FACT SHEET

NIGERIA

June 2026

Nigeria is home to over 3.6 million internally displaced people, 140,000 refugees and asylum-seekers and 3,700 refugee returnees.

Renewed insecurity and violence fuel a severe and deepening protection crisis, disrupting access to basic services and livelihoods.

UNHCR works with partners to deliver protection, life-saving assistance, and durable solutions that build resilience and promote self-reliance

POPULATION UNDER UNHCR MANDATE

Key Figures

FORCIBLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN NIGERIA

3.7M Nigerians internally displaced

140K Refugees & asylum-seekers in Nigeria

3.5K Nigerian refugees who have returned in 2026

57% of the refugee population are women and girls

50% of the refugee population are children

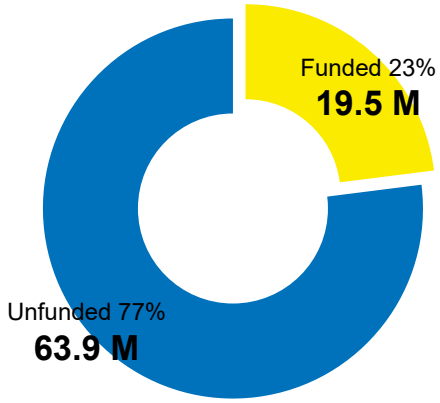
NIGERIANS REFUGEES ABROAD

422K Nigerian refugees in neighbouring Lake Chad Basin Countries

FUNDING (AS OF 30 JUNE 2026)

USD 83.35 M

requested for the Nigeria operation





A Cameroonian refugee woman carrying cassava harvested through UNHCR-supported livelihoods activities in Ogoja, Nigeria. Photo: © UNHCR/Flavia Faria

Protection

UNHCR delivers life-saving protection and assistance, focusing on core relief items, multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA), registration and documentation, response to gender-based violence, child protection, access to justice and targeted support for persons with specific needs. An area-based approach prioritises geographic zones with the highest displacement and need, supporting both displaced and host communities.

UNHCR strengthens the safety and rights of refugees and forcibly displaced populations through protection monitoring, early warning and response systems, community-based protection, registration, refugee status determination (RSD), access to civil documentation, and inclusion in national systems such as health and education, among others.

100%

of asylum seekers are registered; claims are assessed by the Government of Nigeria

99%

of asylum seekers have been granted refugee status and enjoy the right to work and freedom of movement

100%

of refugees may obtain birth certificates and national identity numbers

Access to territory, registration and documentation

- UNHCR works with the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI) to ensure refugees and asylum-seekers are individually registered in comprehensive data systems and receive documentation. The goal is to register all refugees and asylum-seekers with biometric data in the PRIMES ecosystem. Activities support government institutions in refugee-hosting areas to issue identity and civil documents, with UNHCR providing strengthened capacities and tools.
- UNHCR also works with the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Reduction and State governments to provide displaced persons, stateless persons and persons at risk of statelessness with legal identity documentation.

Violence Against Women & Girls

- UNHCR works closely with government counterparts, particularly the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), State Ministries of Women Affairs, organizations specialized in prevention and response to violence against women and girls to address root causes, strengthen quality and access to response services, including case management, psychosocial support, legal aid, safe shelters, and specialized services for survivors, and advocate for inclusion of refugee women and girls in national systems.
- UNHCR advocates for the inclusion of forcibly displaced persons within national frameworks, including the operationalization of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act.

Child Protection

- UNHCR works with government and child protection partners to strengthen child protection systems and protect children from abuse, neglect, exploitation, violence, and family separation.
- Interventions prioritize coordinated responses and solutions in the best interests of the child.

Safety and Access to Justice

- UNHCR partners with the Nigerian Bar Association, Ministry of Justice, NHRC, and refugee-led organizations to improve access to justice and legal protection.
- Support includes legal aid, detention monitoring, alternatives to detention, strategic litigation, and referrals to multi-sectoral services.

Well-Being and Basic Needs

- UNHCR provides emergency cash and in-kind assistance to newly displaced and highly vulnerable individuals to meet urgent basic needs and reduce protection risks.

Multi-purpose cash assistance targets the most vulnerable households unable to meet basic needs

22,685
refugees supported in 2024

27,362
refugees supported in 2025

5,140
extremely vulnerable refugees supported through June 2026

Community engagement and women's empowerment

- UNHCR promotes active and meaningful participation of displaced and stateless communities in decisions that affect them. It fosters two-way communication and collaboration through grassroots networks, women's groups, refugee-led and community-based organizations, outreach volunteers, and other local partners. These efforts ensure programmes reflect community priorities and capacities and foster peaceful coexistence.

~120,000
Cameroonian asylum seekers and refugees in Cross River, Akwa Ibom, Taraba, Benue, and Adamawa states

Access to Services

- UNHCR works closely with the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, NCFRMI, the State Ministries of Health, the National and State Primary Healthcare Development Agencies and other UN agencies to strengthen access to health services by advancing inclusion in national systems and building local health system capacities to deliver inclusive services for refugees and host communities.
- In refugee-hosting areas, UNHCR partners with refugee-led organizations and Community-Based Organizations to implement programmes that ensure the most vulnerable people have access to essential lifesaving services, including health, nutrition, mental health, reproductive health, and HIV services.
- UNHCR promotes the inclusion of refugees in national education, ensuring access to primary, secondary and tertiary education, including higher vocational education
- UNHCR interventions focus on supporting school enrolment, providing learning materials, removing administrative and financial barriers to enrolment, addressing documentation challenges, and training teachers to enhance inclusive education practices.

23,000
refugees access national health services (primary, secondary, and tertiary) annually

Refugees in Lagos are included in the **National Health Insurance Scheme**

3,500
refugee children attend primary schools annually

120
refugee youth are enrolled in universities at national fee rates

1,000+
Convention Travel Documents (CTDs) issued since 2017 to facilitate study and labour mobility opportunities

1,950
refugees are included in state-level social protection schemes in Cross River and Akwa Ibom

TRANSITION TO PROTECTION ADVOCACY GROUP (PAG)

UNHCR is playing a leading role in Nigeria's transition to the Protection Advocacy Group (PAG), a national mechanism established to strengthen protection analysis, early warning, and advocacy across the country. As co-chair and Secretariat member of the PAG, UNHCR supports the consolidation of protection information from field-level monitoring systems, facilitates evidence-based analysis of protection risks, and helps ensure that protection remains central to humanitarian, development, and solutions-focused decision-making.

Building on its protection mandate and extensive operational presence across Nigeria, UNHCR provides technical leadership on protection monitoring, information management, sensitive data governance, and protection advocacy. Through the PAG, UNHCR works with UN agencies, national and international partners, and government stakeholders to identify emerging protection risks, strengthen early warning and response mechanisms, and advocate for the rights, safety, and dignity of displaced and other vulnerable populations.

Solutions

UNHCR Nigeria pursues three durable solution pathways simultaneously: voluntary return in safety and dignity, sustainable local integration by promoting self-reliance, inclusion and livelihoods opportunities through capacity building and vocational training, and resettlement and complementary pathways for the most vulnerable. This is underpinned by a deliberate shift away from substitutional humanitarian support toward solutions anchored in national systems and local economic development, in partnership with government, development actors, and the private sector under Nigeria's Renewed Hope agenda.

Local Integration and Other Solutions

- UNHCR leads efforts to ensure that refugees in Nigeria are included in local development planning and service delivery by mainstreaming refugee needs into broader development frameworks that reflect Nigeria's commitments under the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR).
- In refugee-hosting areas in Nigeria, UNHCR advocates with development and private-sector actors to invest in areas of return.
- UNHCR support national stabilization and recovery strategies as drivers towards the return and reintegration of IDPs.

1,950

refugees included in state-level social protection schemes in Cross River and Akwa Ibom

4,000+

refugee families with bank accounts through UNHCR and NCFRMI-supported programmes

Ongoing advocacy

for inclusion of refugees in social protection systems across additional states

Self-Reliance, Economic Inclusion and Livelihoods

- In line with the sustainable responses approach, UNHCR works under government leadership and in collaboration with development and private-sector partners and communities to link humanitarian action with longer-term efforts to expand access to financial services, entrepreneurship, and decent work for refugees and host communities. Thousands of forcibly displaced people are receiving the tools, training

and support they need to start their own businesses, become self-reliant, and provide for their families and communities.

3,000+ hectares

allocated by the Government for refugee and host communities to farm across seven states (South-South, North-East, North-West)

56 cooperatives

comprising 956 refugee households, with 2,868 additional refugees, supported in livelihood programmes

300 slots

available in the national employment initiative (GEEP) as of June 2026

Refugees included in **vocational training programmes** in Lagos State

Private sector partners providing agri-loans, collateral-free loans, job opportunities, and vocational training:

TGI Group | WACOT Limited | Sterling Bank | Outsource Global | Terrakulture Academy

4 settlements · 20,000+ refugees

fully integrated into local administrative areas, with no structural barriers to socio-economic integration

Voluntary Repatriation and sustainable reintegration

- In Nigeria, UNHCR is strengthening collaboration with governments and development partners to support return and reintegration, creating conditions for return in safety and dignity, and supporting sustainable reintegration of refugees and IDPs. Activities focus on essential protection and assistance including return counselling, documentation, transportation assistance, and reception centre, as well as livelihood supports, including vocational training and support for entrepreneurship and agricultural projects.
- UNHCR supports countries of the Lake Chad Basin in establishing legal frameworks, notably by finalizing tripartite agreements with Chad, Niger and Nigeria for the voluntary repatriation of Nigerian refugees, in line with international refugee protection standards. Tripartite frameworks with Niger and Chad guide cross-border coordination; UNHCR-Niger-Nigeria agreement remains outstanding

Resettlement and complementary pathways

- UNHCR works with partners to support refugee resettlement and complementary pathways, including family reunification and opportunities to work or study, in third countries for refugees with specific protection profiles.

Development Finance & Partnerships

- UNHCR is advancing a humanitarian–development partnership model with AfDB, the World Bank, IFC, and FCDO to reduce aid dependency and secure long-term investments in displacement-affected communities.
- A key milestone is the AfDB–Sterling Bank–UNHCR Blended Finance Facility, currently under development. The US$2.5 million facility combines concessional development finance with commercial capital from Sterling Bank to deliver collateral-free, low-interest loans to over 5,000 refugees, IDPs, small-scale farmers, and MSMEs in Cross River and Benue States — directly addressing the market barriers of perceived credit risk and lack of collateral that exclude displaced populations from formal financial systems.
- At the national level, World Bank-funded multi-sector programmes — SOLID, ACReSAL, ELPRES, and Nigeria for Women — are delivering bundled investments in livelihoods, basic services, and community-led peacebuilding structures in displacement-affected areas. In addition, the Government of Nigeria and the

World Bank have expressed tentative interest in examining Nigeria's eligibility for the IDA Refugee Sub-Window, which could unlock significant additional financing to improve conditions for both refugees and host communities.

- Over a 3–5-year horizon, the ambition is to progressively shift programming and financing toward resilience and livelihoods, with humanitarian resources deployed strategically as catalytic, gap-filling instruments. Except for extremely vulnerable individuals, all refugees are expected to achieve self-reliance by end of 2028, able to afford primary health care and education costs without humanitarian assistance.

UNHCR 50 BY 35 GOAL — NIGERIA'S AMBITION

Nigeria aims to exceed the global 50by35 target by enabling approximately 70% of the current 140,000 refugees to transition out of aid dependency by end of 2028, primarily through socio-economic inclusion and self-reliance, with voluntary return of over 200,000 Nigerian refugees from neighbouring countries targeted in parallel, subject to improved security and reintegration conditions.

EXTERNAL / DONORS RELATIONS

UNHCR is grateful for the generous support to the Nigeria operation from

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Internal Displacement Solutions Fund

NHF Nigeria Humanitarian Fund

ISLAMIC RELIEF AUSTRALIA

ProFuturo

UNHCR is also grateful to those who have contributed to UNHCR's operations globally and regionally through unearmarked and softly earmarked funding, including:

Australia | Belgium | Denmark | European Union | France | Germany | Ireland | Italy | Netherlands (Kingdom of the) | Norway | Republic of Korea | Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | United States of America | Central Emergency Response Fund | Australia for UNHCR | España con ACNUR | Japan for UNHCR | Sweden for UNHCR | UK for UNHCR | UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe and private donors in Italy, the Netherlands, the Republic of Korea, and in the United Arab Emirates.

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LINKS

UNHCR Nigeria Website - UNHCR Nigeria Data Portal - X- Facebook - Instagram - YouTube