Cameroonian Refugees in Nigeria
April 2022

Over 77,000 Cameroonian refugee men, women, and children are registered in Akwa-Ibom, Anambra, Benue, Cross River, Enugu, and Taraba States. About 19,000 refugees received cash to purchase food of their choice in Benue and Cross River States (CRS).

UNHCR provided 60 vaccine carrier boxes to Primary Health Centres to help preserve and transport vaccines including the COVID-19 vaccine in Taraba State.

Cameroonian refugee mother of three designs clothes for her client, following vocational training and receipt of starter kits provided by UNHCR in Adagom refugee settlement, CRS. © UNHCR/ Lucy Agiende.
Operational Highlights

- From 21 to 22 April, officials of the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) undertook a field mission to assess the activities and implementation of the protection and food security grant donated to the Cameroonian refugees in Benue and Cross River States (CRS). The delegation held meetings with UNHCR and government partners on the strategic priorities and operational challenges and held focus group discussions with over 30 refugees to understand their situation and to evaluate the opportunities and constraints in relation to social protection, food security, cash-based intervention, durable solutions, and access to services. Lack of food/cash reduction for food, inadequate livelihood opportunities, healthcare, energy, tertiary education opportunities, and poor access to land for agriculture were among the major concerns highlighted by refugees. The ECHO team appreciated the favourable protection environment which has been made possible for refugees by the Government of Nigeria and expressed satisfaction with the initiatives towards the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees in the refugee hosting areas irrespective of the challenges highlighted, including limited resources.

PROTECTION

Protection Monitoring

- In Akwa Ibom, Benue, Cross River, and Taraba (ABCT) States, UNHCR and partners undertook over 25 visits on advocacy, border, and detention monitoring to the immigration posts, National Drug Law Development Agency, Federal Road Safety Corps, Security and Civil Defence Corps, correctional centres, and the police stations, to promote refugee’s access to justice, freedom of movement, and advocate against the arbitrary arrest and detention of refugees.

- Over 500 additional refugees, mostly women and children arrived at border communities in ABCT States, mainly in Sardauna local government area of Taraba State. They fled their villages in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon due to the protracted crisis between separatist fighters, military forces, and Fulani herders. Urgent needs include food, health care, non-food items, and shelter.

Protection Response

- UNHCR collaborated with 12 government, national and international partners to identify protection incidents including Gender-Based Violence (GBV), medical care, and child protection issues; examined the protection risks, and referred cases to partners providing protection and multisectoral assistance in ABCT States.

- The National Commission for Refugees, Migrants, and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI) and UNHCR registered and provided evidence of documentation to 488 additional Cameroonian refugees from the Northwest and Southwest regions in Benue, Cross River, and Taraba States. As of 30 April, 77,000 refugees mostly women, and children were registered in Nigeria.

- 115 Cameroonian refugee children received birth certificates issued by the National Population Commission, with support from UNHCR and partners in ABCT States.

- Some 40 GBV survivors identified by UNHCR and partners received multisectoral assistance including psychosocial support, medical care, material, and legal
assistance according to their specific needs in ABCT States. They included survivors of rape, sexual assault, denial of resources, physical assault, and emotional abuse. Survivors held at least 10 GBV support group meetings to foster support and improve their coping mechanisms at the refugee settlements in Benue and CRS.

- More than 300 refugee women and girls of reproductive age including students and individuals with specific needs received dignity kits (soap, sanitary pads, toilet roll, shaving blades, toothbrush, toothpaste, comb, towel, and underwear) provided by UNHCR, to promote their personal hygiene in ABCT States.

- Awareness sessions on Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), domestic violence, menstrual hygiene, referral, and reporting channels reached over 1,700 refugees and locals at the refugee settlements and host communities in Benue and CRS.

- In Calabar, Cross River State (CRS), UNHCR in collaboration with UNFPA, Nigerian Red Cross, National Agency for The Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons, Federation of International Female Lawyers, Ministry of Justice, and Ministry of Women Affairs conducted a two-day GBV Dialogue with 70 health workers, security officials, refugees, and partners in Akwa Ibom and CRS. The training focused on the prevention, mitigation, and response of GBV, PSEA, and human trafficking, multi-sectoral approach, referral pathways, clinical management, access to justice, survivor-centered approach, monitoring, and evaluation.

- More than 30 child protection incidences including child labour, unaccompanied and separated children, physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and child at risk of trafficking were identified and managed by UNHCR and its partners, according to case management procedures in ABCT States.

- Over 800 refugee and host community children participated in educational and recreational activities to strengthen and nurture their cognitive, emotional, social development and psychosocial well-being, at the two child-friendly spaces established by UNHCR partner Jesuit Refugee Service in Alheri Primary School, Takum and Jauro Primary School, Gembu in Taraba State.

- In CRS, UNHCR partner Caritas trained 30 refugees and locals from Ukende, Adagom 1, and Adagom 3 communities on alternative dispute resolution, communication skills, conduct, and ethics. Trainees will form the Community Justice Committee that will help promote integration and peaceful coexistence among refugees and locals.

Challenges

- During border monitoring visits by UNHCR and partners, refugees, as a major concern, reported arbitrary arrests and restriction of movement by security officials due to expired ID cards. The ID card renewal is linked to their temporary protection status (TPS) and UNHCR continues to explore ways to reduce arbitrary arrests through sensitization and training of security officials. UNHCR was not successful in advocating for a five-year extension of the refugee ID card. It should be noted that the Government is jointly responsible to ensure the new ID cards will be printed and delivered to refugees.

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH):

- Over 100 refugee families received hygiene kits (including bucket, soap, hand wash/sanitizer) by UNHCR through Save the Children in Adagom settlement, CRS, to help mitigate and prevent cholera, COVID-19, and other poor hygiene-related diseases. The
families included women heads of households, foster mothers, individuals with physical disabilities, and families affected by the outbreak of diarrhoea and cholera.

- In CRS, UNHCR partner Save the Children trained 62 volunteers including hygiene promoters (refugees and hosts) on handwashing, safe water chain and environmental hygiene, chlorination, prevention against cholera outbreak/management, and water quality testing procedures, to improve the volunteers’ skill and capacity on hygiene management procedures.

- **Hygiene sensitization sessions** on safe excreta disposal, hand washing, safe water chain, and environmental hygiene reached more than 1,400 refugees in Benue and CRS.

**HEALTH:**

- UNHCR provided 60 vaccine carrier boxes to the Chairpersons of Takum, Ussa, and Sardauna local government areas in Taraba State and the directors of Primary Healthcare centers therein, to help preserve and transport vaccines including the COVID-19 vaccine to areas with difficult terrains where vaccination services are inconsistent.

- More than 10,000 refugees and locals received medical care services at about 30 UNHCR-supported facilities including mental health, vaccination, antenatal/post-natal services, and nutrition. UNHCR is improving the capacity of national health systems through the provision of medical equipment, rehabilitation, and construction of hospital facilities, and employment of additional health professionals to improve access to health care for refugees and locals. Reportedly, the main causes of ailments were Malaria, upper respiratory tract infection, and diarrhoea.

- In ABCT States, UNHCR undertook the nutritional assessment of 1,700 refugee and host community children and provided supplementary feeding to some 100 identified malnourished children (including 79 refugees), to improve their growth and wellbeing through its partner the Nigerian Red Cross Society.

- More than 160 refugees and locals mostly pregnant women, children under 5 years, and the elderly received mosquito nets to help prevent malaria in ABCT States.

- In Benue State, UNHCR provided COVID-19 preventive items, dignity kits, and non-food items to one Primary Healthcare Centre and four schools in Uji and Mbakpa Communities (Kwande local government), to help promote COVID-19 prevention and hygiene management for refugees and locals.

- At least 90 refugee and host community women received delivery kits during childbirth at the UNHCR-supported health facilities in ABCT States.

- In ABCT States, over 400 refugees received COVID-19 services including vaccination and testing. No COVID-19 positive cases were recorded among refugees.

**LIVELIHOODS**

- In CRS, UNHCR and partner Cuso International trained 350 refugees on entrepreneurship development and life skills including networking, problem-solving, critical thinking, innovation, interpersonal skills, and work plan development in eight local government areas, to equip them with skills for business creation. The trainees will
proceed to 12 weeks of intensive technical/vocational training of their choice that will qualify them to receive starter kits, establish their business ventures and improve their self-reliance.

- On 26 May 2022, the World Bank (WB) APPEALS project team undertook a field visit to CRS to assess the Cameroonian refugee situation and to consider the feasibility of a partnership for livelihood support to Cameroonian refugees. The potential WB project in collaboration with the Nigerian Government is planned to be implemented in six States, i.e. Enugu, Kogi, Lagos, Kano, Kaduna and CRS targeting vulnerable rural farmers in three value chains namely rice, poultry, and cocoa. Having met with UNHCR and livelihood partner CUSO International and having inspected poultry facilities at the integrated farm village in Adagom settlement established by UNHCR for refugees, the mission expressed willingness to support Cameroonian refugees in the poultry value chain.

- With support from the ECHO, the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) trained 50 refugee and host community women (including 35 refugees) in briquettes production, to enhance safe access to sustainable fuel/energy using the abundant farm wastes, sawdust, leaves and other wastes, for business and income generation in Taraba State. ECHO is supporting various livelihood projects for some 3,000 Cameroonian refugees through FAO in Taraba State.

### FOOD SECURITY

- About 19,000 refugees received cash to purchase food of their choice in Benue and CRS, thanks to the generous donation from ECHO and Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives (MBRGI). The cash distribution which commenced in March reached about 37,000 refugees through cash-in-hand and bank transfers for withdrawal using the UNHCR-facilitated ATM cards.

- UNHCR and representatives of MBRGI, as part of their global campaign for 1 Billion Meals, undertook a media mission aimed at providing additional funding to support Cameroonian refugees in Nigeria. The mission met with refugees in the Ikyogen refugee settlement, Benue State. The MBRGI generously donated $1,006,300 to support the provision of cash for food to over 35,000 Cameroonian refugees in ABCT States.

### EDUCATION:

- In CRS, UNHCR registered and paid examination fees for 82 refugee students to participate in the Junior West African Examination Council exam and National Business and Technical Examination Board exams at two public schools in Ogoja.

- UNHCR partner Caritas established two Kids’ Clubs in St. Peter’s 1 Primary School to help prevent the risky behaviour and negative peer influence among refugees and host community pupils, particularly for children with deviant behaviours.

- In Taraba State, UNHCR provided educational and COVID-19 preventive materials including writing boards, rulers, notebooks, pens, textbooks, face masks, and hand sanitizers to the Nigerian Correctional Service in Gembu, to support the new project on education and learning for inmates.

### SETTLEMENT COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT, SHELTER AND NFIS

- The State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) collaborated with UNHCR in Benue, Cross River, and Taraba States to manage and provide security to refugees and to ensure integration and peaceful co-existence among refugees and locals.
In Taraba State, SEMA and UNHCR conducted a two-day training for 35 newly elected refugee leaders, to enhance their leadership skills in Gembu. The sessions underlined the UNHCR code of conduct, refugee leadership, and referral pathways.

Over 100 refugees and vulnerable locals with specific needs particularly the elderly individuals received non-food items including blankets, cooking pots, and mosquito nets in Benue and CRS.

UNHCR and partners SEMA, Caritas, and NCFRMI conducted the refugee leadership elections in Calabar, CRS. Eight leaders (including six females) who will oversee the activities of refugees were nominated during the election officiated by SEMA.

Working in partnership


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UNHCR is grateful for the following support:


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