

Humanitarian crisis in the Lake Chad Region

August 2018

Facts and figures

Background information

(figures represent Boko Haram related insurgency)

Lake Chad Region: 10.7 mio in need of humanitarian assistance

Nigeria: 1.92 mio IDPs, 1.55 mio returnees

Cameroon: 238,099 IDPs and 96,727 Nigerian refugees

Niger: 104,288 IDPs, and 118,868 Nigerian refugees

Chad: 108,428 IDPs and 10,964 Nigerian refugees

UN Appeals for 2018:

Nigeria: 1.05 billion USD

Cameroon: 189 mio USD

Niger: 162 mio USD

Chad: 179 mio USD

SDC allocations 2018:

Org	Country	mio. CHF
ICRC	Lake Chad Region	8.0
WFP	Nigeria	2.0
UNHAS	Nigeria	0.7
FAO	Nigeria	0.8
UNICEF	Nigeria	1.5
Nigeria Humanitarian Fund (NHF)	Nigeria	2.2
NGOs: ACF, CRF	Nigeria, Cameroon	2.8
Total 2018	Lake Chad Region	18.0
Cumulative 2014 - 2018	Lake Chad Region	71.5



Children in Muna Garage IDP camp Maiduguri

Switzerland's humanitarian assistance and situation update

- Boko Haram violence and counter-insurgency operations in the Lake Chad Basin have resulted in one of the biggest humanitarian crises worldwide with 10.7 mio. affected people who require humanitarian support in 2018.
- Whilst hundreds of thousands of persons are still inaccessible in areas controlled by Boko Haram in northeastern Nigeria, in territories retaken by the Nigerian and multilateral armed forces, aid workers are reaching millions of beneficiaries monthly. The latest OCHA Lake Chad Basin crisis update of June 2018 reports five million food insecure people at crisis and emergency level and 490'000 children suffering from severe acute malnutrition.
- Switzerland is contributing to the humanitarian response by financing activities in the sectors food security, nutrition, livelihoods, protection, health, water, sanitation and hygiene.
- With close to 72 mio. CHF allocated since 2014, Switzerland ranks among the 10 biggest humanitarian donors. Its multilateral contributions have strengthened the capacity of the ICRC, major UN agencies and NGOs in bringing assistance to vulnerable populations (refugees, displaced, returnees and hosting communities). Besides financial contributions, UN agencies also received the support of experts seconded by SDC Humanitarian Aid.
- Four SDC Humanitarian Affairs Advisers based in Nigeria, Mali and Chad are closely monitoring the developments in northern Nigeria and the Lake Chad Region.
- Switzerland chaired the humanitarian donors' coordination in Nigeria and was a permanent member of the Humanitarian Country Team for the last 18 months.

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. Part of the group also goes by the name of ISWAP (Islamic State's West Africa Province) since it claimed allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in February 2015. The various factions are mainly operating in northeast Nigeria but also its neighbouring countries (Niger, Chad and Cameroon).

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.

Despite military advances by both the Multinational Joint Task Force (involving the armies of Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon, Chad and Benin) and the Nigerian Armed Forces, the security situation remains volatile in the region. Boko Haram continues to carry out regular attacks and suicide bombings against armed forces and communities in northeast Nigeria and across borders. The two main factions of the group continue to spread over a vast area. Displacements, protection risks and abuses of civilians persist.

Current needs

Most of the displaced families are sheltered by communities that count among the world's poorest and most vulnerable, putting additional strain on infrastructure and resources.

With the push back of Boko Haram, access to affected communities in Nigeria has improved. What was primarily a protection crisis also became a food security and nutrition crisis, requiring a significant scale-up of life-saving assistance in 2017. The situation is particularly dramatic in northeast Nigeria.

It is estimated that hundreds of thousands of people are still trapped in the hands of Boko Haram. Without any doubt, these communities require humanitarian assistance. Since October 2017, over 130'000 people moved out or were extracted by the military from Boko Haram controlled areas in northeastern Nigeria. 20% of the young children in the region are severely malnourished. In addition, since the end of 2016, more than 1.5 million displaced individuals moved back closer to their place of origin but basic infrastructure and services are lacking in most places. In Borno State of Nigeria in particular, their sustained (re-)installation is most challenging: Access to land remains limited to a few kilometres around the main cities, economical opportunities are almost inexistent and civil servants and authorities have not yet returned.

Switzerland's humanitarian response

SDC Humanitarian Aid primarily focuses on food security, nutrition and protection. It is providing financial contributions to organizations working in these sectors in Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger and Chad. Its partners include the Red Cross movement, UN agencies and NGOs.

Switzerland is closely following the developments in this crisis, through its Embassies in Abuja and Yaoundé, as well as its Co-operation Offices in Niger and Chad. Swiss Embassies and Co-operation Offices enjoy privileged relations with the national and international institutions involved in the response to the crisis. The permanent presence of four Humanitarian Affairs Advisers based in West Africa (in Abuja, Bamako and N'Dja-

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

Providing life-saving food assistance

Conflict, high food prices, inflation, and major disruptions to livelihoods and farming due to fighting have left northeast Nigeria and the region crippled by food insecurity. To address severe food insecurity, In northeast Nigeria alone, WFP, ICRC and NGOs reach some 1.3 million people monthly through cash-based transfers, in-kind food assistance and specialized nutritious food distribution. SDC also supports NGOs working in the food security and nutrition sectors such as ACF

Improving the welfare of civilians and detainees

Violence against medical personnel and facilities has caused hundreds of hospitals to close and staff to flee the region. Only 30% of health structures are functioning and they need extensive support to take care of the patients, in the form of funding, medical supplies and deployment of medical teams. With contributions to ICRC in the Lake Chad Region, large populations regain access to life-saving medical care.

The ICRC documents allegations of abuse and shares these reports with parties concerned, urging them to take preventive measures to better protect civilians. ICRC also monitors detention facilities to ensure that inmates are treated according to recognized standards and applicable law.

Psychosocial support and access to education for children

The conflict in the Lake Chad Region has not only affected people's physical well-being, but also their mental health. SDC finances projects of the NGOs COOPI in Niger, DRC in Nigeria, which provide psychosocial support to displaced children and youth. Those NGOs have created child and youth centres in refugee camps and IDP sites, where they can meet and play. These recreational activities are an effective form of post-traumatic early treatment. Children with special needs are identified in the centres and referred to appropriate services.

In Chad, a similar project providing psychosocial support and access to education has started in 2016. The aim is to promote the schooling of vulnerable children through the establishment of inclusive formal and non-formal education services. Children also learn how to manage the risk of explosive remnants of war.

SDC also supports UNICEF in Nigeria and Niger to provide re-integration services to children formerly associated with Boko Haram, including psychological support and family reunification services.

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