



Nigeria: Borno State

Weekly Situation Report No. 7

26 July 2021

This report is compiled by OCHA Nigeria in collaboration with humanitarian partners.



HIGHLIGHTS

- Major health partner to scale down operations in Pulka and Gwoza towns, raising concerns over response gaps for over 170,000 vulnerable civilians.
- Over 176,000 people targeted in ongoing food distribution in Pulka, Damboa and Dikwa towns as part of efforts to ameliorate escalating levels of food insecurity during the lean season.
- Civilian safety concerns as non-state armed groups (NSAGs) target farmers in Damboa Local Government Area (LGA), with an unspecified number of civilian commuters abducted along major highways.
- Concerns over increasing reports of gender-based violence (GBV) in high-risk Dikwa LGA where partners have temporarily scaled down presence due to worsening insecurity.
- Only 30 per cent of required funding received for the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) halfway into the year as partners struggle to sustain critical services.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

Over 176,000 people targeted in ongoing food distribution in Pulka, Damboa and Dikwa towns

Food Security Sector (FSS) partners this week ramped up food assistance to vulnerable populations including IDPs, returnees and host communities across Pulka and Damboa towns and also high-risk Dikwa LGA, where an upsurge of violence prompted a temporary reduction of humanitarian footprints since mid-April. More than 176,000 people will receive food items including rice, beans, sorghum, and condiments to last four weeks as part of the distribution. The scale-up is part of efforts by the humanitarian community to mitigate the impacts of alarming levels of food shortages during the lean season, which is directly affecting over 1.2 million people, mostly in Borno State. Humanitarian partners and the government are jointly coordinating through an in-country task force to ensure the delivery of vital food and nutrition supplies to all affected locations including hard-to-reach/high-risk locations where the situation is most dire.

Concerns over increasing reports of GBV in high-risk Dikwa LGA

Protection partners during the week raised concerns over the increasing cases of GBV targeting women and girls across camps and host communities in Dikwa LGA, where an upsurge of NSAG attacks and clashes prompted a temporary reduction of humanitarian footprints since mid-April. Community protection volunteers sustaining critical services in the LGA have in recent weeks reported a surge in protection issues, some of which require technical follow-up. Protection partners advocating for UNHAS flights (which have also been suspended since April to the location) to facilitate missions of technical staff to follow up on reported cases in the LGA. OCHA is engaging with different stakeholders to provide guidance on the next steps as the security situation in Dikwa LGA remains fluid with occasional reports of armed clashes.

Civilian safety concerns as armed fighters target farmers and commuters for abduction

The continued presence of NSAG operatives along major supply routes and farming areas in Damboa LGA is raising safety concerns for civilian populations, including IDPs, who are venturing out for rainy season agricultural activities to mitigate the impacts of rising food insecurity. Two civilians were reportedly abducted last week while tending their farms, and another attempted abduction was reported this week near the Government Girls Technical School (GGTS) camp. Civilians are also routinely stopped and asked to show identity documents at illegal vehicle checkpoints (IVCPs) that NSAGs have maintained for more than seven weeks along the Damboa-Biu road. IVCP incidents were also recorded this week along the Maiduguri-Damaturu and Monguno-Gajiram highways with at least two civilians abducted and commercial vehicles carrying goods/merchandise carjacked. The increasing IVCP risks could potentially affect aid operations including in Damboa LGA where partners reached some 36,000 IDPs with vital food supplies this week. Some partners providing third-party food assistance to affected populations in Nganzai LGA scaled down operations in June due to difficulty in finding commercial vehicles willing to transport deliveries due to heightened risks of NSAG IVCPs along the routes.

Gaps

A major health sector partner and exclusive agency providing secondary health care services in Pulka and Gwoza towns, Gwoza LGA, this week confirmed plans to scale down operations in the two locations by 31 July. This sparked concerns of major response gaps especially during the ongoing rainy season when the risks of disease outbreaks and other health issues are much higher. The agency had earlier hinted of plans to hand over operations to government health authorities in relatively stable locations to enable it to focus and prioritize high-risk locations where access to health services is most limited. Civilians including IDPs and host community populations in the two areas are already expressing concern about the situation, as the ministry of health is yet to commence a take-over process. OCHA is following up with health sector and the State Ministry of Health (SMoH) to identify agencies to step in and ensure critical health services are not disrupted. Gwoza and Pulka towns host more than 170,000 people including IDPs and returnees.

Humanitarian partners across sectors are facing challenges in sustaining and scaling up response operations and critical services across affected and vulnerable locations due to funding shortfalls. As of 25 July, only about 30 per cent of the US\$1.0 billion required to fund the HRP for 2021 has been received, threatening ongoing lean and rainy season preparedness measures to mitigate impacts of flooding and risks of disease outbreaks such as acute watery diarrhea and cholera. Some of the most vulnerable locations like Rann town (usually cut off by flooding for several weeks during the rainy season) have already witnessed the withdrawal of critical services by partners due to funding cuts, while others are scaling down coverage of services or cutting rations to sustain operations and respond to new demands due to the influx of new arrivals across locations. The OCHA-led inter-sector coordination group (ISCG) is working to develop a periodic monitoring report (PMR) to map ongoing sectoral operations including populations reached, impacts of funding gaps and implications for the coming months. The PMR will provide an overview of the situation to support resource mobilization efforts.

Funding Overview

Out of \$1.0 billion required for the 2021 humanitarian response in north-east Nigeria, \$503 million is required for Borno State.



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