

**“INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY MUST MATCH GENEROSITY OF HOST COMMUNITIES  
IN NIGER”**

(Niamey / Dakar – 18 September 2015) - Toby Lanzer, the Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Sahel, today commended the immense generosity of Niger’s communities and Government who host those fleeing the violence in neighboring northeast Nigeria. He welcomed efforts by humanitarian actors in support of national authorities and added that the international community must match the humanity shown by poor communities across the region and take its responsibility for a greater share of the humanitarian burden.

The Regional Humanitarian Coordinator completed a five-day mission to Niger to assess the humanitarian situation of a country facing multiple crises. He visited the south-eastern region of Diffa, particularly affected by violence and insecurity around the Lake Chad basin, before travelling to Agadez, a major transit hub for migrants in West Africa.

“Trauma and psychosis are palpable amongst families who fled Boko Haram’s brutal attacks on their hometown,” Lanzer said after meeting families at the Assaga site, hosting over 6,000 internally displaced persons and refugees from Nigeria. “Most are women and children who expressed an immense despair. Despite joint efforts by the Government and humanitarian teams, the deprivation is obvious. Their livelihoods were decimated. Some have been forcibly displaced several times, others sleep under the stars. Young people, in particular, are out of school and have little prospects for the future.”

The site of Assaga lies in the Diffa region of Niger, which hosts over 150,000 internally displaced persons and refugees from Nigeria. They found shelter in an extremely fragile region, where communities suffered successive years of droughts and floods, recurrent epidemics and limited access to basic services. In Diffa, an estimated 350,000 people are food insecure. The number of children admitted for the treatment of severe acute malnutrition has doubled compared to the same period last year. “More than one in every four people is now displaced in Diffa. Communities that host them come from the worst-off region of the poorest country in the world,” RHC Lanzer reminded at the term of his visit.

Niger is host to a total of over 220,000 persons displaced by conflict in neighboring Nigeria, Libya and Mali. In addition, thousands of migrants transit through the country each year. In the northern town of Agadez, between 80,000 and 120,000 migrants are expected to transit this year, according to Government’s estimates. A number that is almost four times higher than initial estimates.

“Beyond essential life-saving assistance to those in crisis, we must invest more in policies that can curb the cycle of repeated crisis,” said Fodé Ndiaye the Humanitarian Coordinator and UN Resident Coordinator in Niger. “Access to education, employment, quality public services and increasing and equitable wealth are essential if we are engaged in structural changes and preserve the island of stability that is Niger in the midst of a region in turmoil.”

This year’s humanitarian appeal for Niger calls for US\$ 376 million to address the most pressing needs throughout the country. To date, only 40 percent of its financial requirements have been met.

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