

West and Central Africa Regional IASC

Summary of discussions

Monday 2 July 2018, 09:30-11:00
OCHA ROWCA Conference Room



OCHA

Regional Office for
West and Central Africa

Participants:

IOM, UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF, Dutch Embassy, CRD, World Vision, IRC, USAID, Save the Children, SFCG, CaLP, ECHO, USAID/FFP, ECHO, OCHA

1. Introduction

Following brief introductions, OCHA opened the meeting by noting that colleagues who had been deployed from Dakar to the Democratic Republic of Congo had nearly all returned and that the Ebola outbreak in Equateur province had largely been contained. Under the leadership of the DRC Government, health partners had traced and vaccinated all people who had been in contact with known Ebola cases. Early and heavy mobilisation of humanitarian partners had been critical for quickly bringing the outbreak under control.

2. Sahel Key Messages

Further to the draft Key Messages on the Sahel shared electronically, OCHA briefed on latest developments, including the outcomes of the PREGEC meeting held in Dakar on 28-29 June. It was noted that food insecurity has increased by 45 per cent compared to 2017 and Severe Acute Malnutrition in the six countries under a worst-case scenario was project to rise by 50 per cent compared to 2011 – 2012, the region's last major food and nutrition crisis. In hotspots, SAM admissions in the first trimester of 2018 have increased by up to 20 per cent compared to the same period last year. An even greater increase is expected from July – September at the seasonal peak of admissions. As per discussions in the PREGEC, a tense food and nutrition situation in northern Mali, Mauritania, northeastern Nigeria, eastern Niger, east-central Senegal, the Chadian Sahel and the Liptako Gourma triangle continues. In response to this situation, States and their partners continue to mobilize to assist vulnerable populations. Steps have been taken since 2017 by Governments and international NGO and UN partners to step up the response. Most recently, OCHA organized a regional press conference in Dakar in April with WFP, UNICEF, FAO and ACF on 3 May. On 24 May the ERC announced a USD30M CERF allocation to the Sahel and on 12 June the ERC issued a Statement with a Call for Action. WFP also declared an L3 on 12 June.

Joint Key messages on the Sahel were proposed to support the effort made in response to the current crisis in Sahel. The initial draft of the Key Message was shared for further perusal and inputs by participants.

- Some participants, building on the results of the PREGEC meeting hold the 28th and 29th June, questioned whether to current situation qualifies as a “crisis”. It was agreed that the situation is critical and requires scaled up humanitarian response to prevent further deterioration.
- Concerns were raised about the use of different figures and arguments were made for stronger consensus on the figures and sources to be used.
- The importance of including the status of the response and identifying the gaps was noted. While OCHA has started collecting data from key partners, clusters and sectors at country and regional level there is still a need to consolidate figures and strengthen analysis of gaps and priorities.
- It was recommended to include protection issues in to the document.

- Close follow-up and analysis of security related issues such as pastoralist- farmer crisis, militarization of the region as well as G5 deployment, and its impact to the crisis was suggested.
- There was overall emphasis on the need to reinforce the messages around 'resilience' and to integrate the development and humanitarian nexus perspective

Action Points:

- Inputs to the Key message to be shared with OCHA by Wednesday 4th July 2018, the revised version will be recirculated by Friday 6th July 2018 for further rectification.
- List of Sahel related events/meeting to be shared by OCHA for further inputs and for shared use to amplification of messages by all participants.

3. Lake Chad Basic and Oslo II Conference

OCHA briefed on the Oslo Humanitarian Conference on Nigeria and the Lake Chad Region held in February 2017, which sought to mobilize international involvement and funding for humanitarian effort in response to the deteriorating situation in the region. At this conference, US \$672 million in financial support was pledged for 2017 and beyond, and the humanitarian response in the Lake Chad region was scaled up significantly. At the same time, efforts were undertaken to strengthen regional cooperation to address factors driving the crisis including Consultative Group on Prevention and Stabilization.

Building on the achievements, partnerships, and commitments from the Oslo Conference and its follow-up in terms of stabilization through the Consultative Group on Prevention and Stabilization, the co-hosts – Germany, Nigeria, Norway, and the United Nations – have decided to organize a second Conference on the Lake Chad region. In addition to humanitarian action, this Conference will aim to promote resilience as well as crisis prevention and stabilization initiatives through regional cross-border cooperation and sustainable development efforts to meet the longer-term needs of those affected by the crisis. The meeting is tentatively scheduled for 3rd and 4th of September 2018 at Berlin. The discussion at regional level is to ensure partners at the regional level are engaged and consulted.

Discussions & Recommendations

- Some participants questioned the timing of the conference and underlined the critical need to ensure that the focus of the meeting does not give the wrong impression that the crisis is over and the Lake Chad Basin now is in reconstruction stage.
- It was also mentioned that Nigeria is facing enormous challenges in terms of humanitarian access, with service delivery relying mostly on the humanitarian community. The Conference should aim to encourage the government to take proactive position to ensure basic services delivery.
- There will be joint mission by OCHA and UNDP to the Lake Chad Basin to develop a common/inter-agency narrative on what is required to build resilience in the LCB, in preparation of the conference. The joint mission will be encouraged to link up with the Regional Resilience Working Group.

Action Points:

- OCHA to share partners feedback with colleagues working on the preparation of the conference.
- OCHA to share updated versions of the concept note with the IASC.

- The communication regional group to meet in July to discuss about products and material to be produced for the conference.
- Engagement of UNOWAS in the conference to be verified by OCHA.

4. CAR and UN Strategic Review

In preparation for a Strategic Review of the peace keeping operation in the Central African Republic (CAR), OCHA provided a brief overview of the objectives of the mission. It was noted that the humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic is deteriorating and violence has resulted in a 70 per cent increase in the number of IDPs in the past year alone and a 35 per cent increase in the number of CAR refugees in neighboring countries. This is the highest number of people displaced since the 2012-2014 crisis. Vast areas of the country are described more stable than in 2012-2014. However, this relative stability is the result of vast numbers of people from minority communities having fled the areas and being unable to return due to the risk of being attacked.

A joint letter from 56 NGOs was sent to the Secretary General on 26 June 2018 to address the rapidly deteriorating situation in Central African Republic (CAR) and to appeal for mobilization of international community in response and call for enhancement of MINUSCA's capacity to protect civilians. A process of strategic review is being undertaken by the UN during the two first weeks of July, in which ROWCA's Head of Office will participate on behalf of humanitarian partners.

Discussions & Recommendation

- Involving all the neighboring countries impacted by the crisis will be crucial. Involvement of African Union (AU) in mediation and reconciliation was also suggested.
- ECHO expressed concern on the capacity of the UN Force and possibility of effective surge response.
- Partners are encouraged to share key messages and concerns to ROWCA's Head of Office within the next few days

5. AOB

1. Central Nigeria Situation: Farmer-Herder Crisis which started in 2014 is escalating and is a potential political/cross-border crisis. The report is being prepared by UNICEF, UNHCR and the Borno State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) and will be shared.
2. Cameroonian refugees in Nigeria: 21,000 Cameroonian refugees are in Nigeria in 27 localities. The main concern is that any of these refugees are facing lack of support, specially food assistance.
3. Outcome of the mission of the High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, to Niger: Militarization of the region is causing discontent to the population and it is adding pressure and tensions to an already complex humanitarian situation.
4. NEXT IASC Meeting: Regular meeting will be bi-monthly and ad-hoc meeting based on the necessity. Next meeting is scheduled on September 6th.

Action Points:

- UNHCR to share the reports and documents discussed during the AOB. Described situations will be included in the next EPR meeting to be further analyzed and discussed among regional partners