

## **UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, launches Refugee and IDP Zakat Fund in Nigeria to provide critical support to internally displaced Nigerian families**

**Abuja, Nigeria - 8 April 2021.** In response to the growing levels of internal displacement in Nigeria, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, announced today the launch of the Refugee and IDP Zakat Fund – a Islamic philanthropic tool to collect yearly alms by Nigerian Islamic institutions and Muslims to support the most vulnerable internally displaced families in the country.

“We are witnessing a growing level of internal displacement within Nigeria. While the relentless violence by the non-state armed group in north east Nigeria continues to cause mass suffering and displacement in the region, we are also concerned about the critically evolving situation in north west Nigeria, where violence and banditry is aggravating communities, forcing families to flee their homes,” stated Ms. Chansa Kapaya, UNHCR Representative to Nigeria.

“But as displacement situation increases, so too does the willingness and generosity of Nigerians to respond,” continued Ms. Kapaya. “Undoubtedly, the private sector, including citizens, companies and foundations in Nigeria has a crucial role in assisting vulnerable internally displaced families. My hope is that the launch of this Fund will encourage the Muslim community to give generously to support IDPs in dire need.”

UNHCR’s Zakat Fund was originally established in 2019 and has since helped millions of people who have been forced to flee their homes because of conflict, violence, and persecution. With the launch of the Refugee and IDP Zakat Fund in Nigeria, Muslims in Nigeria and across the world will now be able to contribute their Zakat to Nigerian IDP beneficiaries. The Zakat contributions will be used for livelihoods development for IDPs and the provision of emergency relief items including mattresses, sleeping mats, kitchen sets, laundry soap, and solar lanterns.

“In 2020, UNHCR’s Islamic Philanthropy programme was able to provide critical assistance to over 2.1 million people in 13 countries,” explained Mr. Khaled Khalifa, Senior Advisor on Islamic Philanthropy to UNHCR’s High Commissioner. “With the vast majority of IDPs in Nigeria being eligible for Zakat, we endeavour, through the Refugee and IDP Zakat Fund, to channel Zakat to help alleviate their suffering. The fund does not charge any administrative fees on collection and implementation of Zakat activities. 100 per cent of your contribution goes to those in need. It is a globally trusted, Sharia’ compliant program that offers a most effective vehicle to any donor to channel their Zakat to those who are eligible to receive it.”

The Refugee and IDP Zakat Fund has received the endorsement of 10 fatwas by leading Muslim scholars and Islamic institutions in the Middle East, East Asia, and North America.

Responding to the launch of the Refugee and IDP Zakat Fund, Alhaji Muhammed Lawal Maidoki commented: “We Muslims have a responsibility and duty to give Zakat each year. There is an immense opportunity in contributing our Zakat towards Nigeria’s internal displacement crisis. My request to Muslims and Zakat Managers is to always remember IDPs in disbursing their Zakat funds and ensure a significant portion of their ‘Sadaqa’ in Ramadan and beyond is set aside for IDPs. In Nigeria we have witnessed the dire situation of the IDPs, and we have sought to assist and support them. But the



needs are growing. It is for this reason we welcome UNHCR’s Islamic Philanthropy endeavours in the country and look forward to working together, InshAllah, in this noble cause.”

As of March 2021, there are 2.9 million internally displaced women, men and children in Nigeria. Currently of the 97.7 million USD funding requirement for UNHCR’s response in Nigeria, only 14 per cent has been funded for the year.

For more information about the Refugee and IDP Zakat Fund, please visit: <https://zakat.unhcr.org/ng>

For media inquiries, please contact:

In Abuja:

- For Nigerian media: Gabriel Adeyemo, +234 901 066 0496, [adeyemo@unhcr.org](mailto:adeyemo@unhcr.org)
- For international media: Roland Schönbauer, +234 901 066 4695, [schoenb@unhcr.org](mailto:schoenb@unhcr.org)

In Nairobi:

- Amina Rai, +254 792 339 766, [raia@unhcr.org](mailto:raia@unhcr.org)