

HIGHLIGHTS

- **COVID-19 pandemic:** As of 31 December 2020, the Ministry of Health reported 26,277 cumulative cases and 448 deaths in Cameroon. Case fatality rate of 1.7 per cent.
- **East region:** A resurgence in violence in the Central African Republic has driven 5,000 Central Africans to seek safety across the border in Cameroon.
- **Food security:** 2.7 million people in Cameroon are food insecure, according to the Cadre Harmonisé analysis.
- **Child protection:** 3.2 million children are affected by crises. UNICEF appeals for US\$ 83.1 million.

FIGURES

(UNHCR DECEMBER 2020, IOM JUNE 2020, OCHA AUGUST 2020)

1,032,942

Internally displaced people

18,279

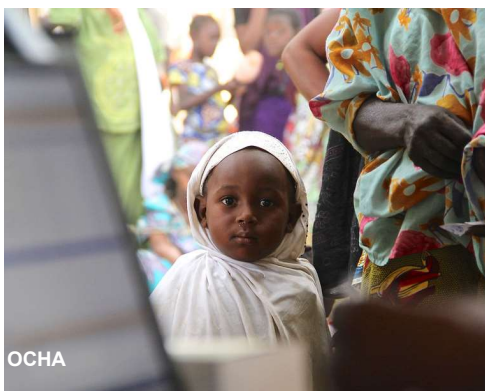
Cameroonian refugees returned from Nigeria

443,216

Refugees and asylum seekers

465,757

Returnees (previously IDPs)



OCHA

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UPSURGE IN COVID-19 CASES IN CAMEROON

Cameroon is facing a significant upsurge in COVID-19 cases. According to the Ministry of Public Health, more than 5,000 new cases have been recorded between November and December 2020. The Littoral, Centre and Far North regions registered the highest number of cases.



WHO COVID-19 sensitization activity in the Centre region
Credit: UNRCO/Emanuel Foukou

According to the results of the Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) survey carried out by UNICEF and WHO in October 2020, the lowest level of knowledge on COVID-19 is observed in the West region and negative attitudes and practices are more common in the Centre and Far North regions.

Humanitarian and health actors are increasing risk communication and community engagement activities with the distribution of information materials, media and social media campaigns and outreach events in the most affected areas.

At a time when there is a second wave of the pandemic, coupled with the prominence of a new and more contagious strain of the virus in Europe, in his new year address to the Nation on 31 December 2020, the Head of State reminded of the necessity to abide by measures to stop the spread of COVID-19. "This is the only way to save lives and to curb the spread of the virus" he noted.

2.7 MILLION FOOD INSECURE PEOPLE IN CAMEROON

On 15 December 2020, the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development published the results of the analysis of the Cadre Harmonisé which identifies risk areas and community members struggling with food insecurity in Cameroon.



With UNCERF funding and technical support from FAO, project beneficiaries produce eggs and sell them in local markets.
Credit: FAO/Daniel Mvondo

The Cadre Harmonisé analysis, developed with the technical and financial support of FAO, WFP, Action Against Hunger (AAH/ACF), CILLS and FEWS NET, reveals that one in ten active farming households has been affected by the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has hampered the production of 42 per cent of agricultural assets, caused an increase in post-harvest losses and led to an increase of three per cent in food prices compared to the normal situation. “This is a situation of constraints of all kinds, in which agricultural and food systems are more disrupted than in the past”, noted the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Consequently, the poor access to food and agricultural products, exacerbated by the crisis in the North-West (NW) and South-West (SW) regions and the flooding and conflict in the Far North region have led around 2.7 million people in need of urgent food and nutrition assistance.

In the NW and SW regions, 960,000 people are food insecure. With a four-year period of below average food production in the two regions, maintaining means of livelihood has become a significant challenge for many. Food and/or livelihood assistance has reduced the number of vulnerable households adopting negative coping strategies. In December 2020, 32 Food Security Cluster partners provided food and livelihood assistance to 360,467 people through various cash and in-kind interventions. 93 per cent of the beneficiaries received food assistance and seven per cent received agriculture and/or livelihoods related support.

Sources: FAO, OCHA

THOUSANDS OF CENTRAL AFRICANS SEEK REFUGE IN CAMEROON



Credit: UNHCR /Xavier Bourgois

In December 2020, elections related violence caused the flight of thousands of people to neighboring countries to seek safety. As of 31 December, 2,481 Central Africans had crossed into Cameroon to Garoua-Boulai town in the East region, hiding and walking in the bushes while avoiding non-State armed groups' (NSAGs) presence in the roads.

Electoral violence in December 2020 in the Central African Republic (CAR) pushed some 2,481 Central Africans to seek safety in Cameroon.

Gnindou Melina* and her children are among the newly arrived refugees in Garoua-Boulai in the East region of Cameroon. They registered with UNHCR, after walking 60 kilometres from Baboua, a town in western Central African Republic (CAR) close to the border with Cameroon. "On 19 December, we saw people fleeing Gallo town, located 40 kilometres away from Baboua town. They told us that the rebels were on their way to Baboua. We left on 21 December 2020 and had to walk all the way to Garoua-Boulai because there was no more bushes cabs", she says. Now, Melina finds it hard to return to her country, and she is ready to go anywhere, as long as she and her family can live there in peace.

The newly arrived Central African refugees are welcomed in a transit site in Garoua Boulai, and then directed to the Gado refugee site, located in the East region of Cameroon, at a thirty minutes' drive from the border with CAR. The site is already home to more than 26,000 Central African refugees who fled previous violence incidents in 2014.

Maurice Moussouravi, Head of the UNHCR office in Meiganga, says the situation is manageable for now. "With the support of our partners, we can cope with these arrivals and offer shelter, food and care to those in need. However, if the influx continues, with the Cameroonian authorities, we will direct the refugees to the best place to receive assistance and above all to be safe."

UNHCR along with WFP, UNICEF, and NGO partners are striving to respond to this new emergency.

Xavier Bourgeois, UNHCR

* Identity withheld for protection reasons.

EDUCATION AT RISK BECAUSE OF CONFLICT AND NATURAL DISASTERS

As of December 2020, 31,856 children, including 10,744 girls, are deprived of school in the Far North region of Cameroon, because of insecurity, natural disasters and poor resources.



Julius's injured leg after being hit by an iron rod. The 16-year-old has physical and mental scars after NSAGs held him captive for three years.
Credit: Plan International, Cameroon

The conflict in the Lake Chad Basin which affects the border regions of Cameroon, Nigeria, Niger, and Chad has deprived hundreds of thousands of children of education since 2009. The distress, due to conflict and lack of schooling, exacerbated by floods which affected around 60 schools and more than 18,000 children in 2020, is likely to severely affect the future perspectives of children.

Mary, a refugee from Nigeria, living in a refugee camp in the far North region of Cameroon, spent three years searching for her two sons, Julius, 16, and Joseph, 14, after they were abducted by NSAGs in 2014.

The boys were staying with their uncle when insurgents tore through the town kidnapping children and transporting them into the Sambisa forest, in Nigeria. Their uncle was executed in front of their eyes.

The boys were held captive in the forest for three years along with other young prisoners. "They (insurgents) attempted

to teach us how to fight with guns but one of their leaders stopped them, arguing that we were too young," Julius recalls.

The children were made to watch the militants killing people. They were then commanded to cover the victims' blood with sand. Showing the scars on his legs, Julius says: "Each time I refused to do their bidding, they hit my leg with iron rods. It hurt so much".

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Julius and Joseph managed to escape while their captors were away from the camp raiding a community. The two brothers crossed the border into Cameroon at the end of 2016 and were reunited with their mother. The family is receiving support from Plan International and partners trying to help them recover from the ordeal.

Sources: OCHA, Plan International * Identity withheld for protection reasons.

PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS FROM VIOLENCE IN HUMANITARIAN CRISIS CONTEXT

On 16 December 2020, UN Women launched a project entitled "Protecting and empowering women and girls affected by the Boko Haram conflict in Cameroon".

Funded by the Catalonia Agency of Cooperation and Development, the project aims to empower women and girls affected by the conflict in the Far-North region, by enhancing their leadership and livelihoods skills and raising their awareness on protection. The project expands over one year, until December 2021, and is implemented in collaboration with the organization ALVF (Association de Lutte contre les Violences faites aux Femmes), as well as national justice, defense and security administrations.

This US\$ 238,949 grant will contribute to gender equality and women empowerment.

Cameroon is the second most affected country by the conflict in the Lake Chad Basin, after Nigeria

Nearly 1.2 million people need urgent humanitarian assistance. Women and girls have been disproportionately affected by the protracted crisis and instability.



Sara (in the middle) is a displaced Cameroonian woman who has been relocated to Zamai IDP site, in Mayo Tsanaga, in the Far North, in Cameroon. "My husband and I were kidnapped by Boko Haram. I managed to escape but have no idea of my husband's whereabouts nor whether he is alive or not". Sara has a young baby. They were kept in detention for several months on suspicion of being affiliated with Boko Haram.

Credit: OCHA/Eve Sabbagh

The Mayo-Sava, Mayo-Tsanaga and Logone et Chari cross-border divisions with Nigeria, are the most affected by recurrent NSAGs attacks since the beginning of the crisis in the Far North region. In December 2020, the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) reported 26 security incidents in the region. The highest number of incidents was recorded in Mayo-Sava division.

Over 322,000 people are internally displaced in the Far North region. The situation of local host communities has been difficult due to pre-existing vulnerabilities. Nevertheless, their situation exacerbated with the arrival of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), with the escalating violence and the disruption of livelihoods and basic social services.

Sources: UN Women, IOM, OCHA

3.2 MILLION CHILDREN AFFECTED BY CRISES IN CAMEROON

In 2020, the situation of children in Cameroon has worsened, with continuing displacements, little hope that refugees will voluntarily return to Central African Republic and Nigeria, and continuing disease outbreaks, including the COVID-19 pandemic.

Urgent support is needed to save the lives of over three million children affected by crises, ensure their protection and access to quality learning opportunities, and alleviate the suffering of displaced, refugee, returnee and host community children, including those vulnerable to measles and cholera outbreaks and the COVID-19 pandemic.

In December 2020, UNICEF appealed for US\$ 83.1 million to meet the humanitarian needs of over 869,000 children and their families at risk or affected by conflict, violence and disease in Cameroon. This funding would enable the provision of critical vaccination, safe water supply, emergency education and child protection interventions to children in need.



Tanya, 11, studies at home in a safe environment through the UNICEF-supported radio learning programme.

Credit: UNICEF/Salomon Beguel

Tanya, 11, is from the Fako division in the South-West region of Cameroon. She was separated from her parents due to the ongoing violence in the North-West and South-West regions and has her learning path interrupted for three years. UNICEF is assisting her with an innovative radio learning programme which provides an alternative learning platform for children and youth affected by crises. In the Fako and Meme divisions in the South-West region, radio learning has allowed more than 3,500 crisis-affected children to pursue their education.

There are more than one million IDPs mostly in the Far North, North-West and South-West regions, 484,000 returnees and 443,200 refugees from CAR and Nigeria and asylum seekers in Cameroon.

Sources: UNICEF, IOM, OCHA, UNHCR

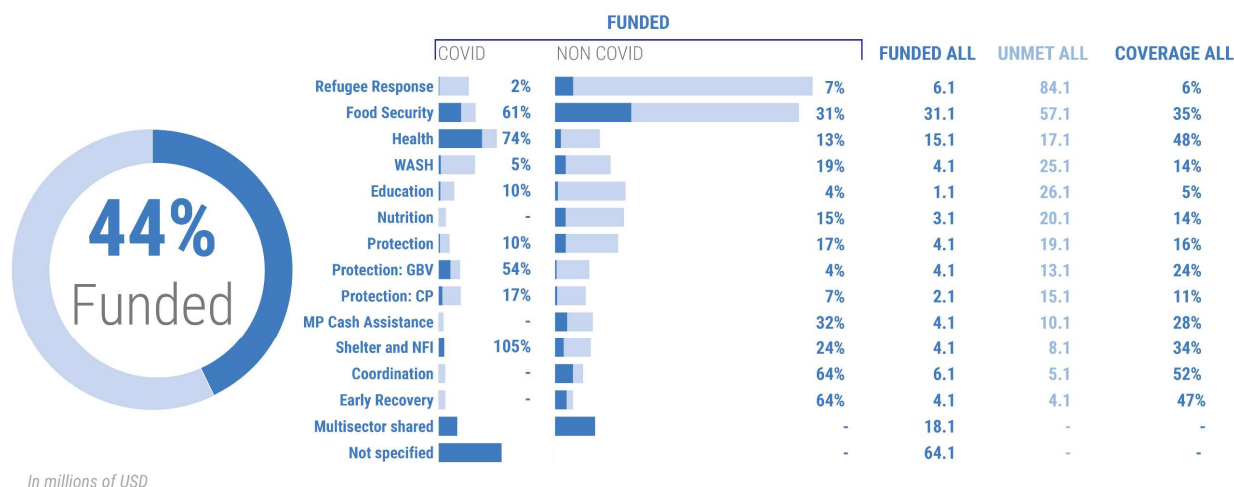
2020 HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE PLAN: FUNDING OVERVIEW

Cameroon 2020

US\$ 391 million requested (HRP and COVID-19 response)
US\$ 170.2 million funded (HRP and COVID-19 response)

Funding by sector (in million USD)

As of 6 January 2021



All humanitarian partners, including donors and recipient agencies, are encouraged to inform OCHA's Financial Tracking Service (FTS - <http://fts.unocha.org>) of cash and in-kind contributions by e-mailing: fts@un.org

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