

HIGHLIGHTS (3 Jul 2020)

- Restriction measures related to COVID-19 affect humanitarian aid and access
- A complex situation for returnees
- A deteriorating situation for refugees, especially in terms of protection



September 2019, Djako, Logone Occidental, Chad. Over 150 households out of 243 have a coping strategy index that is either severe or moderate, meaning that many returnees from Djako camp are heavily dependent on humanitarian assistance to meet their basic needs. Photo credit: OCHA/Federica Gabellini.

KEY FIGURES

6.4M

People in need

3.8M

People targeted

469K

Refugees

102.8K

Returnees

236K

IDPs

690K

Host population in need

FUNDING (2020)

\$671.8M

Required

\$121.1M

Received



18%

Progress

FTS: <https://fts.unocha.org/appeals/907/summary>

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EMERGENCY RESPONSE (3 Jul 2020)

Restriction measures related to COVID-19 affect humanitarian access and aid

Following the first reported case of COVID-19 in Chad on 19 March 2020, national authorities took preventative measures against the pandemic, including nation-wide restrictions of movement. In the South, population movements are monitored closely due to transborder activities with Cameroon and the Central African Republic (CAR).

Local authorities in the Nya Pendé district decided to suspend humanitarian activities on the Began axis in order to limit the spread of COVID-19. This measure was renewed several times over a period of three months. This decision resulted in the suspension of food distribution in refugee sites, directly impacting 6,948 refugees (1,500 households) who live in different

sites along the Békane axis and who have been deprived of food assistance and agricultural inputs for the past three months. Among these refugees, 1,055 are part of the Food for Asset program, and 1,354 are children aged six to 23 months. In the South, HCR reports 131,060 people in food insecurity (phases 3 to 5 of the Cadre Harmonisé).

Government support, central to the continuous delivery of humanitarian assistance, has since allowed humanitarians to be exempted from certain restrictive measures in order to carry out their operations. The total removal of movement restrictions for this route was announced on 16 June. Food distributions resumed the week of 22 June, with a double distribution covering the months of June and July, and the distribution of nutritional inputs and seeds for livelihood activities. The epidemiological situation in the South is getting more and more concerning and it could further deteriorate due to frequent supply shortages (anti-malaria, anti-tuberculosis and anti-HIV/AIDS medications). Since the beginning of the year, 7,305 measles cases have been reported, as well as 330 cases of meningitis and 90,737 malaria cases in the Southern provinces. One case of acute flaccid paralysis was recorded last 18 June in the Moyen-Chari province, which now joins the list of provinces (Logone Occidental, Logone Oriental and Tandjilé) to be in a state of declared cVDPV2 polio epidemic. As for the spread of COVID-19 in the South, 32 cases were reported as of 16 June.



September 2019, Goré, Logone Oriental, Chad. A Chadian returnee cradles her grandchild in a malnutrition centre in Goré, southern Chad. Malnutrition is one of the main causes of child mortality in Chad, which has the second-highest under-five mortality rate in the world (123/1,000 live births) - about one child in eight dies before the age of five. Photo credit: OCHA/Federica Gabellini.

The South is directly impacted by daily movements of returnees and refugees between CAR and Chad, which could potentially impact the humanitarian community of Goré and their beneficiaries. In the South, a total of 16 security incidents were reported during the months of May and June in relation with CAR/Chad and Cameroon/Chad transborder crime. Cases of kidnapping for ransom were reported. Suicide has become more frequent and could be linked to the worsening socioeconomic crisis due to COVID-19. More generally, the humanitarian situation in the South has deteriorated: several donors stopped their financing and a few humanitarian organizations have suspended their activities as a result.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE (3 Jul 2020)

The returnee situation

Following the 2013 conflict and the resulting instability in CAR, many Central Africans of Chadian origins fled to Chad along with Central African refugees. There are 77,650 Chadian returnees from CAR currently living in the South (according to the November 2019 DTM). Most of them had never lived in Chad before. 53 per cent of the returnees are women and 63 per cent are minors. The majority of the returnees (87 per cent) have been in the same place since they arrived in 2014. 61 per cent of them are still living in sites five years later. Emergency shelters built in 2014 are now dilapidated.

The Global Plan for Returnees, developed in August 2015 and targeting 69,343 people in the region, has not been implemented by the Government yet. The delay in its operationalization puts returnees at risk of statelessness and prevents them from accessing state services.

Humanitarian partners are currently concerned about sustainable protection interventions, including the management of increasing birth rates, whose registration by authorities is particularly challenging in the sites. The profiling of returnees is also an issue: some of them have two statuses, benefiting from both the response to returnees and refugees. Overlap of

activities is also likely due to the lack of on-site coordination. After a recent visit by OCHA to the Danamadja and Kobiteye sites, the presidents of the two committees have pointed out urgent needs in the health, shelter, WASH, food security and education sectors.

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The returnee situation

CAR refugees in the South of Chad are close to 88,900, including 20,000 who arrived during the last influx in 2018. Their living conditions are becoming critical in terms of food, health and protection. The protection situation for refugees in the South is alarming: minors reportedly resort to negative coping mechanisms to survive, such as prostitution in exchange for food in the camps. Most refugees live in villages or village sites thanks to the out-of-camp approach implemented since 2018 to facilitate their integration into Chadian society. The most vulnerable, such as households located on the Began axis, need urgent ad hoc assistance, particularly in terms of food.

In this context of protracted crisis in the South, with a constantly decreasing level of funding and a limited number of humanitarian and development actors, it has become a real challenge to respond to the urgent needs of host communities and displaced people, particularly during the rainy season.

Humanitarian partners are advocating with local authorities to ensure maintenance of food distribution and other key agricultural activities in light of the upcoming lean season: trainings of improved stove practitioners, training of horticulture specialists, training of beneficiaries on rain-fed crops, distribution of vegetable seeds, and distribution of seeds for rainy season culture.

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