

NIGERIA

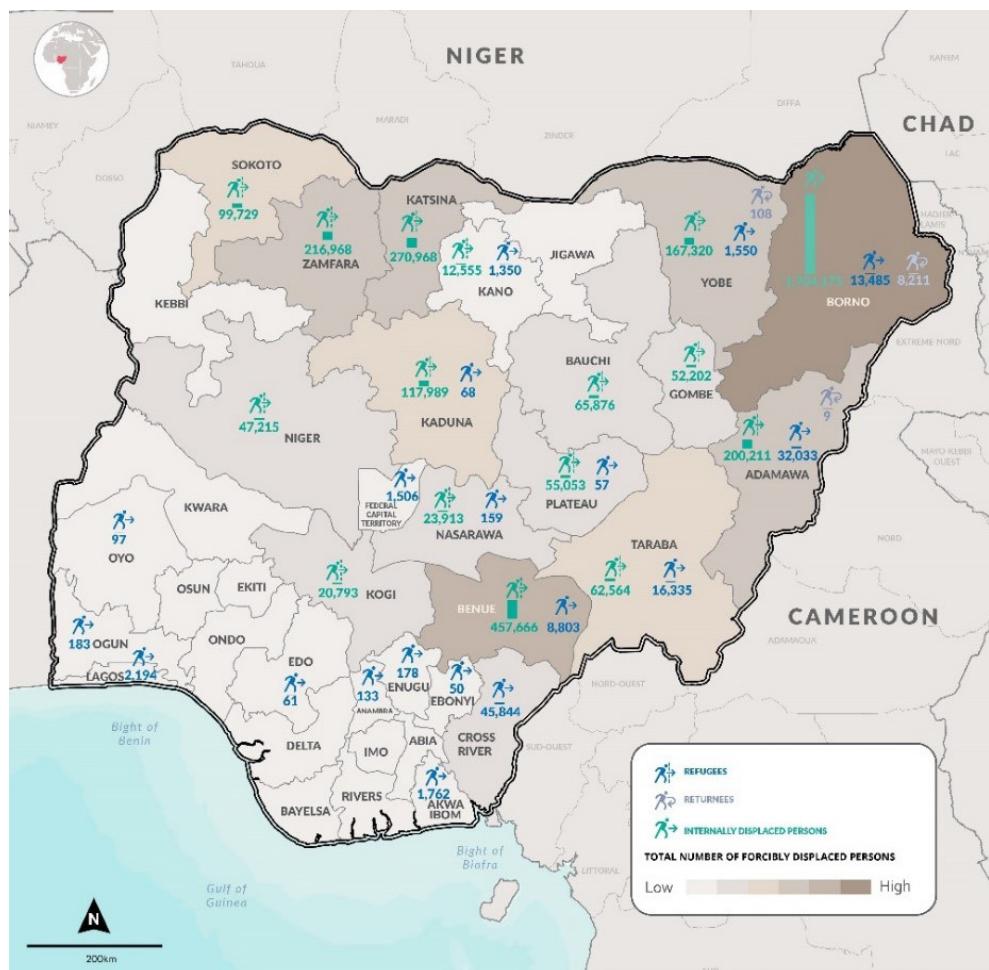
OPERATIONAL UPDATE

Quarterly | January-March 2025



STATISTICS / MAP

	126,428 Refugees & Asylum-seekers
	3,575,114 Internally displaced people (IDPs)
	8,361 Nigerian refugee returnees
	408,781 Refugees in Chad, Niger & Cameroon



UNHCR Nigeria at Work

	268,810 IDPs assisted in response to the 2024 floods in the northeast		5,606 IDP families in the North-east received cash assistance
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	5,000 refugees in the South South received medical care and 150 vulnerable refugees received non-food items		447 refugees and IDPs at risk received case management services in Nigeria		243 individuals received response services for violence against women and girls
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After fleeing conflict in their community, Timothy and his family are rebuilding their lives from scratch through agriculture, with UNHCR's support, on land provided by the Government in Benue State. "We are happy, and we don't lack food anymore."

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Operational Context

Refugee Situation

- Nigeria hosts over 126,000 refugees and asylum-seekers and most reside in host communities across Cross River, Taraba, Akwa Ibom, Benue, and Adamawa states, as well as urban areas such as Abuja, Lagos, and Kano. During the first quarter of 2025, more than 350 new refugees, mostly women and children, fleeing conflict in Nigeria since January, arrived in Taraba State. UNHCR provided documentation, non-food items including mosquito nets and healthcare to the new arrivals.

IDP Situation

- Nigeria also hosts over 3.5 million IDPs in the North-East (63%), North-West (20%), and North-Central (17%), displaced by insurgency, communal violence, and climate shocks. Crisis in the North-East has deepened with floods and the suspension of aid that followed, severely reducing humanitarian support and worsening conditions for the displaced. Vital services were halted in over 18 Local Government Areas

(LGAs), leaving many people without protection or assistance as humanitarian agencies scaled back operations.

- The humanitarian situation in Nigeria's Middle Belt worsened with intercommunal violence, banditry, and resource-based conflicts driving internal displacement. Of the country's 3.5 million IDPs, over 600,000 are in the Middle Belt. UNHCR and partners maintain critical protection and assistance interventions, despite operational challenges linked to insecurity and funding constraints.



Yagana lost her shelter and all belongings when flash floods hit the El-Miskin IDP camp in Maiduguri. Already displaced for 14 years, she now knits and sells caps to survive, with UNHCR providing her with a roof over her head and renewed hope.

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Main Achievements in Sectors

Refugee Situation

- Over 80 at-risk refugee children from the North-Central benefitted from legal services including court and out-of-court representation for cases of rape, intimate partner violence, and property disputes. Over 100 refugee children participated in psychosocial and educational activities such as reading and football clubs, aimed at strengthening their protection.

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- Nearly 80 individuals representing paralegal committees, government, community structures and partners in Benue State were trained to improve their knowledge of preventing sexual exploitation and abuse, violence against women and girls, access to justice and civil documentation.
- 50 survivors of violence against women and girls received psychosocial support / counselling, legal advice and healthcare services across North-Central.
- 75 new asylum applications, with a third of female applicants were received from Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lebanon, Niger, Palestine, Sri Lanka and the Syrian Arab Republic.
- Following the suspension of the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, UNHCR facilitated meetings in Lagos and Ijebu Ode to address refugee's concerns including the impact on ongoing resettlement cases, the importance of maintaining legal documentation, and prevention of fraud.
- UNHCR provided cash assistance to 50 Nigerian refugee returnees from Cameroon who returned to Banki, Borno State. Each household received prepaid card worth 270,000 naira (equivalent nearly \$176) to help them start small ventures.
- In February 2025, UNHCR commenced an online, participatory assessments in Abuja, Lagos, and Ijebu Ode, addressing concerns in areas such as health, education and gender.
- 52 refugees and asylum-seekers in Lagos were trained on self-reliance and innovative ways of moving away from traditional humanitarian aid.
- **Health:** 10 primary healthcare centres, in Akwa Ibom, Cross River (CR) and Taraba States, were solarized bringing the total solar powered health centres to 38. Over 5,000 refugees received medical care in 38 UNHCR-supported health centers and 65 refugees got disability aids.
- **Education:** UNHCR facilitated 45 prospective Mastercard scholarship candidates in Benue,

Lagos and Cross River States, at the Pan-Atlantic University, Lagos. 480 refugee students from primary and secondary schools in Benue State received school bags.

- **Non-Food Items:** 150 new refugees received non-food items including mosquito nets, buckets, solar lamps, blankets, jerry cans, kitchen sets, mats, soap and tarpaulins in Taraba State.
- **WASH:** In Ogoja, Cross River State, an irrigation project commenced on the farmland donated by the host community. The project aims to promote weather-resilient agriculture, enabling year-round commercial farming, boosting livelihoods, food security and economic inclusion for refugees and host communities. In addition, geophysical surveys are conducted for the provision of solar boreholes on farmlands.
- **Livelihoods:** In the donated land in Ogoja, Cross River State, 18 cooperatives (each comprising 10 refugees and five hosts) will cultivate 15 hectares, to enhance their food security and self-reliance.
- **Localization:** Over 50 Refugee-Led/Community Based Organizations (RLOs/CBOs) across Nigeria are championing long-term solutions for self-reliance in agriculture, health, education, renewable energy, and technology, in collaboration with host communities. An RLO constructed a protection desk and office using cost efficient technology in Cross River State, offering adaptability to environmental threats and cost-effective housing. A cooperative led by refugees in Cross River State along with the host community locally mobilized resources to buy farming inputs to cultivate 20 hectares of farmland. The Cross River Basin Authority trained and equipped members of a RLO on modern farming techniques and irrigation strategies in Calabar, Cross River State.

IDP Situation

- In Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe (BAY) States in the North-East, over 37,000 flood-affected IDPs received cash assistance.

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- **Livelihoods:** In two LGAs in Borno State, with a one-off support from UNHCR, two vocational training centres were established which will train 600 individuals annually.
- **Violence against women and girls/Child Protection:** In the North-East, UNHCR took measures to transition ownership of the Women and Girls Safe Spaces and Child Friendly Spaces to the government, community and other humanitarian organizations. Over 500 individuals benefited from gender response and child protection services.
- Protection Monitoring and Access to Justice: Monitoring visits were conducted in 19 LGAs in the North-East to assess protection needs of over 36,000 individuals. As a result, 300 IDPs were provided with court representations. UNHCR assisted over 160 individuals with Alternative Dispute Mechanisms, nearly 300 individuals with legal counselling, and facilitated nearly 40 mobile court sittings.

Solutions

Refugee Situation

- The Nigeria operation submitted 64 individuals for the 2025 resettlement quota of the United Kingdom prioritizing cases previously screened and submitted to the USA resettlement pipeline in 2024 that were put on hold. These individuals were identified with serious protection risks.
- The National Human Rights Commission and UNHCR trained community protection action groups in 11 refugee-hosting states, on Humanitarian Registration and Monitoring System training in Cross River State to improve data collection for protection monitoring.
- The Nigerian Export Promotion Council provided a two-day coffee and tea production training to five RLOs, featuring a practical demonstration on setting up a nursery in Ogoja, Cross River State. The Council collaborates with RLOs and UNHCR to explore opportunities for integrating refugees into export initiatives, driving economic inclusion and diversification.



Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) commitments

- In Cross River and Akwa Ibom States, UNHCR opened One Stop Resource Centres (see photo above) alongside the Ministries of Commerce, Trade, and Investment. As part of Nigerian Government's commitment to the GCR and for the economic inclusion of refugee, the ministry gave an office space to UNHCR. Managed by RLOs, the hub will improve government support for refugees, create capacity and connect refugees and hosts to jobs, markets, and economic opportunities.
- UNHCR began constructing a 3.5 km road with culverts and drainages from the Adagom refugee settlement to the 54 hectares of farmland donated by the host community in Cross River State to enable equal access to farmlands by both refugees and host community members.
- Two host communities in Taraba State have allocated 450 hectares of farmland to refugees and host communities. UNHCR and Taraba SEMA began assessing 200 hectares in Sufa area for planting in the upcoming wet season.

IDP Situation

- UNHCR is partnering with the Borno State Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources to establish a solar powered irrigation system to boost agriculture production and benefit 560 farmers ensuring year-round cultivation and harvest.

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- UNHCR has initiated construction of 450 permanent shelters for 2,500 anticipated Nigerian returnees from Cameroon during the first half of 2025.
- UNHCR is partnering with the Katsina State Government and Tropical General Investment Group to establish a solar-powered irrigation system on 600 ha of land in Rimi LGA, Katsina State to increase access to livelihood opportunities for 3,000 IDPs with access to land, farming equipment, training on cooperative management and opportunities for their farm produces to be purchased by the general market.

Impacts of Funding cuts and Efficiency Measures

The recent funding freeze and ongoing cuts have severely impacted UNHCR's protection operations in Nigeria, forcing the suspension of critical services across 45 LGAs and significantly reducing support for refugees, survivors of violence against women and girls and children, particularly in remote areas. The withdrawal of UN Security agency and loss of key staff have further weakened security coordination and data management. Essential programmes including community-based protection, integrity mechanisms, and humanitarian assistance have been drastically scaled back or stopped. Funding and WFP's anticipated food aid cuts have further compounded the crisis, exacerbating protection risks for forcibly displaced and host communities in Nigeria. UNHCR is urgently seeking alternative funding and advocating for increased support to sustain life-saving operations.

UNHCR Nigeria has made significant operational improvements through the Business Transformation Programme and a shift to sustainable responses. These measures have enhanced protection services for 3.6 million refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) while reducing overhead costs. Key initiatives include rationalizing partners from 22 to 15, which will be further reduced by

the end of 2025, integrating refugee settlements into host communities, increasing government leadership (such as allocating agricultural land), and expanding documentation access for IDPs and refugees via mobile, 'one stop' units. Ongoing activities are also focused on creating economic empowerment through private sector engagement and multi-purpose cash grants. Operational optimization measures include staff realignment, digital procurement and transitioning to solar power and shared office space, all of which have offered considerable savings to the operation, reinforcing a cost-effective, sustainable and inclusive humanitarian response.

Work in Partnerships

UNHCR holds regular coordination and consultations at the State and Local level governments and with other humanitarian actors. UNHCR partners with the Nigeria Bar Association in 10 states while leading the Protection Cluster in the North-East. UNHCR is an active member of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.

UNHCR continues to jointly fundraise with UN agencies and other funding partners. UNHCR has secured funds from the EU for the Durable Solutions Initiative in Yobe, Adamawa, and Kano States focusing on protection monitoring, legal assistance, shelter and advocating for other durable solutions.

UNHCR co-leads the Camp Coordination and Camp Management Cluster to improve living conditions in displacement camps, facilitates relocations, enhances access to services and supports the Shelter and Non-Food Items Cluster, ensuring displaced persons receive essential relief materials.

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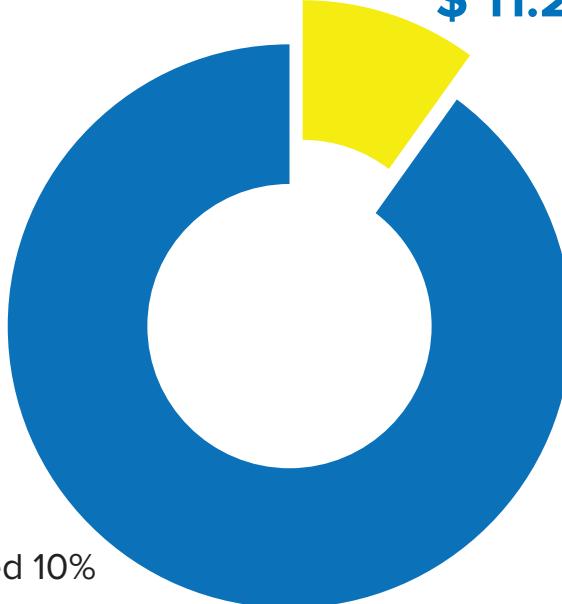
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Funding Update as of 31 March 2025**USD 111.2 million**

required by UNHCR in Nigeria

Funded 10%

\$ 11.2 million

Funded 10%

\$ 100 million**We would like to thank the donors who contributed to the UNHCR**

And Private Donors in Spain and the United States of America

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