

# Cameroon Situation

June 2020

**58,415** *Cameroonian refugees are registered* in Akwa-Ibom, Benue, Cross River and Taraba States in Nigeria.

**COVID19 Update:** 86 cases in Akwa-Ibom State, 59 in Benue State, 0 in Cross River State and 19 in Taraba State – (as of 30 June, Nigeria Centre for Disease Control).

UNHCR revised its **Coronavirus Emergency Appeal to \$4 Million** to protect the most vulnerable persons of concern from the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria.

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## KEY INDICATORS

**27,125** | Cameroonian refugees are registered in Adagom and Ukende settlements in Cross River State and Ikyogen settlement in Benue State.

**54%** | Of Cameroonian refugees in Nigeria live in host communities.

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*Prudentia and Geraldine, Cameroonian refugees in Adagom refugee settlement, Ogoja, Cross River State, were trained by UNHCR in tailoring and provided with sewing machines. They are making and distributing free face masks to other refugees to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. ©UNHCR/Lucy Agiende.*

## Highlights

- Amid the COVID19 (C19) pandemic, UNHCR organized World Refugee Day celebration on 20 June for Cameroonian refugees and members of the host communities in Benue, Cross River and Taraba States. The theme for this year's commemoration was "Everyone Can Make a Difference, Every Action Counts".
- On 29 June, the Office commissioned a solar-powered borehole with a 32,000-litres of water per day capacity, five tap/water collection points and more than 1km pipe network in Ndok Community, Ogoja Local Government Area (LGA), Cross River State (CRS). In late 2019, the community donated 100 hectares of farmland to promote livelihoods for Cameroonian refugees - a majority of whom are farmers. The Traditional Rulers and Government Officials present at the event pledged their continued support to Cameroonian refugees and good maintenance of the borehole.

## Achievements



### Protection:

- In **Benue**, UNHCR and the Government of Nigeria (GoN) resumed **Registration** of new refugees in Ikyogen settlement. Thus far, 629 (256 Male and 367 Female) refugees (walk-ins and new arrivals) were registered in June. UNHCR undertakes all protection activities respecting WHO guidelines for C19 prevention.
- After spending three weeks at the St. Paul Catholic Church and Primary School in Ikyogen, 968 Cameroonian refugees (576F, 392M) that arrived spontaneously were relocated to the Ikyogen settlement. They are currently hosted at the quarantine centre in the settlement. Prior to relocation, fit-to-travel health screening was conducted by UNHCR partners FHI 360 and Kwande Health Department. The new refugees received medical care, food and non-food items, sensitization on prevention and mitigation of C19, SGBV, child protection and restriction of movement within the settlement.
- In **Cross River State (CRS)**, commemorating 20 June **World Refugee Day (WRD)** in Adagom and Ukende refugee settlements, Ogoja LGA, refugee Community-Based Organizations (CBO) of Great Step Initiative (GSI), Save The Woman and Protect the Girl-Child (SWATO) and Paradise on Earth (PoE) organized environmental sanitation activities, C19 prevention and Sexual, Gender Based Violence, child protection sensitization and launched a 10,000 tree-planting campaign in the Adagom and Ukende settlements. In Calabar, UNHCR and partners, MEDIATRIX and CUSO International, organized a press briefing, a radio programme, social media sensitization and a virtual meeting to mark WRD and sensitize the public to the plight of Cameroonian refugees in Nigeria. In Benue State, UNHCR, refugees, traditional leaders, SEMA, Kwande Local Government, Foundation for Justice Development and Peace (FJDP), sponsored a seven day radio broadcast of a message on peaceful co-existence between refugees and host communities, aired on ASHIWAVE FM.
- In Adagom and Ukende, the UNHCR **Registration Desk** undertook risk communication on C19. Refugees practiced C19 prevention measures during the capturing of Bank Verification Number data in Ukende settlement - handwashing, use of face mask and social distancing. Furthermore, GSI reached 469 refugees and host community persons through door to door C19 risk communication in Adagom, Ukende refugee settlements and surrounding host communities.

- In Adagom and Ukende settlements, the **Protection Desk** addressed some 89 cases including separation and creation of new households, family reunification of minors, foster care arrangements and updating of the database.
- In Adagom, 47 elderly refugees (21F, 26M) received *psychosocial support* and 103 refugees were referred for medical care in Adagom and Ukende settlements.
- In **Taraba State**, 13 **persons with specific needs** (physical disability, hearing loss, mental impairment, chronic ailments and vision loss) were referred for medical care. Six refugees with specific needs were supported with dignity Kits.

#### **Detention**

- In Benue, CRS and Taraba States, 47 detention monitoring visits were undertaken to Police Stations, Immigration Offices and Correctional facilities to assist detained refugees and advocate against arbitrary arrests. In **Benue State**, the Office facilitated the release of three refugees (2F, 1M) that were arrested by the Police in Adikpo, Kwande LGA, on allegations of misrepresentation of facts. In **CRS**, six refugees (1F, 5M) detained by the Immigration Service because of expired identity cards were released. In **Taraba State**, UNHCR, CARITAS, Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) and the Local Emergency Management Agency (LEMA) facilitated the release of two Cameroonian refugees who were detained due to lack of ID cards.

#### **Border monitoring**

- In June, Cameroonian refugees continued to arrive in Nigeria amid the C19 pandemic through unofficial entry points, though the Nigeria/Cameroon border was officially closed since March due to the C19 outbreak. State Security Task Forces have been deployed at border entry points.

A total of 172 border monitoring visits with immigration/Police officers, were undertaken to border communities in Benue, CRS and Taraba States to assess the arrival of refugees and identify/respond to their needs and advocate for access to territory and accommodation through village heads. No case of refoulement or extortion were recorded. In **Taraba State**, border monitors profiled 400 new arrivals (70 children, 200F, 130M).

#### **Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)**

- In **Taraba State**, the SGBV committee made-up of refugees and host community members discussed SGBV prevention amid the C19 pandemic. The Office sensitized committee members on referral pathways and follow-up of reported SGBV cases. Routine follow-up with the State Social and Welfare Department on reported SGBV cases is being carried out.
- A total of 50 SGBV cases (40F, 10M) were reported in Benue, CRS and Taraba States and were addressed through psychosocial support services - nine survivors received core relief items, while three received legal assistance. Three awareness raising sessions on SGBV prevention and response activities were also carried out in Ikyogen settlement (**Benue**) and in Adagom and the host community areas of Obanlinku, Ikom, Boki (**CRS**).

#### **Child protection (CP):**

- In **Benue**, a total of 11 Best Interest Assessments were conducted for 11 children at risk including 10 Unaccompanied children and one Separated Child. Among these, seven were placed under foster care, while three were placed in the custody of caregivers. One unaccompanied-SGBV-survivor-child was provided with core relief items, psychosocial support and medical care. Meanwhile, one separated child was withdrawn from her caregiver and reunified with her biological mother who arrived in Ikyogen settlement in the month of June.
- In Adagom and Ukende settlements, **CRS**, 70 refugee children (34F, 36M) were issued with birth certificates. In total, 47 child protection cases (17F, 30M) were identified and managed

through the best interest assessment. In **Taraba** State, 44 refugee children (12F, 32M) were profiled for the issuance of birth certificates by the National Population Commission.

- In **Taraba State**, eleven unaccompanied and separated children were identified and placed under temporary foster care arrangement.

#### Challenges

- In **Taraba**, SGBV cases are under-reported despite the establishment of SGBV committees/volunteers (comprised of refugees and host community members) to strengthen Identification, reporting and undertake continuous sensitizations.
- As a result of the growing number of refugees and limited resources to provide for their basic needs, UNHCR notes increasing internal movement of refugees around the country in search of livelihoods opportunities so that they can provide food for themselves.



#### Health:

- A total of 5,008 refugees and host community members (3,214F, 1,794M) received medical assistance in **Benue** and **CRS**. Of these, 2,120 (1,321F, 799M) persons accessed healthcare for the first time. Medication and consumables were deployed to health facilities to improve health care for refugees and host communities.
- In **CRS**, 121 refugees (67F, 55M) were registered under the Health Insurance scheme in Calabar (CRS) to provide access to medical care in designated health facilities. Also, 38 mentor mothers were identified and trained to serve as coordinators of mother to mother support groups in the refugee settlements and host communities. Their contribution will improve uptake of reproductive maternal, neonatal and child health services including antenatal care, immunization and infant and young child feeding practices. A total of 388 refugees and host community pregnant women and mothers with children under 5 were reached with sensitization to antenatal care, immunization and infant feeding practices in Ogoja, Obanliku and Ikom LGAs.
- The Office sensitized healthcare workers to the importance of triaging to identify suspected cases of C19 and setting up triage stations following the opening of five Primary Health Centres in Akamkpa, Ikom, Obanliku LGAs in CRS and Ikyogen in Benue.

#### Challenges

- None of the Cameroon refugee host locations has a safe ambulance to transport critically ill patients. Also, C19 test kits are unavailable for patients with C19 symptoms.



#### Food and Non-Food Items:

- In **Benue**, food and non-food items (rice, salt, sugar, pots, mosquito nets, buckets, jerry cans, mats, touch lights, blankets and soap) were distributed to 682 new refugee arrivals in Ikyogen settlement.
- In **Taraba**, 14,602 individuals including 10,127 refugees and 4,475 vulnerable host community members received food items including rice, beans, cassava flour, cornflour, salt, and palm oil.

#### Challenges

- In response to the C19 pandemic and to avoid eventual complete lockdown, UNHCR frontloaded the cash for food assistance for the month of June 2020 during the CBI distribution that took place in April/May 2020. Cash assistance for food is received by only

60% of refugees who live mainly in the refugee settlements, Adagom, Ikyogen, Ukende, and in host communities adjacent the settlements. Meanwhile, the remaining 40% of refugees who live in host communities in Benue, Cross River, Taraba and urban areas are not receiving cash assistance due to insufficient resources. The current provision of N4,600 per person per month covers 80% of the refugees' food needs.



### Education:

- In **Benue**, 330 refugee school age children that newly arrived in Ikyogen settlement were successfully profiled for enrolment into schools upon resumption including 280 primary school age children, 49 secondary school age children and one at tertiary education level.
- In **CRS**, UNHCR began the construction/renovation of seven blocks of classrooms, laboratories and assembly halls in five Government Primary and Secondary Schools in Amana, Ikot Effanga, Enoghi, Up Ranch and St. Peter's II to increase learning space for refugee/host community students and ease the pressure on host community schools. Presently, over 13,000 Cameroonian refugee children aged 5-12 years are registered in Nigeria.



### Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH):

- In **Benue** and Cross River States (**CRS**), C19 risk communication and good hygiene awareness was organized for 5,043 refugees (1,106M, 1,465W, 1,086B and 1,386G) through door to door visits in the refugee settlements. Installation of hand washing stations and demonstration on hand washing technique were also undertaken.
- In **Benue**, potable water supply was increased with the completion of an additional 10m<sup>3</sup> capacity water collection point and 60 meters of pipe in the quarantine centre in Ikyogen settlement. Also, nine ventilated improved pit latrines (3 corrugated iron sheet latrines and 6 plastic pit latrines), 10 bathing shelters and a waste pit were installed to accommodate new arrivals.
- In **CRS**, 39 family shared latrines and 54 family shared bathing shelters were installed in the Adagom settlement quarantine centre. Casting of 69 concrete slabs and bathing shelters superstructure were also completed. Two volunteer hygiene promoters have been deployed to support hygiene promotion in the quarantine centres in Ikyogen (Benue) and Adagom (CRS) settlements.
- In **Benue** and **CRS**, cleaning tools including brush, disinfectants, waste bins and rakes were supplied to refugees in Adagom and Ikyogen settlements to promote environmental sanitation. Some 1,903 women of reproductive age received menstrual hygiene kits to improve their personal hygiene in Adagom settlement, **CRS**.

### Challenges

- The demand for WASH facilities in the refugee settlements continues to increase with the arrival of new refugees. Despite the construction of additional boreholes, hand-dug wells and latrines, water supply and sanitation facilities remain inadequate.



### Community empowerment/Self Reliance:

- In **Benue** and **CRS**, distribution of agricultural inputs/start-up kits to refugees and members of the host communities in Adagom and Ikyogen settlements has commenced. The inputs will reach 1,000 arable crop farmers that have successfully completed the entrepreneurial and farmers field school training to enable them cultivate crops on a small scale to contribute to their livelihoods and food security. Each kit includes cassava stems or Bambara nuts, maize seeds, vegetable seeds, hoes, cutlass, file, knapsack sprayer, herbicide, pesticide, raincoat/boot and fertilizer. Following the distribution of the kits, beneficiaries will be allocated about 50 square metres of land donated by the Adagom and Ikyogen host communities for farming. So far, 534 beneficiaries have received kits.
- In **Benue** and **CRS**, entrepreneurship development training was concluded in the refugee settlements (Adagom, Ikyogen and Ukende). A total of 1,000 beneficiaries were trained. The 6-days training equipped beneficiaries with life skills, basic business management skills and facilitated development and submission of business plans by participants. A socio-economic survey to monitor the impact of the livelihood projects for Cameroonian refugees in Benue and CRS is underway.



### Shelter:

- In Benue State, 40 emergency shelters were constructed to accommodate new arrivals while 279 damaged emergency shelters were repaired in the Ikyogen settlement.



### Settlement coordination and management:

- In June, the **Benue** and **CRS** State Emergency Management Agencies monitored managed the refugee settlements, ensuring peaceful coexistence with host communities and providing security for refugees. More than 30 potential conflict cases between refugees and host community members were resolved. The agencies also coordinated facilitated police investigation and prosecution of suspected criminals activities reported by the local security watchmen in the settlements and host communities.

## Working in partnership

In collaboration with the Government of Nigeria, UNHCR ensures international protection and delivery of multi-sectoral assistance to Cameroonian refugees. The Office holds regular coordination meetings in Ogoja, CRS, to foster collaboration with UN agencies and humanitarian actors. The following partners implement specific sector activities in the response to the Cameroon refugee situation: Family Health International (FHI 360), Save the Children International, CUSO International, Catholic Caritas Foundation Nigeria (CCFN), Catholic Diocese of Makurdi Foundation for Justice Development and Peace (FJDP); MEDATRIX Development Foundation, Rhema Care Integrated Development Centre, Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), Nigeria Red Cross Society (NRCS) and the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO). Operational partners include ICRC, UNFPA and WHO.

## Financial Information

In May, UNHCR revised its global Coronavirus Emergency Appeal including **USD4 Million** to protect the most vulnerable persons of concern in Nigeria from the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Regular requirements for the response to the Cameroon situation stands at USD52.5 million for 2020. **As of June 2020, funding of the requirements for the Cameroon refugee situation stood at 11% of USD 52.5 million**

***UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with un-earmarked and broadly earmarked funds including:***

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