

Cameroonian Refugees in Nigeria

December 2021

Over **72,000 Cameroonian refugee men, women and children are registered** in Akwa-Ibom, Anambra, Benue, Cross River, Enugu, and Taraba States.

UNHCR distributed **cash for food** to some **25,000 refugees** in Akwa Ibom, Benue, Cross River and Taraba States in full respect of **COVID-19 restrictions**.

UNHCR installed **four solar-powered boreholes** to improve **water supply** and COVID-19 prevention for **refugees** and **locals** in Cross River and Taraba States.



"No more school drop out!" Their message is clear as refugees, locals, UNHCR and partners march to create awareness about consequences of gender-based violence against women and girls during the 16 Days of Activism Campaign in Adikpo, Benue State. © UNHCR/Williams Ngiyev.

Operational Highlights

- In Akwa Ibom, Benue, Cross River and Taraba (ABCT) States, UNHCR together with refugees, host communities and partners concluded the **16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence (GBV)** campaign. Debates, drama, and cultural dance displays took place under the 2021 theme “Orange the World: END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN NOW!”. During the campaign, UNHCR and partners reached over **20,000 refugees** and **locals** including government officials, security personnel, teachers, students, religious and traditional leaders with GBV prevention, response awareness and training, to help eradicate all forms of GBV against women and girls.
- UNHCR and partners distributed a one-off **cash for food** to some **4,500 Cameroonian refugees** and **780 vulnerable locals**, and cash for **rent** to about **600** vulnerable refugee families in Akwa Ibom and Taraba States for the first time. Over **25,000** refugees and locals received **cash for food** in ABCT States this month.
- Some **6,400 returnees** from Cameroon and **Cameroonian refugee children** received **birth certificates** issued by the National Population Commission, with support from UNHCR in Akwa Ibom State.
- UNHCR supported additional **30 refugee students**, including 28 Cameroonian refugees with **DAFI scholarship** (Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative) funds to enroll into various **tertiary institutions** in Nigeria such as universities. The DAFI scholarship programme is supported by the government of Germany, Denmark, Czech Republic, UNHCR and other private donors. Thus far, some 60 Cameroonian refugee students have benefitted from the scholarship fund.



PROTECTION

Protection Monitoring

- UNHCR collaborated with 12 government agencies, national and international partners to systematically **identify protection incidents**, analyse the protection risk and refer cases to partners providing protection and multisectoral assistance.
- In ABCT States, at least **350 additional refugees**, mostly women and children arrived from the South-West and North-West regions of Cameroon through unofficial entry points, following renewed violence by separatist groups and government forces. Urgent needs identified among these refugees include food, non-food items such as jerry cans and blankets as well as shelter.

Protection Response

- UNHCR and the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants, and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI) registered and provided proof of documentation to some **1,130** additional **Cameroonian refugees** in Benue and Cross River State (CRS). This brings the number of registered refugees to over **72,362 individuals**, as of 31 December.
- As a result of the advocacy efforts made by UNHCR and NCFRMI, Cameroonians and other refugees with a refugee card and factsheet have been granted access by the National Identity Management Commission to enrol for the **National Identity Number (NIN)**. The

NIN is a key instrument for inclusion as it facilitates registration of refugee students with the Joint Admission and Matriculation Boards Examination (a prerequisite for tertiary education), and SIM card registration with all telecom companies.

- Over **500 refugees** received **ID cards** issued by NCFRMI and UNHCR, to help them move freely and access basic social services in Benue and CRS.
- On 9 December, UNHCR undertook a one-day refresher **Code of Conduct dialogue** session for 45 partner staff implementing UNHCR projects in ABCT States. The sessions focused on the **nine core principles, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) prevention, sexual harassment**, and communication in the workplace.
- In ABCT States, at least **20 GBV** survivors received multisectoral assistance including **medical, psychosocial, legal**, and material assistance through established referral pathways to enhance their coping skills.
- On 3 December, UNHCR together with refugees, locals, partners, and community-based organizations commemorated the **International Day for Persons Living with Disabilities** in Benue and CRS with sensitization sessions, traditional dances, and drama. Over **60 refugees** with disabilities received **walking aids** including wheelchairs, crutches, sunglasses, and walking sticks in Benue and CRS.
- In Akwa Ibom State, UNHCR and partners undertook advocacy visits to the Department of State Services, Police Force, and the National Immigration Service in Esit Eket, to increase GBV prevention, response, and human rights awareness, during the 16 Days of Activism against GBV. The security officials pledged to support, protect, and uphold the human rights of women and girls.
- UNHCR **trained** some **100** religious and traditional leaders, government officials, internally displaced people, (IDP) community structures and leaders and humanitarians including MSF and International Organization for Migration on **GBV prevention, sexual exploitation and abuse**, as well as risk mitigation, to eradicate and improve GBV response among refugees, IDPs and host communities in Adikpo and Makurdi (Benue State).
- In CRS, UNHCR partner Caritas trained **45 protection monitors** including refugees and locals on **GBV prevention, mental health, psychosocial support** and UNHCR's code of conduct, to improve GBV response and community participation in the eradication of GBV among refugees and locals.
- Some **150 refugee women and girls** of reproductive age received **dignity kits** provided by UNHCR in Akwa Ibom State.

Challenges

- In all refugee hosting locations, harmful coping mechanisms including **sale and exchange of sex** leading to increase in **teenage pregnancy** and **substance abuse** have been reported among youth and women-headed households, due to limited food and livelihood support.
- **Under-reporting** of **GBV incidences** remains a major concern as most survivors fail to report GBV incidents for fear of reprisal attacks and stigma.

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH):

- UNHCR installed **four solar-powered boreholes** to improve **water supply** for refugees and locals in Ikom, Adagom-3 refugee settlement, Bashua Boki and Gembu (Cross River and Taraba States). Additionally, two manual boreholes were upgraded to solar motorized boreholes at Ukende Primary Health Center and Ukende Community in CRS.

Challenges

- Long distance to water collection points in the refugee settlements, insufficient user-friendly latrines and bathing shelters constitute a major challenge in the refugee settlements, especially for the individuals with disabilities, in Benue and CRS.
- The main gap in the water-sanitation-hygiene sector are **inadequate latrines and water supply** especially during the dry season, in refugee settlements and in most communities hosting refugees.



HEALTH:

- UNHCR provided support to some **30 health facilities** through the provision of **medical equipment**, laboratory consumables, **COVID-19 prevention items**, and capacity-building for staff in ABCT States.
- Over **300 refugees** received **COVID-19 vaccines** in Benue, Cross River and Taraba States. UNHCR is supporting the government efforts with vaccine cold chain boxes, face masks, hand gloves, hand sanitizers, logistics support to hard-to-reach locations, vaccine safety and COVID-19 prevention awareness.
- More than **3,000 refugees** received **health care services** including mental health, pre-natal services/delivery kits, immunization, and nutrition services at the UNHCR supported facilities in ABCT States. Malaria remained the major cause of illness.
- On 1 December, UNHCR, in collaboration with government officials, host communities, refugees, and partners, undertook a road walk to promote awareness on HIV/AIDs prevention, pre-exposure prophylaxis, and family planning, in commemoration of the World Aids Day in Benue and Cross River States.
- The Women Association of Port-Harcourt (Rivers State) donated essential drugs to refugees in Ikyogen settlement, Benue State. The drugs were delivered to the Ikyogen Primary Health center, to improve health care for refugees and locals.

Challenges

- Poor COVID-19 vaccine uptake by refugees due to misconceptions about the vaccine.



EDUCATION:

- UNHCR and partner Caritas trained **40 teachers** from primary and secondary schools hosting Cameroonian refugee students on **child safeguarding** and **protection** in Cross River State.
- In Cross River State, over **1,000 refugee** students in primary and secondary schools received **exercise books**, pens and pencils provided by UNHCR through Caritas.

Challenges

- Levels of **school** and **university enrolment** remain **critically low** for refugee children and youth because of **limited funding** and support.



LIVELIHOODS

- UNHCR and partners Mediatrix and CUSO International trained **180 women** and girls including widows on the production of **tie and dye**, to improve their livelihoods and self-reliance, as part of the activities to mark the 16 Days of activism against GBV in Adikpo, Benue State.
- **68 refugees** who were trained on entrepreneurship and trading, received **starter kits** to establish their business ventures in Adagom, Adagom 3 and in Ukende refugee settlements, CRS.

Challenges

- Refugees continue crossing back and forth to Cameroon in **search** of **food** and **livelihood opportunities** to sustain their families. Inadequate access to land for refugees limits the livelihoods options, especially for crop farming.



FOOD SECURITY

- Thanks to generous donation from the UAE-based private donor Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum Global Initiatives, UNHCR could distribute **cash** for **food** to some **25,000** Cameroonian refugees for **food** of their **choice** in ABCT States. Additional outreach will ensure that individuals entitled to cash assistance who did not show up will receive this support.
- In Taraba State, at least **1,000 refugees** and locals received **food items** including rice, cassava flour, beans, noodles, vegetable oil, tomatoes, sugar, and seasoning cubes donated by the North East Development Commission and Taraba State Government to celebrate Christmas.
- Some **6,000 refugees** received **food items** donated by the First lady of Benue State and the Women Association from Port-Harcourt to celebrate Christmas in Ikyogen settlement, Benue State.

Challenges

- **Food** remains one of the **critical needs** of refugees in settlements and host communities.



SETTLEMENT COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT, SHELTER AND NFIS

- UNHCR and its partners, the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) in Benue CRS, and Taraba, monitored and managed the four refugee settlements (Adagom, Adagom 3, Ukende and Ikyogen) and host communities, ensuring integration and providing security for refugees. More than 20 potential crises that were based on sharing of resources among refugees and the locals, were managed through **community engagement and negotiations**.

- Over **300 refugees** including individuals with specific needs, GBV survivors, unaccompanied and separated children received **non-food items** including bed cabinets, mattresses, pillows, stools, buckets, and kitchen utensils to commemorate the 16 Days of Activism against GBV in Adagom and Ukende settlements, CRS. In Benue State, 45 refugees with disabilities received buckets, pots, mattresses, blankets, and cloths.
- UNHCR donated **food** and **non-food items** including rice, toilet tissue, sanitary pads, soap, disinfectants, hand washstand with buckets and shaving sticks to **inmates** of the Correctional Facility in Gboko, Benue State.

Working in partnership

Together with the Government of Nigeria, UNHCR ensures international protection and delivery of multi-sectoral assistance to Cameroonian refugees. The Agency holds regular coordination meetings at the State and Local Government levels with, government, and humanitarian actors. The following partners implement specific sector activities: NCFRMI, SEMA, Save the Children International, CUSO International, Catholic Caritas Foundation Nigeria, Catholic Diocese of Makurdi Foundation for Justice Development and Peace, MEDATRIX Development Foundation, Rhema Care Integrated Development Centre, Jesuit Refugee Service, and the Nigeria Red Cross. Operational partners include UNFPA, FAO, ICRC and WHO.

External/Donors Relations

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