

CHAD EMERGENCY UPDATE

LAKE CHAD PROVINCE

Nigerian refugees seek safety in Chad

The UN refugee agency, UNHCR, is supporting Chad in coordinating the joint efforts of humanitarian actors to provide **protection and assistance to newly arrived Nigerian refugees** in the Lake Chad province who fled after an attack by non-state armed terrorist group known as Islamic State in West Africa (former Boko Haram) on Nigerian military barracks on 26 December 2018.

According to government estimates, as of 8 January 2019, some 4,450 people had reached the Chadian village of Ngouboua, located on the Lake Chad shores. They arrived in successive groups, after navigating 3 hours on small boats (pirogues) on Lake Chad. Despite the official closure of the border, authorities maintained their open-door policy towards refugees, screening new arrivals to detect armed elements. Together with the government refugee agency (*Commission Nationale d'Accueil et de Réinsertion des Réfugiés et des Rapatriés*, CNARR), UNHCR is carrying out household level pre-registration and identifying people with specific needs at Ngouboua. **3,166 refugees have been pre-registered so far.** Refugees are transferred from the border area to the Dar es Salam refugee camp, close to Baga Sola. The transfer (pirogue + trucks) is complex and highly demanding as it involves driving cars onto handmade rafts to cross a river. **2,403 persons have so far been transferred to the Dar es Salam refugee camp**, where they

receive emergency shelter and assistance. Individual biometric registration will be carried out in the Dar es Salam camp; it will provide further information on the profile of new arrivals.

A **high-level mission led by the Ministry of Territorial Administration** and composed of government officials (including the Ministries of Health, Social Affairs and representatives from the government refugee agency, CNARR) and UN agencies (including UNICEF, UNHCR, OCHA, UNFPA, WFP and WHO) visited the Lake Chad province on 9-10 January to assess the situation. In the meantime, UNHCR is supporting CNARR in coordinating the operational response with humanitarian actors mapping out gaps and capacities to improve protection and assistance delivery.



Newly arrived Nigerian refugees are transferred by pirogue. Chad, January 2018 © UNHCR / A. Ngargoune

IN BRIEF

According to government estimates, some 4,450 Nigerian refugees have crossed so far into Chad following security incidents in Borno state, Nigeria. CNARR and UNHCR are registering refugees individually, once they are transferred from the border area to Dar es Salam camp, close to Baga Sola, in the Lake Chad province.

Due to security constraints (notably the proximity with the border and risks of terrorist attacks), the Government of Chad allocated an additional 57 hectares to welcome newly displaced refugees in Dar es Salam camp, where around 8,000 Nigerian refugees are already settled.

Humanitarian actors are supporting authorities to respond, while planning for possible further influx (from 5,000 up to 10,000 people). The volatile situation, with recurrent and complex attacks by terrorist group former Boko Haram, and the upcoming elections in Nigeria could trigger further forced displacement in the region.

Emergency response

Protection: CNARR and UNHCR are pre-registering refugees at Ngouboua. 3,166 refugees have been pre-registered at the household level so far. Upon the request of the Government and in line with UNHCR's protection standards, refugees are then transferred away from the border area to Dar es Salam camp, where individual registration will take place. 2,403 refugees were transferred so far. In the Dar es Salam camp, ICRC is providing family reunification services by providing new arrivals with free calls to relatives. **Child protection:** With the support of UNICEF and ICRC, the regional government services for child protection (*Délégation Régionale pour les Affaires Sociales*) has identified at least 51 separated and non-accompanied children. Individual registration will ease the identification of children at risk.

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence: Identifying survivors of SGBV is difficult while refugees are still being transferred from the border to a safer location. Individual registration will, however, provide an opportunity to identify persons in need of assistance. UNFPA is mobilizing staff and material to step up reproductive health services in Dar es Salam camp.

Education: the current influx could double the school-aged population when the two primary schools in the camp are already overcrowded (248 students per classroom) – and so is the Child Friendly Space, consisting of a tent for close to 400 children.

Shelter & Core Relief Items: So far, UNHCR's partner, the Chadian Red Cross, has built 260 emergency shelters and set up 21 Refugee Housing Units (an innovative shelter solution for families) for newly arrived families, with priority given to households with a person with specific needs. New arrivals are first hosted in collective shelters for 48 hours. UNHCR is distributing an emergency CRI kit containing blankets, mats and mosquito nets.

Water & Sanitation: UNICEF's partner Action Against Hunger (*Action Contre la Faim*) set up a water pump at



The convoy from Ngouboua crossing a river to reach Dar Es Salam camp. Chad, January 2018 © UNHCR / A. Ngargoune

Ngouboua on 5 January, with a capacity of 30,000 l/day. UNHCR and HELP started drilling two of the 10 additional water points needed in the Dar es Salam camp. Defecation areas were set up pending the construction of latrines; 41 were built so far out of an estimated 250 latrines needed.

Health & Nutrition: With the support of the International Rescue Committee (IRC), International Medical Corps (IMC), UNFPA and UNHCR, the Ngouboua health centre is screening new arrivals (for signs of malnutrition, transmissible diseases, etc.), providing emergency care and vaccinating all children under 14. UNHCR is prepositioning NutriButter for children aged 6-23 months while UNICEF and WHO prepositioned cholera kits, as cholera is endemic in Borno State. Anti-malaria medicine and mosquito nets were also sent to Baga Sola. Health capacities, including in terms of mental health, need to be significantly scaled up – including in Krikatia.

Food security: UNHCR's partner the Chadian Red Cross is providing three hot meals at Ngouboua. WFP is distributing high-energy biscuits to all refugees transferred to Dar es Salam camp, pending the general food distribution planned for 5,000 beneficiaries.

Logistics: Transferring refugees across the Lake Chad to Dar es Salam is logistically complex. Seven canoes and 15 vehicles are currently going back and forth to transfer an average of 360 people a day.

Coordination

The UN refugee agency, UNHCR, is supporting the Government of Chad in leading and coordinating the refugee emergency response, in close collaboration with the clusters already active in the Lake Chad area for the Internally Displaced People (IDP) and returnees.

From the onset of the crisis, Chadian authorities held coordination meetings in Baga Sola and N'Djamena with all government services and humanitarian partners involved. With the support of NGOs and UN agencies, existing government services are assisting refugees. The Government refugee agency (CNARR) is deploying additional capacities to respond, notably to carry out registration.

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