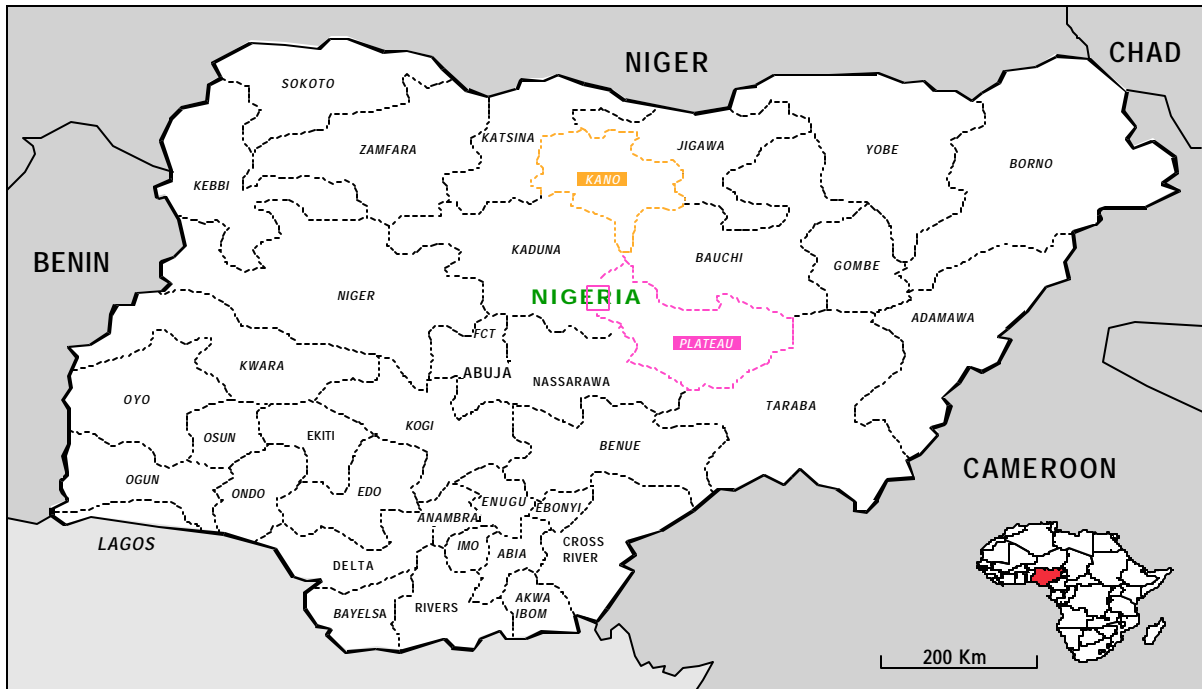


NIGERIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

SITUATION REPORT ON INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS AS A RESULT OF PLATEAU ETHNO-RELIGIOUS CONFLICT OF MAY 2004



Plateau State witnessed series of ethno-religious conflicts since the year 2000. The most recent one was in May, 2004 which led to the displacement of over 40,000 people from Plateau to neighboring Bauchi and Nasarawa States. The figure included people displaced in Kano as a result of a reprisal attack immediately following the attack on Yelwa in Plateau State.

As at October, 2004 there are a total of 625 families consisting of 3,128 people displaced in both Bauchi and Nasarawa States in this order;

BAUCHI

- Unguwan Barno Primary School	1,320
- Women Centre	734
- Boto Village	122
- Maraba Liman Katagum	54
- Tashan Mai Alewa	43

NASARAWA

- Shinge	645
- Shabu	110
- Nasarawa Eggon	100

The displaced persons in Kano have either been integrated into the community or relocated to their States of origin or other States.

ASSISTANCE GIVEN TO IDPs

The IDPs were supported by the host communities, Local and State Governments, National Emergency Management Agency, Nigerian Red Cross Society, ICRC, SC(UK), MSF, UNICEF, Faith based Organisation like the Jama'atul Nasrul Islam, Jama'atul Izalatul Bidi'a Wa'ikamatul Sunnah, Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria (FOMWAN), Boy Scouts and local NGOs

The Red Cross provided First Aid and Psychological support, Dressing materials, evacuation of the wounded during the emergency phase and followed with Non-Food relief assistance in the three States. The assistance given was appropriate to the needs of the IDPs during the emergency phase while the adequacy, effectiveness and efficiency of the assistance was fragmented due to lack of coordination by the relevant Government Agencies as is usual in Nigeria.

DISPLACEMENT

The nature of attack on Yelwa Shendam left the affected population that survived with no option than to flee Yelwa and surrounding villages at the slightest opportunity. Bauchi and Nasarawa States became the nearest and safest haven for the displaced and wounded, although some families relocated to other States such as Kano.

The State Governments in Bauchi and Nasarawa must be commended not only for catering to the needs of the IDPs but for succeeding in calming their citizens against reprisal attacks to avenge what was perpetrated in Yelwa.

Initially, the IDPs were sheltered in Primary Schools and Government buildings that were used for the same purpose during preceding conflict situations in Southern Plateau. The host communities became used to receiving IDPs as a result of past conflicts that dates back to the year 2000.

CONSEQUENCES

The Political, Economic and Social implications of the displacement were as varied as the displaced persons. Given the prevailing economic situation of Nigerians, the social solidarity extended to the IDPs during the emergency period was beyond imagination. Thousands of these displaced persons were accommodated, fed and provided basic necessities by individuals before the government could respond to the plight of the victims.

All the schools used to shelter the IDPs were closed or relocated. Most of the adults were rendered idle and jobless during the displacement. It must be noted that the farmers among them have left their farmlands behind them while the artisans among them left without their working tools or completely demoralized for losing lifetime savings and loved ones. The harsh realities of the times did not help matters as everyone was living at his wits end, from the host communities to the displaced ones.

PRESENT SITUATION

A total of 625 families consisting of 3,128 are the only ones in the localized areas as stated earlier. The number consists of Men, Women and Children who couldn't go back to Yelwa due to one reason or another and did not get relatives or friends to accommodate them. The State Governments have since stopped the relief assistance they give to the IDPs.

Condition of the IDPs in the camp varies a great deal, but attention has shifted from the condition of the displaced to other things. The Government still provides medication for families in the

camps although sanitation is very poor. It is doubtful whether Bauchi and Nasarawa State Governments could continue to assist and support the displaced people despite calls by the Plateau State Administrator for all to go back to their homes. To be candid, the government may make promises to its citizens to go back but thousands have made up their minds never to go back to Yelwa alive. Yelwa is and will never be safe for non indigenes or settlers as they are referred to. The Indigene/Settler dichotomy has come to stay in Plateau State. People may not just be safe for a long time to come in Plateau.

There is no coherent strategy of managing IDPs, in Nigeria, for now but an ad-hoc plan to cater for their needs for some time. The NRCS is working within the policy framework of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies including the policy on Rehabilitation.

The needs of these, IDPs are mostly bordering on rehabilitation of the affected people. Some IDPs in Bauchi are known to have been resettled by Local and State Governments in various locations of the State. There are hundreds still waiting to be resettled because they lost all they had in the ensuing conflict.

Most of the IDPs in Plateau State (Yelwa) are being accommodated by friends, relatives and other communities around.