.

Merci, Obrigado, Thank you.

World Refugee Day Activities across Nigeria continues



Cameroonian Refugee, Yvonne Ndaga, Presents her book during the World Refugee Day Commemoration in Abuja. © UNHCR/T. Efe

At the main event of WRD commemoration hosted at ECOWAS Commission on 20 June, the UNHCR Representative to Nigeria and ECOWAS, Antonio Canhandula, reminded the audience that, “In emergencies, UNHCR and its partners are on the ground, helping to provide shelter, food, clean water, and medical care - yet it is the people in local communities who give so much - sometimes over many years. This solidarity/hospitality is essential— “it inspires and moves us to believe that people can thrive together.” In line with UNHCR’s age, gender, and diversity mainstreaming (AGDM) policy, representation and meaningful participation of refugees in the event was assured by speakers, participants, as well as music performance by a refugee band. Cameroonian refugee, Ms. Yvonne Ndaga, shared her story *en route* fleeing from Cameroon to Nigeria, and her eventual success in Nigeria by publishing a book on self-motivation to overcome challenges. IDP representative, Ms. Halima Mustapha, from Karshi IDP camp, called on the authorities, to assist them as displaced persons.



Partners of UNHCR hand over some food and Non-Food Items to Refugees in Abuja. © ECOWAS

The WRD week in Abuja culminated in the distribution of food and non-food items (NFIs) to refugees.

North-East

In North-Eastern Nigeria, protection and assistance are provided to IDPs in a context where the insurgency attacks have hindered humanitarian and population movements, and where IDPs face severe violations of their basic rights. In addition, the path to durable solutions remains a challenge. It is against this backdrop that the World Refugee Day (WRD) was commemorated in the three States: Borno (Maiduguri), Adamawa (Yola) and Yobe (Damaturu). This year, given the broad spectrum of the theme, the objective was three-fold: for IDPs- to celebrate their resilience, create awareness on their plight and showcase their skills; for the Government- to advocate for the domestication of the Kampala Convention to improve the protection and assistance to IDPs and other affected populations, to improve peace and security necessary to implement durable solutions, and for UNHCR to promote and operationalize the nexus between humanitarian and development.

The UNHCR Sub Office (SO) Maiduguri, the Field Office (FO) Yola and the Field Unit in Damaturu, in collaboration with state authorities, IDPs, Borno and Adamawa State Emergency Management Agencies (SEMA), line ministries, donors, UN agencies, the academia, INGOs and NGOs marked the World Refugee Day commemoration with series of events between 17- 20 June 2019 in Maiduguri, 20 - 23 June in Yola and 19-20 June in Damaturu. The official WRD commemoration in Maiduguri took place at the UNHCR Guest House and was graced with the presence of the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC), Mr. Edward Kallon, who also served as the keynote speaker.

In his statement, the HC highlighted the plight of IDPs hosted in North-eastern Nigeria camps “Thousand IDPs and returnees continue to live in crowded camps and lack basic necessity such as shelter”. He commended the tireless efforts of the humanitarian community in providing protection and assistance, despite the challenges. The HC added : “Refugees, returnees and IDPs are part of humanity and they need to be protected,” and pleaded for the scale up of the humanitarian assistance delivered to IDPs and the



UNHCR staff work together with women and children from the IDP community on WRD © UNHCR/ T. Monboe

domestication of the Kampala Convention and its further implementation to ensure the respect of the rights of IDPs. He called on the government to improve the security situation to enable durable solutions for IDPs. He further stressed that the return of IDPs should only be done in safety and dignity and appealed for more resources to restore basic services in their communities of origin to ensure the sustainability of return. The message about the resilience and skills of IDPs was reiterated by various speakers.

The SEMA Executive Chairperson of Borno, Madam Yabawa Kolo, commended the generosity and hospitality of local communities who hosted IDPs despite their challenges. She said: “affected populations were not a burden to society but survivors of untold crises and sufferings and should, therefore, be supported.”



Women and children from the IDP community in Stadium Camp on World Refugee Day. © UNHCR/ T. Monboe

A member of the academia, Dr. Musa Usman, an Associate Professor at the University of Maiduguri, stressed on government’s obligation to restore security and ensure durable solutions. He expressed hope to see all the IDPs return home to rebuild their lives. The IDP representative thanked UNHCR and other stakeholders for their support to IDPs and called for more support, including putting conditions in place for the return to their areas of origin. After a message on the significance of the **#StepWithRefugees** campaign was spelled out, the participants join the world in taking steps with refugees using dance and walk. This concluded the ceremony.

On 17 June, at a soccer field in Stadium camp (Mohamed Goni) Camp in Maiduguri, series of

remarks highlighting the WRD theme were made by representatives of SEMA, NEMA, UNHCR, IDPs, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and the Nigeria Bar Association (NBA).

The speakers recognized efforts made by the humanitarian community, especially UNHCR to provide protection and assistance to IDPs in Borno State, highlighted the persisting needs, while calling for all actors to work towards finding durable solutions to displacement including the voluntary return of IDPs to their areas of origin in safety and dignity. The same strong message was conveyed by IDP representatives, both women and men who expressed their collective hope to return home in the very near future. The event was adorned with drama performance in local languages, as well as interventions by NHRC and NBA who sensitized IDPs and created awareness on laws and conventions on refugees and IDPs, and the importance of Access to Justice programmes.

In Bama (Banki), Ngala, Monguno and Mobbar (Damassak) LGAs, Focus Group Discussions with women and men, mass sensitization and football matches took place to engage the community in the celebration of World Refugee Day 2019, stimulating a community dialogue about peaceful coexistence and durable solutions.

Building on the momentum of the WRD commemorative activities, the Zero Tolerance Village Alliance initiative, an intensive community-mobilization intervention geared towards community-led and community-owned SGBV prevention and response was officially launched in Stadium Camp on the 18 June.

Later that day, UNHCR organized a round table discussion at the Nigeria Television Authority channel (NTA). The participants included prominent Maiduguri professor, UNHCR Protection Officer, a Barrister from the NGO Nigeria Human Right Commission and a member from the Islamic Foundation. For half an hour, the participants explored durable solutions in the context of Maiduguri where attacks of the insurgency constitute a major security challenge to implement durable solutions. The same topic was highlighted on Radio on 18 and 19 June (at the slot - Episode 12- Humanitarian Talks). UNHCR and the partner GISCOR had an open-line discussion on Peace FM radio Maiduguri in the local languages (Hausa).

In Damaturu, the two-day celebration started with a community sensitization and awareness session during which IDPs and humanitarian actors and government partner CSO attended the



Handicraft of the IDPs display in Maiduguri, Nigeria © UNHCR/ D. Dieguen

sensitization activity featuring drama as a tool for awareness and messaging. The center topic was self-reliance. Livelihood beneficiaries with thriving businesses shared their experience. On 20 June, UNHCR facilitated a media round table on an early morning radio show in Yobe – Gari Ya Waye (Dawn of the day) at the Yobe State Broadcasting Cooperation (YBC) in Hausa. The radio show also provided and opportunity for phone-in conversations with displaced persons and other callers within Yobe State. Later that day, partners, students and parents from six schools of Gujba LGA where displaced children attend, and other schools in Damaturu embarked on a Walk to the Yobe State House of Assembly. They were received by the members of the State House of Assembly in their valedictory session. During the ensuing discussion, they relived the challenges faced and spoke of the dire needs of learning materials, and the over-crowded facilities. The members of the House assured the students of their commitment to addressing the challenges and also support their returns as soon as the conditions are conducive. The day ended with a handball competition between Government Girls Unity College (Host School) and Government Girls Secondary School Buni-Gari (displaced school), the FU organized the sporting event to encourage extracurricular activity, create a platform to engender peaceful coexistence, unity and togetherness amongst the students.

In Yola, some activities organized on 20 June extended to children in Fufore IDP Camp. Sessions were organized by UNHCR and partners to address rights violation in relation to child

marriage, and the need to increase girl-child education across communities. Children within the age range of 10-17 participated fully in the discussions involving leaders of the camp, teachers and parents. The children proposed to share awareness messages with their parents. They were responsible for arranging

the marriage instead of encouraging them to go to school. Teachers and children requested to hold a forum where they could be mentored as agents of change.

It was suggested that to establish a school club for students. They will, in turn, mentor their peers and work with humanitarian actors to report issues of child marriage and abuse. The IDP children composed and recited poems depicting their plights during flight and displacement. The day ended with a one-hour football match between IDPs of Angwan Kara and Malkohi settlements to foster peaceful coexistence.

On Friday 21 June, the humanitarian community joined Muslim faithful to mark WRD. The Chief Imam emphasized the significance of the WRD celebration and gladly offered prayers for displaced persons. On Sunday 23 June, during a service organized through the chaplain of Government House Chapel in Yola, UNHCR conveyed messages on the importance of the WRD and the effects of displacement in North-East Nigeria. UNHCR concluded by advocating to build a peaceful country. On behalf of the Governor, a goodwill message was given by the Chief of Staff on the special occasion. Prayers were offered by the congregation for displaced persons.

The WRD commemorations in Maiduguri were the opportunity to celebrate the resilience, skills and capacities of IDPs. On 18 June, a number of IDPs products such as handicrafts, clothes, jewellery and other products were displayed at the UNHCR Polo Livelihood Centre. The exhibition stands were visited by the general public including host

community and humanitarian actors. A similar exhibition was organized in Anguwan-Kara Damare informal Camp in Yola, with a display of products from IDP Women (Essential balm, Vaseline, bar and liquid soap, knitted items and agricultural produce) acquired through skills training activities implemented by partners. All exhibited products were patronized by UNHCR

staff and given to the most vulnerable in the community.

Through the sales exhibition, IDPs demonstrated that they are not a burden, but skilled and talented people who can be self-reliant and contribute to the local economies in their areas of displacement as well as upon return in their areas of origin.

South

WRD activities were organized in Taraba, Benue and Cross River States simultaneously. Host community's solidarity towards the refugees was acknowledged and celebrated. There were calls to strengthen peaceful co-existence, to recognize the resilience and steps that Cameroonian refugees took to reach safety in Nigeria, encouraging local/states' authorities and the general public to stand #withrefugees. Protection Advocacy messages were kept simple and harmonized across the three States.



Cameroonian refugees' and host soccer team of teenagers compete as part of WRD activities in Anyake settlement of Benue State. © UNHCR/ L. Agiende

The refugees and host, including children, displayed their talents through cultural dances, songs, drama and poems, while products from their livelihood activities were exhibited. A group of refugee children sang and danced in their local dialect accompanied by drums, to express their joy. Refugee women during a song presentation, gave a brief history of the crisis and thanked the host community, UNHCR and other partners for their hospitality and support. Dignitaries present at the event signed the Kwande City #WithRefugees commitment. In a statement by the

The overall and multi locations WRD approach has been successful in bringing attention to refugees' plight and engaging new stakeholders as per the feedback received from refugees, host communities and authorities as well as per the extensive local media coverage.



Cameroonian Refugee children perform as part of WRD activities in Anyake settlement of Benue State. © UNHCR/ L. Agiende

On 20 June, the commemoration of the WRD took place at the Anyake settlement, attended by the Chairman Kwande Local Government Administration (LGA), traditional rulers, security forces, government officials, principals of schools hosting refugee children, teachers, the press, partners, refugees and members of the host community to show their solidarity to the refugees.

Kwande LGA Chairman, Engineer. Tertsua Yarkwan, he said that "the city of Kwande loves refugees".

World Refugee Day Solidarity Road Walks



The public receives on the spot information during the WRD solidarity road walk in Abuja, Nigeria. © UNHCR

In Abuja, #StepWithRefugees solidarity road walk brought UNHCR, NCFRMI, ECOWAS and the general public together to walk several thousand steps in solidarity with the refugees and persons who had to flee their homes looking for safety. Over 200 participants took part in the walk. The distance walked per person in Abuja reached 10,000 steps or 6.5 km in average. Flyers containing information

on refugees and internally displaced persons were distributed to the public during the walk.

In Adamawa, humanitarian actors and government agencies, including IDPs, UNHCR, SEMA, NEMA, NCFRMI, INGOS, NGOs and other line ministries walked from Adamawa SEMA office to the Adamawa State House of Assembly, where they were received by the Speaker of the 9th Assembly in the company of other legislators. A presentation on the essence of the WRD was made by the Head of UNHCR FO Yola and advocacy conducted for the domestication of Kampala Convention in Adamawa State. The Representative of the State House of Assembly, who received copies of the Kampala Convention, appreciated UNHCR and partners for addressing the plights of the IDPs and made a firm commitment to ensure the domestication of the Kampala Convention and further called upon UNHCR to technically support the process.



Road walk in commemoration of World Refugee Day 2019 in Abuja, Nigeria. © UNHCR Nigeria

In Ogoja, the Head of Local Government Administration (HOLGA) led the #StepWithRefugees walk with a crowd of about 130 persons to reach a total 81,250 steps in solidarity with refugees. The walk was opened with a touching speech by refugee athlete, Mr Leonard Awasum,

who appreciated the walkers and reminded everyone that even as they walked, somewhere in the world, a refugee is fleeing for his/her life. At the end of the walk, UNHCR Head of Sub-Office, appreciated the local administration and all partners and friends that have joined. He reminded the

audience of the significance of the step with refugees' campaign and the cities #withrefugees campaign. The Cross River SEMA Director General took the floor and introduced the Paramount Chief of the Ndok local community, one of the communities hosting refugees in Ogoja - formally addressed as the "Ntol Ndok". The DG also added his voice to the solidarity with refugees with reassurance of the support of the State. The HOLGA, Ntol and officials signed the Ogoja city #withrefugees commitment. The event was closed with a statement by the Ndok Ntol and finally by a very appreciative representative and chairman of the refugees in Ogoja.

In Calabar, the solidarity road walk took place, on 20 June, by refugees, host community members,

government officials, partners and UNHCR, despite the heavy rain, sharing the thought that while fleeing refugees cannot afford to slow down because of weather conditions. Inspired by refugees' resilience, over 100 persons took 3,750 steps which sum up to an average of 375,000 #StepsWithRefugees. At the end of the walk, everyone gathered at a venue where state authorities led the signature of the commitment of Calabar city to stand #withrefugees.

In Taraba, a #StepWithRefugees walk took place, on 15 June, from Old Park to Local Government secretariat Gembu. At arrival, the Head of Local Government led the signing ceremony to commit the Gembu city to stand #Withrefugees.

Engagement with special audiences



School children appreciate lectures on displacement in Abuja, Nigeria. © UNHCR/ H. Suliman

In Abuja, UNHCR kept the public informed on the plight of refugees during the solidarity road walk, as flyers were distributed to pedestrians, vehicles and bystanders. UNHCR and partners also initiated classroom lectures and discussions with children in three different high schools around the city. The children showed interest in the subject matter and further appreciated the educative material donated by UNHCR and partners. During the lecture, the students interacted excitingly, showing enthusiasm to learn. The administrator of the school appreciated UNHCR and partners for choosing the school as one of the schools selected for the WRD school lectures. The Principal of Model Secondary School Maitama, Mrs. Patience Ekenma Oti while thanking UNHCR, said: "The lecture

you have held here is encouraging and I would like to see this type of activity extended all across to other schools in Nigeria," And she followed up on her commitment by sending children to represent the school in the official commemoration day.

In the North-East, the academia was involved in the commemorative event through discussions, debates and advocacy for the wellbeing of IDPs, including advocacy for returns only when conditions appropriate for the returnees to return to their areas of origin, as well as discussions around finding durable solutions and improvement of livelihoods for their independence and self-reliance. The Muslim faithful also joined to mark the WRD, highlighting the significance of the commemorative event and further offered prayers for the displaced persons. The Chaplain of the Government House Chapel, in Yola, organized a service for UNHCR, during which the importance of the WRD, the effect of displacement in North-east Nigeria, the significance of contributing to build a peaceful country was highlighted.

In the South, the general public received information on WRD via direct interaction and media outlets, which enabled the inclusion of new stakeholders and advocates. During the commemoration of WRD in Anyake settlement, dignitaries signed the Kwande City #WithRefugees commitment. The Executive Chairman, Kwande Local Government of Benue State, Engineer. Tertsua Yarkwan, in his statement, noted that, “the city of Kwande loves refugees.” Moreover, a friendly football game took place in Ogoja, between refugees and host community male and female players, as part of efforts of UNHCR to mobilize sympathizers to #StepWithRefugees. The game saw both refugees and host community persons uniting and celebrating together as one community.



UNHCR's Mulugeta Zewdie greets Team of female players as Refugees and Host Community unite together as part of World Refugee Day activities In Ogoja, Nigeria. © UNHCR/ T. Aseh

Media Coverage

Interview of UNHCR Representatives:

1. UNHCR Representative, Antonio Jose Canhandula, and Head of SO Maiduguri, Alex Kishara, on ChannelsTV News #DiplomaticChannel and Silverbird Television.
2. UNHCR Representative, Antonio Jose Canhandula, on The Osasu Show Symposium on Nigeria Rising; AIT.
3. UNHCR Deputy Representative, Roger Hollo, on live ChannelsTV News @ 10, Saturday 22 June 2019.
4. UNHCR SO Maiduguri, Commemoration of WRD2019 in IDP Stadium Camp – NTA live coverage, 17 June 2019.
5. UNHCR SO Maiduguri, Commemoration of WRD2019 at the University of Maiduguri on #StepWithRefugee – NTA live coverage and Peace FM radio: phone-in live event.
6. UNHCR Deputy Representative, Roger Hollo, and Senior Protection Officer, Markus Topps, on NigerianInfo Radio Station, Wednesday 19 June 2019.
7. UNHCR Deputy Representative, Roger Hollo, on Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria, Thursday 20 June 2019.
8. “Safiya Breakfast” by Gotel Radio and Television: In the same vein on 21 June in Yola, a 30-minute talk show program known as “Safiya Breakfast” by Gotel Radio and Television hosted the Head of Field Office and Field Officer (Protection) for a live program on WRD. The platform was to sensitize and create public awareness on the significance of the day, the plight of the population affected and the responsibilities of the state and other actors in seeking durable solution for them.

WRD Reportage – Nationwide

A press conference held on Tuesday, 20 June 2019, briefing journalists on the commemoration of WRD and answering questions alike, while putting emphasis on forced displacement in Nigeria, 50th and 20th anniversaries of OAU, Kampala conventions and finding durable solution to the people of concerns.

Print media

- **Finding solutions to refugees, displacement in Nigeria**
<https://www.nan.ng/news/finding-solutions-to-refugees-displacement-in-nigeria/>
- **World Refugee Day: No IDP or refugee should be forced to leave camp —UN**
<https://punchng.com/world-refugee-day-no-idp-or-refugee-should-be-forced-to-leave-camp-un/>
- **UNHCR holds solidarity walk to create awareness**
<https://nnn.com.ng/2019/06/19/refugee-day-unchr-holds-solidarity-walk-to-create-awareness/>
- **IDPs: UNHCR seeks new, effective approaches to tackling refugees in Nigeria**
<https://newsdiaryonline.com/idps-unhcr-seeks-new-effective-approaches-to-tackling-refugees-in-nigeria/>
- **Opinion: What does it mean to take a step with refugees? by Olajide Adelana**

<https://www.legit.ng/1244445-2019-world-refugees-day-what-a-step-refugees-by-olajide-adelana.html>

- **World Refugee Day: Forced return not the way forward**
<https://thenationonlineng.net/world-refugee-day-forced-return-not-the-way-forward/>
- **UNHCR, ECOWAS seek more intervention for IDPs**
<https://www.von.gov.ng/unhcr-ecowas-nrc-seek-more-interventions-for-idps/>
- **World Refugee Day: NRC tasks host communities on durable solutions**
<https://www.von.gov.ng/world-refugee-day-nrc-tasks-host-communities-on-durable-solutions/>
- **25million Refugees Travel 2bn Kilometres Yearly For Safety – UNHCR**
<https://leadership.ng/2019/06/17/25m-refugees-travel-2bn-kilometres-yearly-for-safety-unhcr-2/>
- **UNHCR, Partners Seeking Solutions to Refugee Situation in Yobe – Official**
<https://leadership.ng/2019/06/20/unhcr-partners-seeking-solutions-to-refugee-situation-in-yobe-official/>
- **Humanitarian Crisis: 4.5 Million Remain Food Insecure In Nigeria — FG**
<https://tribuneonlineng.com/220263/>
- **UNHCR assures durable solution for refugees in Yobe**
<https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/unhcr-assures-durable-solution-for-refugees-in-yobe.html>
- **Finding solutions to refugees, displacement in Nigeria**
<https://nporeports.com/2019/06/24/finding-solutions-to-refugees-displacement-in-nigeria/>
- **Yobe: UNHCR seeks support to address plights of IDPs**
<https://www.blueprint.ng/yobe-unhcr-seeks-support-to-address-plights-of-idps/>
- **Story by NAN published on five online news media outlets**
<https://paradiseneews.ng/41802/refugees-travel-2-billion-kilometres-yearly-safety-unhcr>
<https://www.thedailynewsng.com/2019/06/refugees-travel-two-billion-kilometres.html>

<https://www.negroidhaven.org/2019/06/refugees-travel-two-billion-kilometres.html?m=1>

<https://www.voplink.com/refugees-travel-two-billion-kilometres-yearly-safety-says-unhcr/>

<https://thenationonlineng.net/refugees-travel-2b-km-annually-to-reach-safety-says-unhcr/>

Television and Radio

- **STV News @ 10**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KyeLQFA8Ssl&feature=youtu.be>
- **The Osasu Show : World Refugee Day 2019 (Documentary)**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hpg-B4BM0c8&feature=youtu.be>
- **#ChannelsTV #DiplomaticChannels**
Why We Need To 'Step With Refugees' – UNHCR
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XhKIoOVDYqQ&list=PLI6lvhbhEqwzdddckL9BDfwwD4yH3lc&index=5&t=0s>
- **Voice of America (VOA)**
Hope Endures for Cameroonian Refugees in Nigeria Seeking to Return Home
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P90lkTEK6DI&feature=youtu.be>
- **NTA**
Covered the 15, 17 and 20 June events of Ogoja and reported them on the 20 June 7PM news bulletin.
- **Two radio announcements: Radio Nigeria (nationwide coverage) and Sparkling FM (Calabar coverage)**
Broadcasted the event on 16 June.

Social Media

The screenshots show prominent tweets with positive impressions. **#StepWithRefugees** hashtag was on top 5 trends in Nigeria on Wednesday, 19-20 June 2019 for more than 5 hours on each day.



- Ogoja event was posted on UNHCR Live Blog: World Refugee Day marked across Africa as global displacement hits record high: <https://www.unhcr.org/afr/news/stories/2019/6/5d0a33604/live-blog-world-refugee-day-marked-across-africa-as-global-displacement.html>

Pictures and videos



ADIKPO

Refugee children perform as part of WRD in the Anyake Settlement in Benue State. UNHCR was keen to include the persons of concern at the centre of activities all across Nigeria.



ADIKPO

Cameroonian refugee and host community girls show their skills and play soccer as part of a competition organized by UNHCR and partners in Anyake.



ADIKPO

The refugees proudly show their rich culture through colourful and touching dancing that has grabbed the attention of the audiences.



ADIKPO

Cameroonian refugee woman looks confident as she displays the rich culture of her country as part of WRD activities in Anyake Settlement in Benue state. UNHCR was keen to include the persons of concern at the centre of activities across Nigeria.



ABUJA

During the solidarity walk in Abuja, the message was simple and clear: "No step is too small."



ABUJA

During the solidarity walk in Abuja, the public kept informed very much through display of flyers and posters by UNHCR and partners. Drivers, passengers, pedestrians and other by standers reacted accordingly to the cause.



ABUJA

The banner #StepWithRefugees in front of the walking people kept the public aware of the reason. UNHCR and partners accomplished an average of 10,000 steps per person at the end of the walk in Abuja.



ABUJA

As UNHCR, partners and the public walk to show solidarity with the displaced persons in Abuja, leaflets handed out instantaneously to the passengers that reacted consequently.



ABUJA

The official commemoration of the WRD hosted by UNHCR's partner ECOWAS in Abuja and attended by many.



ABUJA

Big banner displays the #StepWithRefugees on the spot where the solidarity walk started in Abuja, Nigeria.



ABUJA

During the walk in Abuja, participants carried and raised the messages of solidarity with refugees, which allowed the public to understand the cause.



ABUJA

Yvonne Ndaga's book is about leadership and is inspiring.



ADIKPO

The refugees make a beautiful show as part of WRD activities in Adikpo.



OGOJA

Video-When armed men stormed into the remote village in the south-west Cameroon, they took Agah Rachel's husband, levelled a gun on him and pulled the trigger as she looked on.

<https://www.unhcr.org/news/stories/2019/5/5cdbc9f74/displaced-cameroonians-struggle-nigeria.html>



AGBOKIM, CROSS RIVER STATE

Video-When the insecurity in Cameroon's restive western region forced Susan Agbo to leave her home, she did not know what lay ahead. All she knew was that she needed to get her eight grandchildren a safer place. She found that safer place in Nigeria.

<https://www.unhcr.org/news/stories/2019/6/5d109fc44/nigerian-widow-opens-doors-cameroonian-refugees.html>

Statements

Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary General:

"World Refugee Day is an expression of solidarity with people who have been uprooted from their homes by war or persecution . . . This not about sharing a burden. It is about sharing a global responsibility, based not only the broad idea of our common humanity but also on the very specific obligations of international law."

Edward Kallon, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator:

"Refugees, returnees and IDPs are part of humanity and they need to be protected."

Antonio Canhandula, the Representative to Nigeria and ECOWAS, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR):

"Today is World Refugee Day - a moment during the year to reflect on the fact that millions of families are living far from their homes, leaving everything behind- because of war or persecution. These families are not at all different from yours or mine."

"Every region of the world is impacted in some way and today a volatile mix of political, environmental, economic, ethnic, and territorial factors often combine to ignite conflicts."

"The sense of belonging is perversely married to the very unfortunate and growing sense of exclusion that generates rejection and violence between communities."

"When people seek refuge from violence there are international laws which protect them, but in practical terms, the communities receiving them, welcoming them, also provide protection."

"In emergencies, UNHCR and its partners are on the ground, helping to provide shelter, food, clean water, and medical care, - yet it is the people in local communities who give so much - sometimes over many years."

"A family of seven in Ikom town, Cross River State, has received in May last year another family of six refugees from Cameroon. When I visited first, things were fine, there was sharing of food. Five months later, when I visited, the Nigerian family had consumed their stock of food faster than they normally would, and their food reserves, normally made to last for nine months, were down to five months. Increased solidarity, increased food insecurity!"

"An anti-foreigner, anti-refugee narrative that is taking root in some countries runs counter to the professed democratic values they purport to live by, erodes the basic human solidarity and threatens, does not reduce, social stability and peace in an increasingly interdependent world."

"This spirit of participation, of shared responsibility is enshrined in the UN Global Compact on Refugees."

The Compact on Refugees marks a new era of international cooperation and provides a blueprint for better responses; not only humanitarian emergency responses, but also in terms of development to ensure longer term stability in entire regions."

Mrs. Mariam Uwais, Special Adviser on Social Investment on behalf of His Excellency, Vice President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo:

"This year's world refugee day is an opportunity to commemorate the strength and courage of refugees and show them love and solidarity for losing their homes, peace and stability."

Engr. Festus Daudu, on behalf of the Secretary to the Government of Nigeria, Barr. Boss Mustapha:

"World Refugee Day calls for sober reflections on the global situations of the causes and effects of forced displacement of persons in our various communities that gave rise to refugee problem and I appeal to leaders of the world to always pay serious attention in addressing the root cause of Refugees and IDPs."

Sadiya Umar Farouq, the Federal Commissioner, National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI):

"We recognize the challenges and hardships that refugees face, we honor their courage and resilience in the face of overwhelming obstacles, and above all, we celebrate their many valuable contributions to Nation building."

"This year's theme presupposes that around the world, communities, schools, businesses, faith groups and people from all walks of life are taking big and small steps in solidarity with refugees. Therefore, as we celebrate today, we challenge everyone to join together and take a step with refugees."

"For me, celebrating these target group today is not enough in the face of given realities, therefore the need for the world to adequately respond to refugees unprecedented challenges is beyond question and requires all of us to do more."

"One of the salient efforts, the International Community must be commended is the advent of Global Compact on Refugees. This Compact presents a political will and ambition of the International community as a whole to strengthen cooperation and solidarity with refugees and affected countries."

"That the Global Compact is structured its mainstay on easing out pressure of refugees, enhance refugees self-reliance, expand their access to third country solution and support conditions of countries for return in safety and dignity makes the Compact a veritable tool in addressing the plights of refugees."

"With the support of His Excellency, President Muhammadu Buhari, what we are doing for the refugees, as a Commission includes, but not limited to: distribution of various food, non-food items, educational pack, water sanitation, shelter materials, Agricultural input and medical care; trained and retraining of Refugees on various skill acquisition; provide accommodation and help the refugees settled within their host community; fight for their rights to safety, dignity and long-term livelihood empowerment scheme; enrolment of the refugees into the National Health Insurance Scheme, provide variety of lifesaving assistance, safety and protection; and durable solution."

"No one and none of us deserve to be a Refugee or live in Refugee Camps. Those that are there today have been forced by circumstances."

Dr. Sintiki Tarfa Ugbe, the Director of Humanitarian and Social Affairs of the ECOWAS Commission:

“We recognize that with the increase in refugees, IDPs and migrants within the ECOWAS region, we are very proud that the host communities are sharing in the burdens to host people of concerns”. The host communities are showing us what ECOWAS is, and that is the spirit of brotherhood, the spirit of regional integration in hosting these strong and courageous people that have been forcibly displaced”

Madam Yabawa Kolo, the Chairman of State Emergency Management Agency of Brono State:

“Affected populations were not a burden to society but survivors of untold crises and sufferings and should therefore be supported.”

Mrs. Patience Ekenma Oti, the Principal of Model Secondary School Maitama, Abuja:

“The lectures you have held here were encouraging and I would like to see this type of activity extended all across to other schools in Nigeria.”

Engineer. Tertsua Yarkwan – Executive Chairman Kwande Local Government, Benue State

“The city of Kwande love refugees”.

Conclusion

At the conclusion of WRD activities in Nigeria, some crucial messages are sent out and must be recognized.

To the Government of Nigeria, at Federal and State levels: enhance the security situation in the North-east to prevent further displacements and create a protective environment where the rights of IDPs are respected and protected; put in place conditions conducive for the realization of durable solutions; domesticate the AU Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention); and take leadership and ownership on data on forced displacement as the start for a durable solution process.

To the humanitarian community: scale up the provision of protection and assistance to IDPs in the North-east and support the Government's effort to create a protective environment for IDPs and returnees.

To UNHCR: provide technical support for the domestication of the Kampala Convention in Adamawa State.

And to the public: IDPs are skilled persons who can take care of themselves and contribute to the local economies if given the opportunity. More livelihood interventions are needed.

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UNHCR - NIGERIA

World Refugee Day 2019

July, 2019



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