



ADVOCACY NOTE ON THE RELOCATION OF IDPS FROM ISS CAMP, NGALA TO LOGUMANE IN BORNO STATE, AND THE PROTECTION CONCERNS

JANUARY 29, 2024

1. Background .

In pursuit of its agenda to end forced displacement, the Borno State Government (BSG), conducted the first relocation of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) within the Local Government Areas (LGA) in 2024 as it relocated 408 HHs of the ISS Camp in Ngala LGA on 20th January 2024. The ISS camps host about 41,317 individuals within 10,284 households. Of the 10,284 households, 488 households were registered by SEMA for return to Logumane, their ancestral home, as reported. Of the registered number of 488 households, 408 were facilitated by the BSG from the ISS Camp to Logumane.

Commendably, on January 7th, The Governor of Borno State had made a blanket distribution where women received one clothing wrapper and 5,000 Naira, while the men received 25 KG bags of rice and maize on that day. In his speech, the governor promised to return Logumane community in a week, or at most two weeks. He said he had already built 500 houses at the community's location (35 KM from Ngala, sharing a border with Dikwa), and installed streetlights. At the time of his speech, no specific date was given but he mentioned he would prioritize other Logumane members returned from Maiduguri, Jere, or Monguno. On January 20, 2024, the relocation took effect without any prior information on the date of relocation.



Arrival in Logumane

The Governor of Borno State arrived in Logumane and assured the IDPs of his support for reintegration. The established Local Government Assigned Committee supported the allocation of the houses. Men were supported with 2 cows, 2 pieces of clothing (5 yards each), farming fertilizers and pest spraying cans, seedlings, 50,000 Naira each, 25Kgs rice and 25kgs Maize. Women were supported with 4 sets of children' slothing (2 for boys and 2 for girls) and 20, 000 Naira each. Upon arrival in Logumane, married men and their wives were allocated houses, while female-headed households were yet to be allocated houses on Monday 22nd of January 2023, according to anecdotal information received, the committees are planning to have multiple women (single-headed households) share a house.



There is a need to understand how families have been selected and what will happen with the other Logumane communities' members located in other returns. Although it is commendable that the BSG was able to deliver assistance and ensured some access to basic services at the start, the criteria used and announcements for relocation have so far been unclear. Transportation in trucks was provided free of charge between the Ngala ISS camp and the Logumane community area of relocation, but it was not clear if families were provided with support to load their belongings. This is a concern for the vulnerable individuals, especially elderly persons. It would appear as if families were not informed on the exact date for the relocation. At least 1 week before the exact date of relocation could have provided them with enough time to prepare their belongings and raise awareness on the different steps of relocation procedures as part of the anticipatory and dignified process. For instance, to ensure a dignified return, it is recommended that on days of departures, transportation of persons with specific needs will be ensured in the most appropriate manner, medical personnel will be available during the relocation- to respond to medical needs, ,and protection partners could be available to monitor the situation and refer vulnerable cases or people in high distress to relevant focal points in order not to feel disoriented or overwhelmed during the relocation.

Support for Sustainable Integration

In addition to the food, cash and nonfood items provided, the MRRR constructed about 500 Shelters with funding from UNDP. The Protection Sector Northeast (PSNE) appreciates the BSG, MRRR and UNDP for the houses and other support provided to the IDPs to ensure sustainable integration. The UNDP funded project also includes a health facility and a Police post, though not yet functional.



Some forms of livelihood support have been provided to the population and this has been one of the key past advocacy points of the PSNE which is well received because it helps in reducing exposure to protection risks associated with the limited livelihood options available in return areas.

PSNE believes that considering sustainable integration, over the medium term, there will be a residual population within each camp that will be unable to return to their Areas of Origin (AoO). These IDPs have the right to continued safety and dignified living conditions and may opt to be



relocated to another location. IDPs unable or unwilling to return will include people with damaged/destroyed houses, those from areas with ERW contamination, those with perceived affiliations to armed groups, those with tribal bans, those missing essential documentation, those whose areas are disputed by armed actors, and those from areas lacking essential services. Multiple re-locations of IDPs are disruptive and should be kept to an absolute minimum. Where possible IDPs should move only once.

PSNE also recommends the timely sharing of comprehensive information among actors when they know about relocations to ensure:

- Long-term capacity of partners and government for access and protection
- Timely evaluation of existing physical infrastructures and possible gaps or upgrades needed to ensure the sustainability of services in areas of relocation.
- Identification of sectorial partners and government capacity to provide assistance to have a continuum of care.

Key Protection Concerns

PSNE appreciates that BSG provided shelter, food items, Non-Food Items (NFIs), and cash assistance as part of the reintegration support to the relocated IDPs. However, it underlines that to ensure the safety and voluntariness of returns are sustainable, all return decisions would need to be made voluntarily and in an objectively informed manner. It is important that community-based consultations with IDPs, and the provision of detailed information on conditions in potential

areas of return be communicated in due time to the IDPs populations to be relocated. Those key considerations will be highlighted in the document as the relocation that occurred on Saturday 20th January appear to have found the IDPs unprepared as they were not informed on the exact date of relocation. Below are the key protection concerns for the attention of the BSG as it implements the return of IDPs:

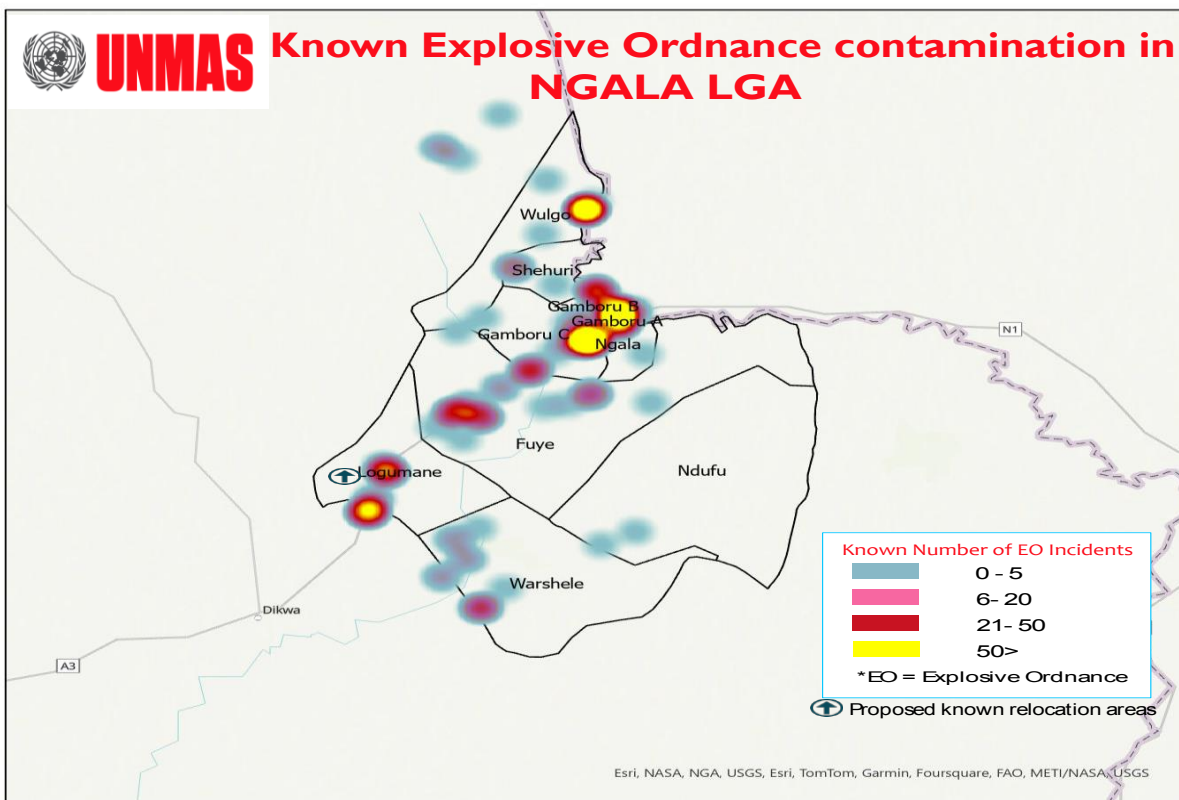
- **Providing comprehensive solutions:** It is not clear if people have been given opportunities to choose whether to be relocated or if other durable solutions options (local integration etc) have been offered in conformity with the SG Action Agenda, to avoid the potential of people being unintentionally forcibly relocated to other locations by circumstance as opposed to full consent. Principle 15 of the Guiding Principles on displacement emphasizes that IDPs *the right to be protected against forcible return to or resettlement in any place where their life, safety, liberty, and health would be*

Hence,

- Every IDP shall enjoy freedom of movement and the freedom to choose her or his residence.
 - IDPs, like other civilians, have the right to seek safety in another part of the country.
 - The Government shall protect IDPs against forcible return to or resettlement in any place where their life, safety, liberty, or health would be at risk.
- **Community involvement:** apart from the visits conducted by the Borno State Governor on 7 January 2024, where he informed the IDPs that residents of the ISS camp would be relocated, there was no additional information availed to the IDPs indicating a specific relocation date.
 - **Involvement of Humanitarian Actors:** camp closure and relocation is more efficient when stakeholders (government, humanitarian, and developmental actors) work together. Relocation or return does not end the need for protection and assistance and may at times lead to more protection concerns if not well implemented.
 - **Family Unity/Separation:** given the uncertainty of the relocation dates, some IDPs missed the movement due to lack of prior notice, leaving them confused and unsure of their next steps. Since the relocation of the 408 households, there has been no information shared with those who were unavailable in the camp at the time of movement. They are still in the camps and need direction/guidance. Some have relatives who were relocated and need to reunite with them. As reported, those left in the camp fear moving out of the camp to engage in their daily activities in fear of missing any possible relocation and which is counter-productive to the need to have IDP meaningfully engage in activities and decisions that impact their lives.
 - **Freedom of movement and safe farming:** like other return areas, insecurity looms large around Logumane. The military presence is visible but there is a need to ensure that the returnees can freely move around to engage in safe farming outside of Logumane town particularly considering the recent high level of farmers killed within different areas during the harvest season. Efforts would need to be made to ensure that this is possible and that returnees are not exposed to IEDs, attacked or abduction by Non-State Armed Groups (NSAGs) when outside of the town. As reported, tranches are not yet complete, and this makes infiltration by NSAG much easier.
 - **Mode of transport:** the usage of dump trucks for transporting the IDPs has the propensity to create danger and is not in line with the principle of a safe and dignified return process.

Dump trucks could ideally be used for the luggage of the IDPs, and this would mean anticipatory dates for camp closures to ensure better transit/ensuring that items are being transported to the area of relocation. Like past relocations, buses are a more dignified option than dump trucks.

- Housing Land and Property (HLP):** IDPs have been moved and allocated houses with no clear tenure arrangement (i.e. are they allocated houses as owners, tenants, or licensees). There is no formal HLP documentation (Right of grant, Certificate of occupancy, or any House allocation papers) of It is understandable that these IDPs have just been relocated but this need to be considered. There is also information that the 500 Units of houses being constructed to be used in settling the IDPs are not fully completed and the numbers of the IDP households returned/relocated may exceed the number of available Houses constructed, so what then is the plan for the excess households? Legal Identity and civil documentation should also be considered for these IDPs for movements considered. Given that they have just being relocation's relocated, this may not have been considered but is important as they settle in Logumane.
- Mine Action:** there was no humanitarian survey and clearance activities done in Logumane as well as in the immediate areas around Logumane. Mine action records indicate that this area is impacted by the presence of explosive ordnance, posing a risk to the people in the area.



Designations and geography used on this map do not imply of fiscal endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Developed only for humanitarian activities purposes.

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Key Recommendations

To the Borno State Government

- Information on the date of relocation should be shared with the relocated population at least a week in advance to ensure that they are prepared, and possible family separation avoided. Humanitarian actors should be alerted to initiate protection/complaints desks to mitigate risks and respond to queries the population or individuals with protection concerns may have.
- Facilities constructed would need to be fully functional before relocation with all staff deployed promptly. Sustainability of services should be ensured in order not to disrupt curricula for children in schools, medical services etc. We are aware that there is a Health post and a Police Post, but these facilities are not fully equipped and functional yet. The lack of functioning facilities is a concern and needs to be addressed.
- Unlike the previous relocation where buses were used, this relocation was done using dump trucks, with the IDPs boarded along with their luggage. Given the number of individuals boarded per truck and the road condition, we recommend that the dump trucks be used for luggage and buses provided for the IDPs. The usage of dump trucks is unsafe and undignified, and the roads seem to be unclear in some parts where a few incidents were reported in the past month due to IEDs.
- Humanitarian survey and clearance of Logumane and the immediate area around it is urgently needed to ensure the safe movement of the population outside of Logumane when needed, including engaging in farming or other agricultural activities and firewood collection.
- To ensure that HLP issues are addressed right at the beginning of the relocation. There is a need to ensure that the status of the individuals (owners/tenants) in these houses are established. This equally needs to be cleared as soon as possible to ensure that possible HLP issues are resolved.

To Donors

- Donors advocate developmental partners support to that are safe and do not expose the population. Past relocations only in locations newly taken over by the land not, deliberately exposing the IDPs. As mentioned in previous reports, development ensure that their funding complies with their human rights approaches.
- The mode of transport used for the relocation affects the safe and dignified return. Political and diplomatic advocacy support BSG/GoN with international best practices so relocation remains vital.
- Support for the Protection Sector remains critical.

To the humanitarian community

- Given that the population consists of persons with protection needs who were being supported by Protection partners, there is a need to ensure that humanitarian actors are informed ahead of any relocation/movement to ensure protection intervention continuity in areas of return to reduce further vulnerability. Currently, interventions in return areas have not been clarified yet. Therefore, a casework/ support plan with the individuals on how to minimize further exposure to protection risks will be considered, including liaising with individuals who were members of community-based protection groups for support where

possible, and remote protection monitoring to ensure liaison with key service providers even remotely can be considered.

- Although humanitarian partners do not have access to Logumane, it would be helpful for the populations that have been relocated to have key emergency services of humanitarian partners when accessible to ensure proper follow-up and continuity of services that might have been available in the ISS camp (i.e. psychosocial support etc) to get a transit process and humanitarian actors should be prepared to give remote support to those IDPs that have been relocated.

To UNDP

- There is a planned post-return assessment by the UNDP and BSG to Logumane to assess the settling in of the relocated IDPs. UNDP needs to ensure that as it collaborates with the BSG, there is a need to also collaborate with humanitarian actors to ensure that concerns raised by the humanitarian, especially Protection actors are taken into consideration for the betterment of the relocated population.
- Post relocation assessment organized in Logumane should not exclusively be done by UNDP and BSG but include other humanitarian actors that have been working with the population to ensure that we have a more comprehensive understanding of the population's needs since this comprehensive solutions a t e d a

To OCHA

- There is a need to urgently take the lead in organizing constructive relocation coordination discussions with the BSG on the ongoing camp closure and relocation to ensure that protection issues observed in the past relocations do not recur.
- There is a need to revisit the coordination structures related to return and camp closure. Advocate with the BSG to see a need for a voluntary return/relocation committee led by the government and including the affected population leaders, to oversee the implementation of a plan for camp closures. This committee should include representatives from humanitarian organizations including representatives from UN agencies and INGOs, NNGO and the key Sectors. The committee, among other duties, will coordinate and publicize the schedule of all camps closures from each LGA to ensure return movements/relocation are synchronized across LGA.

Way forward for Protection actors

Due to the restricted access by Protection partners working with the relocated population in Ngala, there will be no direct intervention in Logumane until advised by UNDSS/INSO. Among the relocated population are members of the Community-Based Structures established in the ISS camp and the Protection partners will continue to support those Community Workers to identify, document and support those with protection needs as much as possible.

Mine Action partners implementing Explosive Ordinance Risk Education (EORE) will ensure that awareness sessions and the distribution of EORE sensitization leaflets are provided to camp residents earmarked for relocation. Radio broadcasts of EORE messaging will also be aired as a rapid response. Mine action partners will also work with government agencies to request the distribution of EORE leaflets. These are relevant to ensure that community members are sensitized on the risks of explosive ordnance, especially in locations where partners do not have access. Information sharing on plans for relocation is important for this to take place.

The PSNE and HLP Partners are available to work along with UNDP, the BSG and MRRR to ensure that the HLP concerns related to the allocation of shelters are addressed to ensure further minimization of HLP disputes among the population.

The Protection Sector appreciates the Protection partners in Ngala who contributed to this report and the support they continue to provide to the community through members of the Community-Based Groups that are currently in Logumane.