



# Tchad

## FLASH UPDATE

27 July 2017

### New arrivals from Niger to Chad's Lake region



Since last week-end Chad's Lake region has seen the arrival of large groups of people from the Republic of Niger. Preliminary assessment and registration were done by local authorities and government's refugee commission, CNARR (Commission Nationale d'Accueil et de Reinsertion des Refugies et des Rapatriés) which the alerted UNHCR through the Baga Sola field office, early this week.

According to their assessment, there are so far 1337 households totalling about 6,685 individuals who have settled on a site they have named Dar al Kheir (providential place), near Dar es Salam, the camp for Nigerian refugees.



south-east of Niger.

The site is also not far from an IDP camp called Dar Naim, hosting an Arab nomad community, who shared some of the food they received from WFP with the new comers.

The new arrivals stated that they came from the villages of Kidjindi, Ankadndougoune and Tchortchouri, in the area of Guiguimi, itself located in the region of Diffa, in the

They claim they are originally from an Arab nomadic community from Ati in the Batha region of central Chad, and that their grandparents had left Chad for Niger several decades ago. Some stated that the community left Chad because of persecution by the Hissene Habre regime.

A UNHCR team from Baga Sola Office as well as OCHA and IOM collected similar information during initial assessment visits to the site, located 12 km from the Baga Sola. UNHCR verified documentation from 11 people supporting their Nigerien citizenship.

The new arrivals told the team that they decided to leave Niger because of the fear of attacks by Boko Haram fighters following the withdrawal of Chadian soldiers who were protecting them in the area. They also report that there were attacks on village of Tchortchouri, about a month ago - during Ramadan, and that an additional 10,000 could arrive in coming days due to ongoing insecurity.



UNHCR is currently leading a needs assessment at the site near Baga Sola while in N'Djamena the UNHCR Representative a.i. held a briefing and coordination meeting with the RC/HC and UNCT members which was joined by video conference by UNHCR team in Baga Sola. The meeting allowed all stakeholders to have the same information and to share views on the way forward. UNHCR explained that the authorities are treating the caseload as refugees but that the exact status of the arrivals is subject of continuing analysis with the Ministry for the Territorial Administration / CNARR and that clarification will be provided as soon as possible.

UNHCR dispatched trucks with a stock of non-food items (plastic tarps, soap, jerry cans, mosquito nets, blankets, kitchen sets, plastic mats and buckets) to cover the needs of 10,000 people which arrived in Baga Sola Thursday evening. the new arrivals were vaccinated against hepatitis E and meningitis by staff from UNHCR sponsored health

centre, managed by International Rescue Committee (IRC) in Dar es Salam camp and Chadian regional medical district.

On Friday 28 July 2017, UNHCR will host a coordination meeting in Baga Sola to review all sectorial assessments and issue a report on the population profile, needs, intentions and appropriate actions.



While actions are being taken by UNHCR, WFP and other agencies and NGOs to provide emergency assistance to the new arrivals, the issue of their status determination was subject of extended discussion in particular with regard to guiding solutions relevant and appropriate to their

situation. The CNARR has issued a technical opinion that it thinks the new arrivals are refugees.

The meeting agreed that priority should be given to meeting immediate protection and assistance needs while awaiting for official clarification of the status of these persons / population.

UNHCR and CNARR have developed a draft registration strategy and UNHCR will be deploying staff from other offices in Chad to support the team in Baga Sola if needed.

The Thursday meeting in N'Djamena was attended by UN Resident/Humanitarian coordinator, WFP, OCHA, UNDSS, UNHCR staff in N'Djamena and Baga Sola. The Deputy Director for the Regional Bureau for Africa and the Senior Desk Officer for Chad and CAR based in Geneva were also in attendance.

A coordination meeting between UNHCR Chad staff in Baga Sola and N'Djamena, and UNHCR staff in Diffa, Niger, will take place on Friday 28 July 2017 to cross check information on the caseload to better understand the situation which led to this large population movement from Niger to Chad, and to inform more detailed analysis.