

# UNHCR Cameroon Response

July 2024

Cameroon is confronting a **multi-faceted humanitarian and protection crisis** caused by conflict, inter-communal violence, and the effects of climate change.

Over **two million individuals** have fled their homes in search for protection, safety, and security in Cameroon, amongst nearly **half a million refugees**, 34% of whom have specific needs.

UNHCR works to **protect and assist** forcibly displaced persons and those at risk of statelessness, strategically focusing on **protection, coordination, and** searching for **solutions**.

## FORCIBLY DISPLACED PERSONS: 2,180,000

484,978

Refugees and Asylum seekers in Cameroon\*

*Cameroon : Statistiques des personnes déplacées de force (July 2024) ; Gouvernement du Cameroun avec le support du HCR*

1.037 million

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) \*\*

*\*\* IOM, OCHA Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment (MSNA)*

658,500

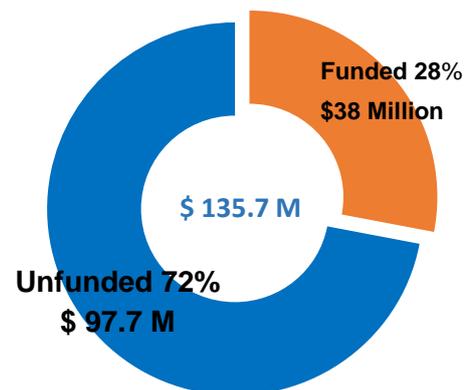
IDP returnees \*\*

*\*\* IOM, OCHA Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment (MSNA)*

## FUNDING (AS OF 31 JULY 2024)

**USD 135.7 M**

requested for the Cameroon Multi Country Office (MCO)



## UNHCR PRESENCE

**Staff: 210 Staff**

**167** National Staff

**43** International Staff

**49** Affiliated Workforce

**Offices:**

**01** Branch Office in Yaoundé

**03** Sub Offices: Bertoua, Maroua, and Douala

**03** Field Offices: Bamenda, Kousseri and Meiganga

**01** Field Unit: Batouri



*Under the 'Go green Minawao' initiative, every refugee is to plant a tree in the Minawao camp to protect. © UNHCR/ Ngoh 2022*



## Working with Partners

UNHCR works closely with wide range of partners including key Government ministries and decentralized entities, UN agencies, NGOs, civil society, the refugee community, donors, private sector and other humanitarian and development actors to respond to the most pressing needs of refugees and others displaced persons across the country.

**Government partners:** UNHCR works primarily in collaboration with the Secretariat Technique and the National Institutes of Statistics respectively in all matters pertaining to the transfer of competencies in Status Determination, registration, and socio-economic data on refugee households. To effectively ensure the protection of persons affected by poly-crises and to facilitate their integration into the plans and programmes supported by the Government, UNHCR intensively collaborates with the following key ministries: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MINREX), the Ministry of Social Affairs (MINAS), the Ministry of Territorial Administration (MINAT), the Ministry of Basic Education (MINEDUB), the Ministry of Defense (MINDEF), the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and the Family (MINPROFF), the Ministry of Justice (MINJUSTICE), the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development (MINEPAT), the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER), Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFEF), Ministry of Environment Protection (MINEP), Ministry of Decentralization and Local Development (MINDDEVEL), the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and other government institutions.

**UN sister-Agencies:** WFP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNWOMEN, OHCHR, IFAD, UNDP, ILO, UNOCHA, FAO, IOM, and WHO.

Twelve implementing INGO and NGO partners, including **International Non-Governmental Organizations** (seven): African Humanitarian Action (AHA), African Initiatives for Relief and Development (AIRD); Développement Equité Durabilité et Innovation (DEDI), International Medical Corps (IMC), Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), INTERSOS, and Plan International (Plan).

**National Non-Governmental Organizations** (four) : Action Citoyenne pour le Développement Communautaire (ACDC), Centre pour la Promotion de la Défense des Droits de l'Homme (CPDH), Research and Advocacy for Gender Justice (RAGJ), and Public Concern (PC).

## Main Achievements

To achieve objectives defined in the Multi-Year and Multi Partners Strategy 2022-2026 (MYMP 2022-2026), with key focuses on strengthening protection, coordination, and search for durable solutions in favor of forcibly displaced persons and those at risk of statelessness in Cameroon, UNHCR has strategically implemented its activities to attain the results described in the following paragraphs. The outcomes of the MYMP 2022-2026 are in phase with the UNHCR Global Strategic Direction 2022-2026, the Cameroon 2030 National Development Plan, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework. The evaluation at the mid-point of the implementation of the 2024 execution plan displays positive progress to the extent that UNHCR and partner services have supported 472,500 refugees and 1,036,775 IDPs from January to July 2024.



### Refugee response.

**Protection Monitoring:** UNHCR and partners have continued implementing the Project 21 Protection Monitoring Systems to collect and analyze protection information across the country. The Eastern region of Cameroon is experiencing cross-border movements, assassinations, banditry, kidnappings for ransom at the extent that the National Association of Teachers has asked the government to improve the security of teachers to prevent negative impacts on the education system. In the Far North region, civil unrest, non-state armed group attacks and intercommunal conflicts have disrupted daily activities. Despite tremendous efforts made through project, such as the Peacebuilding initiative (PBF) to contain the occurrence of real conflicts, there are still dormant tensions and pockets of violence. Compared to 2023, there has been significant reduction in the number of new arrivals at the Gourenouel transit centre (309 households vs 5020 households). As of 30 June, **8,356** protection incidents affecting forcibly displaced have been reported.

**Populations displacement:** Since January 2024, 309 households comprising 698 refugees (60% children, 20% men, and 20% women) have arrived at the Gouroungel Transit Center in the Far North. Assessments revealed that 84% of the displacements were due to insecurity from renewed non-state armed group attacks at the border town with Nigeria, 13% were for family reunification, and 3% were in search of humanitarian assistance.

**Refugee profile:** During the period under review, UNHCR in close collaboration with the Government have registered **484,968**. Of these, 52% are women and girls. Furthermore, 34% of refugees have specific needs, including children at risk (41%), women at risk (17%), single parents (14%), older adults at risk (13%), persons living with disabilities (10%), unaccompanied and separated minors (8%), and those with serious medical conditions (7%). Regarding demographics, 8% of refugees are older adults. Living conditions vary, with 29% residing in camps or camp-like situations, 63% living outside of camps in rural areas, and 7% in urban areas. In terms of religious affiliation, 73% are Muslim, 25% are Christian, and 2% follow other beliefs.

**Flagship Survey:** UNHCR and NIS are conducting surveys to gather data on refugees, asylum seekers, and host communities' living conditions and access to services. The information will be used for planning and advocacy efforts to improve their lives and will also be available to the host country's government and partners.

## Results and impact

- ✓ **Protect - Enhanced Protection for Refugees:**
  - **Registration and refugee documentation:** 10,570 refugees have been registered and obtained their refugees documents.
  - **Refugee Status Determination:** Additionally, 2,140 asylum seekers obtained refugees status after undergoing the determination procedures.
  - **Civil Status and Legal Documentation** Facilitated the freedom of movement and access to rights for 2,081 refugees through the supporting the issuance of birth certificates.
  - **Law and Policy:** Intense advocacy with the government of Cameroon led to progress towards accessing United Nations conventions on the status of stateless persons and the reduction of statelessness.
  - **Legal Representation and Counselling:** Protected the rights of 751 refugees through legal representation and counselling on immigration control and legal status.
  - **Community-Based Protection Services:** Reached over 173,000 forcibly displaced individuals. These services empowered 28,480 survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) to seek specialized assistance, provided child protection services to 26,966 children, including Best Interests Procedure and alternative care arrangements, and supported 55,974 refugee children with education programming (primary and secondary schools).
- ✓ **Empower and assist - Enhanced the well-being of refugees through improved access basic services:**
  - **Cash for Protection:** 49,542 refugees and IDPs received cash assistance, addressing their needs for protection, livelihoods, shelter, education, and non-food items. Additionally, 23,850 refugees and IDPs benefited from access to clean cooking fuels, improving their daily living conditions and reducing environmental impact. Further, 86 active DAFI scholarship holders for the academic year 2023/2024.
  - **Healthy environment:** To date, 546,400 seedlings have been planted inside and outside the Minawao camp, and 145,527 kg of briquettes have been produced by 3,269 households. These efforts improve the refugee environment and mitigate the effects of climate change.
  - **Housing:** 121,057 (8,352 households) refugee individuals gained access to adequate shelters that meet international humanitarian standards, national building codes, and urban plans. Additionally, 25,308 refugees received non-food items (NFIs) /core relief items (CRIs). These achievements were made possible through the support of UNHCR and partners, who provided cash, construction kits, rehabilitation services, and established support construction committees.
  - **Water and sanitation:** The water supply has significantly improved. Over 142,885 refugees from 23,814 households now have access to basic drinking water, averaging 16.92 liters per person per day. Additionally, 30 % of families have latrine coverage, with the highest coverage in Borgop at 43%, the lowest in Mbile at 15%, and Minawao at 25%. These improvements are due to UNHCR's advocacy and support in maintaining the water network, repairing broken hand pumps, building capacity, and improving the proximity of water fetching points. Additionally, the following has been completed to improve the health and sanitation for refugees. 821.4 m3 of latrine sludge have been emptied and buried in the camp's wastewater treatment plant basins. This has allowed the manufacture of 360 bags of 50 kg of composted manure to improve the refugees' agricultural activities. Furthermore, biofertilizers have been produced from the sludge, with 16 refugees managing the process. The

biofertilizers have been used to restore the soil, promote organic production, and sold to farmers to generate additional income. The proper management of these biofertilizers reduces health risks and costs.

- **Resilience and livelihood:** Over 5,820 refugees have gained access to land and property, along with tools for farming, livestock breeding, and fish farming. Additionally, 246 individuals have been provided with market-oriented vocational training, financial services, and employment opportunities. Additionally, 17 refugees graduated and received certificates in mechanics from the Cami Toyota training center, with many finding jobs in major cities in Cameroon and abroad.
- **Healthcare:** 52,000 refugees now have access to healthcare through universal health coverage, providing free or subsidized access to treatment for malaria, HIV, tuberculosis, kidney failure, and subsidized care for pregnant women.
- In camp, site, and host communities, 78,600 refugee consultations and treatment in UNHCR supported health care services allowed refugees to maintain their health, including reproductive, mental health and psychosocial health. Furthermore, women health has been enhanced as UNHCR provide Education on family planning during sensitization in health facilities and communities, and during post-natal consultations in health facilities. Mass campaigns on contraception are often provide and participants are encouraged to use contraceptive methods.
- In health facilities, UNHCR and the Ministry of health provide several methods of modern contraception through: Condoms, Pills, Injectable Depo-Provera, Intra-uterine device, and Implants. The Ministry of Health also provide immunization such as measles vaccine.
- Refugee main diseases concern was malaria, respiratory tract infections, intestinal parasites, diarrheal conditions, skin diseases, ear infections, urinary tract infections, eye infections, and acute malnutrition.

**Green Actions:** To mitigate the negative impact of refugees, IDPs, and host community activity on the environment in Far North Cameroon, nearly 55,000 forest, fruit, and nutritional seedlings have been planted by refugees and the host community members, bringing 546,320 the total number of trees planted (501,315 in an ordinary way and 44,792 seedlings with the Cocoon technique in the camp and in the host community on an area of more than 900 ha with a tree survival rate of 86%). Additionally, 145,527 kg of eco-friendly briquettes have been produced by 3,269 households. These efforts improve the refugee environment and mitigate the effects of climate change.

✓ *Solve - UNHCR works with the government and partners to find durable solutions for forcibly displaced populations in Cameroon. Advocacy for refugee inclusion in the country's national system (health, education, and finances) have yielded some positive results, but additional funding is needed for an effective and consistent response.*

- **Voluntary repatriation** – A Return Intentions Survey conducted among 28,400 CAR refugees in urban areas and the Eastern regions revealed that only 26 percent of CAR refugees are willing to return to their country of origin. Urban refugees were less likely (79%) to return to their country than refugees in the Eastern region (73%). Since January 2024, UNHCR facilitated the voluntary repatriation of 4,688 refugees to CAR and Chad. During the process, UNHCR ensured that the return was voluntary, well-informed, and carried out in safety and dignity.
- **Return and reintegration:** 12,529 Cameroonian refugee-returnees from Chad were assisted upon their return to support their reintegration into the communities in the Far North Region.
- **Resettlement** – As of 30 June, 443 refugee cases (215 female/228 males) have been submitted for resettlement consideration, primarily to France, USA, and Canada. Additionally, 600 refugees (311 females and 269 males) have departed from Cameroon to Canada, Finland, France, Germany, and USA. Among these, 1% were urban refugees (Yaounde and Douala while the remaining were CAR refugees living in Eastern regions of Cameroon. Most of the resettled refugees now have access to better healthcare, housing, enhanced psychosocial support, improved educational opportunities, and a chance to elevate their living standards, achieving autonomy and living in safety, security, and dignity. UNHCR provided logistical and financial support for accommodation and travel arrangements until their departure.
- **Education pathways-** UNHCR Cameroon targets to have refugee students benefit from various scholarship opportunities in countries such as France, Germany, and Italy. As of 30 June, one student interviewed for a university placement and scholarship to University of Clermont Auvergne in Clermont-Ferrand, France.

## Internally Displaced Persons – UNHCR Response



- Since January 2024, over 1 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host community members have benefited from UNHCR's protection and response initiatives. These include protection monitoring, documentation, prevention of statelessness (birth certificates, national identification cards, and disability cards), access to justice, community-based protection approaches, environmental support, gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and response, material assistance (shelter and core relief items), and coordination activities. **Protection Monitoring:** 6,831 individuals were reached, highlighting critical needs related to key protection services (documentation, legal assistance, education, security, access, GBV, freedom of movement), limited access to food, livelihood, healthcare, water, durable shelter, and infrastructure.
- **Civil Documentation:** 2,172 IDPs and host community members in the Northwest, Southwest, West, and Littoral regions obtained civil documentation, including birth certificates, national identity cards, and disability cards, facilitating their movement and access to education, employment, and livelihood opportunities.
- **Legal Assistance:** 2,692 individuals, primarily in the Northwest and Southwest regions, received legal assistance and representation to uphold their rights.
- **Community-Based Protection Services:** 49,060 protection services were provided to IDPs through established community-based protection committees and working groups.
- **GBV Prevention and Response:** 14,059 GBV survivors, primarily women and girls, were reached through prevention and response activities, including vocational training, provision of non-food items, and economic livelihood support.
- **Child Protection Services:** 15,217 children and youths benefited from child protection services, with around 50% receiving mental health and psychosocial support.
- **Complaint and Feedback Mechanisms:** 8,916 complaints and feedback were received through established community-based mechanisms, with responses directed to available resources based on needs.
- **Healthcare and Livelihood Support:** 3,700 refugees benefited from UNHCR-supported healthcare services, 225 families received improved cooking stoves, and 940 individuals benefited from livelihood interventions. Additionally, 8,178 IDPs were referred for protection services.

## Strengthened Coordination

### *For forcibly displaced persons' inclusion*

- March 2024 - Joint launch with the Ministry of External Relations (MINREX) of the UNHCR Cameroon Multi-Year Multi-Partner Strategic Plan for 2022-2026 (MYMP) with the active participation of national authorities, diplomatic corps, and key partners in Cameroon. The document provides strategic guidance for the operation and highlights the need for enhanced focus on protection, coordination, and search for durable solutions for the forcibly displaced and stateless people.
- Co-chairing of the Second Edition of the Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue with the Ministry of External Relations of Cameroon (MINREX). The Dialogue highlighted the collaborative efforts and achievements of governmental authorities, UN agencies, and partners towards the Cameroonian pledges made in the Global Refugee Fora.
- First participation of UNHCR in the Multi-Partner Committee Annual meeting jointly organized by MINEPAT and Resident Coordinator Office and inclusion of the theme on the integration of the needs in the development projects and programs supported by the government on the agenda of the 2024 meeting. Firm engagement of key ministries to integrate refugees' needs into their programs and plans.

- ❑ Development of an action plan for the effective inclusion of refugees in development projects such the PACRI<sup>1</sup>. MINEPAT, World Bank, and UNHCR have agreed to meet on a monthly basis for better coordination actions and visibility in the inclusion of refugees.
- ❑ Positive progress was recorded in supporting alternatives to Minawao Camp with the clearance of the initial project proposal by country members of the European Union.
- ❑ Signature of two Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) - with National institute for statistics (NIS) and MINDDEVEL to support the socio-economic inclusion of refugees and forcibly displaced persons in national and local development plans. Afterward, a workshop was organized with representatives from UNHCR, MINEPAT, MINDDEVEL, MINFI, MINREX and MINAT in Bertoua, a region hosting over 200,000 refugees. During the workshop, the parties agreed to begin by selecting a few municipalities to include refugees in their development plans. Despite the limitations imposed by the Cameroonian Finance Law, the parties committed to amending the process and integrating refugees into the budgeting process at the municipal level.
- ❑ The government has granted a 100-hectare piece of land to refugees for agricultural production to refugees. This project involves collaboration between various national actors, the UN System (UNHCR and UNDP), and neighboring countries. To start the project, UNDP has already provided two tractors, and the State of Borno in Nigeria has pledged to supply an additional tractor and food stuff.
- ❑ The UNHCR and GIZ are collaborating on the “Promoting Economic and Social Participation of Internally Displaced Persons and Host Population Communities (PESoP)” project. Through this initiative, the UNHCR will gather and share socio-economic profiling data of internally displaced persons (IDPs). This data will enable GIZ and other humanitarian organizations to develop and implement durable solutions.
- ❑ Signature of a tripartite agreement between the Protection Cluster, (UNHCR, as the cluster lead agency), DRC, and the national NGO Respect Cameroon to strengthen coordination and promote shared responsibility in protecting people in need of assistance.

#### For Cluster/Sector Coordination

UNHCR leads the response for IDPs' Protection, Shelter/NFI sector (Far-North, Northwest, and South-West) while acting under the overall leadership of the Cameroonian Government. UNHCR also coordinates the refugee response's protection needs and solutions strategy (as per the Refugee Coordination Model). UNHCR is also attending key UN meetings and actively contributing to ensure that agencies with resources and mandates consider refugees and IDPs in their response and solutions.

UNHCR is fully committed to its leadership role. Dedicated protection and Shelter/NFIs coordinators have been appointed at the national level, in the Northwest and Southwest (covering the Littoral and West regions) and the Far North. Regular protection meetings are held at the national and sub-national levels. The Sectors/Clusters have various technical working groups to support coordination.

**The Protection Sector** coordinates efforts related to Child Protection, Housing, Land and Property, and GBV in alignment with the lead agency. To improve coordination, in April 2024, UNHCR signed a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding with DRC and Respect Cameroon for the joint coordination of the Protection Sector at the national level.

The Sector provides monthly updates to the Humanitarian Country Team on protection analysis and trends and coordinated response. Protection Monitoring is ongoing, and the sector is harmonizing the reporting tools on data collection and cleaning. Regular Sector/Cluster Coordination meetings take place at the national and regional levels (Northwest, Southwest, and Far North) with approximately 100 active cluster members in attendance. So far, 24 meetings have been held. In addition, coordination meetings are also held in the West and Littoral regions. In the Far North, government authorities, such as the Ministry of Territorial Administration, Ministry of Social Affairs, and Ministry of Women and Family Promotion, lead and participate in these meetings.

**Shelter/NFI Cluster** - Emergency, transitional and durable shelter interventions conducted by UNHCR, and 21 partners has improved the life of **80,870** IDPs and vulnerable host communities out of 1.1 million individual needs assessed in Cameroon. In the Far North region 5,602 households have been assisted with shelter items/kits and household items while a total of 1892 households gained access to transitional/emergency shelters and 1170 got their house rehabilitated or reconstructed. In the North-West, South-West regions 5464 households have

<sup>1</sup> *Projet pour l'Amélioration de la Connectivité, la Résilience, et l'Inclusion des réfugiés*

been assisted with shelter items/kits and household items while 1,982 households gained access to shelter through rental support. The Shelter/NFI Sector is among the least funded sectors in Cameroon, with less than 20% of the 29 million USD required, according to the OCHA Financial Tracking System.



## Financial Information

The total recorded contributions for the Cameroon MCO amount to **38 million USD**. **UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed directly to this operation**, as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with broadly earmarked and unearmarked funds:

UNHCR Cameroon says thanks to the Government of Cameroon | Canada | Education Cannot Wait | Germany | Netherlands | Norway | Sweden | Toyota Tsusho Corporation | UN Peacebuilding Fund | UN Peacebuilding Fund | UNCERF | UNAIDS | United States of America

Special thanks to the major donors of softly restricted and regional funds in 2024: **Australia for UNHCR** 6.5 million | **Norway** 2.8 million | **Italy** 2.5 million

Special thanks to the major donors of unrestricted funds in 2024: **Sweden** 90.6 million | **Norway** 58.9 million | **España con ACNUR** 44 million | **Denmark** 37.8 million | **Netherlands (Kingdom of)** 36.3 million | **France** 33.6 million | **United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland** 28.5 million | **Japan for UNHCR** 23.4 million | **Private donors in the Republic of Korea** 20.1 million | **Switzerland** 19.2 million | **Republic of Korea** 17.9 million | **Belgium** 14.2 million | **Ireland** 13.6 million | **Private donors in Italy** 12.8 million | **Australia** 10.7 million

### For more information:

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