A close-up portrait of a young girl with dark skin and large, expressive eyes. She is wearing a vibrant green headwrap with a woven, mesh-like texture. Her face is partially framed by the golden-brown, woven structure of a basket or container. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of her skin and the intricate details of her headwrap.

NIGERIA REGIONAL REFUGEE RESPONSE PLAN

January — December 2018

CREDITS:

UNHCR wishes to acknowledge the contributions of partners and all staff in the field and at Headquarters who have participated in the preparation of the narrative, financial and graphic components of this document.

Production: UNHCR, Regional Representation of West Africa (RRWA), Dakar, Senegal. With the support of Field Information and Coordination Support Section (FICSS/DPSM).

The maps in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of UNHCR concerning the legal status of any country or territory or area, of its authorities, or the delimitation of frontiers or boundaries.

All statistics are provisional and subject to change.

For more information on the Nigeria crisis go to: [Nigeria Information Sharing Portal](#)

FRONT COVER PHOTOGRAPH:

Nigerian refugee, Aissata, 8, peers through the entrance of her hut in the settlement of Mainé-Soroa, in the Diffa region of Niger. She and her family fled to Niger from the border town of Kanama to escape fighting.

UNHCR / Roberta Russo

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Foreword



As we launch the fourth Nigeria Regional Refugee Response Plan for 2018, I am very pleased to see, that over the past years the number of partners who joined us in the refugee response has more than doubled, from 23 in 2015 to 47 in 2018. This is an encouraging sign that coordination and cooperation in assisting Nigerian refugees in the Lake Chad Basin is working well, and that we all join forces to give our utmost to help improve their lives.

Yet, the needs of these persons for whom we care have also increased since the Boko Haram crisis began. These needs not only regard basics, such as having free access to asylum and being protected from *refoulement* or forced return, but also being protected from arbitrary detentions. Prevention and protection from the risk of statelessness also remains critical; it currently affects most of the populations living in the region as they do not have proper civil documentation. The *Abuja Action Statement*, the Governments of Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria signed in 2016 committing to adhere to international binding protection principles, is still valid and gradually being implemented. Faster progress in the implementation of these principles will remain our focus in 2018.

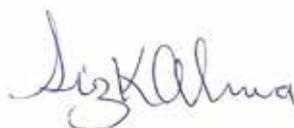
More importantly, in 2018 Nigerian refugees and their hosts will need increased access to livelihoods and their self-reliance potential will need to be strengthened, as the Boko Haram conflict carries on with little hope for a return to peace and stability in the near future. At one point in the first half of 2017, Nigerian refugees were hoping living conditions in their areas of origin had improved, and dared to return in a self-organized manner, mainly from the Far North region in Cameroon and from Diffa in Niger. Most of them engaged in back-and-forth movements across the borders, and sadly, many decided to return to the refugee camps, as neither security conditions, access to basic services and shelter, nor food, water facilities or livelihoods were restored in north-eastern Nigeria to enable them to restart their lives.

One of the most devastating side effects of the conflict is the alarming rise in food insecurity and severe malnutrition populations are facing to date. Over 7.2 million people in the Lake Chad Basin region were food insecure in September 2017. The future of young generations is at stake, as food insecurity not only affects the dignity of families, but has consequences on the physical and cognitive development of children that will permanently impact their mental and physical growth.

Another number that did constantly rise since 2015, is the number of Nigerian refugees all partners plan to cater for in 2018, namely 218,000 refugees and 75,000 host community members who continue to share the biggest burden.

Still, the only amount we did reduce, is our funding needs for 2018: We are asking for US\$ 84 million less than in 2017, not because we plan to do more with less, but because we are aware that our capacities are limited. Hence, within the UNHCR/World Bank partnership, we intend to increasingly engage development actors, to ensure a smooth transition towards providing durable and sustainable solutions for Nigerian refugees and their hosts, especially in Niger and Cameroon, as well as for all other conflict affected populations in the Lake Chad Basin.

I thank you in advance for your continuous support, collaboration and engaged partnerships.



Liz Kpam Ahua
UNHCR Regional Refugee Coordinator
for the Nigeria crisis

2018 PLANNED RESPONSE

218,000

REFUGEE
POPULATION

75,000

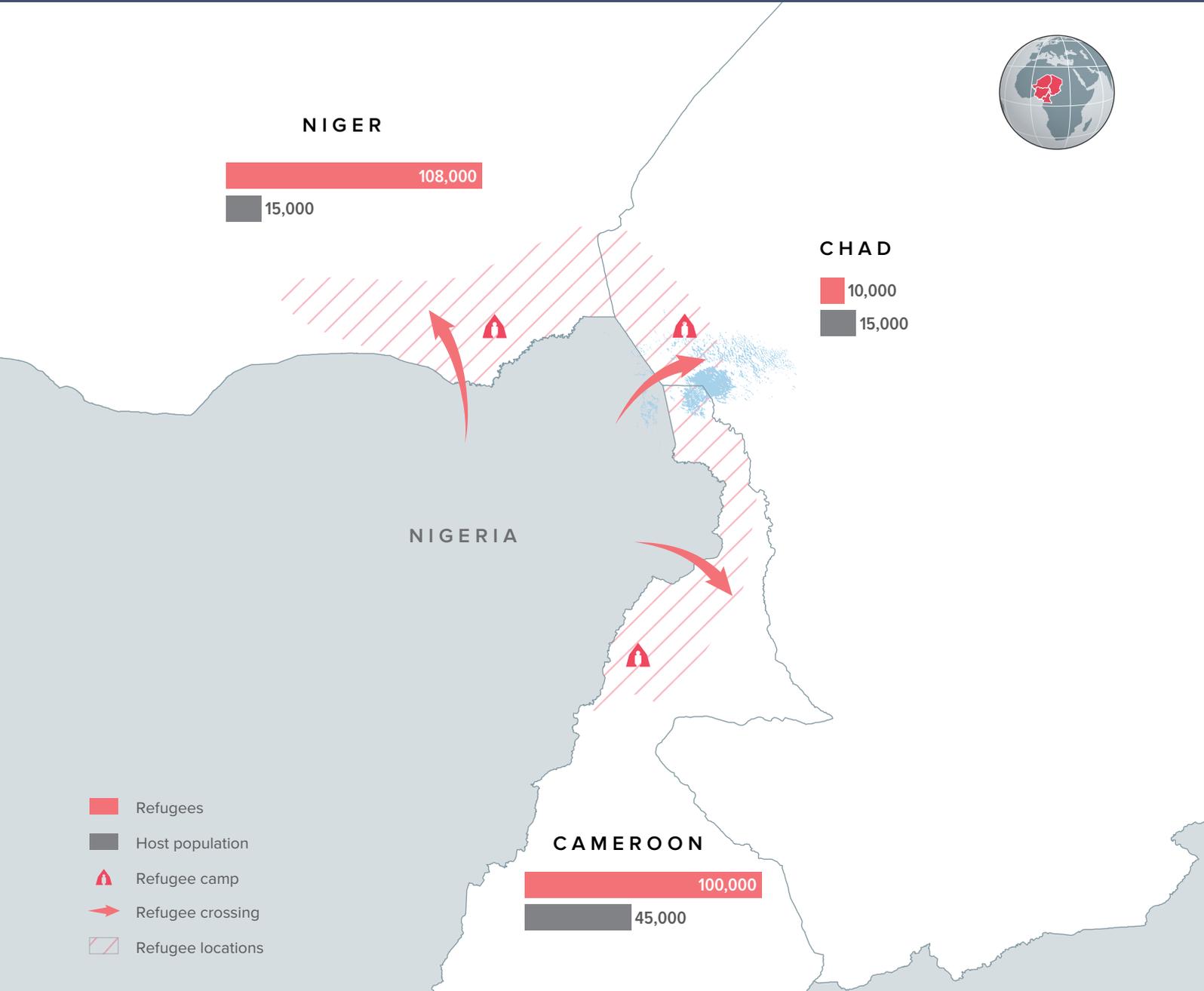
HOST POPULATION
TARGETED

US\$ 157M

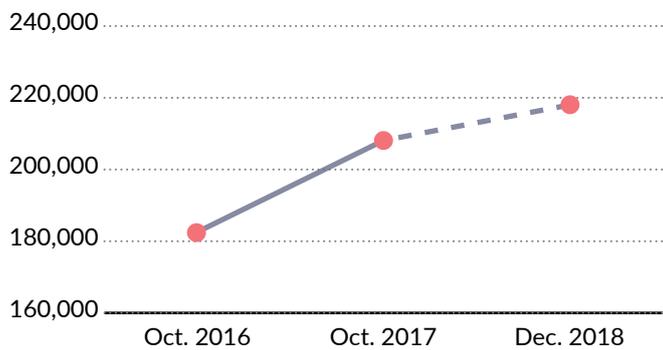
REQUIREMENTS

47

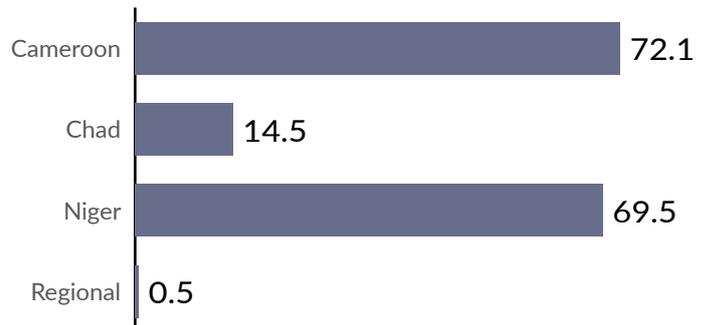
PARTNERS
INVOLVED



Refugee Population Trends



Requirements | in millions US\$



Regional Overview

Introduction

2018 will mark the fifth year of the Nigerian refugee crisis with 218,000 Nigerian refugees expected to be living in and outside of camps with host communities in Cameroon, Chad and Niger. The overall Nigerian refugee population size has fluctuated in 2017, with new arrivals, departures to Nigeria and pendular movements between countries of asylum and Nigeria, owing to the prevailing insecurity and sub-standard living conditions in the country of origin.

In 2017, security conditions improved marginally only in Niger, with less frequent Boko Haram incursions inland, while violent and deadly attacks continued in all three hosting countries, mainly in border areas. As a result, counter-insurgency operations by national military forces and the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) carried on, contributing to displacement. In those areas where the security situation improved, humanitarian access did as well. In this context, RRRP partner presence increased and a greater number of interventions were carried out.

Security measures such as restrictions on the freedom of movement of refugees significantly affected their livelihoods and self-reliance potential. In some areas, farmers have not been able to engage in agricultural activities and had to abandon fertile areas, while most refugees' access to land is limited anyway; herders face impediments to find pastures, most of the Lake Chad is banned for fishermen and traders cannot move their goods, especially not cross-border. The Boko Haram conflict therefore not only affects refugees, but also

further deteriorated the living conditions and increased the poverty rate of host populations. The absorption capacity of most host villages, including their infrastructure for basic services, is stretched to the limit, increasing the need for humanitarian assistance and interventions by development actors, especially in the health and WASH sectors. In 2017, the Diffa region in Niger witnessed for the first time the outbreak of a Hepatitis E epidemic. Such additional humanitarian emergencies need to be prevented to avoid further deteriorating the living conditions of the displaced populations and their hosts.

In 2018, RRRP partners will focus on interventions aimed at implementing durable solutions, while continuing to support and ensure access to asylum and protection for persons fleeing the conflict. The Tripartite Agreement signed on 2 March 2017 between Nigeria, Cameroon and UNHCR on voluntary repatriation constitutes a key step in that direction, and provides the framework for the safe, dignified and voluntary return and sustainable reintegration of Nigerian refugees living in Cameroon once conditions are conducive in areas of origin. Given that the security situation remains precarious and that access to basic services is severely limited in many areas of Borno State, where most Nigerian refugees come from, these parts of Nigeria are not yet conducive to return. Therefore, RRRP partners will continue providing humanitarian assistance throughout 2018 and in parallel, will implement interventions that support the local integration of those refugees who want to stay.

Identified Needs & Regional Protection and Response strategy

The 2018–2020 Regional Protection and Response strategy, as outlined below, guides the refugee response in Cameroon, Chad and Niger.

Protection

ACCESS TO ASYLUM AND PROTECTION

Needs - The crisis continues to cause new displacement and perpetuates insecurity, particularly in border areas. It has hindered refugees living in isolated areas in Cameroon and Chad from accessing protection. Since the beginning, concerns have been raised over the risk of *refoulement* incidents, whether in the form of border closures, forced returns or induced returns. While recognizing the legitimate national security concerns of states affected by the crisis in the context of ongoing terrorist attacks and incursions, and the need to implement measures, some of which may affect refugees, asylum-seekers and other persons of concern, these must be implemented in accordance with international standards and obligations. Security considerations must be addressed in a manner that also ensures refugees are able to access asylum and protection.

Response - To ensure this access is maintained, RRP partners will continue to support governments in establishing and bolstering relevant mechanisms and preventive measures that enable states to identify persons entering their territory in a manner that responds to protection needs and satisfies security requirements, in accordance with their obligations under international law. This includes border and protection monitoring, establishing transit centres, joint screening processes for new arrivals, pre-registration, as well as other measures, all conducted in an age and gender sensitive manner. To the extent possible, RRP partners will encourage national entities responsible for asylum and refugees as well as protection actors to be more present in border areas. This, in an effort to provide dignified treatment to persons in need of international protection, in a way that is fully respectful of human rights. All relevant stakeholders will benefit from capacity building on key international protection and human rights standards, including

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