

1. Political Situation

President Muhammadu Buhari returned to the country on 19 August from London where he stayed for treatment for more than three months. While the president was away, there were a number of demonstrations in Abuja and other places calling for his return or resignation. One of the protests turned violent in Abuja on 15 August when the president's supporters clashed with those opposing his long absence from the country.

From 16-18 August, the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC), Edward Kallon visited the North-East to hold further discussions with government officials in Borno State on the need to allow humanitarian staff to have the space to function without intimidation or harassment. The HC's visit to the North-East, followed the incident of 11 August where the Nigerian military forcibly entered the UN accommodation facility in Maiduguri for what officials said was part of their routine cordon and search operation in the area. The UN described the action as 'unauthorized' and ordered the temporary suspension of staff movement in and out Maiduguri until circumstances surrounding the action of the military were established. Following the incident, the government issued a statement and reaffirmed its commitment to ensure the safety of humanitarian workers and the residents of the North-East. The HC was accompanied from Abuja by the heads of UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, UN Children Fund, World Food Programme and International Organization for Migration.

2. General Security Situation Outlook

Military officials leading the fight against insurgents in North-East Nigeria reported the surrender of a top Boko Haram commander in the Maiduguri area. According to the military, the 'ex-commander', accused of committing atrocities including abductions and killings is seeking forgiveness and helping state security with information about activities of the militant group.

The following incidents were reported during the reporting period: **On 23 August**, seven people were killed and 11 were injured in suicide bomb attack in the Maiduguri metropolitan area. On the same day, several soldiers and members of Civilian Joint Task Force were killed or wounded when the convoy in which they were travelling came under attack by Boko Haram. **On 22 August**, suspected Boko Haram insurgents attacked a village in Adamawa State and burnt down a newly renovated hospital and several houses in the area. **On 28 August**, the World Food Programme (WFP) announced the suspension of food distribution to internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the Gubio Camp in Maiduguri following an attack by some IDPs on staff of WFP's partner, the International Medical Corps (IMC). Some IMC staff and IDPs were injured and several humanitarian vehicles smashed during the incident. The State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) was quoted by local media as confirming the incident including suspension in food distribution, but said the measure was temporary to enable the government reassess security in the camp. Several IDPs believed to have masterminded the fracas were arrested. The Gubio Camp is host to more than 14,000 IDPs and refugee returnees. **On 29 August**, some farmers in the Konduga Local Government Area were attacked by Boko Haram while cultivating their farms. One person was shot dead, several sustained injuries from gunshots and four were abducted. Three of the farmers were rescued by the security forces. **On 30 August**, five people of the same family were abducted while travelling from Dikwa to Maiduguri. Their vehicle was reportedly left behind by the convoy because it had mechanical problem. The abductees included a woman along with her sister and three young daughters. Road kidnappings and attacks remain daily threats to travellers in the north-east, and even with military escorts, the militants are able to infiltrate and cause damage to commuters and military personnel.

3. Population Movements

On 15 August, 218 refugee returnees from the Bagame community in Cameroon arrived in the Nigerian border town of Ngala, about 138 kilometres north-west of Maiduguri, Borno State. The returnees said their decision to come back to Nigeria was informed by the relative peace in North-Eastern Nigeria. Meanwhile, the number of returns from Cameroon to Banki reduced significantly during the month of August. Only 84 people were recorded to have arrived from Minawao Refugee Camp and the Kolofata Region in Cameroon. This could be largely due to the July 10-12 Tripartite Commission discussions in Abuja that recommitted the parties to ensuring the proper management of returns from Cameroon to Nigeria. The Abuja discussions also developed a joint phased plan to operationalize the provisions of the Tripartite Agreement signed on 2 March in Yaoundé Cameroon between UNHCR and the Governments of Nigeria and Cameroon. Meanwhile multiple attacks on villages by Boko Haram insurgents in Borno during the last several weeks resulted to additional internal displacements of civilians in search of protection, highlighting the unpredictable nature of the current situation.

4. Situation Analysis and Response Efforts

While the government is making efforts to restore services in some return areas, the current nature of the crisis doesn't guarantee the process of safe, dignified and sustainable returns. Refugee returnees who have managed to go back to areas such Banki, Ngala, Damasak and Bama end up in secondary displacement because their communities of origin not ready to receive because services there are inadequate. UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies are helping the government to respond but the complex nature of the humanitarian and security situation is limiting their capacities to effectively provide the required interventions. Meanwhile, 121 refugee returnees who were transferred to Maiduguri from the Mubi Transit Center near the border with Cameroon by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) were provided with the following non-food items by UNHCR: mattresses, cooking pots, jerry cans, plastic buckets, blankets, solar lanterns, slippers, sleeping mats, women underwear, sanitary napkins, detergent and antiseptic soap. The returnees were also registered by the Nigeria Immigration Service as part of the measure to document them. UNHCR also distributed charcoal and energy saving stoves to address protection risks linked to firewood collection and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

