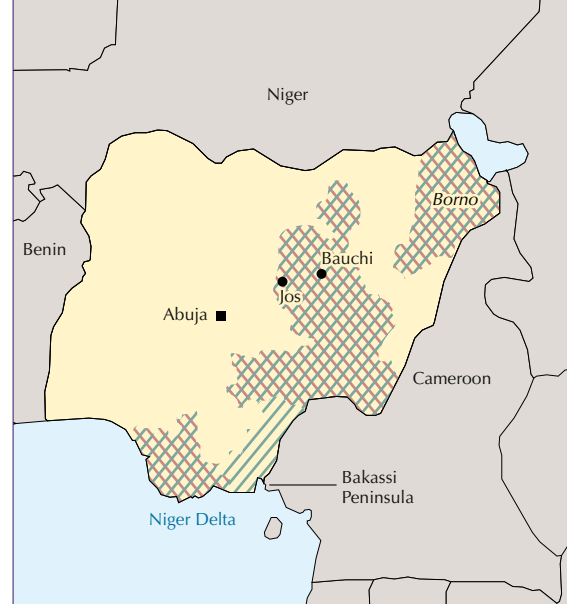


Nigeria



Quick facts

Number of IDPs	Undetermined
Percentage of total population	–
Start of current displacement situation	1999
Peak number of IDPs (Year)	Undetermined
New displacement	At least 5,000



People have been forcibly displaced across Nigeria, for short or longer periods, since the end of military rule in 1999. Only rough estimates of the number of IDPs and their location are available as there are no reliable statistics on internal displacement in the country. The figures provided by government and non-governmental agencies are generally only estimates referring to localised situations. In most cases, the numbers refer to people who have sought shelter at temporary IDP camps.

Against a background of systematic patterns of inequality and intense competition for resources, Africa's most populous nation has had little success in bringing together its diverse ethnic, religious and linguistic groups. Armed conflict between security forces and the rebel Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) has caused displacement in the Niger Delta region, while across the rest of the country the most significant cause of violence has been the entrenched division between people considered indigenous to an area and those regarded as settlers. Indigenous groups have routinely prevented settlers from owning land or businesses, or accessing jobs and education, leading inevitably to tensions.

Both new displacements and returns were reported in 2009. In May, thousands of people fled clashes in the Niger Delta between MEND militants and the governmental Joint Task Force (JTF), charged with restoring order in the Niger Delta. In the central and northern regions referred to as the "middle belt", between 4,500 and 5,000 people were displaced in February following sectarian violence in the city of Bauchi, while in July clashes between a militant group and the army in Borno State led to the displacement of some 4,000 people. Over the year, people who had been displaced because of post-electoral violence in Jos at the end of 2008 reportedly started to go home where possible.

Most IDPs were supported by their family or friends or local faith-based groups, and only some groups received assistance from local government bodies or the Nigerian Red Cross. However their protection needs appear to have been significant. Human rights organisations have regularly accused the security forces of failing to provide protection during outbreaks of inter-communal violence, while people displaced into makeshift camps in schools or army barracks have had to endure overcrowded and insanitary conditions.

Many children internally displaced by these episodes were unable to go to school, and displaced women and girls risked

sexual and gender-based violence and exploitation. In the Niger Delta, there were accounts of disruption to family life as many women and children found shelter separately from the men.

Nigeria was among the countries which signed the Kampala Convention.

In the absence of any national IDP policy, responses have generally been incomplete and subject to competing mandates with consequent duplication of services or else inaction. The national responsibility to respond to displacement has been delegated to the local governments, and only if they are unable to cope are state governments called in. State Emergency Management Agencies (SEMAs) exist in some states, but they have varying capacities. Only when this second level of response is ineffective does the state government appeal to the federal government for support. The President takes the final decision on whether the federal government intervenes.

At the federal level, the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) coordinates emergency relief operations and assists in the rehabilitation of victims where necessary. However, the Nigerian Red Cross has often been first to provide aid, as it has the structure and the capacity necessary to respond at short notice. The National Commission for Refugees (NCFR) has taken responsibility for post-emergency and long-term programmes for IDPs.

There has been no consistent drive for durable solutions; in many cases there has been no support for the rebuilding of homes and livelihoods in areas of return, and where IDPs have sought to integrate locally or resettle in another part of the country, material support has been scarce and has varied from state to state. Apart from addressing the causes of communal violence, comprehensive compensation and restitution mechanisms and reconstruction efforts in areas of return are needed. These would depend on clearer mandates, greater institutional support to IDP focal points, better and more efficient funding, and greater staff capacity.

The UN in Nigeria has focused on development rather than humanitarian issues, where it believes it may have a greater impact on ending the recurrent conflicts. Coordination between humanitarian agencies at all levels has been inconsistent.