

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

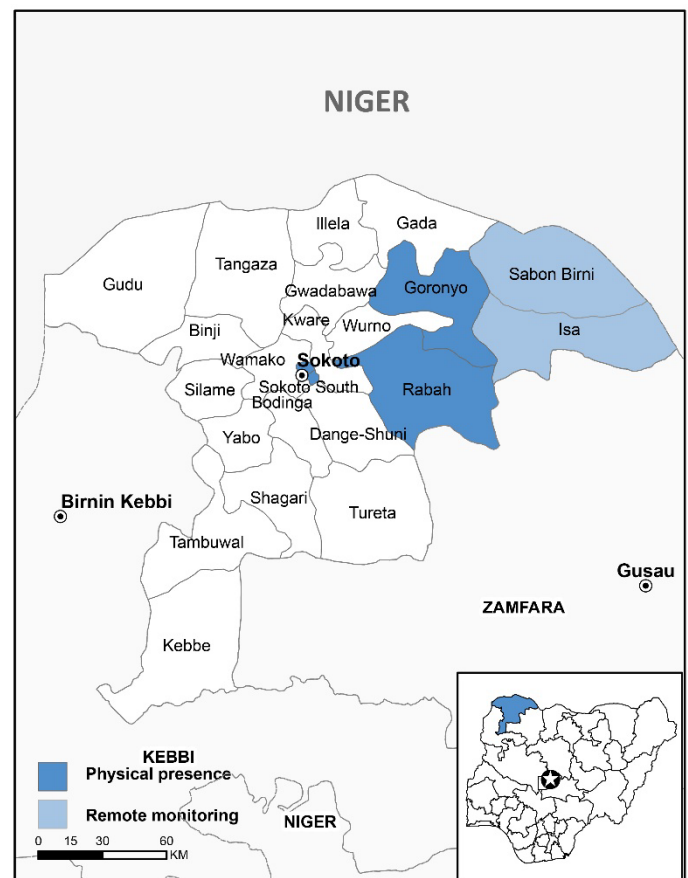
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BACKGROUND

Sokoto State is among the States in North-West Nigeria where struggle for control of natural resources, including mines, water resources and pasture pitting between herders and farmers metamorphosed into communal clashes, conflict, banditry and criminality causing forced internal displacement of 56,600¹ individuals into different parts of the State and 80,900² registered as refugees in Niger Republic out of which 71 per cent are biometrically registered.

The security situation in Sokoto continues to deteriorate, between July and end-September 2021, 32 incidents leading to 109 fatalities were reported³. To respond to the challenges, the State government signed into law the security challenges (Containment) Order No 3, 2021 in September 2021⁴. The measures in the order include, among others, the restriction of movements, curfews, and ban on sale of some items in local markets. Furthermore, the State government announced the shutdown of the telecommunications networks in 14 out of the 23 Local Government Areas (LGAs) due to the increase of attacks which they attributed to ongoing military operations in neighbouring Zamfara State.

Since July 2021, UNHCR has established a presence in Sokoto Municipality, Rabah and Goronyo LGAs and covers Isa and Sabon Birni LGAs remotely to undertake protection monitoring and has Grassroot Initiative for Strengthening Community Resilience (GISCOR) implementing the protection monitoring. However, due to the shutdown of telecommunications network and closure of roads, GISCOR has not been able to reach the monitors in Isa and Sabon Birni LGAs since 20th September 2021.



SECURITY AND PROTECTION

- Safety and Security:** The security situation is particularly alarming in the eight eastern LGAs of Sokoto State that share a border with Zamfara State, which comprise of Gada, Isa, Sabon Birni, Wurno, Rabah, Goronyo, Illela, and Gwadabawa. For instance, since the commencement of protection monitoring activities in July 2021 by GISCOR, serial attacks by non-State armed groups (NSAG) were reported in Tsamye, Gangara and Dambo villages of Sabon Birni; Birjingo Village of Goronyo LGA; Kogogo Lambar Tofa, Doliyom, Amgamba, and Rijiyar Bugaje, all in Rabah LGA. In addition to the whirls of attacks that destroyed lives and property which characterize the situation of the most affected LGAs, the NSAG also attacked Sokoto Municipality on 29 August 2021, a development that heightened fears generally and constituted a threat to other parts of the State that currently enjoy relative peace. The deteriorating security situation is also attributed to the increased military operations in Zamfara which made the NSAGs move into parts of Sokoto State.

¹ IOM displacement tracking matrix for northwest and northcentral states round 7

² UNHCR Niger Maradi Factsheet September 2021, note not all the refugees originated from Sokoto state

³ The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED)

⁴ <https://dnlllegalandstyle.com/2021/sokoto-state-governor-signs-security-challenges-containment-order/>

- **Freedom of movement:** Freedom of movement, mobility rights or the right to travel are a human rights concept encompassing the right of individuals to travel from place to place within the territory of a country, and to leave the country and return to it without restriction. This has been restricted in some parts of Sokoto State due to the ongoing crisis. The curfew imposed and the ongoing security operations especially in the eastern LGAs covered by GISCOR were cited by IDPs and other stakeholders as the primary causes of movement restriction. For instance, the curfew imposed on Goronyo, Rabah, Sabon Birni, and Isa from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. has decimated the freedom of movement, business activities and social coexistence. In addition to the official curfew, some locations have declared self-imposed restrictions, usually discouraging citizens, particularly women and girls, from leaving their homes after 9 p.m.. The State government announced the closure of roads of Isa to Marnona until further notice as part of containment measures, thus affecting the already paralyzed businesses and livelihood means.
- **Access to GBV Services:** GBV (gender-based violence) prevention and mitigation efforts are coordinated by the Ministry of Women Affairs in Sokoto State through an established Response Team that comprises of relevant line Ministries, United Nations Agencies, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), International and National Non-Governmental Organisations, traditional institutions and faith-based organizations. The team which meets quarterly is a response platform that develops referral pathways, early warning systems and manages GBV cases. The actors' capacities are still inadequate, the cases are under-reported and some legal cases linger in court for long without judgement due to disappearance of evidence or interference by the families of survivors or perpetrators. A Spotlight Project, managed by Nana Khadija Foundation, began implementation in 2018 to bridge some of these gaps in five LGAs – Binji, Tangaza, Sokoto North, Sokoto South and Bodinga. About 620 cases were received from inception; some were managed and others referred to other actors.
- **Access to Justice:** Though Sokoto State has proper adjudicatory mechanisms in forms of court, commission, traditional system etc, most of the aggrieved IDPs do not know of their existence or have the feeling that they cannot afford the cost required to access them. In its efforts to ensure access to justice, the Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) has established a community structure in Achida, Gandi Bodinga and Shuni. Ten individuals were selected in each community and trained as Para-legals who identify rights violations and report them immediately to trigger action. Both FIDA and the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) have been rendering pro bono services especially on GBV.
- **Housing Land and Property (HLP) issues:** HLP issues were reported to be gradually surging as displacement figures continue to rise especially in the areas affected by the activities of NSAGs. This was reported during an interaction with NBA's Sokoto State branch. The chairman of the NBA stated that property of the displaced population was being occupied by bandits and other people that have a pact to stay in some villages attacked by NSAGs.
- **Trafficking in Persons:** Since NSAGs became active in the North-West, reported cases of trafficking increased in the region. This was disclosed by the National Agency for Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), Sokoto Zonal Command. The agency informed that it was able to secure the conviction of 64 offenders while 22 cases were still in court. According to NAPTIP, most of the victims were from Katsina, Zamfara, Sokoto, Niger and Borno States. NAPTIP implored humanitarian actors with protection mandates to assist in sensitizing the general population of the menace.
- **Peaceful Coexistence:** Peaceful coexistence among different tribes cohabiting the conflict-affected communities is gradually threatened. There is the perception that a particular ethnic group is the one perpetrating all the crimes in communities, and this leads to serious stigmatization of all the members of that tribe in some places. In some instances, this even led to attacks or arrest of innocent members of the suspected ethnic group by security forces. These issues occur in virtually all the areas most affected by the ongoing attacks. In view of this development, massive sensitization is needed to address this sociological problem that could fuel the conflict if not checked.

BASIC SERVICES AND LIVELIHOOD

- **Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH):** In Goronyo 400 Housing Unit Camp, WASH related challenges were still visible. Though the issue of scarcity of water was resolved, challenges relating to insufficient toilet

facilities and hygiene education persist. WASH is also a major challenge at Ramin - Kura Camp, even though an agency had intervened to mitigate the challenge. Like other protection aspects, WASH is a particular concern because actors do not have the capacity to intervene.

- **Access to Shelter:** Within Sokoto Municipality - at the Ramin-Kura and Rabah Stadium Camps, the team observed gross inadequacy of shelters. On several occasions, more than 14 individuals were seen occupying a single local transitional shelter while many others resorted to sleeping in the open. The monitoring team counted 38 female-headed households at Rabah- Stadium Camp who were sleeping on bare floor without even synthetic mats. In Gandi, more than 25 women with children were allocated one classroom and 235 female-headed households were without synthetic mats, thus, sleeping on bare floor, too.
- **Access to Health:** In the last week of August, the Sokoto State Government confirmed no fewer than 265 cases of cholera induced gastroenteritis in at least thirteen local government areas. The affected LGAs include Rabah, Wurno, Shuni, Kebbe, Gwadabwa, Isa, Bodinga, Wamakko, Silame, Illela, Sabon Birni, and Yabo. Thanks to measures by the State government since January 2021, there was no escalation of cases until recently. Between 6 and 10 of September 2021, three patients with suspected cholera were found in Goronyo LGA who were taken to Goronyo General Hospital for proper treatment.
- **Child Protection:** Between 13 and 31 September 2021, GISCOR monitors reported child protection incidents involving 118 children (67 girls, 51 boys) in Sokoto Municipality alone, particularly at Ramin Kura Camp and Gwiwa Lowcost Camp. All children were of school-going age who could not have meaningful access to education as they spend their time hawking, begging and engaging in menial labor to support their families, according to the interviews conducted with children and adults in the areas.
- **Awareness Raising and Sensitization:** Between July and end-September, GISCOR reached 586 IDPs in camps and host communities with awareness raising sessions. Advocacy sessions were held on the importance of community engagement, effects of child begging and flood safety measures, peaceful coexistence, girls rights to education, COVID-19 preventive measures in Goronyo, Rabah and Sokoto North LGAs.
- **Advocacy:** During the reporting period, GISCOR engaged in advocacy meetings with Community Health Service Providers, Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Goronyo and Sabon Birni LGA Chairmen, Breakthrough Action, MSF Holland, Plan International, the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) and United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS), reaching 42 individuals. On 24 August 2021, at Sabon Birni Location, GISCOR Team discussed access to documentation with the National Identity Management Commission as a number of IDPs had complained about the lack of national identity documents.
- **Capacity-Building:** GISCOR conducted 3-day capacity-building sessions for 20 recruited Protection Action Group Members, eleven Protection Monitors and three Senior Protection Monitors to ensure that they develop the required attitude to carry out their assignments.
- **Housing:** Shelter is among the pressing needs of IDPs in the North-West generally. It was reported that in most cases, NSAGs burnt houses when they attacked communities. In an effort to reduce the housing deficit in Sokoto State, SEMA reported that the State government in partnership with Qatar Charity and Future Leadership Foundation had built 150 housing units to house 150 IDP families in Gandi, Rabah LGA. However, many IDPs are seen occupying some uncompleted structures.

ASSESSMENT AND COORDINATION

- **Assessment:** On 28 September, GISCOR, IOM, and SEMA conducted a rapid assessment to ascertain the locations of the internally displaced people across Sokoto metropolis. During the assessment, the team identified two additional informal IDP camps (Gwiwa Lowcost and Gwiwa Eka). The assessment was a follow up to the action points of the SEMA-led State level coordination meeting on 7 September 2021.
- **Coordination Meetings:** SEMA-led Coordination Meetings (SEMCOM) were held in September and October 2021. The objective of the meetings was to have all protection actors together and map their services to improve collaboration and avoid duplication. In attendance were: Office of the Secretary to the State

Government, National Emergency Management Agency, SEMA, NAPTIP, National Human Rights Commission, UNHCR, IOM, UNFPA, Red Cross, Nigera Police Force, Civil Defense and Immigration, Safe the Children, GISCOR, and Nana Khadija Foundation. Action points agreed were for SEMA to harmonize the three different assessment reports conducted by UNHCR, IOM, and MSF, on or before 17 November. The objective of the harmonization is to make the humanitarian issues more visible to attract appropriate responses. Furthermore, SEMA stated that Nigerian refugees in host communities - Gidan Ruji and Maradi – in Niger Republic had protection challenges and could not access any assistance.

PROTECTION MONITORING STRUCTURE IN SOKOTO STATE.

