

REFUGEE PROTECTION IN NIGERIA DURING COVID-19

“ Refugees who know the actual problem of the refugees acted as agents of change by forming refugee-led organisations, this has created great understanding among the local population, using the local language to simplify the message for fighting corona so the local people get to know the information well.

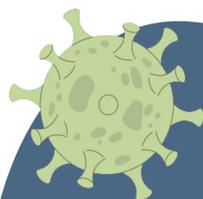
– Person with refugee background, Nigeria

“ Most refugees in urban areas have businesses so the lockdown caused business closure which affected them a lot unlike those in rural who can engage in farming. Refugees at the segment who solely depend on food ratio are affected because of the reduction in food ratio, the closure of schools increased the population at home as other members have been in school and probably in boarding schools, so they are highly affected.

– Person with refugee background, Nigeria



In Nigeria roughly half of the displaced refugees live in UNHCR-built settlements in rural locations while the other half remain in urban areas. It also has a huge population of internally displaced persons.



205,484 infected
2,702 people died

(September 2021, WHO)

2,61 million internally
displaced persons
2,788 asylum seekers
66,081 refugees

(2020, UNHCR)



From our research findings:

- Refugees faced health-related challenges as access to hygiene and/or knowledge about preventive measures is limited, especially in secluded rural settlements or densely populated urban spaces.
- They were pandemic-related tensions among refugees in Nigeria, as well as partly between refugees and host communities.
- Aid agencies adapted their support to be in accordance with COVID-19 prevention measures and some collaboration between NGOs and regional state governments took place in the provision of food and relief packages for displaced people.
- Inadequate or misinformation on COVID-19 and its spread has led to a lack of awareness, especially in more secluded refugee camps. However, with their active engagement refugee-led organisations contribute to awareness raising, e.g. by providing necessary information in local languages.

Read more about our research [here](#).