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For more information on the Nigeria crisis go to: Nigeria Information Sharing Portal

FRONT COVER PHOTOGRAPH:

Nigerian refugees and asylum seekers in Cameroon's Far North Region UNHCR / Xavier Bourgois

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Foreword



Five years on, the refugee situation created by the Boko Haram conflict in the Lake Chad Basin has not let up, resulting in a protracted displacement crisis. To address this multi-dimensional crisis, we recognize the need for a more comprehensive regional refugee response that integrates humanitarian, development and peace approaches. As we launch the 2019/20 Nigeria Regional Refugee Response Plan (Regional RRP), we are committed to applying this comprehensive approach by bringing in the best of humanitarian and development planning together.



Looking back, we can be proud of our achievements made so far. The protection and humanitarian assistance Regional RRP partners have provided to Nigerian refugees and their hosts since 2015, helped to save lives, improved living conditions and already contributed to build the resilience of the affected

populations. It is now time to broaden the response, as host governments, partners and the international community have indeed recognized the need for a longer-term approach in the Nigeria/Lake Chad Basin crisis that interlinks humanitarian and development planning in a strategic manner. This is in the context where most of the local population in refugee-hosting areas already live below the poverty line along with low human capital development, gender gaps and with inadequate access to basic social services.

In 2019/20, Regional RRP partners will work jointly on seeking lasting and durable solutions that will benefit refugees and their hosting countries. This is also in line with the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and its Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), as agreed upon by Member States in the 2016 New York Declaration, which advocates for a more equitable and predictable burden and responsibility sharing with refugee hosting countries. As Regional RRP partners we acknowledge the importance of combining our efforts with the collective outcome of improving living conditions of refugees and host communities in strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability.

When we last launched the 2018 Nigeria Regional RRP, we reported the population in the three countries to be 218,000 refugees and aimed to assist 75,000 host community members in Cameroon, Chad and Niger. Due to the unrelenting violence in the Lake Chad Basin, the number of Nigerian refugees increased in 2018 to 228,500. The horizon for a quick resolution of the Boko Haram conflict is offering little hope, with the likelihood of a similar increase in numbers in 2019.

For 2019, a total of 40 Regional RRP partners are appealing for US\$135.3 million. The top priority within the 2019/20 refugee response remains the saving of lives, provision of basic assistance to restore the dignity of the affected families, delivery of protection services and the improvement of their resilience and that of the host communities.

A review of the 2018 financial appeal shows that the Nigeria Regional RRP was 42 per cent funded against \$156.6 million financial requirements by November. The Chad operation was funded at almost 100 per cent of its \$14.5 million financial needs. By contrast, Cameroon and Niger, with five times higher Chad's financial requirements, received around 35 per cent.

We wish to thank those donors who contributed with their financial support and we also appeal to them to continue supporting our comprehensive response without which the situation of the refugees and host communities would be extremely dire. The quality of our multi-sectoral response would greatly improve with a solid funding base across our programmes in the three countries.

As we transition to the sixth year of the Nigerian refugee crisis in the Lake Chad Basin, we would like to thank our past and current partners for steering the response forward and onward.

Tire not even in 2019. Leave no one behind!

Nana Oumou Toure Sy

UNDP Sub-Regional Platform Coordinator for Western and Central Africa

Liz Kpam Ahua

UNHCR Regional Refugee Coordinator for the Nigeria Situation and Regional Representative for West Africa

5

228,500 REFUGEE

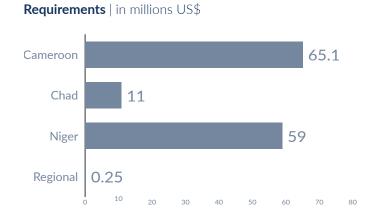
55,500HOST POPULATION TARGETED

US\$ 135.3M REQUIREMENTS

40
PARTNERS
INVOLVED







Regional Overview

Introduction

As the crisis enters its sixth year, the Nigerian refugee situation has become a protracted one with humanitarian assistance and response needs expected to run well into 2019/20. In 2018, Boko Haram attacks on civilians and the related armed conflict continued to cause refugee influxes to neighbouring countries. Moreover, this conflict, combined with the pre-existing social, environmental and climatic conditions and exacerbated by resource and governance constraints continued to have a negative impact on the livelihoods of the affected population. It further disrupted market and social services, and deteriorated local economies in the Lake Chad region.

In Niger, counter-military operations led by the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) from April to July 2018 led to a temporary improvement of the security situation. In Cameroon, Boko Haram attacks and consequent military operations in border areas continue to have a negative impact on access to asylum for Nigerian refugees, who are often caught in the middle, and forcibly returned to Nigeria. In Chad, restricted humanitarian access continues to be the main challenge for assisting refugees living in host villages. Due to the volatile security situation, over 15,000 new Nigerian refugees had been registered in Minawao refugee camp in Cameroon as of August 2018. Partners in this Regional Refugee Response Plan (Regional RRP) assume that in 2019 Boko Haram attacks and military counter operations by states along the Nigeria border are likely to provoke new refugee arrivals in Cameroon, Chad and Niger. Given the prevailing unstable security situation in some parts of Nigeria's North-East, in particular in Borno

State, the prospects for voluntary return in safety and dignity in 2019 remain limited for the vast majority of Nigerian refugees.

This refugee situation is set within regions of the Lake Chad Basin already characterized by sub-optimal economic productivity and endemic poverty. Approximately 50 per cent of the host population lives below the poverty line in north-eastern Nigeria – far below the national average of 33 per cent. For Cameroon, the gap is even greater, with 74.3 per cent of the population living below the poverty line in the Far North region, compared to 37.5 per cent nationally. The regions have also witnessed low human capital development with significant gender gaps in school attendance, all below the national average, due to limited provision of basic social services. In the Far North Region of Cameroon, the net academic enrolment rate is 23.5 per cent while the national average is 44.5 per cent. These social and economic disparities within the population have deepened perceptions of marginalization and exclusion. While the refugee hosting regions bordering Lake Chad in Niger and Chad have been less marginalized and less excluded from development planning compared to equivalent regions in Cameroon and Nigeria, development indicators remain worse than the national averages and access to basic services there is limited or non-existent.

The refugee-hosting areas do not have adequate capacity in terms of livelihoods and social and basic services, which in turn has an environmental and economic impact. Furthermore, administrative

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population figures and corresponding national budget allocations do not reflect the demographic changes caused by refugee influxes. As the crisis becomes more protracted, there are increased tensions between refugees and host communities. Therefore, it becomes more difficult for new refugees, such as in Cameroon, to find a place to settle with host families outside the camp. The lack of adoption of a refugee-related law and the weakness of local protection services, including support to people with specific needs (PSN) and survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), remain a major challenge for the improvement of the protection environment for refugees in the concerned countries. Legal barriers sometimes also prevent refugees from pursuing livelihoods activities, such as in Chad where the absence of a specific law remains the major challenge for refugee access to employment. National basic services such as health and education still remain insufficient, inadequate, and often inaccessible for refugees, especially for those living outside of camps.

Development interventions to strengthen the resilience of refugees and host communities need to be scaled up alongside life-saving humanitarian assistance and protection. Therefore, in all three countries, new initiatives are underway to improve and strengthen collaboration between humanitarian and development actors. For instance, the application of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF)

Plan for Diffa that was introduced by the National High Authority for the Consolidation of Peace. In Cameroon, UNHCR and partners developed a joint multi-year-multipartner strategy (MYMPs) as well as operational projects for the Far North region to support the resilience of refugees, local authorities, and the host community.

Within the framework of the Regional RRP, UNHCR and UNDP have begun to work closely together to ensure that development interventions that build the resilience of host communities and refugees are mainstreamed into the response plan and its implementation.

Therefore, both agencies jointly developed the regional strategy, and consulted respectively with all RRP partners at regional, national and field levels.

The High-Level Conference on the Lake Chad Region hosted by Germany, Nigeria, Norway and the UN on 3-4 September 2018 in Berlin, Germany brought together a variety of stakeholders working on humanitarian assistance, crisis prevention, stabilization, and development to identify shared challenges and opportunities. Donors made pledges to address humanitarian needs and to build the resilience of over 17 million people affected by the crisis. It is hoped that the international community will continue to support and fund the collective outcomes of this Regional RRP.

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