

A NEW FACE OF DISPLACEMENT IN BORNO STATE?

Over the past year, the narrative on the context of the North-East States of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe (BAY) has been consistently marked by continuous population movements caused par ongoing non-state arm groups (NSAG) attacks on military operations with severity in Borno State. Ten years on, the socioeconomic dimension of the crisis is becoming more acute and considerably impacting the lives of affected populations.

Since the end of the year 2019, the situation in Rann, Kala Balge LGA raised concerns due to secondary and pendular movement that appeared to be linked to environmental factors such as flooding, destructions of farms by birds or elephants. The population in majority farmers left without means of livelihoods are compelled to move in search of better socio-economic conditions.

Since January 2020, the phenomenon has grown and taken another dimension in Maiduguri Metropolitan Council (MMC); populations that initially displaced due to insecurity caused by attacks, fear of attacks or military operations started arriving in IDP camps for lack of socioeconomic opportunities in their areas of secondary displacement rather than directly linked to insecurity as previously observed among new arrivals. The mostly affected camps are Stadium, Gubio, El Yakhoub and Dalori I camp among others.

In addition to the immediate reasons for displacement, the composition of the population also raises curiosity. Newly arrived populations at camps gate are not homogeneous. Discussions conducted with the concerned populations, community members and other stakeholders reveal that both IDPs previously leaving in host communities at the outskirts of Maiduguri, host community members in Maiduguri as well as individuals from other states are also part of the newly arrived.

At Mohamed Goni Stadium camp, over 251 families have recently been admitted in the camp. They are accommodated at the reception center and assisted food and basic household items as per Fig.1.



Fig. 1. New arrivals at Stadium camp at the reception center. © UNHCR /D. Dieguen

The lack of space poses a major challenge to construct temporary housing to accommodate the 126 families admitted in the camp that were sleeping in the open. A pull factor has been observed after the admission of the first batch of IDP into the camp; additional 402 new families arrived, and are presently at the entrance of the camp, pending admission into the camp.



Fig. 2. Second batch of New arrivals outside the camp. © UNHCR /D. Dieguen

Between 17-29 February, a total of **979 individuals** newly arrived were reached through the vulnerability screening exercise conducted by GISCOR/UNHCR.

| Demography | | | | | | |
|---|-----|------|-------|-------|-----|---------------|
| Female | | | | | | Total Females |
|  | 0-4 | 5-11 | 12-17 | 18-59 | 60+ | 582 |
| | 127 | 152 | 57 | 229 | 17 | |
| Male | | | | | | Total Males |
|  | 0-4 | 5-11 | 12-17 | 18-59 | 60+ | 397 |
| | 103 | 118 | 53 | 119 | 4 | |

The search for humanitarian assistance not provided to IDPs and host community members living in host communities is highlighted as the immediate cause of the movement. For example, in January, it has been observed in Dalori I camp that a first group of newly arrived left the camp 04 days after receiving food assistance.

The same scenario was witnessed at Gubio camp where hundreds of new arrivals are accommodated at already overcrowded reception center. They are reportedly coming from Kala Balge, a local government known for its instability and inaccessibility to humanitarian actors, coupled with frequent flooding and farm destructions by elephants and birds leading to food insecurity therefore explaining their need to access food.



Fig.4. Newly arrived at Gubio camp Reception center. © UNHCR /D. Dieguen

At El Yakoub camp, MMC, 50 families displaced from Gajiram; a town where they were established after their original displacement from Mafar LGA their area of origin- are leaving in makeshift shelters. The immediate reasons of their arrival are lack of livelihood and lack of assistance including food.

Contributing factors: Based on a combined analysis of all above situations and priority needs expressed, a few factors could be highlighted to understand the choice of camps in MMC.

- Regular food distributions have been conducted in camps in MMC. Other type of assistance although limited is provided to IDPs in camps;
- Easy access to markets where interviewed communities have reported to conduct small businesses as a mean of livelihoods;
- Family reunification purposes as the newly arrivals have stated that they had already relatives in the camps they have joined.
- The safer environment as compared to the local government areas or outskirts of Maiduguri that remains vulnerable to attacks.

Urgent needs

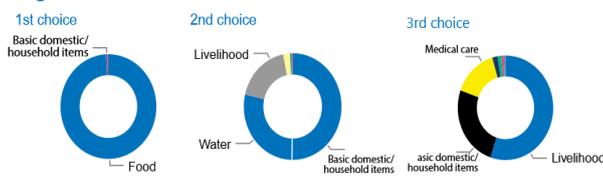


Fig. 5. Urgent needs as expressed by newly arrives at Stadium camp

Protection risks associated with the influx: Most of the newly arrived are women and children including with specific needs as reflected by Fig.6.

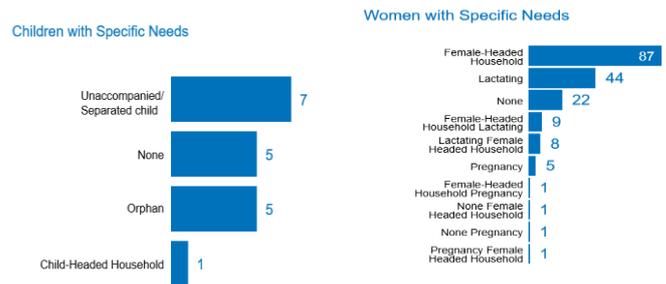


Fig.6 Specific needs among the newly arrived at stadium camp 17-29 Feb.2020

The lack of access to an appropriate shelter exposes them to high protection risks. The promiscuity is most likely to expose women and girls to risks of sexual and gender-based violence. In the absence of assistance both men, women and children are likely to developed negative coping mechanisms. Human rights violations including arbitrary arrests and detention have already been reported.

Possible solutions: A comprehensive approach is needed to address the immediate as well as root causes of these displacements while at the same time avoiding creating pull factors.

- **On the immediate causes-** the lack of livelihood opportunities for IDPs both in camps and in host community- the design and implementation of more programmes that build the resilience and self-reliance of IDPs and their hosts, and their inclusion in such programmes could contribute to prevent or reduce such movements;
- As recommended by IDP during discussion, most newly arrived have lost contact with their areas of origin for at least 5 years. It is therefore important to assess the prevailing situation in IDPs areas of origin to establish if the minimum conditions for safe and dignified returns are in place; to conduct information campaign and return intention surveys and provide adequate support to those willing to return. This requires an investment in areas of return to respond to factors hindering returns.
- **On the root causes,** intensify advocacy at all levels to improve the overall security situation in the State.

In conclusion, it is time to operationalize the Humanitarian -Development-Peace nexus, it could substantially contribute to address the triple dimension of the crisis (the Peace and security dimension - the human rights/humanitarian dimension and the development dimension).

Contact:

Alexander Kishara, Head of Sub-Office Maiduguri, North-East Nigeria
Email: kishara@unhcr.org; Mobile: +234 9087 447 516

Michele Apala, Senior Protection Officer, SO Maiduguri,
Email: apala@unhcr.org; Mobile: +234 809 016 0750