



Nigeria

ECHO FACTSHEET

Facts & Figures

Most populous African country with **over 188 million inhabitants**

1.9 million people displaced in Nigeria (IOM)

169 000 refugees in Niger, Chad and Cameroon (UNHCR)

Registered returnees: over 136.000 (UNHCR)

5.1 million people facing a food security crisis in northern Nigeria (OCHA, Humanitarian Response)

European Commission humanitarian aid: **Over €124 million since 2014**

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Hundreds of thousands of children are displaced due to the conflict. ©EC/ECHO/Anouk Delafortrie

Key messages

- In seven years of conflict in north-eastern Nigeria, over 20 000 people have been killed and **1.8 million displaced**. Many live in **dire conditions** in informal settlements and have not been able to farm. Trade is stalled and prices have soared, all of which has worsened the difficult food and nutrition situation.
- The most urgent priority remains to address the **significant food insecurity** which is affecting thousands of internally displaced people (IDPs) in accessible and newly accessible areas as well as the **alarming nutrition levels**. Many health facilities have shut down and acutely malnourished children cannot access vital treatment.
- The European Commission is providing **immediate assistance** to cover the basic needs of displaced, refugee and host families. Funds go to food distributions, to clinics providing lifesaving nutrition medical care, as well as to ensure access to water and sanitation, shelter and protection. They also contribute to increased access, through the Humanitarian Air Service, and to the coordination of humanitarian organisations.
- More than €124 million of humanitarian aid has been allocated since 2014, complementing the assistance provided by the authorities. Given the immense need, much more humanitarian support is required quickly.
- **Access** to newly accessible areas remains a major challenge due to their remoteness and the prevailing volatile security situation. The European Commission advocates for safe humanitarian access and an **increased operational presence of humanitarian organisations** on the ground so that more people in need can be reached.

Humanitarian situation and needs

Nigeria is Africa's leading oil producer. Despite its large oil revenues, it has one of the highest levels of income disparity worldwide. The majority of the population is very poor and has no access to health care, education nor safe drinking water or other basic goods and services. 6.2 million people depend on external assistance (Nigeria 2016 UNOCHA Humanitarian Response Plan).

Since 2009, Nigeria has faced the **insurgency** of the militant group Boko Haram. The ongoing violence in north-eastern Nigeria has claimed the lives of thousands of civilians in the past year alone. Attacks on villages, massacres, suicide bombings and mass abductions have become daily threats across the region. Boko Haram violence and the military operations in response have prompted a **massive displacement: 1.9 million Nigerians have been forcibly displaced within the country**. 169 000 have fled to neighbouring Niger, Cameroon and Chad (UNHCR).

While some displaced families have found shelter with relatives, hundreds of thousands of people still live in precarious conditions in informal settlements, schools, courtyards and open fields in and around towns where they mostly rely on the charity of local communities.

Increased attention has to be paid to growing food insecurity in the northeast. The current food crisis, driven by insecurity and the almost halt of sub-regional cross border trade, already has massive consequences. **Over 15 million people are food insecure, out of whom over 5.1 million are severely food insecure and in need of immediate food assistance. Severe acute malnutrition** was already responsible for more than a third of all child deaths in Nigeria before the crisis, but **rates of malnutrition** in under five year old that are being reported by humanitarian organisations are **well beyond the emergency threshold** defined by the World Health Organisation. Therefore, an **immediate scale up of emergency assistance** to the affected population is **required**.

The re-taking of many towns and villages by Nigerian security forces in Borno and Yobe States has further highlighted the need for an increased emergency humanitarian response as access slightly improves. **Massive needs have been identified in newly accessible areas** and should be met quickly, taking account of the prevailing volatile situation. There are still whole areas beyond the reach of humanitarian organisations; where there is access, security constraints hamper the assessment of needs and the adequate provision of aid.

In parallel to humanitarian aid, solid investment in resilience building is required to help improve the situation of the most vulnerable in the medium and longer term.

Nigeria is also regularly affected by epidemics such as cholera, polio and measles.

European Union's humanitarian response

Since 2014, the European Commission's humanitarian office has allocated over **€124 million for humanitarian assistance** in Nigeria. Annual budgets have been increased several times throughout the year as needs evolve. For 2017, initial allocations amount to nearly **€50 million**, with more funds from the Emergency Reserve in the pipeline.

The focus is on providing immediate assistance to cover the **basic needs of the large number of internally displaced people** in the states of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa. **Emergency food assistance as well as non-food items** are being provided. Health care, nutrition and the protection of displaced people and other victims of violence are also priorities.

However, due to the difficulties in access, especially in the northeast of the country, providing humanitarian assistance remains very challenging. The Commission advocates for an increased operational presence of international humanitarian organisations, full and unhindered humanitarian access to people in need and enhanced coordination among aid organisations.



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Examples of humanitarian projects in Nigeria



In newly accessible areas such as Monguno, in Borno State, EU humanitarian partner **ALIMA** is providing nutritional care in clinics in four of the largest camps for displaced populations. When the town became accessible, the malnutrition rate in children was found to be well over the emergency threshold. ALIMA is also providing nutrition care in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno hosting over a million displaced. ©EC/ECHO/I. Coello

Safe water is among the most basic needs for survival, but also crucial to prevent waterborne diseases, which can cause or aggravate undernutrition. The Commission's humanitarian aid department (ECHO) funds **Solidarités Internationales** to ensure the provision of water and sanitation, through wells, latrines and other infrastructures. The NGO also makes hygiene promotion a priority: awareness raising community sessions are held to ensure the displaced population are sensitized on the measures to prevent diseases. ©EC/ECHO/I. Coello



Funded by the European Commission, humanitarian partner organisations like **OXFAM** and the **International Rescue Committee** are addressing the **basic needs of the displaced** in terms of food assistance, water and sanitation as well as access to health care. ©EC/ECHO/I. Coello

Acknowledging the food insecurity level in Nigeria, in 2016 the European Commission supported the World Food Programme in northeast Nigeria. Through this funding, **life-saving food assistance** was provided to the most vulnerable IDPs and host communities. Furthermore, food security analysis and capacity building of State actors is supported. © WFP/Adel Sarkozi



While providing humanitarian assistance remains absolutely essential, there is a need for more solid investment in resilience building and development efforts. This should **be carried out in parallel to the on-going scaling up of humanitarian assistance** to help provide more sustainable solutions.

