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Nigeria: The number of National Identity Cards (NICs) issued to date and their usage (2005-January 2011)
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

Information about the number of National Identity Cards issued in Nigeria to date was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

A 6 January 2009 article in the daily *Nigerian Compass* noted that the Director General of the National Identity Management Commission (NIMC) stated on 5 January 2009 that "only 37 million Nigerians have so far been issued with the National Identity Card" of a population of approximately 140 million inhabitants. The NIMC has issued the National Identity Card in Nigeria since 2007 (Nigeria n.d.). Based on official records, the Director General of the NIMC added that the organization was supposed to be able to issue a National Identity Card to over 70 million people (*Nigerian Compass* 6 Jan. 2009).

Card usage

A 10 August 2005 article in *This Day*, a daily in Lagos, stated that National Identity Card holders can use the card for, among other things, "consumer credit, driver's licence, access to health insurance, and voting." According to the *National Identity Management Act*,

27.-(1) ... the National Identification Number issued to [an] ... individual [registered in the National Identity Database (NID)] must be presented for the following transactions, that is:

- a. application for, and issuance of a passport;
- b. opening of individual and or personal bank accounts;
- c. purchase of insurance policies;
- d. ... purchase, transfer and registration of land ... ;
- e. such transactions pertaining to individuals as may be prescribed and regulated by the *Pensions Reform Act, 2004*;
- f. such transactions specified under the Contributory Health Insurance Scheme;
- g. such transactions that have social security implications;
- h. all consumer credit transactions;
- i. registration of voters;
- j. payment of taxes;
- k. such relevant government services ... (Nigeria 2007).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

This Day [Lagos]. 10 August 2005. Josephine Lohor. "Nigeria: National ID Card for Multi-Purpose Use, Says FG." (AllAfrica.com)
<<http://allafrica.com/stories/200508110036.html>> [Accessed 31 Jan. 2011]

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Nigerian Compass [Nigeria]. 6 January 2009. Hope Afoke Orivri, Aaron Ossai and Wole Oladimeji. "Only 37 Million Nigerians Have National ID Card."
<http://www.compassnewspaper.com/NG/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=7436%3Aonly-37-million-nigerians-have-national-id-card&Itemid=7966> [Accessed 1 Feb. 2011]

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: Attempts to contact officials at the Nigerian embassy in Brussels, Ottawa and Washington, D.C., and representatives of the *Daily Champion* and the National Identity Management Commission (NIMC) were unsuccessful.

Internet sites, including: Afrik.com, Agence de presse sénégalaise (APS), AllAfrica.com, British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), *Daily Champion* [Lagos], *Daily Trust* [Abuja], Global Development Network (GDN), *The Guardian* [Lagos], International Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), Japan International Cooperation Agency Research Institute (JICA-RI), *Jeune Afrique*, *Le Messager* [Yaoundé], *National Daily* [Lagos], *The News* [Lagos], *Newswatch* [Lagos], *Nigerian Tribune* [Lagos], Organisation suisse d'aide aux réfugiés (OSAR), PANAPress (PANA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United States - Department of State, *Vanguard* [Lagos].

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