



HumAngle

MILESTONE EDITION

August 2021

RIISING HUMAN MISERY

OVER 2,500
HELD AT GIWA
BARRACKS, 67
WITH
TUBERCULOSIS

AFTER RESCUE,
ABDUCTION
VICTIMS REMAIN
HAUNTED BY
MEMORIES

Editorial Advisory

The HumAngle mission highlights a journey in journalism that connects the human experiences under the environment of crisis and development. Its daily reporting covers a wide spectrum in violence, insurgency, human distress, environmental emergencies and the interventions that target these problems.

It is not unlikely that even the most passionate consumers of the HumAngle contents could miss out on a few major news reports. At inception, the HumAngle Milestone was created as a monthly delivery of a collection of the stand-out stories packaged in one edition. Following a relapse that lasted a few months, we resume the HumAngle Milestone Edition, more robustly finished as a stand-out magazine product. We captured this edition under a sombre banner: Rising Human Misery. It is a dive into the month's investigative repertoire of our reporters. They include a glimpse of Lagos' scary resume as the epicentre of COVID-19 transmissions in Nigeria. It includes a searching attention on the recurring terrorists ambushes against Nigerian troops in the Northeast; a definitive satellite evidence questing the hurried resettlement of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Borno; a rare insight into the state of the dreaded Giwa Barracks, Maiduguri and its cruelty on inmates; a cheery example of ethnic harmony between Yorubas and Fulanis in Southwest. It further contains counter-insurgency successes of the military in the Northeast, a rarely reported trauma experiences of victims of insecurity; satellite data backed warning on imminent flooding of IDP camps in Maiduguri; matters of institutionalized injustice against communities fleeing conflict; and the fate of Christian IDPs in Borno. Enjoy it.

Obi Chukwumba, PhD

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A flooded Sharwari 5 IDP camp in Maiduguri. Photo credit: NRC/Catriona Loughran

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#COVID19: LAGOS HAS OVER 40% OF NEW CASES IN NIGERIA

LAGOS STATE, SOUTHWEST NIGERIA, CONTINUES TO WITNESS AN UPSURGE IN DAILY NEW COVID-19 CASES.



HEALTH OFFICERS ATTEND TO A WHITE MAN AT THE COVID-19 TEST CENTRE, NATIONAL HOSPITAL, ABUJA. AISHAT BABATUNDE/HUMANGLE.

“VACCINES ARE JUST ONE PART OF OUR COVID RESPONSE AND WE MUST CONTINUE TO RELY ON PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES TO KEEP OUR POPULATIONS AND OUR COUNTRY SAFE,

Nigeria recorded 610 new confirmed cases of COVID-19 and two more deaths on Tuesday, Aug. 10, according to an update by the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC).

Lagos, the country's commercial hub and the epicentre of the virus, had 281 cases, contributing 46 per cent of the new infections. Following closely is Rivers State with 152 infections and Akwa-Ibom with 85 while Ogun and Oyo recorded 21 cases each.

Ekiti State recorded 14 cases while the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) had 13 cases and Delta State recorded seven cases. Edo reported six cases while Ondo recorded four infections. Bayelsa, Plateau and Kano states recorded two infections each.

This brought the total confirmed cases in the country to 179,118 with the fatality toll standing at 2,194. At least 166,141 people have recuperated from the disease. Nigeria has tested more than 2.5 million samples for the virus out of its roughly 200 million population.

According to the NCDC, the country's COVID-19 average test positivity rate is six per cent.

CURBING THE VIRUS

With more than 10, 000 active cases currently under hospitalisation across the country, the NCDC said driving down infections requires Nigerians to protect themselves and others from getting sick by observing the COVID-19 preventive protocols.

TERRORISTS AMBUSH MILITARY CONVOY IN KARETO AREA OF BORNO

The country received a donation of 4.08 million doses of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine from the United States on Aug 1. The government has rescheduled the vaccine rollout for Aug 16.

“Vaccines are just one part of our COVID response and we must continue to rely on public health measures to keep our populations and our country safe,” the NCDC said. “While we have all been affected by this pandemic, we have not been impacted equally. To fight COVID-19 effectively, we must address these inequalities and support the most vulnerable as they struggle to protect themselves.”

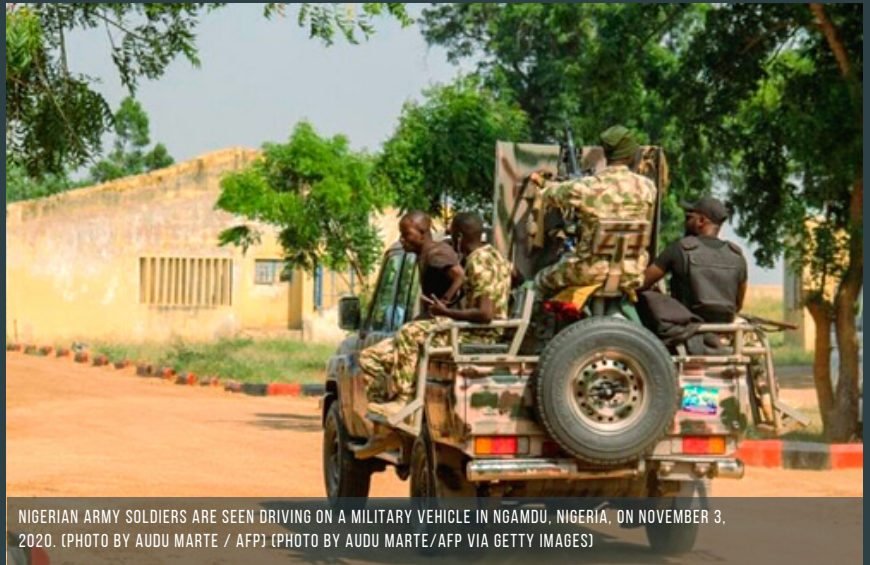
Combating the resurgence, state governments are reintroducing COVID-19 restrictions. In Ekiti State, Southwest Nigeria, the government has limited large gatherings to only 50 people.

“All gatherings must be held in strict and full compliance with the regulations regarding worship centres, which include social distancing of six feet between worshippers, handwashing and wearing of face masks,” Kayode Fayemi, Governor of Ekiti State said on Tuesday.

Babajide Sanwo-olu, Governor of Lagos State, also emphasised on the importance of observing COVID-19 protocols. “Eighteen months into the pandemic, we have learnt a lot, we have seen progress and setbacks, we have been able to finetune our strategies and response, and we are now in a good place to ensure that this third wave is the final one,” Sanwo-olu said.

“I believe that we can close this pandemic chapter very soon. But we must put in the work, the compliance, the regard for rules and restrictions.”

THE MILITARY CONVOY WAS AMBUSHED BY ISWAP, A TERROR GROUP AND FRANCHISE OF ISIS OPERATING IN NORTHEASTERN NIGERIA AND LAKE CHAD BASIN.



NIGERIAN ARMY SOLDIERS ARE SEEN DRIVING ON A MILITARY VEHICLE IN NGAMDU, NIGERIA, ON NOVEMBER 3, 2020. (PHOTO BY AUDU MARTE / AFP) (PHOTO BY AUDU MARTE/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES)

MURTALA ABDULLAHI AUGUST 1, 2021

A Nigerian Military Convoy was ambushed by ISWAP terrorists on Saturday, July 31, while moving through a road that cuts through Kareto town connecting Damasak and Gubio towns in Northern Borno State, Northeast Nigeria.

Kareto is about 25 km from Damasak the headquarters of Mobbar Local Government, 52 km away from Gubio town and 135 km from Maiduguri the state capital.

The area has witnessed a series of terror attacks on security forces and the setting up of checkpoints targeting aid workers.

The ambush on Saturday, which was believed to have begun around late morning or early afternoon, targeted a convoy travelling to Gubio.

According to Daily Trust, the convoy was there to provide escort to members of the governing political party for their ward congress in Damasak.

On Sunday, ISWAP mounted a checkpoint along the Damaturu-Maiduguri road connecting the capitals of Yobe and Maiduguri.

The checkpoints are used by the terror group to screen, abduct, or kill a certain category of passengers.

HumAngle understands that military authorities have begun reviewing travel of personnel on pass following the recent abduction of soldiers along the road.

The violence ravaging the region has led to the death of thousands of people and displaced millions.

HALTING SALE OF GUN SHIPS TO NIGERIA MAY HURT WAR ON TERROR

US SUSPENSION OF SALE OF MILITARY HARDWARE TO NIGERIA COULD TRIGGER DIRE CONSEQUENCES FOR WAR WEARY MILITARY BUT HALT SHRINKING CIVIL SPACE.

MURTALA ABDULLAHI

AUGUST 2, 2021



PRESIDENT MUHAMMADU BUHARI AND THEN VICE PRESIDENT IN WASHINGTON, D.C.
2015 PHOTOGRAPH BY BAYO OMOBORIOWO

The stalling of the proposed sale of attack helicopters to Nigeria by United States lawmakers could have diverse impacts on security and military relations between Nigeria and the U.S., and also drift Nigeria's procurement further towards China and Russia.

The foiled deal is coming, despite Nigeria – Africa's most populous country with an estimated population of more than 170 million people and projected to surpass that of the United States before 2050 – facing multidimensional human security threats.

Aside from the traditional roles of the tri-service armed forces, the military is deployed in the country's six geopolitical zones due to weak policing, deteriorating security conditions, and to conduct large-scale operations such as those ongoing in the north-west and northeast against religious and non-religious terror groups.

The country has sought to or acquired diverse military capabilities from different countries such as the United Arab Emirates, China, Ukraine, Czech, Russia, South Africa, and the U.S., in an attempt to tackle the myriad of security crises and strengthen the military's ability to carry out its assignments.

NIGERIA-US LONG BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP

Nigeria's long security and military relationship with the U.S., which improved after the country's move to democracy in 1999, has been broad, ranging from security engagement, military capacity-building opportunities, transfer of pre-owned equipment and purchase of new ones in support of peacekeeping activities in the region, maritime security in the Gulf Of Guinea and the ongoing counter-terrorism – counter-insurgency in the Northeast and Lake Chad Basin.

The relationship, however, weakened under the then-President Barack Obama due to corruption and human rights violations concerns, with the U.S. halting training for the army and blocking third-party sale of Cobra helicopters to Nigeria in 2014.

The U.S. government also stopped the sale of Tucano aircraft to Africa's largest democracy following the bombing of a displaced persons camp in Rann town, Borno State, Northeast Nigeria in 2016.



FORMER PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA WITH NIGERIAN PRESIDENT MUHAMMADU BUHARI
PHOTOGRAPH BY SAUL LOEB/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

The recent disclosure by Foreign Policy, a news magazine, that top Democrats and Republicans on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee froze the proposed sale of 12 AH-1 Cobra attack helicopters to Nigeria, signals a potential shift or resetting of the Washington DC approach to Abuja.

The American news outlet also revealed debate among policymakers in Washington on balancing national security with human rights objectives and moves by U.S. lawmakers to push the Biden administration to rethink U.S. relations with Nigeria, amid concerns that President Muhammadu Buhari is drifting toward authoritarianism.

Although the relationship between the two countries got warmer after the election of Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari and subsequently meeting with the former president Obama on security cooperation and Boko Haram, it took Obama's predecessor, Donald Trump a different approach to foreign policy and human rights, for the sale of 12 Super Tucano turboprop aircraft to Nigeria to move forward.

"We make the best military equipment in the world, and our friends can now buy that equipment," Trump said during a joint press briefing in 2018, with his Nigerian counterpart in the Rose Garden of the White House.

Trump also made comments on potential sale of helicopters to Nigeria, saying the Nigerian President likes helicopters. "He likes buying helicopters, and they're buying a lot of helicopters," Trump said of the Nigerian leader.

He added that "They weren't allowed to buy the helicopters for various reasons, which frankly weren't good reasons. Now they get them, and they get them very quickly, and they are the best helicopters in the world."

It's unclear if Trump was revealing parts of a discussion with his Nigerian counterpart on a possible helicopter deal or misrepresented the deal for the turboprop Tucano aircraft.

Although Joe Parkinson, the Africa Bureau Chief for the Wall Street Journal, in a Tweet in Nov. 2020, mentioned that the Trump administration had agreed to sell attack helicopters to Nigeria.

"It was the Trump administration – considerably less bothered by human rights issues—who agreed to sell Super Tucanos for \$600m and later, attack helicopters that Nigeria has long hoped would be the game-changer in the fight against Boko Haram," Parkinson tweeted.

Parkinson had earlier tweeted that, "Nigeria's president was one of the first African leaders to congratulate Biden, but privately, some of his key advisors were hoping for a Trump victory and are worried. The reasons are quite simple and are linked – human rights, the #EndSARS protests, and weapon sales."



The Biden administration was expected to have more human rights and anti-corruption-oriented foreign policy relations with the Nigerian government.

Both countries have continued capacity-building engagement, and the first batch of six Tucano aircraft arrived in Nigeria in July. The aircraft slated for induction in August is expected to carry out counter-insurgency, close air support and reconnaissance missions.

The appearance of normalcy in the relation between the two countries explains the reason behind the reaction and surprise that accompanied the news about the blocking of the proposed sale of the attack helicopters.

AN OPAQUE DEAL

The Nigerian side, through Lai Mohammed, Nigeria's Minister of Culture and Information, has said it was not aware of the arms deal with the U.S., which some members of Congress blocked.

In a much different tune and response, Chairpersons of security committees at lower and upper parliament told The Punch the Parliament might send a delegation for talks with the U.S. counterparts on the arms sale to Nigeria.

The multiple and divergent statements from within the Nigerian Government sends a wrong message on transparency of the arms procurement process. This is also evident with the lack of public information in the country on the details of the deal, aircraft variant, and supplier.

The botched deal highlights the increasing dependence by the government and military on airpower to prosecute security operations due to escalating insecurity and the lack of sufficient and efficient ground capacity and policing system. The use of combat aircraft over the years has been linked with a series of civilian related casualties in Zamfara, Adamawa and Borno states.

The military could suggest that acquisition of modern airborne platforms will provide sensor technologies that improve the identification of ground targets and allow delivery of precision or guided payload.



FORMER PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP AND PRESIDENT MUHAMMADU BUHARI DURING A JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE IN APRIL 2018, PHOTOGRAPH SAUL LOEB/AFP- GETTY IMAGES

As demonstrated in other conflicts theatres like Afghanistan, the employment of modern airpower also has limitations and should be part of a broader multidimensional security strategy that involves building the capability of ground forces, support security services, police, intelligence, and paramilitary, alongside, addressing socio-economic and in some cases, ideological drivers of insecurity.

A PERCEIVED DOUBLE STANDARD BY THE U.S.

The U.S. freezing of the arms deal over human rights concerns has renewed scrutiny and criticism of the selective manner in which the U.S. uses human rights when dealing with countries and how countries like Israel and Saudi Arabia use the U.S. and other Western military assets and support for offensive action in Gaza and Yemen that has caused humanitarian suffering and civilian casualties.

In Feb., President Joe Biden announced that he was ending U.S. “offensive” support to the Saudi campaign in Yemen and shifting to defensive support for the oil-rich country. This is coming six years into the conflict that has led to over 230,000 deaths and triggered the world’s worst humanitarian crisis.

POSSIBILITY OF PUSHING NIGERIA TOWARDS CHINA AND RUSSIA

The new move by the U.S. is capable of pushing Nigeria further towards China and Russia for military hardware due to the absence of constraints and bottlenecks associated with Western and US-built platforms. U.S. foreign policy and military officials have often expressed concerns over growing Chinese and Russian activities in Africa which are usually connected to economic and military ties.

The Nigerian military has historically turned to Russia and, recently, China to fill equipment needs. The Air Force operates the Russian-built MI-35M gunships and MI-171, while the Army has acquired tanks, fire support vehicles, and self-propelled artillery systems from China.

About five MI-35M gunships have been delivered and inducted into the Nigerian Air Force. But one of the aircraft crashed in Jan. 2019 while providing close air support for troops in Damasak while battling an attack from ISWAP, a franchise of the Islamic State.

Although the Air Force has not disclosed future deliveries, the service ambition is believed to be around 12 MI-35M gunships, a platform that HumAngle understands has provided enhanced air support and armed overwatch for troops.

In Jan. 2020, a source in the Federal Service of Military-Technical Cooperation told Sputnik the remaining batch of MI-35M was ready for delivery upon payment.

Other options for attack helicopters for the Nigerian military include the mi28NE and China z10 from Russia and China, respectively.

A shift from Western partners and deterioration in military cooperation and relation will hinder the ability of the U.S. to use that window of cooperation to work with and influence changes in political behavior and operation of the military, even though the U.S. still has cards considering its role as one of the most critical funding partners for humanitarian programs particularly though USAID and support provisions for the Multinational Joint Task Force.

While US-Nigeria interest has faded away from energy to security due to the Shale oil revolution, security cooperation between the two countries is vital for regional stability and security of U.S partner states.

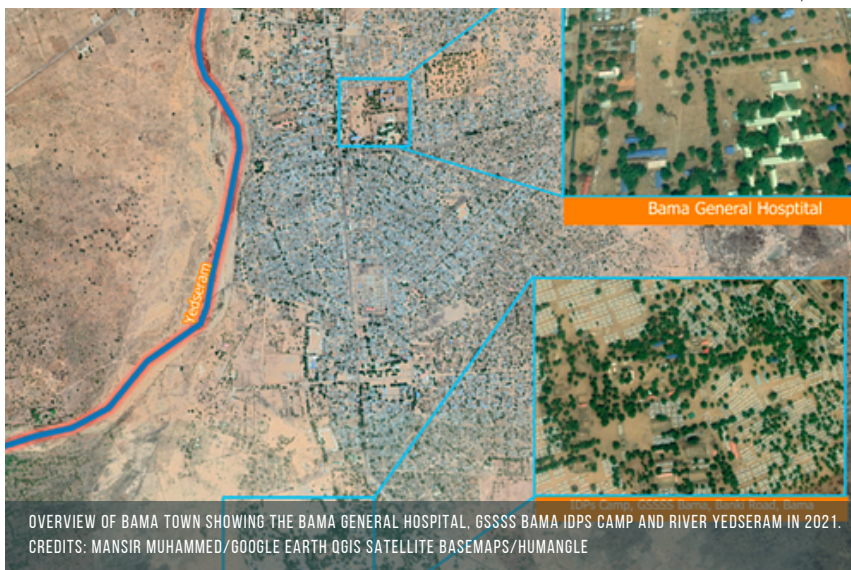
SATELLITE DATA SHOWS RESETTLING IDPS IS AT RISK

THE GOVERNMENT OF BORNO STATE, NORTHEAST NIGERIA, IS TRYING TO RELOCATE DISPLACED PERSONS FROM CAMPS TO RELATIVE SAFETY IN DESERTED COMMUNITIES. HOWEVER, THE LOCATIONS IT SELECTED PUTS THE RETURNEES MORE AT RISK.

MUHAMMED AKINYEMI

MANSIR MUHAMMED

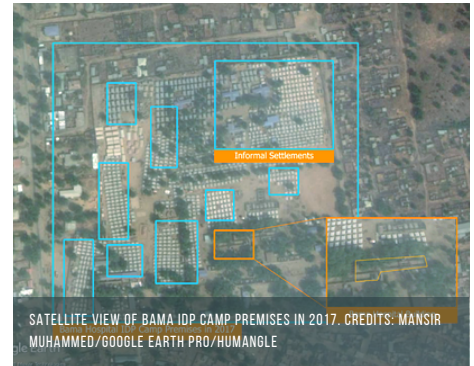
AUGUST 2, 2021



Between May 2013 and September 2014, several villages in Bama Local Government Area (LGA), Borno State, Northeast Nigeria, were repeatedly attacked by Boko Haram terrorists, who effectively crippled it. In 2015, the Nigerian Army entered Bama, sending the terrorists running, and reclaimed it for Nigeria. But for the people caught in the crossfire, their lives would never be the same again.

After its victory in Bama, the Nigerian military, accusing the townspeople of supporting the terrorists, soon unleashed its own terror on them. It separated families, illegally holding many of the men at different military detention centres, while the women faced starvation, threats to their lives and livelihood and sexual violence as they wait unend for their husbands to be released.

The Bama residents, reeling from the terrorists' destruction, became displaced in their own homes. An informal settlement hosting more than 15,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) was established in Bama town's General Hospital and controlled by the military. International humanitarian aid first reached Bama town in June 2016. A new camp was established in December 2017 at the Government Senior Science Secondary (GSSS) School to decongest the settlement at the General Hospital site.



Before the invasion, Bama residents were mostly farmers, petty traders, and small business owners. Geographically, Bama LGA is predominantly a lowland area, especially around the rivers and streams which averages 300m above sea level and about 800 to 1000m above sea level around the hills near the southern boundaries. There are about 28 waterways within its boundary supporting farming and fishing activities. These waterways comprise streams and river tributaries of rivers Yedseram, Mayo Ngassawé, Keraua, Kolofata, Kutelaha, Mbuli, Bararam, Nbalta, and Kolofata.



Additionally, there are two major wetlands west (33km wide area) and east (93km wide area) of the boundary of the local government, relevant to the economic activities of the communities in the town.

Bama is nourished by its dense vegetation; there are trees and plants growing in residential areas and in open spaces. This is a proxy for the nutrient-rich agricultural soil type of the area. The town's topography, therefore, supported farming, which helped its residents to maintain a boisterous economy.

But all the resources would mean little as the residents would spend years moving across IDP camps, some relocating to the state capital in Maiduguri, and some returning to Bama town, away from their villages faced with limited resources.



AWAY FROM HOME

The displaced – mostly women and children, have been scattered around places like Yerwa, neighbouring Cameroon, and in IDP camps in Maiduguri like Dalori I, Dalori II.

The conditions at these IDP camps have not been totally favourable. Left to the mercy of government and aid organisations, the IDPs, who have been responsible for their own feeding in the past, now have to wait for their meals.

In some camps, the food supply has been irregular, some families are provided with feeding allowances (depending on the size and availability of a patriarch), and there have been cases of IDPs having to do menial jobs like wood gathering, to earn a living.

The geographic positioning of these camps and the repeated attacks by terrorists make it difficult for the IDPs to utilise their farming and trading skill sets effectively.

Despite Maiduguri being the most militarised city in Northeast Nigeria, movement is restricted to 2km outside of the garrison city without the risk of attacks and abduction.

However, over time, there have been new developments to help the displaced return to their homes. In 2016, the Federal and State governments and some private organisations started rehabilitating Bama town/LGA under the “Bama Initiative.” In March 2018, the Borno State Government, via the State Security Council, approved the return of 120,000 IDPs to Bama town from Maiduguri, as the villages in the LGA are still largely unsafe.

Conversely, the government has also created some resettlements for the displaced. While they seem promising, geographic information on the areas is not so reassuring.

RESETTLEMENT AREAS, NOT EXACTLY HABITABLE

On May 29, the Borno State government officially started closing some of the IDP camps. IDPs from Damasak, Bama, and Konduga LGAs were given three options: accepting to be returned to their original communities, relocating to a government-established resettlement site, or receiving support to rent a house in the host city, Maiduguri.

However, according to a previous study by HumAngle, these options are limited in practicability due to reasons including insecurity and food sustenance. Muhammed Sani, an IDP from Bama told humAngle that; “even if you go to Bama [villages], one does not have the space to farm; a kilometre outside the village is dangerous because of possible attacks by Boko Haram.”

Bama town is a Local Government Headquarters. Part of the planned resettlement is to relocate persons from several villages in Bama LGA to the headquarters in Bama town. Most resettled people are not going back to their villages (within the Bama LGA) that are currently ungoverned or under the control of insurgents. Therefore as it stands, the IDPs cannot go back home. The next best thing the government can do is to have them relocated to Bama town where they can be closer to home.

Additionally, the government has also started moving some of these people to resettlement housing at Auno, another part of the state. Satellite data analysed by HumAngle, however, shows the risk attached to Auno.

The closest Auno resettlement site is about 100 meters away from Auno town. The other two sites are just about 1km away from the town, situated on either side of the Kashim-Ibrahim road, at Auno Malam Bukarti area. The Auno resettlement camp is a relatively flat area with an average elevation of 350 meters above sea level.



The vegetation of the Auno area consists of very sparse vegetation surrounding the community and resettlement sites. The area is composed of rock surfaces that appear as brownish outcrop rocks and may not be suitable for a variety of agricultural activities.

There is no significant surface water in the area.

Auno is very far from other places. To the east, Auno resettlement area is about 22km away from the heart of Maiduguri metropolis and 15km away from the Airport area. To the west, it is about 15km away from the Kesawa area and 13km away from Limlim to the southwest of the site.

To Auno's South, there is a 10km distance to Bimi village and 11km away from Karasuram community to the north.

For Bama villagers who have been fishers, farmers, and traders, being resettled in an isolated community with very little fishing or farming prospect might be grueling for them.

Modu-Sulum Kayamla, an IDP with three wives and 13 children told HumAngle that “the truth of the matter is that bringing us to Auno, an upland area, where there is no wetland, instead of somewhere close to or towards the direction of our homes, leaves us in greater dilemma. We are known vegetable farmers from Konduga; we don't have any other means [of earning a living]. Even when we were in the camp, we still went to the Alau dam axis to farm our vegetables.”



INSURGENCY REMAINS A CONCERN

Auno, a major resettlement area is 15km from Jakana, which serves as a major ISWAP crossing connecting Northern Borno to Southern Borno.

Jakana records frequent cases of attacks and abductions of commuters. Auno and Jakana are communities along the Damaturu-Maiduguri Expressway. The Jakana community is an active insurgency spot which puts Jakana, Konduga, at risk.

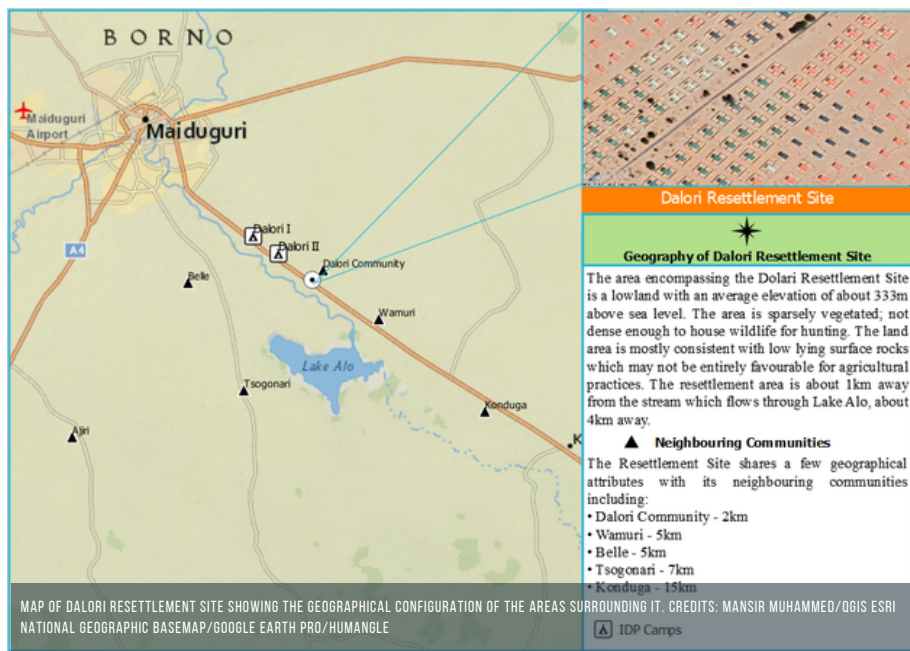


Another resettlement area is located at Dalori, situated about 2km away from the Dalori residential area. Like Auno, the Dalori resettlement site is low land with an average elevation of about 333m above sea level.

Additionally, Dalori has sparsely vegetated surfaces. There are a few patches of trees in-between them. Another feature of the Dalori settlement area is the municipal type vegetation which does not have the density to house wildlife and game for hunting. The land area is mostly consistent with low lying surface rock which may not be entirely favourable for agricultural practices.

Unlike Auno, Dalori is about 1km away from the stream which flows from Lake Alo, about 4km away. Other planned resettlement camps like Warabi, Damboa, Chibok, and Banki have similar concerns.

Similarly, for those moving to Bama town, their lives are not so safe. Bama is at greater risk after ISWAP invaded the Boko Haram camps in Sambisa, which is close to the area. Following the killing of Abubakar Shekau, ISWAP has more capabilities to attack and disrupt Bama than when Shekau was in charge.



INSURGENCY REMAINS A CONCERN

Many of the former residents from Bama are happy to return to their former homes instead, in hopes of continuing their lives. But in previous HumAngle reports, we have uncovered how this has been hard for them. In some cases, some relocated residents complained of not getting food supplies or seedlings for over a year despite huge government spending, raising questions about possible gaps in implementation or whether essential supplies from the Borno State government are enough to cater to the returnees' needs.

One of such persons is 30-year-old Yagana Umara, who was returned after staying in Maiduguri for six years. The mother of seven children said: "We were driven out by Boko Haram from Bama and went to stay in Maiduguri."

She explained that she rushed down to Bama when the opportunity presented itself because of hunger and destitution back in Maiduguri.

"It is poverty that brought us here. We didn't get anything except for some assistance from one organisation,"

she said, adding that they were managing to survive.

Their land has been badly damaged by the conflict, impacting their productivity.

A recent report indicated that the levels of acute malnutrition among new arrivals from the inaccessible areas are critical with the overall Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rates standing at 20.7 percent and Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) at 4.9 per cent.

"This high level of acute malnutrition indicates an extremely stressed population including food insecurity, poor sanitation and hygiene and health conditions which are the key underlying causes of acute malnutrition," the report revealed.

The report added that detailed analysis among the newly arrived population with good quality and adequate sample size showed severe consumption deficits and concerning Severe Acute Malnutrition rates (15 percent) in Bama LGA.

GOVERNMENT SAYS IT HAS DONE ITS BEST

The United Nations Protocol on the Protection and Assistance to IDPs stipulates that authorities should ensure they create conditions that allow IDPs or refugees to return voluntarily to their homes or other parts of the country.

"Special efforts should be made to ensure the full participation of internally displaced persons in the planning and management of their return or resettlement and reintegration," it adds.

The state government claims it met these conditions, despite concerns from the IDPs indicating otherwise.

In a previous interview with HumAngle, the Commissioner for Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (RRR), Mustafa Gubio, said each household with a patriarch would be given an apartment with two rooms while a household with a matriarch would get a room and some cash token, half of what the male-headed household gets.

"I can assure you that none of the displaced persons was forced out of the camp; they were given three options of resettlement in Auno or Maiduguri metropolis, or in their respective communities."

While the good-intentioned nature of the resettlement is understood, geographic data indicates that the IDPs are on their path to a new journey on struggling survival. The displaced persons are farmers without farms, fishers without rivers, and traders without markets.

Despite these, they still have to deal with the almost unending insecurity that will confine their movements. The future is full of uncertainties for them.



OUTSIDE GIWA BARRACKS, MAIDUGURI. PICTURE WAS TAKEN ON APRIL 27, 2018, WHEN THE MILITARY UNVEILED NEWLY BUILT DETENTION CELLS. PHOTO: HUMANGLE

OVER 2,500 HELD AT GIWA BARRACKS, 67 WITH TUBERCULOSIS

THOUGH THE CONDITIONS OF DETAINEES AT THE NIGERIAN MILITARY FACILITY HAVE GENERALLY IMPROVED OVER THE YEARS, THERE IS STILL MUCH LEFT TO BE DESIRED.

KUNLE ADEBAJO

Despite the recent release of hundreds of people, there are still over 2,500 detainees at Giwa barracks, a military detention facility in Borno State where civilians are mostly kept without trial for years in connection to the Boko Haram insurgency, HumAngle can report.

An inside source informed HumAngle that 67 of the detainees were bedridden with tuberculosis at the last check while others showed symptoms of the disease.

In the early days of the insurgency, Giwa army barracks served as a refuge for residents fleeing from violent incidents involving the infant terror group. But, by Oct. 2012, there were already reports that it had become a facility where “Boko Haram suspects” were tortured, detained indefinitely under inhumane conditions, and prevented from communicating with lawyers or their families. Around the period, it was nicknamed Guantánamo after a U.S. detention camp in Cuba that is similarly notorious for indefinite detention without trial and acts of torture.

Amnesty International, a human rights research and advocacy group, reported in May 2016 that scores of people died at Giwa barracks every month, including children. “In all cells, detainees were subjected to conditions which amounted to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment,”

the group noted, blaming the centre’s congestion on arbitrary arrests of civilians based on random profiling.

It added that many of the inmates were victims of mass and arbitrary arrests “largely based on random profiling of men, especially

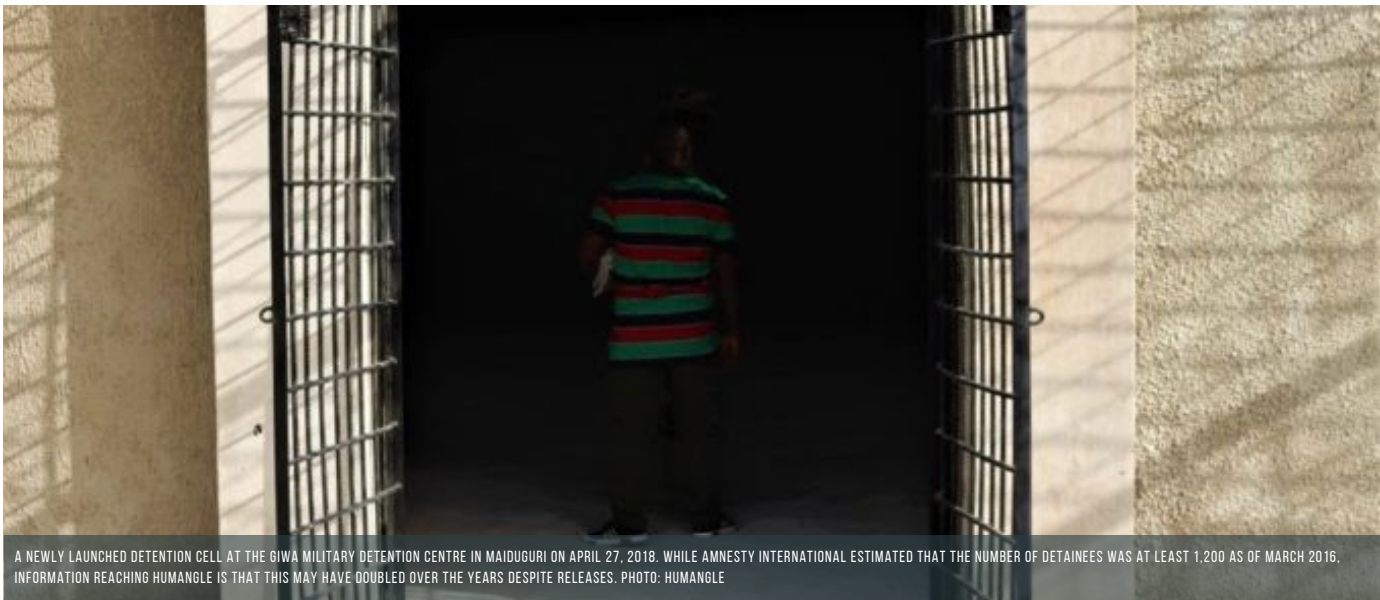
young men, rather than on reasonable suspicion of having committed a criminal offence.”

Sagir Musa, a former army spokesperson, last year described the allegations as “mere claims” that lacked any basis.

Meanwhile, information from our source confirmed findings that the conditions of detainees at the facility have improved, especially since 2018 when new cells were constructed and hundreds of detainees were released to decongest the place.

“Many people have died. Twenty to 30 people died daily; and during the month of April 2017, there were days when 70, 100, and 160 people died in a day,” he said.

He attributed the deaths to overcrowding, malnutrition, and lack of adequate water. Many of the detainees were down with several illnesses, including tuberculosis.



A NEWLY LAUNCHED DETENTION CELL AT THE GIWA MILITARY DETENTION CENTRE IN MAIDUGURI ON APRIL 27, 2018. WHILE AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL ESTIMATED THAT THE NUMBER OF DETAINEES WAS AT LEAST 1,200 AS OF MARCH 2016, INFORMATION REACHING HUMANGLE IS THAT THIS MAY HAVE DOUBLED OVER THE YEARS DESPITE RELEASES. PHOTO: HUMANGLE

Though water is available now, the cells are still congested, worsening the ventilation and making the inmates more susceptible to contagious illnesses.

Two to three deaths have been recorded so far in 2021 as a result of tuberculosis. "We have 103 tuberculosis patients and 36 of them were released," the source said. "Every now and then, there would be new cases." Tuberculosis is one of the leading causes of death worldwide, with symptoms that include a persistent cough that may be bloody, weight loss, high temperature, fatigue, and loss of appetite.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) notes that while an estimated 10 million people contracted the disease in 2019, 1.4 million lost their lives to it. Nigeria is one of the eight countries that account for 87 per cent of all new cases.

Since it is a contagious disease, one of the common ways of contracting tuberculosis is by being in a place where it can easily spread, such as a jail or prison. Similar cases of the infectious disease have been recorded at the Borno Maximum-Security Prison.

Brig. Gen. Onyema Nwachukwu, the Director of Army Public Relations, informed HumAngle that besides tuberculosis, another prominent infection some of the detainees, "about 65", were battling was hepatitis. "But they came with it," he explained. "It is not as if there was an outbreak."

He added that the authorities have made efforts to ensure that the affected persons are treated at a clinic located in the facility while more severe cases are transferred to an external hospital.

The Nigerian Army had announced on July 15 that it had cleared 1,009 detainees at Giwa barracks and the Maximum-Security Prison in Borno for release after establishing their innocence.

The total population of the detainees at the centre has recently been unstable owing to a wave of surrender by hundreds of Boko Haram militants.

About half of this number are believed to have been released from Giwa barracks and, according to our source, 16 of them are women while 48 are minors. About 50 women were said to still be held in the facility.

The total population of the detainees at the centre has recently been unstable owing to a wave of surrender by hundreds of Boko Haram militants.

It was gathered that some of them, detained briefly at Giwa barracks, have already been transferred to the Operation Safe Corridor camp in Gombe State, where former extremist fighters are 'deradicalised' and then released to be reintegrated.

"The food is not enough and there are many elderly people. The place is too congested and people get infected with tuberculosis; you would hear them coughing in the cell. There are some that are as old as 80 years."

He recommended that the food rations at the facility should be increased and the detainees released. "Most of the people are innocent. Only 30 per cent are real culprits and most of them are those that surrendered," he alleged.

Brig. Gen. Onyema Nwachukwu told HumAngle he did not have the statistics of the number of detainees at the centre, but confirmed that the recent surrenders of over 2,000 people associated with Boko Haram have led to an increase in the population.

"But this number included women and children. And those that are held in the facility are the combatants," he clarified.

IFE-MODAKEKE: DRUMS OF INTER-COMMUNAL CRISIS IN SOUTHWEST NIGERIA

KILLINGS AMONG NEIGHBOURING COMMUNITIES SPARK TENSION, OUTRAGE AND MEMORIES OF BLOODY PAST.

ADEJUMO KABIR

AUGUST 22, 2021



IMAGE OF MAYFAIR ROUNDABOUT IN ILE-IFE. PHOTO: THE GUARDIAN.



OSUN STATE POLICE COMMISSIONER, OLAWALE OLOKODE. PHOTO: OSUN STATE POLICE COMMAND.

CP OLAWALE T. OLOKODE (PSC)
COMMISSIONER OF POLICE
OSUN STATE COMMAND



OBAFEMI AWOLOWO UNIVERSITY CAMPUS GATE. PHOTO: ADEJUMO KABIR/HUMANGLE.

There was pandemonium in Ile-Ife and Modakeke communities of Osun State on Friday Aug. 20, following the lynching of five farmers on their way to the farm.

The farmers were said to be indigenes of Toro Village, Modakeke in Southwest Nigeria. Multiple sources told our reporter that the killings sparked outrage and escalated to the main town, forcing many shop owners in Mayfair, Ede road, and Lagere axis to abandon their businesses.

To ensure safety of students and staff, the management of Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) also shut the school gate for hours.

A community leader in Modakeke, who spoke to HumAngle under the condition of anonymity because of fear said “there was mayhem on Friday after five indigenes of Modakeke were killed along Toro road while heading to their farm. The incident got Modakeke youths angry and they attempted a reprisal.”

Our reporter gathered that the bodies of the deceased were taken to the morgue at Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospital.

A resident of Ile-Ife, Gbenga Idio, expressed concern over the ‘unending crisis’ between his community and Modakeke. He said “we ought to have gone past this. Anytime Modakeke residents get attacked, they storm the town causing mayhem. This has also been the case with Ile-Ife people. This should not be happening. The communities should look for evil perpetrators together rather than the repeated attacks on themselves.”

Sources told our reporter that some Modakeke youths also attempted to attack the palace of Ooni of Ife, Adeyeye Ogunwusi, but they were resisted by Ile-Ife youths at the palace’s entrance.

POLICE CONFIRM KILLINGS

The police in Osun State confirmed the killings in a statement signed by its spokesperson, Yemisi Opalola. She said the commissioner of police, Olawale Olokode, led the Police Response Team and Tactical Unit of the Command to the scene of the incident to restore normalcy.

“The CP appealed to the residents of the area to remain calm as the Command is resolute to get to the root cause(s) of the dastardly act and the perpetrator(s) will be brought to book. He urged residents of the area to avail the Command credible information that will fast track the arrest of the perpetrator(s) of the evil act.”

HumAngle was told that Olokode met with some Ile-Ife and Modakeke chiefs before he left the two communities for Osogbo.

OSUN GOVT SPEAKS

The Osun State government has allayed fears of a possible resurgence of the Ife-Modakeke crisis. The government in a statement by information commissioner, Funke Egbemode, said “it has ordered immediate deployment of armed policemen with support from the army in the trouble areas to forestall possible breakdown of law and order.”

“Mr. Governor personally spoke to the Ooni of Ife, Oba Enitan Adeyeye Ogunwusi and the Ogunsua of Modakeke, Oba Moses Oyediran Oladejo and they both assured him of their commitment to peace by ensuring that the people from both areas also continue to remain peaceful and law abiding.”

“As a government, we are resolved to do everything possible to protect citizens from actual and potential threats. To this end, we have ordered immediate deployment of security operatives to restore law and order.”

“We have also directed security operatives to arrest and prosecute any person found fomenting trouble and to fish out those responsible for the killing of the five farmers.”

‘UNENDING’ INTER-COMMUNAL CRISIS

The Ife-Modakeke inter-communal crisis began many years ago. For historians, seven major violent clashes have been recorded between them; 1835-1849, 1882-1909, 1946- 1949, 1981, 1983, 1997-1998, and 2000.

Multiple records revealed the causes as cultural identity, economics and politics related to land ownership, payment of land rent (Isakole), creation of local government and location of its headquarters.

The Ile-Ife community considered the Modakekes as visitors who migrated to the area following the collapse of the Old Oyo empire in the 19th century.

The indigenes of the former were dominating the latter and that was the major underlying factor in the crisis between the two Yoruba groups that has led to the slaughter of thousands of people.

The last major crisis was agitation by the Modakekes for a local government council of their own in the 1990s. The military junta of the late Sani Abacha granted their wish by creating Ife East Local Government out of the former Ife North and Ife Central local governments in 1997.



For Ile-Ife indigenes, they wanted the headquarters of the new council in their part of town but Modakeke people objected, saying they demanded the creation of the new local government.

In the long run, the government announced Oke-Ogbo in Ile-Ife as the headquarters. This was after initially indicating that Oke D. O. in Modakeke would be the location.

This was objected to by Modakeke residents who alleged injustice. This led to a full-blown crisis and the killings of hundreds of people from both sides. There were also destruction of hundreds of houses, cars and other properties.



THE TRUCE

After years of repeated killings, ex-president Olusegun Obasanjo set up a committee, led by Olabode George, with the support of the state government under the then governor, Bisi Akande, to find a lasting solution to the crisis.

In its recommendation, the committee proposed the recognition of Ife East Area Office as a local administration entity with headquarters at Oke, D.O. in Modakeke, and adding “Ife” as a prefix to Modakeke for the town to become known as Modakeke-Ife

It also recommended the location of a mobile police training school in Ile-Ife and police buffer zones in the flashpoints of the conflicts like Oke Yidi, Odo Okun, Iye Kere, Egbedore, Akrabata, Isale Agbara, and Mayfair/Obande areas.

HumAngle findings revealed that aside from relocating the local administration headquarters, all other recommendations are yet to be made a reality.

Although peace has relatively returned to the two communities, many victims of the violence still live with the trauma. Our reporter also gathered that the crisis seems “unending” as both communities continue to record attacks on their farms, just like it happened on Friday.

But there are separate committees in the two communities working in ensuring peace in order not to allow attacks on farms and boundaries lead to massive deaths and destruction of properties as recorded in the ‘90s.

ARMS SEIZURES, DESTRUCTION SHADOW NIGERIA'S WAR AGAINST TERROR GROUPS IN NORTHEAST

BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF COUNTER-INSURGENCY FORCES TO REDUCE OR STOP ATTRITION OF WEAPONS WHILE AT THE SAME TIME INCREASING THE LOSSES SUFFERED BY INSURGENTS IS ESSENTIAL TO IMPROVING SECURITY IN NORTHEASTERN NIGERIA AND THE LAKE CHAD BASIN REGION

MURTALA ABDULLAHI

AUGUST 23, 2021



The counterinsurgency and insurgency campaigns in the shrubland of Northeast Nigeria and the wetlands of Lake Chad Basin region are characterised by frequent attrition, particularly during periods of intense fighting and raids. Between January and early August 2021, data from the military and open-source intelligence indicates that the military destroyed, captured, and recovered more than 200 pieces of lethal and non-lethal equipment from the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) and Boko Haram. Although the report which does not include ammunition recovered or lost is based on the limited information available from official and open sources, it provides a view of the attrition war in the region.

Among the weapons seized over the past months are at least 11 Heavy Machine Guns (HMG)

also known as anti-aircraft guns (AA), comprising the Soviet-designed NSV and DShK HMGs, Chinese-designed W-85, and Type 85 HMGs chambered for 12.7 x 108 mm cartridge, usually mounted on trucks as an anti-personnel and anti-aircraft weapon.



Others included over 150 Fabrique Nationale (FN) FAL rifles, AK pattern rifles and variants such as the AKM, Serbian-built Zastava M21, and the Norinco Type 56.

There were also several general-purpose machine guns consisting of the PKM, Browning, and FN MAG.

At least 20 assault rifles and two grenades were surrendered to Nigerian troops in Northeast Borno by former Boko Haram combatants fleeing their enclave following ISWAP's incursion into Sambisa that led to the death of Abubakar Shekau and the absorption of fighters.

During the period in review, the military also recovered weapons used for deployment of explosive projectiles. These, for example, include the SPG-9 recoilless gun, rocket-propelled grenade launchers, mortar tubes and automatic grenade launchers, while a gun truck retrofitted into a car bomb was disabled.

In June, a suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (SVBIED) was captured during an ISWAP attack on a military base located in the town of Damboa. Hugo Kaaman, an independent researcher focused on SVBIED, tweeted that “an ISWAP up-armored SVBIED disabled by Nigerian forces during a failed ISWAP attack on an NA [Nigerian Army] base at Damboa, Borno. First use of camouflaged armor. Looks like armored glass from an Isotrex Phantom APC as a windshield.”

The terror group is known for removing armoured parts of captured military vehicles to fabricate car bombs used against ground forces. In February, the researcher identified another SVBIED with what appears to be armoured glass panels from a seized Isotrex Phantom 2 APC employed as windshield armour.

More than 30 gun trucks were either destroyed, damaged or captured by the Nigerian troops with 13 recorded as the military was pushing back an ISWAP attack on a military formation in new Marte in January. A significant proportion of the gun trucks, mostly Toyota Hilux and Buffalo land cruisers, are originally those of the Nigerian military lost in ambushes and large scale attacks on units.

ISWAP usually destroys armoured vehicles after stripping them of useful parts, likely because of the vulnerability of heavy armour to airstrikes or lack of expertise, or both factors. Likewise, the Nigerian military has encountered and disabled at least two armoured vehicles used in attacks on bases. For instance, an ex-Nigerian Army Fv103 spartan tracked armoured personnel carrier used in a February attack on Askira was smashed by the military and, in Damboa, an MT-LB amphibious multi-purpose tracked carrier was recaptured.

The FV103 destroyed in Askira bears resemblance to a similar carrier that appeared in propaganda media showing a FV103 captured in Gorgi area, located in the dreaded Alagarno forest axis.

LOSSES NOT ONE-SIDED

Security forces and support militias in the region have similarly suffered losses from attacks, with the Army suffering more – possibly connected to the central role it plays in providing security and sustaining the onslaught against terror groups.

In 2019, the Army established super camps to absorb forward operating bases or smaller units, thereby improving defensive capacity and curbing the alarming rate at which bases were dislodged that led to attrition of personnel and equipment. However, ISWAP continued to pose a threat to military convoys and adopted tactics that have enabled squads to either overwhelm, swarm or dislodge bases of varying sizes, including some with artillery and tanks.

Upon dislodging a formation, certain ISWAP units or fighters proceed to loot equipment and gears, which are reused for offensive operations against military forces in Nigeria, neighbouring Diffa in Niger republic, and the far North region of Cameroon.

The Air Force has been able to conduct bombing runs on raiding parties during intense confrontation or after the overrunning of bases. This has contributed to the number of ISWAP offensive assets captured or destroyed by the military, as highlighted

earlier. An analysis of combat losses is tricky due to the absence of official data from authorities as well as the risks of militants exaggerating their propaganda.

HumAngle, however, monitored open-source data including extensive work conducted by Calibre Obscura, a weapons researcher and analyst who documented and tracked the trend of weapons losses in the region.

ISWAP media have displayed more than 70 AK variants, FN rifles, HK21, pump-action and flintlock (dane guns) belonging to the Army, Police, and Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF). About 19 machine guns ranging from Vz.59, M60, FN MAG, RPK and MG-1M were also looted after attacks.

The seizures included heavy machine guns consisting of about two dozen NSV, W85, Type 85 and Dshkm alongside weapon systems designed to discharge a variety of warheads like the Soviet-built RPG 7 and Type 69 launchers, Automatic Grenade Launcher (AGL), and OTO-Melara Mod 56 105 mm pack howitzers.

An estimated 77 vehicles were stripped, destroyed or stolen from security forces; police, Army and CTJF units, comprising of heavy transport trucks, pick up in normal and gun truck configuration and armoured fighting vehicles; Isotrex Legion and Phantom II, Otokar Cobra, FV-103, Panhard AML-60, Mowag Piranha, Panhard VBL, Panhard ERC-90, Steyr 4K 7FA, BTR-4, Nigerian Army built Ezugwu and Conqueror, Vickers, T-55 and T-72AV MBT.

The number of these armoured vehicles that were unserviceable and abandoned is unknown but the diversity of the stockpile and location of incidents indicate that the vehicles were either used in defensive or offensive roles.

The Phantom II Armoured Personnel Carriers (APC) on its part bears the scars of the military operation in the first quarter of 2021 code-named ‘Operation Tura Takai Bango’ in Sambisa and Alagarno forest.

At least three or more Phantom II were destroyed or captured in fierce battles between Nigerian troops and insurgents in Alargano-Timbukwu triangle, as troops battled stiff resistance from the group in the form of counter-assault, bomb-laden vehicles, and buried improvised explosive devices.

In April, a group of ISWAP insurgents in multiple gun trucks and an unknown variant of a vehicle suspected to be Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles (MRAPs), launched a deadly raid on mobile and static army position in Mainok, leading to the capture of several vehicles including two or three new Legion MRAPs.

The Isotrex armoured vehicles (Legion and Phantom II) were acquired after authorities in February 2020 replaced the acquisition of 10 T90 tanks with 60 Legion (\$475,587.42), 12.7mm DSHK HMG (\$18,750), Codan Radios (\$6,920), and Armoured Turrets (\$29,631) – 24 Phantom II APC (\$385,208.67), 12.7mm DSHK AA Guns (\$18,750), Codan (\$6,920), and Turret (\$29,631).

The ability of the affected states in the Lake Chad Basin region and foreign partners to drastically reduce or stop the attrition of resources belonging to counterinsurgency forces and increase the losses recorded by terror groups is vital for security and stabilisation campaigns in the region.

HumAngle understands that this will require more training, appropriate acquisitions and use, counter-ambush measures, improved situational awareness, and rapid deployment capabilities.

AFTER RESCUE, ABDUCTION VICTIMS REMAIN HAUNTED BY MEMORIES

ALTHOUGH THEY ARE HOME NOW, THE MEMORIES OF WHAT THEY PASSED THROUGH IN CAPTIVITY
KEEPS THEM AWAKE AT NIGHT.

ADEBOWALE OLUWASEUN

AUGUST 21, 2021

When I close my eyes, I am haunted by flashbacks of the incident like it happened yesterday,” Jennifer Peter, one of the kidnapped victims from Federal College of Forestry and Mechanisation, Afaka in Kaduna, Northwest Nigeria, told HumAngle.

Mass kidnappings in the Northwest and North-central Nigeria have become endemic without a practical solution. The problem has gained the attention of professionals such as nuna therapists (clinical psychologists), social psychologists, security experts and economists who research its cause and consequences.

Data has shown that in the first six months of 2021, states in the Northwest Nigeria had 1,405 recorded cases of kidnapping, followed by the North-central region (942), then Northeast (211), Southwest (169), South-south (140), and Southeast (77).

Recently, terrorists shifted targets from farmers to students in

a bid to weaken the educational sector. This has created a ripple effect that has obstructed education, led to early marriage, cultism, peer pressure, early pregnancy, drug abuse, stigma associated with sexual violence, and children born as a result of rape.

Currently, many schools in Northwest Nigeria remain shut for fear of kidnappers. Ruth, a 100 level student of biotechnology from Greenfield University in Kaduna, said since her release from captivity she has stayed away from school.

“The incident also affected my school. There are some reconstructions going on and it will take a while before I go back because I question my safety in that school,” she explained. “Being there for so long shows how our educational sector is in a deep mess. No intervention from the government. The educational sector is supposed to be the biggest responsibility of the government, but they failed and they keep failing.”

HEALING TAKES TIME OR NEVER

Kidnapped victims are likely to take years before they heal from the psychological wounds inflicted upon them. And some never completely recover. Trouble sleeping is one of the most commonly reported psychological effects of kidnapping, as victims experience fear of being abducted, psychologists said.

“I was a deep sleeper before I was kidnapped, but since I came back from the bandits’ den, a little noise wakes me up. My first week at home was tough for me. Sometimes I had to stay awake to convince myself that everything is fine,” Ruth told HumAngle.

Families and relatives of victims are not left out of the pain and anxiety from pre-psychological and post-psychological trauma.

“When she talks about the incident, she suffers trauma. Also, her sleeping method changed and it took time for her to adjust. The first night she came home, she was looking so unhealthy and she didn’t even sleep because we had lots of questions to ask her,” a victim’s elder sister said. “Since I noticed she doesn’t like talking about it, we don’t grant interviews. But she is recovering fast.”

Dr Obabire Yemi, a psychologist, told HumAngle that kidnapping is a stressful event that can cause psychological imbalance and what a victim needs is psychological, social, and physical support.

“There is no ‘one-size-fit-all’ for kidnapped victims. Our approach is to individualise and be holistic. We don’t apply one solution to everybody. We look at each person’s individual circumstance,” he said.

RELATIVES SUFFER TRAUMA TOO

But there is a problem, he continued: “As frequent as kidnapping is in the country, we hardly see those who suffer from it present themselves to psychologists. In my own opinion, we are not paying enough attention to that.”

Dr Yemi further disclosed that he has spoken to some people who have relatives or friends who have been kidnapped and learned that it also has a great effect on these groups of persons.

In a statement released by The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the organisation expressed concern over growing numbers of students being kidnapped since Dec. 2020. The statement highlighted negligence on the part of government and school authorities who do not take actions to tighten up security around school premises.

“These incidents appear to be increasing in frequency, raising fears for the safety and well-being of the region’s children,” UNICEF stated.



IN JUNE 2021, THE NIGERIAN MILITARY RECOVERED NSV, W85, AND TYPE 85 HEAVY MACHINE GUNS DURING A COUNTER-ASSAULT ON AN ISWAP SQUAD IN LAMBOA AREA OF BORNO STATE.

GIS DATA REVEALS 31 IDP CAMPS AT RISK OF FLOODING IN NORTHEAST NIGERIA

ACCORDING TO DATA ANALYSED BY HUMANGLE, SEVERAL IDP CAMPS IN MAIDUGURI, BORNO STATE, ARE AT RISK OF FLOODING WITH PROPERTY LOSSES INCURRED IF AUTHORITIES DO NOT ACT SWIFTLY TO PROTECT LIVES AND PROPERTIES.

MUHAMMED AKINYEMI

MANSIR MUHAMMED

AUGUST 25, 2021

Changing climates are having serious environmental impacts across different parts of the world, and Maiduguri in Borno State, Northeast Nigeria, is not exempted from this. Currently faced with a 12-year-old insurgency with its ever-changing dynamics, resource access has become far more limited in the state capital than ever before.

The insurgency, which has displaced millions of people, has also put them at risk of the impact of changing environments. Aside from not being able to access more resources, residents in different Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps are also at the mercy of government authorities who often falter in their responsibilities. At the base of this helplessness is the possibility of flooding that threatens to push displaced persons out of their camps.

Aside from the impact of climate change, massive displacements in other towns, leading to forced migration to Maiduguri, have also affected the geography of the city, causing it to lose surface soil.

A study by the University of Maiduguri glossed on the connection between the city's vulnerability to flooding with urbanisation and associated environmental negligence, stating that "this urbanisation has generally induced flash floods, solid waste, distorted land use and environmental pollution." It also noted that "the floods were largely due to excess solid waste generated and encroachment of large development into natural drainage channels in the metropolis.

ALMOST 31 IDP CAMPS AT RISK

In April 2021, Relief Web, a humanitarian information website, published a report which highlighted the cases of flash floods in Borno, putting at least 800 IDP households in jeopardy. Borno, because of its placement on a higher latitude in the country, is often overlooked as a flooding concern.

In the 2021 flood outlook prepared by the Nigeria Hydrological Services Agency (NIHSA), the state is not listed in the 27 highly probable flood risk states, with no indication of the likelihood of flash floods. Data analysed by HumAngle has revealed that this is not true.

Information extracted from Geohazard Risk Mapping Initiative in May 2021 has shown that there is a risk of flood affecting about 31 IDP camps in Maiduguri.

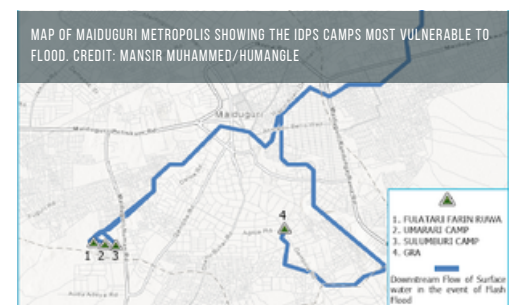
INTERACTIVE FLOOD MAP OF MAIDUGURI

Maiduguri is about 167 km² in size. The total area under assessment for flood risk is about 209.27 km² wide in a landmass area encompassing the Maiduguri metropolis and the areas surrounding the town. About 193km² of this total landmass is vulnerable to flood at different levels; 88.3km² of the total landmass is considered a high-risk area. And over 9,500 IDPs are vulnerable to flooding in these high-risk places.

An estimated 17,153 IDPs might be susceptible to the hazard despite living in low-risk areas. The flood risk analysis also shows that about 52.17 km² of the landmass within the Maiduguri area is considered to have low vulnerability to flood, 76.79 km² of the area falls under vulnerable, while about 11.46 km² is highly vulnerable.



This 250km streamflow model shows the direction in which the flood will pass through, thereby affecting some of the IDP camps. This is based on the natural slope configuration of the town.



The surface water flow path is in line with the natural slope path of the city which begins from the bank of Lake Chad at the extreme northeastern end of Borno. In this flood vulnerability analysis, the surface run-off of the flow of water into the IDP camps shows that when intense rains start — and it will — the likelihood of flash flooding then becomes increased after each downpour.

GROWING POPULATION INCREASING VULNERABILITY

A five-year analysis of some of the IDP camps and places around Maiduguri shows growth in physical structures, even around IDP camps. These growths put a strain on the topography of the various areas where the IDP camps are situated, making them more vulnerable during flooding.



In some of the reviewed locations, the soil area has become more shallow and human structures are slowly replacing natural breakers like trees, which can act as support systems during and against some of these disasters.



The compact nature of some of these structures — built very close to one another — increases their vulnerability. The trajectory of many of these areas over a five-year period also makes it obvious that the structures have not been spaced out but have been built very closely. Despite these assessments, there is little to no effort on the part of the government to either avert these disasters, to make evacuation plans for them, or to prepare the IDPs in case of such emergencies.



AUTHORITIES GHOST RESPONSIBILITIES

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) was established to manage disasters in Nigeria. NEMA is mandated to tackle disaster-related issues through the establishment of concrete structures and measures. Such measures as the education of the public to raise their level of awareness and reduce the effects of disasters in the country. To allow effective response and coordination of efforts, several states in Nigeria operate a S-EMA.

When HumAngle reached out to Yabawa Kolo, Director-General of Borno State SEMA, she said she is “currently on medical leave” and gave the contact of someone acting in her stead. The acting person, simply called Gadau, when informed about the impending danger, said “you mean IDP camps are flooded with rainwater?”

HumAngle clarified that the camps are currently not flooded but are at risk of flooding, and he responded that “even last time about two weeks ago, we got a report about a camp in a particular village ... We went there and saw that some of the camps were inside the water.”

“On our own part, we initiated a programme of meeting with partners who we are partnering with, in the fields of humanitarian activities and we have reached a certain kind of tentative agreement that we and the partners will partner in providing some sort of relief to the IDPs and at the same time, we have initiated at our own end that the areas which the rainwater flows through have been blocked, so we are making frantic efforts to see that this does not happen again,” he added.

HumAngle, however, soon discovered that Gadau was making reference to a flooding incident that has already happened, while the focus is on imminent ones. Upon correction, Gadau noted that “we have the mandate of talking to the people and rendering them our services in all these directions, not just the IDP camps but every part of Borno State. Now you are talking about IDP camps, we have done our best to ensure that these IDP camps are not flooded.”

He omitted plans that SEMA was actively taking to help the IDPs.

Attempts to reach the Nigeria Meteorological Agency (NIMET) to know if it shared relevant forecasts with the emergency management agencies were met with futility as HumAngle correspondents were directed to different persons who did not have information.

Meanwhile, the threat remains imminent. Kayode Adeniyi, a GIS expert, told HumAngle that “international NGOs validate aids required by each camp based on data derived from field officers and satellite imageries.”

“Further displacement due to flooding will make effective monitoring and validation difficult,” he explained. “They’ll have to start again and it will lead to delayed responses. In fact, most IDP camps use canopies; floods can move buildings so there is little guarantee for them.”

GUILTY UNTIL PROVEN INNOCENT: THE DETAINEES' NIGHTMARE

IT TOOK THREE TO SIX YEARS OF AGONISING DETENTION AND TOTAL SEPARATION FROM THEIR FAMILIES FOR MU'AZU AND MUHAMMAD TO BE "CLEARED" AS HAVING NOTHING TO DO WITH THE NOTORIOUS TERROR GROUP, BOKO HARAM.

KUNLE ADEBAJO

AUGUST 31, 2021



MU'AZU*. THE FORMER DETAINEES' NAMES HAVE BEEN CHANGED TO PROTECT THEIR IDENTITY. PHOTO: KUNLE ADEBAJO/HUMANGLE

The people of Andara, a town in Northeast Nigeria, were worried sick when Boko Haram invaded in 2014 and started dictating how they could go about their lives. The terrorists set strict rules and forced them to receive religious instructions, all while threatening anyone who dared to disobey with death. So, one day, many of the locals fled under the cover of night, including Mu'azu, 35, and various members of his family.

Located in the Bama Local Government Area (LGA) of Borno State, Andara at the time had close to 200 households. The people farmed and reared livestock without hindrance.

"But when they came, they began to impose their rules on us, like women should not go to farms or fetch water and firewood, and men should attend Islamic schools, raise their trousers [a practice known as *nisfu sak*], grow a beard, and observe prayers accordingly. And no smoking and taking of drugs," Mu'azu, a soft-spoken man, recalls. "We just had to observe them against our wish because if we didn't, we would be killed."

Anyone seen trying to escape was slaughtered. Though no one was caught in Andara, they heard of public executions that took place in neighbouring villages. This, however, did not stop them from plotting their escape. Eight months into the occupation, they tried their luck. "About 50 households escaped that day. Some escaped in

the daytime and others in the night. We assembled in the bush and waited for others from the neighbouring villages before we proceeded."

With the communities being just a few kilometres away from the border, they went straight to Cameroon in their hundreds. Days later, five of them, including boys as young as nine or 10, were screened out as suspected Boko Haram members, beaten, blindfolded, and taken away to Banki in Nigeria, by the military. Everyone else had heaved a sigh of relief, which they would later find was premature.

Bama Local Government's chairman visited the displaced people and suggested they remain in Banki, Mu'azu says. But some of the people complained that they had not been receiving their salaries. Others feared the town was vulnerable to terrorist attacks. So they boarded trucks and buses and followed the chairman to Bama town, at the heart of the Local Government Area.

Muhammad, 41, was born in Makasuwa, a community in Borno's Mafa LGA, and had lived there all his life. Like Mu'azu, he was also victimised by Boko Haram. On their way to launch attacks in Dikwa and other communities in Central Borno, the terrorists would pass through Makasuwa and preach to the residents. This happened almost daily.

“They would tell us we should study, we should not allow our wives to work on the farm or fetch water, we should grow a beard, we should shorten our trousers, our women should cover themselves with hijab, and so on,” he says, his recollection quite similar to that of Mu’azu.

The community leaders agreed it was best they sold their livestock before the Boko Haram members seized them. Muhammad’s family, which had up to 70 cows, started selling them in batches.

“When our people took some of the animals to Maiduguri to sell, they stayed there for over a month because the market was not good. When they noticed we were selling the cows, they seized the remaining ones. From there life became very difficult for us because they even seized farm produce like beans, groundnuts, sesame seeds, onions, and millet.”

With his livelihood gone, Muhammad decided to join his kinsmen who had travelled to Maiduguri with his wife and children in early 2018. About two other men and four households joined them. They settled at the gate of the Muna Garage IDP camp located along the Maiduguri-Dikwa road on the outskirts of the state capital.

But that night, some soldiers came and asked who among them was “Muhammad.” When he signalled, they put him in their van and drove off to the “sector.”

“They asked me if I am Boko Haram, I told them I am not. ‘I was staying in Makasuwa, teaching Qur’an to children. I came here when it was not comfortable for me to stay there.’ They said, ‘Since you have stayed with them you are Boko Haram,’” he narrates.

The soldiers asked why he stayed back when some of the residents already left, and he replied that he did not get a chance to. “I was an Imam and they were strictly monitoring me. People began to leave gradually as it became difficult to stay there due to starvation.

Then I also left when I got the opportunity,” he explained to them. During the two weeks he spent at the sector command, he would be offered food just once every day at 4 p.m. The Army officers quizzed him four times about alleged ties with Boko Haram but he stuck to his story.

“They took me to Maimalari barracks. After about 30 minutes, they took me to a certain house; they said it was in the garrison. I stayed there for two days but they didn’t ask anything. Then they took me to Giwa barracks,” he says, tugging at his right foot.

THE DREADED GIWA BARRACKS

Nigeria’s most notorious detention centre, Giwa barracks has become infamous for keeping civilians and suspects indefinitely without trial and in inhumane conditions.



MU’AZU*. THE FORMER DETAINEES’ NAMES HAVE BEEN CHANGED TO PROTECT THEIR IDENTITY. PHOTO: KUNLE ADEBAJO/HUMANGLE

Amnesty International, a human rights research and advocacy group, reported in May 2016 that scores of people died at the facility every month, including children. “In all cells, detainees were subjected to conditions which amounted to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment,” the group noted, blaming the centre’s congestion on arbitrary arrests of civilians based on random profiling.

It was here Mu’azu would spend the next five years and eight months of his life and Muhammed the next three years and two months of his.

For Mu’azu, life in Giwa barracks was “very bad.”

“We eased ourselves in the cell because there was no toilet. It was congested. There wasn’t enough food and water and people used to die every day. Twelve, 15, 20, 30 died. Three, four, five people died daily in our cell alone and there was a time about 303 people died in a week. We lived like that for two years until the Red Cross came and the situation began to improve.”

Among the fatalities were at least five people from Mu’azu’s hometown, Andara.

With the intervention of the Red Cross, an international humanitarian group, food and water became more abundant and detainees were given soap to have their baths.

Mu’azu believes many of the detainees were innocent and is unsure about some others. He was interrogated only twice during the almost six years he spent at the facility. The first took place a week following his arrival and the second was during a review in 2019.

“They asked if we were Boko Haram and we told them we were not, that we left our village because they were worrying us,”

he tells HumAngle.

He was not given access to a lawyer but remembers a group of lawyers once came and met with about 500 detainees. He was also not allowed to communicate with his wife and children. It was later he learnt they had been hearing about him from detainees released in previous years.

Muhammad did not also receive legal aid nor was he permitted to reach out to his family all through his years in detention. He was quizzed two weeks into his stay at the facility and the second time much later. He tells HumAngle he was adamant about his version of events.

While he believes most of the other detainees were innocent like him, he did meet one person who used to supply Boko Haram and had been picked up after delivering a camera to a young “journalist” working for the terror group.

Though Muhammad was detained at a time conditions at the centre had improved significantly, there were still shortcomings.

“We were 270 in the cell. I didn’t know many people back then. It was congested. There was food but due to the heat, we couldn’t eat. There was drinking water but not enough for taking bath. Because of the scarcity, I would be unable to bathe for over a month,” he laments.

“Most of them [the detainees] were sick and there were some who died, like say two to three in a week. They then created an outer cell for the underaged. They sometimes took us there in the daytime and then returned us to our cells. It was when a case of sodomy occurred against a small child they stopped bringing us out.”

Both Muslims, one common thread in Mu’azu and Muhammad’s stories was how they practised their faith despite the challenges. Because of water scarcity, the inmates would perform “dry ablution” using sand or the cell walls and then observe the mandatory daily prayers. Mu’azu was, in fact, able to memorise seven *hizb* (about a tenth of the Qur’an) during his stay.

“Giwa was very bad but I was taking some Islamic lessons from the learned ones among us,” he says. “Red Cross gave us copies of the Holy Quran and some Islamic books.”

According to Amnesty International, many of the inmates at Giwa barracks were victims of mass and arbitrary arrests “largely based on random profiling of men, especially young men, rather than on reasonable suspicion of having committed a criminal offence.” Though the Nigerian military has dismissed these as “mere claims,” recently released detainees continue to narrate their experiences of anguish. Seeing them for the first time after many years, wives of former detainees often describe their husbands as looking “very slim and starved.”

BACK TO SQUARE ONE

The Nigerian Army announced, on July 15, that it had released 1,009 detainees after clearing them of wrongdoing, clarifying that they were “not ex Boko Haram fighters.” About half of this number were detainees at Giwa barracks while the rest had been kept at the Borno Maximum Security Prison.

There was a hunger strike at Giwa barracks in April but it is



not certain if it had anything to do with the release. The ration of food, water, and soap had been reduced and the detainees were not pleased.

“After about three days, one general came and asked us to suspend the strike and he assured us that there would be improvements. They took our names and later we were released,” Mu’azu recalls.

Confirming information received from other sources, he says 500 of the detainees at Giwa barracks were released, including 14 women. Despite this development, the facility still held over 2,100 people, including “small children” and about 40 women.

One of the greatest shocks Mu’azu and Muhammad received following their release had to do with their families. They lost a child each while in detention. For Mu’azu, this was in addition to another of his children who had died during their brief stay in Banki. Also, one of Muhammad’s two wives had returned to her family in Dikwa. Mu’azu’s only wife had remarried and is with her new husband in Lagos, over 1,500 km away in southern Nigeria.

“I want her to come back because I still love her,” he says in his characteristic soft voice. “We spoke twice and I sent a message to her new husband that their marriage is invalid because it was a marriage on top of another marriage [bigamy]. Then the new husband asked for a refund of his expenditures in the marriage, but he didn’t say how much.”

Another shock Mu’azu received was the sheer number of people who died while he was away, some killed by Boko Haram terrorists, others by starvation and disease at a displacement camp in Bama years ago.

Neither of the men has been compensated by the Nigerian authorities despite clearing their names, nor was any assistance provided to support their reintegration. So, they are thinking of rolling their sleeves and getting to work, knowing they have been giving another shot at life and that they have families to take care of.

For Mu’azu, that means hopefully starting a business that will involve selling cosmetic products. For Muhammad, it means returning to the farm. But, first, they both need to raise enough money.

BORNO'S CHRISTIAN IDPS (1): STRUGGLING FOR SURVIVAL WITHOUT GOVERNMENT SUPPORT



CHILDREN LOOK ON AT THE FACADE OF EYN CAN CENTRE IDP CAMP LOCATED IN MAIDUGURI, BORNO STATE CAPITAL, NORTHEAST NIGERIA. THIS IS WHERE MANY CHRISTIANS IN THE STATE DISPLACED BY THE BOKO HARAM INSURGENCY SEEK REFUGE. PHOTO CREDIT: NATHANIEL BIVAN/HUMANGLE

MANY OF THEM FLED FROM THE ONLY HOME THEY EVER KNEW IN PARTS OF GWOZA, BAGA, AND CHIBOK IN NORTHEAST NIGERIA. TODAY THEY LIVE IN IDP CAMPS WITH LITTLE OR NO GOVERNMENT SUPPORT.

NATHANIEL BIVAN

AUGUST 31, 2021

The man sits up with an air of dignity lacking in many occupants of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp, popularly called EYN CAN Centre, in Maiduguri, Northeast Nigeria.

His name is John Gwamma, 53, once a social studies teacher back in Halawa, Bayan Dutse in Gwoza Local Government Area (LGA). It is August 21, 2021. Rain had poured earlier and where he sits, close to the camp's fence, is a shelter a few metres away from the flooded entrance.

This camp is one among the four housing Christians displaced by the 12-year-old war between the Nigerian government and Boko Haram, a terrorist group that later birthed a more violent faction known as Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP).

The camp Gwamma seeks refuge in was set up by Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (Church of the Brethren in Nigeria) in conjunction with the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN). Besides this, there are other camps; DCC Shwari, Shagari Low-cost, and Saint Hillary.

HOW THEY EVOLVED

On June 5, 2014, Boko Haram drove into Gwamma's settlement in Gwoza LGA in large numbers. "They wore military uniforms and used their vehicles," he recalls. So, the people shouted that the Nigerian army had come. But, "they were well-armed, took different positions and opened fire, killing anyone in sight, including women and children."

That day all the routes leading out of Halawa to Gwoza LGA headquarters and the Cameroon border were blocked by the terrorists. By nothing short of a miracle, Gwamma made it out alive. His son, 31, an undergraduate from Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Kaduna State, was, however, not that lucky.

Gwamma lost everything, except for the clothes on his back. After reuniting with his wife and children on the Mandara Mountains where they spent 14 days, they all trekked to Madagali and then Michika in Adamawa State. Here too the terrorists attacked in droves and the family escaped death once more.

When they reached Maiduguri, there was nowhere to sleep because there were many IDPs. "Some were staying with relatives, some under trees," Gwamma narrates.



JOHN GWAMMA SAYS CHRISTIAN IDPS AVOIDED THE GENERAL IDP CAMPS FOR FEAR THAT THOSE WHO KILLED THEIR LOVED ONES WERE THERE TOO. PHOTO CREDIT: NATHANIEL BIVAN/HUMANGLE

But there were IDP camps. It was just that the Christians avoided them like the plague and preferred other less attractive options. “We could not go to the government IDP camp because some of those who pursued us, the Boko Haram, were there. It is not easy to stay in the same place with someone who killed your child and looted your property. Some of our children were abducted by Boko Haram. So, we the Christians decided to stay away. There was no food, clothing or shelter at that time for us,” Gwamma explains. The time he arrived, on June 23, 2014, the EYN CAN Centre camp was a barren land. Gwamma was the first, then other Christians started coming. “From June to October, there was no intervention, be it from NGOs or the government,” he continues. This was when Gwamma took the bold step and approached Senator Kashim Shettima, who was a governor at the time. “As camp chairman then, I laid out all our problems,” he says. Soon, organisations such as Action Against Hunger and other NGOs came to the rescue.

OVERWHELMING FEAR

Gwamma’s experience is similar to that of Filibus, 63, who fled to Cameroon and then back to Jos, Plateau, in North-central Nigeria, where he learned his wife had made it out alive too. His mother, on the other hand, was not so fortunate. Almost a hundred years old, she was restricted by the terrorist group.

It was an ‘act of God’ when Filibus and his family later made it back to their home state. But this time around, they holed up in Maiduguri. Beaten and hungry from the long journey, they had nowhere to stay until they were pointed to “a field.”



MARYAMU YUSUF FELT UNSAFE UNTIL SHE FOUND A CAMP MAINLY FOR CHRISTIANS. PHOTO CREDIT: NATHANIEL BIVAN/HUMANGLE



FILIBUS IS AN IDP AT DCC SHWARI IN MAIDUGURI. HE SAYS THEY HAD NOWHERE TO STAY UNTIL THEY WERE POINTED TO “A FIELD” THAT SOON BECAME AN IDP CAMP FOR CHRISTIANS. PHOTO CREDIT: NATHANIEL BIVAN/HUMANGLE

“When I was in Cameroon where I spent eight months, anytime I met a Muslim, I felt like I was in the presence of a Boko Haram member because of what I suffered. In fact, I didn’t want to return to Nigeria but had to because of my family,” Filibus says.

The father of 13, some of whom are from his late wife, adds: “My heart couldn’t bear to stay with Muslims in the same camp. But gradually, as time went on, I was able to greet them with less fear.”

Maryamu Yusufu, a widow, experienced the same kind of fear when she came to Maiduguri. She did not look elsewhere when EYN CAN Centre had no room for her and her four children.

“I was afraid of staying where there are Muslims,” she tells HumAngle. And so when she learned about Shwari camp, she did not hesitate to go there.

MOUNTING DISTRUST

At DCC Shwari camp, the old who can hardly do any work sit on mats chatting away while children run around the compound. Like the CAN Centre, it was also set up by EYN.

“We get food from Christian brethren,” John Zira Hwara, the camp leader says. “They give offerings in their churches. CAN also does Christmas appreciation for us at the end of the year. Christian denominations do the same. For about six months, we have not even had a visit from NGOs.”

DCC Shwari is under the EYN Local Church Council of Pomponari. So, Shwari camp is a District Church Council of EYN. This is where Hwara has served since he was posted in 2018 to lead the camp’s church.

But the camp, which doubles as a worship centre for the displaced, has come a long way.

In 2014 when 42-year-old Adamu Yakubu, the camp’s current secretary arrived, the place was surrounded by bushes with no houses or people around. “So, when the CAN Centre was filled up, people were brought here,” he says.

Before then, Yakubu had narrowly escaped death in Gwoza when Boko Haram attacked his village in Nov. 2013.

“Back home, we lived behind the Mandara Mountains,” he narrates. “When we escaped, we first came to Cherubim and Seraphim around the post office before we came here.”

When they came to Shwari camp, his parents were still in Gwoza. Later, he learned of his father’s death at the hands of terrorists when he was about to enter Cameroon. By then, Yakubu’s mother was on top of the Mandara Mountains when Boko Haram captured her and threatened to sell her into slavery after she refused to marry one of them.

But today his mother is also at the Shwari camp, including his wife and children while Yakubu’s siblings remain in Cameroon.

“In Gwoza, it was the Christians who started to flee and there was no place for us to stay afterwards,” he continues. “There is no way you would see the brother of someone who killed your own brother or father and stay in the same place with that person. That is why our people kicked against it. Before we were all going to be put together in the NYSC camp. That was when Christian leaders decided to take our people to CAN Centre.”



THE ENTRANCE TO DCC SHWARI IDP CAMP IN MAIDUGURI. OCCUPANTS HERE SAY THEY HAVE NOT RECEIVED FOOD OR ANY KIND OF HELP FROM THE GOVERNMENT. THE SPACE THEY OCCUPY AND THE HELP THEY GET ARE PRIMARILY FROM EYN. PHOTO CREDIT: NATHANIEL BIVAN/HUMANGLE

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

At the start, there was no external support for the 26 occupants of DCC Shwari until the Red Cross intervened. Then their numbers rose as some churches brought more displaced persons.

“The former governor [Kashim Shettima] used to give us food and we would cook outside. But that later stopped,” Yakubu says. “Right now, food comes mainly from churches. Action Against Hunger is the only NGO that has come here. They gave us cards but we are yet to start collecting food. There is presently no government intervention here.”

But the situation at Shwari is slightly different from what obtains at EYN CAN Centre IDP camp, HumAngle found out. While the latter receives some government attention, Shagari Low-cost, Saint Hillary and DCC Shwari do not.

Dala Yaro, a staff member of the Borno State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) who has managed (on behalf of SEMA) the four Christian camps in Maiduguri, gives an explanation.

He points out that the camp was established in May 2014 after SEMA was unable to put Christians and Muslims in the same place. “The Christians were afraid because those who drove them from their villages were Muslims. For this reason, there was no way they could be in the same camp.

“Most of them in the CAN Centre came from Gwoza, almost 99 per cent. From the beginning, there were five households from Margi, two households from Michika, and one from Chibok. Then more started trooping in. The government during the time of Kashim Shettima commissioned this camp. Back then, a kitchen was being run here where they eat. But after two years this ceased,” he says.

Currently, every month-end, SEMA brings condiments to the camp such as cooking oil, seasoning, and other such items, Yaro explains.

In 2015, Christian Aid intervened for a year at the CAN Centre. Then the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) took over in 2017 and 2018.



There were also other NGOs such as the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), and World Health Organization (WHO).

“But for about four months they have not received food supplies because the government cannot intervene in one camp,” Yaro says about the CAN Centre. “Because NGOs are coming here, the government decided to pull back and only give condiments.”

He adds that other Christian camps are under the EYN CAN Centre because they evolved due to the latter’s lack of space. But, “whatever is brought to the CAN Centre by SEMA does not get to the others,” he says. “Since there is an NGO presence in Hillary camp, the government also ‘hands-off’ there.”

At EYN Shagari Low-cost, Naomi Yohanna, 43, and mother of six tries to engage in farming as much as the security situation permits in order to earn a living. “We cut down trees for firewood and sell,” she tells HumAngle. “Sometimes I clean houses and do the laundry. I have done that for about two months and collected N3,000 per month.”

But the camp was not initiated by the state government. “This Shagari low-cost camp was set up by EYN. They always pay us a visit and pray with us. They also share food for us,” Yohanna says. “Churches have not forsaken us. We don’t have any NGO helping us. In 2017/2018, Christian Aid registered us and gave us food for about four months before they stopped. We thank God because Jesus has told us that this world is not for us.”



WHY THEY MAY FEEL NEGLECTED

Men like Ibrahim Kulka, 53, sought labour opportunities on farms. But when they were attacked at Mailalari, they never went again. “We used to make N700 to N800,” he tells HumAngle. “Now it has been six months since we have gotten food from the government. Surprisingly, some camps still get food supplies.”

maila Ayuba Ashiffa, an IDP at the EYN CAN Centre, recalls how, from the beginning, the state government paid attention to them. From 2014, down to 2015 and 2016.

“The assistance continued to decline up till this moment,” he says. “Right now, we don’t get food from the state government. We don’t know why, but we were promised food from the beginning during the time of the former governor, Kashim Shettima. Then, in 2015, we were convinced to vote for APC so we can get assistance and from top to bottom we voted for APC because we were promised that we would be able to return to our homes in Gwoza. But this did not happen. However, recently, some of our people returned to Goshe in Gwoza LGA.

“He [governor] promised that if Buhari becomes president and he becomes governor, he would take care of us. But this is not the case presently. We face a lot of challenges. We feel neglected, like we are not Borno State indigenes.

“Also, we face challenges in the area of schooling. There were some children who were selected for scholarships in Sokoto. But when they are selecting, they, for example, take five Christians and 10 Muslims.

They don’t do it fifty-fifty because they have a monopoly

of political power. It is the same when it comes to the way they treat Bakassi camp and Dolori camp compared to how they treat us in EYN CAN, Shagari or Shwari camp. We however depend solely on God.”

Ashiffa points across the road to where the sound of grinding machines floats from some makeshift structures.

“EYN brethren recently helped us. Some of the grinding machines we have here were idle until they came. Now we have grains to grind because of them.”

But Yaro mentions a day in August when IDPs at EYN CAN Centre were given food. “Each person gets two measures of maize and rice, one litre of tin oil, a packet of food seasoning, salt and detergent,” he says, and adds that it is not easy.

Then he gives an example of what may be the source of the problem. “Stadium Camp doesn’t have more than four or five Christian IDPs. They are mostly Muslims there. Sometimes some Muslims take their zakat [charitable donation] there. Just like some Christians may want to give their tithes. But some Christians may think that they are ignored by the government.”

A pastor who has lived in Maiduguri before the insurgency started emphasises that “Christians are not being taken care of like the Muslims.”

He adds that “the camps were not separated from the beginning, but when the Christians discovered that they were not given food or clothing like the Muslims, they left the camps. Some of them left for some churches. Some left for the CAN centre or the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria where a camp was later formed. Because of their plight, their lack of food and clothing, we buy things and take to them.

“We had a brother who came from Lagos on a monthly basis. He invites all of them to our regional headquarters. He buys bags of maize. And then, at a time, he decided that he was going to empower them, so he would select 40 people on a monthly basis and give them N25,000. After a month he would return to assess how far they had gone with the resources and then empower another 40. After that, he would go to Shwari camps one and two. He did that for about a year.”

The pastor says a school called African Global Mission was founded by his church’s regional pastor. Then a skills acquisition centre was opened a stone’s throw from the camp.

“The school is free. Even if you are not from the camp, you are welcomed. Even some Muslims attend. But because the help from churches is hardly enough, you see the IDPs going from church to church when there is a welfare service,” he says.

“At other non-Christian camps, the IDPs are registered with organisations where they get monthly payments and also have a place where they pick their food according to the number of their households. But the Christians fend for themselves, engage in farming, security, dishwashing, and so on. The segregation amongst IDPs is serious because of their religion.”

The pastor also points out that the camps lack security personnel.

But Yaro explains that at other camps like Dalori, the United Nations World Food Programme attends to them (WFP). Then also, NEMA in camps like Bakassi and WFP in Gubio.

“Usually, where the government intervenes, NGOs don’t go there,” Yaro stresses. “EYN CAN Centre has 376 households and 2,240 individuals.”

But occupants of the camp feel differently about the situation. It is early afternoon and some say they are yet to know what they would eat for lunch, talk less of dinner. The picture is the same at Shagari Low-cost where women sit in groups, idle and waiting for the next meal.

“By evening, this place will be flooded with men,” John Ali, a former vice leader at CAN Centre says, referring to how the situation pushes young women to trade sex for daily bread



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