HUMANITARIAN NEEDS AND ICRC RESPONSE

Millions of civilians are affected by the armed violence in North East Nigeria, including an estimated 2.1 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and a 1.8 million host population. Moreover, violent communal clashes in the Middle Belt and violence in Niger Delta states have also affected the humanitarian situation.

In 2016, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has significantly scaled up its humanitarian response for those most in need in the North East, in particular by providing food, shelter and essential household items. It also facilitates access to clean water, shelter and medical care, and strives to restore family links. Since the beginning of the year, the Nigerian Red Cross Society (NRCS) and the ICRC gained access and assisted residents and IDPs living in very difficult conditions in previously inaccessible locations of Borno state such as Sabon Gari, Damboa, Dikwa Monguno, Gamboru-Ngala and others.

EMERGENCY RELIEF ASSISTANCE

Working together with the NRCS, the ICRC prioritises urgent humanitarian needs in north-eastern Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states. In particular, the Red Cross focuses on difficult-to-reach areas where both IDPs and residents are facing severe food shortage. These communities have missed out on the current planting season that is vital for their survival and are likely to remain dependent on aid for the next months to come. The Red Cross distributed food and essential household items to IDPs, returnees and residents in Borno state (Maiduguri, Sabon Gari, Damboa, Dikwa Monguno, Gamboru-Ngala and others). In addition, the ICRC launched a cash programme to provide alternative means of survival for IDPs and help them through their displacement period.

- 892,040 IDPs, returnees and hosts in North East Nigeria received food rations for up to three months.
- 319,516 IDPs in North East Nigeria and the Middle Belt received essential household items.
- 51 NRCS, NEMA and SEMA staff country-wide were trained in a humanitarian management program.

LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT AND MICRO-ECONOMIC INITIATIVES

The ICRC has launched livelihood support programmes to help strengthen the resilience of people affected by the armed conflict and help them resume farming again. People returning to their areas of origin who wished to resume farming received seeds (maize, sorghum, beans or cowpeas) and fertilizers. Those returning to areas with functioning markets received cash or vouchers to re-build their livelihoods.

This programme aims to assist some 162,000 IDPs and vulnerable persons living in widow/female-headed households in 2016. By the end of July the first 41,000 persons in Yobe state received cash to purchase priority commodities. In addition, some 16,000 returnees in Adamawa and southern Borno states received a livelihood input grant. In Niger Delta, the ICRC supports victims of urban violence.

- 248,037 returnees in the North East and the Middle Belt received agricultural inputs to start farming again.
- 69,624 IDPs in north-eastern Borno and Yobe states, as well as victims of urban violence in Port Harcourt, Rivers state, received cash to enable them to purchase their priority commodities.
- 1,000 widows/heads of households in Borno state, North East Nigeria, were registered to receive cash that will enable them to provide the basic necessities for their families, while an additional 250 received support for micro-economic initiatives. 220 widows/women heads of house-holds living in urban shanty settlements in Niger Delta received training to enhance their capacity to start earning their livelihoods.

HEALTH CARE

Many health facilities in the North East have shut down, due to the prevailing security situation, lack of doctors, nurses medicine and equipment. The ICRC supports primary and mobile state health clinics mainly in Borno and Adamawa states in areas of rehabilitation, regular medical supplies, equipment supply and training of staff. Two ICRC surgical
teams provide care for the weapon wounded and IDPs in need of emergency surgical care in Maiduguri State Specialist Hospital. In addition, the ICRC trains staff of Nigerian hospitals in order to enhance their capacity in the treatment and management of weapon wounded patients. ICRC’s first aid training programme spans over 15 states and includes north-eastern, the Middle Belt and the Niger Delta states.

308,594 patients attended 14 ICRC-supported centres for primary health care and 6 mobile clinics serving IDPs, returnees and residents in Adamawa and Borno states, North East Nigeria, the Middle Belt and the Niger Delta states.

10,499 children were delivered in ICRC supported clinics.

8,649 children under 5 suffering from severe acute malnutrition were treated in ICRC-supported clinics in Borno South, North East Nigeria.

1,488 mainly weapon-wounded patients were treated by the ICRC surgical team in Maiduguri State Specialist Hospital, Borno, North East Nigeria, out of whom 326 were hospitalised.

2,425 people including NRCS members, community members, military/police personnel, religious groups and weapon bearers, were trained in first aid and emergency preparedness capacity.

6,700 casualties were treated and evacuated by the ICRC-supported NRCS emergency first aid teams and trained community first aid responders in 15 states covered by the First Aid program.

158 IDPs benefitted from ICRC’s mental health and psychosocial support program.

SHELTER, WATER AND SANITATION

Only around 10% of IDPs fleeing the armed conflict live in IDP camps, while the vast majority is hosted by communities in North East Nigeria. In some cases, the size of the population has more than doubled due to the influx of IDPs (e.g. Maiduguri metropolis). The existing infrastructure, especially water and sanitation installations, too often breaks down under pressure from the increased population. In both IDP camps and most affected host communities the ICRC creates or upgrades water points and sanitation facilities, provides tents or builds emergency shelters. It also supports the NRCS and IDPs themselves to clean and maintain hygiene in the camps.

130,000 IDPs, returnees and residents in North East Nigeria and Middle Belt received assistance to access water and improve their sanitation and hygiene conditions.

1,400 returnees in Mubi (Adamawa) and 720 persons affected by communal clashes in Kaduna and Bangai (Plateau) received ICRC support to rebuild their houses.

24,800 IDPs living in camps in Adamawa and Borno States, North East Nigeria, received temporary or emergency shelter.

RESTORING FAMILY LINKS

Hundreds of thousands have left home in the course of the armed violence often losing contact with their families. The ICRC works with the NRCS Red Cross and Red Crescent societies and others in the region to help reunite family members by facilitating contact with each other using red cross messages and free phone calls.

1,078 new tracing files for persons searching for missing relatives were opened by the ICRC and the NRCS. 479 red cross messages were exchanged among separated family members.

899 free phone calls were made available by the Red Cross to persons who were separated from their families.

9 children were recently re-united with their families. They travelled from Dar Es Salaam camp, Chad to Maiduguri, Borno State on an ICRC plane.
DETENTION VISITS

As in more than 90 countries around the world, in Nigeria the ICRC visits persons detained in relation to the armed conflict and violence and supports the authorities in their efforts to improve detention conditions.

21,442 detainees in prisons as well as police and military detention facilities country-wide were visited by the ICRC. Wherever needed, the detainees also benefited from improved access to clean water, sanitation or hygiene following ICRC rehabilitation activities and assistance.

SUPPORT TO THE NIGERIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY (NRCS)

The ICRC supports the NRCS and its country-wide network of volunteers to ensure that persons affected by armed conflict and violence are assisted as quickly and effectively as possible. The ICRC enhanced the operational capacity of the NRCS by providing training, office equipment and material for two of its branches and donating generators and five 4x4 vehicles. The ICRC and the NRCS hosted Nigeria’s first round table on the safe access to health care in Port Harcourt.

Around 2,000 volunteers received training on first aid, hygiene, nutrition screening, assessment in emergencies, operational communication and safer access during emergency response interventions.

3,000 volunteers of the NRCS were covered under the International Federation’s Volunteer Insurance Scheme through the support of the ICRC.

COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW (IHL) AND HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPLES

Dissemination sessions for military, police and civilians took place all over the country on ICRC work, international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL). Thousands of people, among them civilian authorities, community / religious leaders and beneficiaries, also participated in information sessions on ICRC working modalities and its operations.

The ICRC further strengthened its relationship with the Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS), through support to the ECOWAS Standby Force, in order to integrate IHL into its operational documents. In collaboration with academics, the ICRC also carried out a survey in north-eastern Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states on operationalization of the African Union Convention on Assistance for and Protection of IDPs (“Kampala Convention”).

Over 3,159 army and police personnel including those deployed in the North East, in the Middle Belt and in Niger Delta states increased their knowledge of IHL and IHRL.

The ICRC worked with academics, think-tanks and over 600 students from 24 Nigerian universities, in order to enhance the teaching of IHL in Nigeria.

ICRC IN NIGERIA

The ICRC protects and assists people affected by armed conflict and other situations of violence in the North East, the Middle Belt and Niger Delta states. It promotes the respect for rules that protect people in armed conflict and violence, and works in collaboration with the NRCS.

The ICRC has been present in Nigeria since 1988. Today, its main office is located in Abuja, while it also has offices in Damaturu, Gombe, Jos, Kano, Maiduguri, Mubi, Port Harcourt and Yola. The essence of ICRC’s presence is to maintain proximity to the people affected by armed violence, to understand their needs and respond appropriately.