

# Nigeria: Top UN officials say more support needed to ease humanitarian crisis and rebuild lives in conflict-ravaged north-east

The top United Nations relief and development officials on Saturday called for national and international partners to step up support for humanitarian efforts in [north-eastern Nigeria](#) and help millions of people rebuild their lives in the region that has been ravaged by Boko Haram's near decade-long insurgency.

UN Development Programme ([UNDP](#)) Administrator Achim Steiner and UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Mark Lowcock made this call as they [wrapped up a two-day official visit](#) to Nigeria to rally support for the Government-led efforts on the ground, especially in the conflict-torn northeastern Nigerian states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe.

"We are committed to Nigeria and to the people of Nigeria," said Mr. Lowcock, who heads up the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs ([OCHA](#)).

Humanitarian aid can only be a temporary solution, he said and was pleased to visit the region alongside the UNDP Administrator to help join up humanitarian and development efforts "to save lives, help stabilize the situation, rebuild lives and communities for the future."

"We must do everything we can to prevent this crisis from continuing for years," Mr. Lowcock told reporters in Maiduguri, at the end of the visit, which also included meetings with Minister of Finance Zeinab Ahmad, government ministers and high-level officials.

They visited projects in Bama town and Ngwom community in Borno, the state most affected by the 10-year conflict, where humanitarian and development workers are providing life-saving assistance and implementing development programmes. The two officials heard first-hand testimonies from people affected by the Lake Chad Basin crisis who are trying to rebuild their lives.

"We have a unique opportunity to make a real difference to communities across the north-east of Nigeria," said Mr. Steiner. "Helping people affected by the crisis requires us to work together – humanitarian and development organizations alike – to tackle immediate humanitarian needs and the root causes of the crisis."

The Government of Nigeria has launched recovery initiatives and efforts in north-east Nigeria aimed at rapid stabilization. Early recovery and livelihood activities implemented by UN agencies and international and local NGOs seek to address the underlying causes of the conflict, lay the

foundations for sustainable development and prevent aid dependency.

The humanitarian crisis in Nigeria's north-east has spilled over into the Lake Chad region. It remains one of the most severe in the world today with 7.7 million people in need of humanitarian assistance in the worst-affected states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe alone.

According to OCHA, food security and the nutrition situation remains extremely fragile across the north-east, particularly given the high levels of aid dependency, compounded by the lack of access to land or other livelihood opportunities. Up to three million people are estimated to suffer from critical food insecurity. Almost a million children aged from six months to five years are acutely malnourished, with 440,000 facing Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM).

The visit follows an [international donor conference](#) held in Berlin in early September during which some \$2.5 billion was pledged for humanitarian, stabilization and recovery projects in the Lake Chad region.