



EXTERNAL: 29 April – 10 May 2019

GENERAL SECURITY SITUATION

The security situation in North-East Nigeria remains volatile due to sporadic attacks by Non-State Armed Groups (NSAGs) on civilian and military infrastructure in Borno and Adamawa states. On 7 May 2019, NSAG elements attacked two villages (Molai and Maiboriti) about 4 kilometers from Maiduguri - the state capital. During the attack, at least 10 people including military personnel were reportedly killed, several others wounded and houses set ablaze by the attackers. The incident forced residents of the areas and nearby communities to flee to the main city center and into IDP camps. Intermittent gunshots and explosions continued during the night of the incident. Over the last few weeks, there has been an increase in attacks on villages on the outskirts of Maiduguri including a military barracks - 3 kilometers from the main city center. Recently, several suicide bombers detonated their bombs at a missionary hospital in Molai Village, killing themselves and injuring several other people.

Meanwhile, on 8 May 2019, a group of armed NSAG combatants attacked the Ngala Local Government Area (LGA) headquarters, eastern Borno State - close to Arabic IDP Camp and the UN Humanitarian Hub. The military successfully foiled the attack following several hours of gun battle with the NSAG. The exact number of casualties is unknown. In Ngala, there are two IDP camps currently supported by UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies. Staff working for different partners residing in the town during the attack were all accounted for.

REPATRIATION UPDATE

Voluntary Repatriation from Cameroon

UNHCR is holding discussions with relevant Nigerian Government agencies for the voluntary repatriation of about 4,000 Nigerian refugees from Cameroon to Adamawa State. This followed the allocation of Naira 1.5 billion (approximately \$4.2 million) by the Federal Government. UNHCR is advocating to ensuring that the repatriation is in line with the provisions of the Tripartite Agreement signed by the Governments of Nigeria/Cameroon and UNHCR in March 2017 for the voluntary repatriation of Nigerian refugees in Cameroon. On 29 April, the Government of Nigeria and UNHCR participated in a meeting hosted by the Federal Minister of Interior to review preparedness for the planned voluntary repatriation to Adamawa State.

As of the second week of May 2019, over 2,500 Nigerian refugees have been registered by UNHCR in Cameroon to repatriate to Adamawa State. While the record shows that the majority of those registered are originally from areas in Borno State, the Adamawa State Government has indicated its willingness to receive non-indigenes and provide them with the support needed for their integration in the LGAs and communities the refugees have chosen to return to in the state. UNHCR believes that solutions pursued by affected populations should be well informed. Therefore, information about the conditions in potential areas of return in Adamawa is being shared with refugees in Cameroon to enable them to make informed decisions about voluntary repatriation. UNHCR is currently facilitating a "Come and See Visit" for six refugees, including 2 females, from Cameroon as part of the cross-border initiative to visit Adamawa State so as to see first-hand the situation in return areas. The refugees, accompanied by UNHCR in Cameroon have been able to meet senior government officials, local administration, traditional and religious leaders and the host community in the areas of return. The delegation will use its findings to educate other refugees in Cameroon to make informed decisions about voluntary repatriation.

The voluntary return of Nigerian refugees to Adamawa State is likely to increase the number of spontaneous returnees from Cameroon into Borno State. Therefore, in addition to working with the Governments of Nigeria and Cameroon, UNHCR is actively engaged in the various return structures in Borno State including the High Level Task Force, Returns Task Force and Returns Working Group which seek to strengthen the participation of the government, UN agencies and other humanitarian actors in the issues of return and the pooling of resources to support principled and voluntary return of refugees and IDPs in safety and dignity. While UNHCR continues to support the process of return, the agency remains concerned that unless the necessary safeguards are put in place to ensure the sustainability of the return process, those returning might end up in secondary displacement situation thereby exacerbating the humanitarian needs.

Spontaneous Returns from Niger

Since the start of 2019, 1,698 refugees spontaneously returning from neighbouring Niger have been biometrically registered by the Nigeria Immigration Services (NIS). They have returned mainly to host communities in Damasak, Mobar LGA near the border with Niger. Meanwhile, discussions are continuing on the process of formulating a Tripartite Agreement between the Governments of Niger/Nigeria and UNHCR to guide the organized return of Nigerian refugees from Niger when the conditions are conducive for return. UNHCR has requested Niger to provide details of potential areas of return. A cross border meeting between UNHCR Nigeria and Niger is scheduled for 29 and 30 May.

IDP RESPONSE EFFORTS

Teachers Village Shelter Construction

To address the shelter gap in Teachers Village Camp in Maiduguri ahead of the rainy season, UNHCR is providing 246 emergency shelters for 1,230 individuals. This is part of an inter-agency approach to support people living without shelters in the camp.

GBV Activity in Stadium Camp

During the reporting period, UNHCR, through its partner Borno Women Development Initiative (BOWDI) established the Stakeholders' Forum in support of the Zero Tolerance Village Alliance (ZTVA) framework used to moderate negative gender attitudes and beliefs related to SGBV. The Forum aims to positively change perceptions of the community norms and increase awareness of SGBV interventions. 10 stakeholders and 3 monitors from each of the selected zones and communities were identified to support the initiative.

Mission to Rann

On 8 May, UNHCR participated in an inter-agency mission to Rann, Kala-Balge LGA in North-East Nigeria, near the border with Cameroon. Terres des Hommes (TDH) and Plan International were the other two agencies that participated in the mission. The purpose was to primarily support the training of enumerators on how to undertake a survey to assess the intentions of the population about possible relocation due to potential flooding during the upcoming rainy season. The findings will inform an ongoing Inter-Sector Working Group (ISWG) contingency planning to respond to the flood if it happens. The mission also met with community leaders including village chiefs, women and youth leaders on the establishment of community structures.

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