LAKE CHAD BASIN: CRISIS UPDATE
No. 26
November - December 2018

REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

- Armed attacks escalate in Nigeria’s north-east
- Cholera outbreak on the decline
- Nigeria private sector joins humanitarian fund
- Niger domesticates the Kampala Convention, Africa’s first
- Good rains, sustained aid ease hunger

10.7M people in need
7.8M targeted for assistance
2.5M people displaced
3.6M* food insecure people at crisis and emergency level
490k children suffering from severe acute malnutrition
1.6B funding requirement in 2018

*According to CH Nov 2018 current situation (oct-dec) for Nigeria and Chad; CFSVA 2017 for Cameroon et HNO 2018 for Niger
SITUATION OVERVIEW

VIOLENCE ESCALATES IN NORTH-EAST NIGERIA

Armed groups have stepped up raids in recent months across Nigeria’s north-east, targeting military bases, towns and displacement sites. The violence has disrupted aid operations in some locations and thousands more people have been displaced. An unknown number of displaced people were killed in an attack on 6 December in Rann, a remote town in the north-eastern Borno state. A few days earlier, gunmen raided an IDP camp in Yola town, opened fire and stole valuables as the displaced scampered for safety. On 31 October, armed men attacked an IDP camp and villages outside Borno capital Maiduguri, killing at least eight displaced people, injuring dozens, kidnapping women, burning and looting homes, shelters and food.

The attacks force the already displaced to flee again for safety elsewhere. Since October 2017, over 183,000 more people have been internally displaced, with almost daily influx to camps and host communities where resources are already overstretched. The majority have been forced to flee due to armed attacks. Poor living conditions, lack of access to humanitarian assistance, military operations and fear of attacks have also uprooted tens of thousands of people.

In Chad’s western Lac region, a series of raids in late September forced six aid organizations to suspend work in some Lake Chad islands. Humanitarian operations have since resumed and the authorities are reinforcing security. Attacks, however, continue to occur in localities near the border with Nigeria, limiting humanitarian access.

IMPROVING FOOD SECURITY

Good rains in the 2018 June – September rainy season improved food security in the Lake Chad region, boosting relief efforts to ease hunger and other humanitarian needs. Between October and December 2018, around 3.3 million people were food insecure1 at “crisis” and “emergency” levels in the conflict-hit areas of Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria. In the same period in 2017, some 4.1 million2 people were food insecure. Despite the improvement, conflict persists and continues to displace families, restrict movement and disrupt agriculture, trade and other life-sustaining activities. Around 2.2 million people remain internally displaced in the region due to the conflict.

TACKLING CHOLERA OUTBREAK

Around 11,000 suspected cholera cases were reported by 2 December in Nigeria’s Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states. Authorities in Borno and Yobe declared an outbreak in September as cases mounted. The Government and aid organizations are working to contain the epidemic. On 3 December, Borno state health authorities, UNICEF and MSF launched a five-day cholera vaccination campaign targeting around 463,000 people in four localities. Across the border in Niger, the authorities and WHO also launched a cholera vaccination drive targeting more than 152,000 people. Since July, cholera has infected 3,824 people and killed 78. The outbreak has affected four regions in Niger’s south.

This year’s cholera outbreak in Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria is the worst the Lake Chad Basin region has witnessed since 2010. Infections are now on the decline in the three countries due to efforts by the authorities and aid groups. While Chad was not affected in 2018, reinforced monitoring mechanism has been put in place in border areas to better prepare for quick response in case of an outbreak.

1 According to the CH November CFSVA 2017 for Cameroon
2 CH November 2018 (Oct-Dec) for Niger, Nigeria and Chad; EFSA 2016 for Cameroon
Niger’s parliament on 3 December adopted a bill on IDP protection and assistance, becoming the first African country to domesticate the Kampala Convention. The law aims to promote and strengthen measures to prevent, mitigate or eliminate the primary causes of internal displacement, and establishes a legal framework that governs internal displacement and promotes durable solutions.

Top Nigerian private firms on 16 November joined the country’s humanitarian fund, the first such collaboration between the UN and the private sector for a country-based aid fund. The United Nations Nigeria Humanitarian Fund-Private Sector Initiative (NHF-PSI) will finance relief efforts on the crisis in Nigeria’s north-east. Fourteen companies and groups announced their support for the NHF-PSI and will join to form a Steering Group, the collaborative efforts of which will raise awareness and resources and promote solutions to support humanitarian action in the north-east.

**FUNDING LEVEL PER COUNTRY**

- **NIGERIA**
  - Required: 1.05B
  - Funded: 699.3M

- **CAMEROON**
  - Required: 189.2M
  - Funded: 44.4M

- **CHAD**
  - Required: 179.4M
  - Funded: 58.1M

- **NIGER**
  - Required: 167.9M
  - Funded: 51.6M

**Funded: 853M**

**Requirement: US$ 1.6 BILLION**

Source: Financial Tracking System (FTS) as of 21/01/2019
OPERATIONAL UPDATES BY COUNTRY

CAMEROON

- Around 2.1 million people in Far North region require relief assistance in 2019, the same figure as 2018. The majority are women and children. Newly displaced people are highly vulnerable having lost property and with limited access to services. They also face mistrust and stigmatization by communities because of suspicion that they collaborate with armed elements.

- The Far North region has witnessed an increase in attacks by armed groups. Almost half of suicide attacks in 2018 occurred in November and December. Three such attacks were in Kolofata division in December. Suicide blasts also hit Waza locality in Logone-et-Chari division.

- Around 233,000 people remain displaced in Far North region due to conflict, according to IOM data published on 8 December. Half of them are women. Some 45 per cent of the displaced live in other communities, others in makeshift shelters and a few rent houses. Around one per cent lives in the open.

- On 12 October, a cholera outbreak was declared in the Far North, following the confirmation of two cases in Makary health district, with epidemic links to Gambaru, Nigeria. Since the outbreak started in Cameroon on 14 July 2018, 995 cases have been registered across the country, including 58 deaths, including 279 cases and 17 deaths in the Far North.

- Regional directors of UN agencies visited Cameroon on 11 - 15 November to, among others, encourage the implementation of the New Way of Working in Cameroun by mobilising stakeholders to find lasting solutions to forced displacement in the Far North region.

Cameroon’s Far North region has suffered recurrent armed raids. Insecurity and attacks continue to displace thousands of people. Food insecurity and malnutrition have deepened. Around 1.5 million people in the Far North region are food insecure. Almost half of all children affected by acute malnutrition in Cameroon are in Far North. Population displacement has risen in recent years to reach around 335,000 in 2018. The region is currently home to around 102,000 Nigerian refugees, more than half of whom are living in Minawao camp. Precarious conditions in the camp, reduction of food rations and refugees being swayed to believe that conditions are back to normal in their areas of origin have contributed to the spontaneous return of almost 13,000 refugees between April and June 2018.
Following several armed attacks in north-east Nigeria on 12 and 26 December, UNHCR reported that over 6,350 people from Nigeria fled to Chad in Krikatia and Ngouboua areas. As of 11 January, 3,241 had been pre-registered (48 per cent women) and 3,031 transferred to Dar Es Salam refugee camp near Baga Sola by UNHCR and the National Refugee Agency. Around 100 new shelters and a temporary transit site have been built in the camp after the influx. Food and household items distribution to displaced people has been launched.

Insecurity persists on the Lake Chad islands. Armed attacks are recurrent in localities bordering Niger and Nigeria, with civilians suffering adversely. More than 20 attacks against civilians were reported between September and December, resulting in the killing and abduction of villagers as well as the looting of food and livestock, particularly in the Kaiga-Kindjiria sub-prefectures and Ngouboua.

Cattle rustlers raided Ngoria locality in the western Lac province in November, killing one person and forcing several others to flee. An earlier armed attack had also uprooted civilians in the area. Some residents have fled their villages fearing attacks in the aftermath of the recent raids, including an attack in October on a military base in Kaiga-Kindjira which claimed the lives of 22 soldiers.

Humanitarian Coordinator Stephen Tull launched food and household items distribution to displaced people in Yakou area in Lac region during a visit on 19 - 21 December. It was the first time the more than 1,000 households who fled their homes on Lake Chad islands in 2017 received humanitarian assistance due to insecurity and difficult physical access.

Insecurity and armed attacks have also affected humanitarian access to Tchoukoutalia, Kaiga-Kindjiria and Boma areas. Access to Lake Chad islands is also limited due to security and logistical challenges, limiting the operational presence of partners. A series of attacks in October prompted several humanitarian actors to suspend some operations, particularly on the islands south of Bol and on the axis towards Kaiga-Kindjiria.

To improve livelihood and promote economic activity, Lac province Governor in October lifted a ban on fishing. The ban had been imposed to facilitate military operations and patrols in the lake. Fishing is still prohibited in the border areas deemed dangerous. Border closures and movement restrictions continue to limit farming and fishing activities as well as trade between Chad and Nigeria, Cameroon and Niger.

Malnutrition remains high in Lac region, according to the November SMART survey. Global acute malnutrition rate is 10.5 per cent while severe acute malnutrition stands at 1.8 per cent. In 2017, at the same time, global acute malnutrition was 18.1 per cent and severe acute malnutrition 4.1 per cent. Chronic malnutrition rates have been increasing over the past years, from 36 per cent in 2016 to 40 per cent in 2017 and 48.2 per cent in 2018.

Thousands of families have been uprooted by insecurity and cross-border attacks. There are around 173,000 displaced people struggling to survive under difficult conditions with little access to necessities such as potable water, health, nutrition and education. Children associated with armed groups, unaccompanied or separated from their families, are particularly vulnerable, as are displaced women and girls who account for the majority of victims of gender-based violence. The local population has come under increased pressure due to the influx in a region already beset by poverty and underdevelopment.
NIGER

- On 3 December, lawmakers adopted a bill on the protection and assistance of internally displaced persons, making Niger the first African country to domesticate the Kampala Convention. The law aims at promoting and strengthening national measures to prevent, mitigate or eliminate the primary causes of internal displacement. It establishes a legal framework that governs internal displacement and promotes durable solutions. Niger ratified the African Union Convention on the Protection and Assistance of Displaced Persons in 2012.

- The Humanitarian Country Team met on 6 December to develop a common position regarding the Government’s plan to relocate refugees and IDPs living along the national highway (RN1), around the Komadougou river and in some villages in the Tounour area in the country’s south. The relocation comes amid worsening security, including attacks and kidnappings near Tounour and suspicions among the local population that the displaced are colluding with armed groups.

- Gunmen on horsebacks on 24 November raided Bague, Badji Majiri and Blaharde villages in Tounour and abducted 15 girls. Two days earlier, horse-riding armed men raided Tounour town and killed eight people and seriously injured two others at a French drilling company. Armed attacks and insecurity are prevalent in Diffa, home to 223,000 IDPs and refugees.

- The authorities on 7 December extended the state of emergency in Diffa for three months. The measure has been in place since February 2015.

The south-eastern Diffa region is witnessing an unprecedented humanitarian emergency since the first armed attacks in February 2015. Hundreds of thousands of people have been internally displaced or forced to seek refuge in the region from across the border. Diffa is home to just four per cent of Niger’s population. However, it accounts for 18 per cent of the 2.3 million people in need of protection and life-saving assistance in the country. Across the country, 1.4 million people are struggling to meet their most basic need for food, some 500,000 more than at the beginning of the year. Around 16,000 children under five are at risk of dying from severe acute malnutrition.
Nigeria’s north-eastern region has been ravaged by violence for nearly a decade. What started as a protection crisis has also become a major food and nutrition crisis, and one of the largest humanitarian emergencies in the world. Agricultural production has nearly stalled. Protracted displacement has further devastated livelihoods already upended by violence. Humanitarian response scaled up personnel and resources to meet the huge humanitarian needs. Many areas remain inaccessible and armed attacks continue to torment civilians and pose threats.

- In 2019, 7.1 million Nigerians need humanitarian assistance in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states. This represents a reduction of 600,000 people compared to 2018 due to a fall in the number of people in need of food, livelihoods, nutrition, and education support due to increased relief assistance, improving security and favourable harvests. However, the situation is still dire for many, with limited livelihood and agriculture opportunities due to security measures, restricted movement, conflict and the threat of violence and abuse.

- More than 30,000 people have been displaced by recent fighting between troops and armed groups in the country’s north-east region. Clashes on 26 December in the remote Baga town forced thousands of people to flee to already congested displacement sites in Maiduguri, the capital of the conflict-hit Borno state. An attempted attack on Monguno town on 28 December also forced several people to flee their homes.

- Conflict has also forced the withdrawal of around 260 aid workers from three local government areas (Monguno, Kala/Balge and Kukawa) since November 2018, affecting the delivery of humanitarian assistance to hundreds of thousands of people. It is the largest pull out of aid workers since international aid response was scaled up in 2016. While aid workers have started to return to some areas, insecurity is preventing a full resumption of humanitarian operations.

- On 6 December, an unknown number of displaced people were killed in Rann, a remote locality in Borno state, when armed assailants stormed the area and clashed with soldiers. A medical centre and other facilities were destroyed, forcing a temporary relocation of aid workers to Borno capital Maiduguri. Military bases have come under increasing attacks in recent weeks. It is not yet clear whether the attack in Rann targeted the IDPs or the army base. In March, armed raiders attacked Rann, killing three aid workers. The town and surrounding villages host more than 76,000 IDPs.

- Since October, seven trainings on civil-military coordination have been provided to humanitarians and Nigerian security forces in the north-east, with a total of 181 participants (72 per cent from the Nigerian security forces). The trainings took place in Maiduguri and in four field locations (Gwoza, Dikwa, Bama and Monguno) and have been used as the basis to improve advocacy on humanitarian principles, protection and access issues with the Nigerian Armed Forces.

- The Presidential Committee for the North-East Initiative on 3 and 4 December hosted a workshop on the New Way of Working aimed at advancing the implementation of the approach in Nigeria, bringing together Government representatives, humanitarian and development partners as well as international financial institutions. During the workshop, five areas for collective outcomes have been identified to help reduce people’s vulnerability: basic social services and local governance; durable solutions; livelihoods; food security and nutrition; and social cohesion, peace and reconciliation.