

**Press release**

**NIGERIA: UN ALLOCATES EMERGENCY \$15 MILLION TO FIGHT RISING HUNGER**

**ABUJA, 18 November** – The Emergency Relief Chief Mark Lowcock has allocated a total of \$15 million emergency funding to address rising food insecurity in north-east Nigeria. The ongoing crisis affecting Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states and the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic are driving hunger to alarming levels.

Up to 5.1 million people risk being critically food insecure in the crisis-affected states of Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe, during the next lean season period of June to August 2021, according to the latest official food security assessment and projections.

“The humanitarian community is extremely worried by the rising food insecurity in north-east Nigeria. We are now recording levels of food insecurity similar to 2016-2017, at the peak of the humanitarian crisis, when the risk of famine was looming over the north-east,” stated Mr. Edward Kallon, the Humanitarian Coordinator for Nigeria. “We are not at famine levels of food insecurity in Nigeria, but we must spare no efforts to scale up our actions and ensure that the situation does not deteriorate.”

According to findings released on 5 November from the Cadre Harmonisé analysis, the most comprehensive food security analytical framework for Nigeria, the food security situation is rapidly deteriorating. Projections for the 2021 lean season, when farmers risk running out of food while awaiting their harvest, indicate an increase of about 20 percent of people at risk of hunger compared to the 4.3 million food insecure people projected in June 2020 for the same season, at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“In the past, we have been able to avert food insecurity deteriorating into a famine by working together, pooling our resources and scaling up our efforts” stressed Mr. Edward Kallon. “With adequate resources and improved access, we can save lives and curb the trend of rapidly deteriorating food insecurity. This funding from the Central Emergency Response Fund comes right on time to start scaling up these efforts and I appeal to Member States to provide the resources we urgently need.”

At the end of September, aid workers had already provided food to 3 million people across conflict affected Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states and multisectoral assistance to over 3.6 million people. However, the joint humanitarian response proposed by the United Nations and its humanitarian partners is critically underfunded. Less than two months before the end of the year, aid actors have received less than half the funds required to provide assistance to the 7.8 million people targeted, which means that critical activities to save the lives of people affected by the crisis remain underfunded.

The UN Central Emergency Response Fund is a pooled fund in which donors preposition funds so that money is available immediately to kick-start relief operations in rapidly evolving emergencies and to provide live-saving assistance in crises that are underfunded. A total of \$100 million was allocated today to stave off hunger in seven countries: Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Nigeria, South Sudan and Yemen.

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