

Regional conflict in Lake Chad basin

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Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
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Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

Facts and figures

Background information

Around 2.7 million people have been internally displaced.

Nigeria: 2.15 mio internally displaced

Niger: 241'000 returnees, refugees and displaced

Chad: 117'000 refugees and displaced

Cameroon: 262'000 refugees and displaced

Source: IOM, UNHCR, OCHA, Jun 2016

The conflict has killed more than 20'000 people since 2009 and 8'852 in 2015 alone (Source: ACAPS).

Swiss Humanitarian Aid contributions to activities across the region since September 2014:

ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross, Nigeria, Chad, Niger and Cameroon, CHF 8.7 mio.): emergency support, promotion of humanitarian law

UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, covering Niger, Cameroon and Chad, CHF 3.1 mio.): protection and shelter

WFP (World Food Programme, regional appeal covering Niger, Nigeria, Cameroon and Chad, CHF 3.1 million): emergency food

UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund, Diffa, Niger, CHF 0.18 mio) : child protection activities

UNHAS (UN Humanitarian Air Service, Cameroon, Nigeria, CHF 1.4 mio): safe access to remote areas for humanitarian aid and personnel

IRC (International Rescue Committee, Diffa, Niger, CHF 2.02 mio.): food, water, hygiene and sanitation (WASH) and protection

COOPI (Cooperazione Internazionale, Diffa, Niger, CHF 1.14 mio) : psycho-social support

ACF (Action Against Hunger, Niger, CHF 660'000) : food security, WASH

Croix-rouge française (Far-North Cameroon, CHF 885'000) : health and nutrition support

IRC (Nigeria, 1.3 mio): Protection and WASH for vulnerable communities in Borno State.

ACF (Nigeria, CHF 0.33 mio) : fight against malnutrition in Borno State

HI (Handicap International, Chad, CHF 0.3 mio): protection and education

Total amount allocated to date:
CHF 23.1 million



Distribution of non-food items (NFI) in N'Guagam, Niger © IRC

SDC activities and situation update

- Three SDC humanitarian affairs advisers based in Nigeria, Mali and Chad are closely monitoring the developments related to the crisis in northern Nigeria, also in light of the consequences it entails for the whole Lake Chad basin.
A Swiss expert seconded to the WFP in Niamey contributes to reinforcing monitoring and evaluation measures of their projects in Niger.
- Through its contributions to the crisis response, Switzerland ranks among the 10 top donors. Multilateral contributions have strengthened the capacity of the ICRC and the major UN agencies involved in activities focused on bringing assistance to vulnerable refugees, displaced and local hosting communities.
- The SDC is focusing its activities on food security and nutrition, psychosocial support (and protection in general) and the WASH sectors (water, sanitation and hygiene).
- The Cooperation office in Niamey is investing for CHF 0.5 million in humanitarian flights and for CHF 2.4 million in improving education quality, school infrastructure and services for the affected communities in the Diffa region.
- Several security measures taken by the authorities in the lake region – restraining the circulation of goods and persons (notably the ban on motorcycle circulation, border closures and market shutdowns) – are hampering economic exchanges between communities, which increases the livelihood crisis for the poorest households.
- Whilst hundreds of thousands of persons are still inaccessible in areas controlled by Boko Haram, in the territories that have recently been retaken by the international military operation, aid workers have discovered extensive needs in food and nutrition and possible famine pockets.
- Despite certain improvements however, village attacks and suicide bombings remain deadly and unabated.

Background information

Boko Haram is an armed insurgency group that emerged in 2002 and intends to install extreme religious rule upon northern Nigeria by means of violence. The group also goes by the name of ISWAP (Islamic State's West Africa Province) since it claimed allegiance to ISIL in April 2015.

Attacks and reprisals, most of them excessive and targeting civilians indiscriminately, have caused massive displacement and the death of more than 20,000 persons since 2009. A state of emergency has been in force in the north-eastern states since May 2013, in Diffa (Niger) since February 2015, and in the Lake Chad region since November 2015.

The security situation remains volatile in the region, where elements of Boko Haram continue to carry out regular attacks and suicide bombings against armed forces and communities across the border. A multinational force (involving the armies of Niger, Chad, Cameroon and Benin) was instituted in January 2015 under the auspices of the AU. In February 2015 the Boko Haram group attacked Chad and Niger, triggering a massive counter-attack from both countries.

In Nigeria, more than 86% of the people fleeing the advance of the armed group have been taken in by host families towards the west and south of Nigeria, within large cities, away from the fighting. Only 14% of the displaced population finds shelter in camps.

In Cameroon, Chad and Niger, UNHCR camps have been set up to make up for the lack of accommodation and to help resolve the security problems inherent in such displacements (50,000 persons after clashes near Diffa, Niger in June). Many families have been displaced several times in the last two years.

Current needs

The conflict in northern Nigeria must be considered from a regional standpoint, given the impact it is having on neighbouring countries Niger, Cameroon and Chad. Recent cross-border attacks by Boko Haram have also been causing internal displacement in those three countries.

The displaced (mostly women and children) are settling mainly outside the camps, putting pressure on the host communities, who themselves are usually poor and destitute. The Lake Chad region englobes several of the poorest regions in the world: according to the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), nearly 30% of the population in the Lac region in Chad does not access to sufficient daily food.

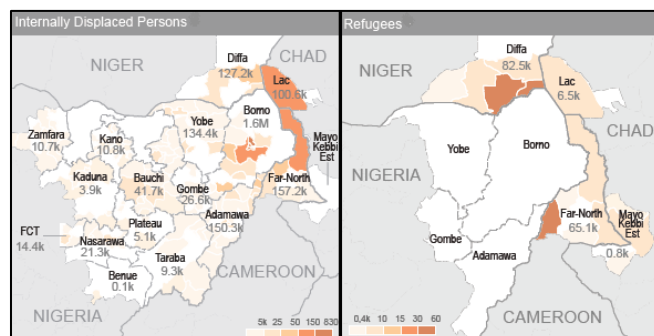
Swiss Humanitarian Aid's response

In the Sahel, Swiss Humanitarian Aid primarily focuses on food security and nutrition, and protection. It contributes to the work of its partners who are working in these two areas in Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger and Chad. Its partners include the Red Cross movement, UN agencies and NGOs.

Switzerland is paying close attention to developments in this crisis through regular contact with its embassies in Abuja and Yaoundé. These embassies enjoy privileged relations with the national and international institutions involved in the response to the crisis in the north-east of the country. The permanent presence of three humanitarian affairs advisers based in West Africa (in Abuja, Bamako and N'Djamena) who

travel regularly to the affected areas makes it possible to track the progress and quality of the humanitarian response in the whole region.

These visits are coordinated with the cooperation offices and Swiss embassies concerned.



Source: overview of populations displaced in the Lake Chad region due to the conflict in northern Nigeria (OCHA, June 2016)

Overview of areas covered:

Sectors	Activities
Emergency relief	Distribution of basic items: food, blankets, kitchen utensils, tarpaulins, etc.
Food security	Needs assessments, follow-up of harvests and anticipation of chronic needs, support of government response structures, un/conditional general or targeted food distributions, support for households' and communities' livelihoods.
Nutrition	Fight the cyclical (food crisis) or chronic (structural) causes of malnutrition: at-risk areas follow-up, social services training, raising awareness among mothers about good nutrition, technical support to nutritional centres, allocation of specialised products, etc.
Protection	Humanitarian advocacy before the armed forces to ensure proper treatment of civilians, access to detained persons and vulnerable populations. Registration of displaced persons, psychosocial support for affected persons. Mine awareness
WASH: Water, sanitation and hygiene	Strengthening of water supply (in terms of quality and quantity) to health centres and communities in need, and support for state hydrologic services.

Further information:

SDC

Swiss Humanitarian Aid
Sägestrasse 77, Köniz
3003 Bern, Switzerland
Tel. +41 58 462 31 24
Fax: +41 58 464 16 94
Email: hh@deza.admin.ch
www.deza.admin.ch
[@SwissHumAidUnit](https://twitter.com/SwissHumAidUnit)

Media contact:

FDFA Information
Federal Palace West Wing
3003 Bern, Switzerland
Tel. +41 58 462 31 53
Fax: +41 58 464 90 47
Email: info@eda.admin.ch
www.eda.admin.ch