Strengthening Resilience in North-East Nigeria

Improving living conditions in host and return communities of internally displaced persons in Borno and Adamawa States

The Challenge

With more than 180 million inhabitants, Nigeria is Africa’s most populous country – and also one of the poorest. Particularly, the country’s North-East suffers from poverty, food insecurity, and insufficient access to education and health. Since 2009, the activities of the terror organisation “Boko Haram” aggravated the situation dramatically. Over 20,000 fatalities have been recorded and about 2.3 million people have been displaced out of their communities of origin due to repeated violent attacks in Borno and Adamawa States. The majority of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are now in host communities in Borno and the neighbouring states Yobe and Adamawa.

Consequently, the already weak health and education system has come under further strain through targeted attacks by Boko Haram, hence further limiting the resources available to IDPs and host communities. Basic infrastructural facilities such as potable water, energy and sanitation are overstretched and the local markets can no longer provide sufficient food supplies to the population. These developmental challenges and humanitarian needs exceed the current capacities of the Nigerian government, which it aims to address through the engagement of external support.

Our Approach

On behalf of the European Union (EU) and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the German Agency for Development Cooperation (GIZ) renders support to improving the living conditions of people in the two states. Working at the nexus between emergency relief and development cooperation, the GIZ strengthens local institutional capacity to improve service provision in the long run, and promotes self-reliance by boosting the resilience of the most vulnerable households.

The Programme targets IDPs, host communities, returnees and return communities. Through the rehabilitation of school, health, WASH and market-related facilities, the Programme contributes to the improvement of basic service infrastructure. The Programme further promotes the resumption of agricultural and economic activities and fosters youth economic empowerment through vocational training support. To address the significant needs in the education sector, the Programme aims to decrease access barriers to education and to improve the quality of basic education through targeted systems strengthening support.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Project name</th>
<th>Support to Strengthening Resilience in North-East Nigeria</th>
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<tr>
<td>Commissioned by</td>
<td>The European Union (EU) The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project region</td>
<td>Federal States Borno und Adamawa, North-East Nigeria</td>
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<td>Lead executing agency</td>
<td>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH</td>
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<td>National partner</td>
<td>Ministry of Budget and National Planning of Nigeria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>08/2016 – 07/2021</td>
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<td>Financial volume</td>
<td>€ 54.5 million</td>
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Beneficiaries of the cash for education project in Adamawa: School children in Bahuli (left) and a head of household from Kwashkini with his children (right).
Through Community Development Planning (CDP), the Programme strengthens the relationships between local communities and leaders, government institutions and civil society. The weakness of these relationships is seen as one of the reasons why Boko Haram could gain that much traction.

Simultaneously, the Programme builds the capacities of local and state government as well as civil society and community-based organisations for improved service delivery. Combined, the four components reflect the Programme’s holistic approach for sustainable improvement of basic services and thus the living conditions of people in North-East Nigeria, while strengthening social cohesion.

Impact in figures ...

Across its interventions, the Programme places a strong emphasis on gender and protection mainstreaming. For example, beneficiaries of infrastructure measures are 60% female, while CDP session participants are 32% female and up to 19% from other vulnerable groups, such as youth, widows, and persons with disabilities.

... and in stories

Alhaji Abubakar M. (District Head) and Sakti G. (community member), were both part of the CDP process in Maiha LGA. When Boko Haram invaded Maiha LGA, the majority of the population had to flee to the surrounding mountains to escape the group’s brutality. Both were actively engaged in the CDP process at different stages and recognised its value for their communities:

“I believe positive changes will occur when everyone is included in decision making and fair representation takes place. I as a Christian appreciate being involved, as we are often overlooked as a minority.”
Sakti G.

“Coming together has been a great opportunity for Maiha LGA. It has never happened before that village, ward and district heads sit together and discuss, but we recognise now the importance of unity.”
Alh. Abubakar M.

The programme is part of the special initiative ‘Tackling the Root Causes of Displacement, Reintegrating Refugees’. Via this special initiative, funds are provided to support refugees and host communities in the short term and eliminate structural causes for displacement, such as inequality and food insecurity in the long term. This project contributes to improving living conditions of displaced persons, host communities and communities of origin and strengthens social cohesion, to stabilise the region in the long run.