

# 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

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 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, Mediatrix Development Foundation, Rhema Care Integrated Development Centre, Jesuit Refugee Service, and the Nigeria Red Cross. Operational partners include UNFPA and FAO.

## External/Donors Relations

UNHCR is grateful for the following support:

**Direct contributions to UNHCR in Nigeria:** UN Cerf | European Union | Foundation Probitas | France | Japan | Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum Global Initiatives | Muslim World League | Nigeria | Private donors Nigeria | Other private donors | Spain | United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security | United States of America.

**Unearmarked contributions:** Norway 80 million | Sweden 66.9 million | Private donors Spain 55.7 million | Netherlands 36.1 million | Denmark 34.6 million | Private donors Republic of Korea 28.5 million | United Kingdom 28.4 million | Germany 26 million | Private donors Japan 23.6 million | Japan 23.4 million | France 20.2 million | Switzerland 16.4 million | Private donors Italy 14 million | Private donors Sweden 13 million | Ireland 12.5 million | Belgium 11.9 million | Italy 10.7 million. | Private donors.

**Softly earmarked contributions:** Germany 37 million | United States of America 33 million | Private donors Australia 8.7 million | Canada 5.6 million | Private donors Germany 2.6 million.

### CONTACT US

**Tesfaye Bekele**, Head of Sub-Office, Ogoja, Cross River State  
[bekelet@unhcr.org](mailto:bekelet@unhcr.org); Cell + 234 901 066 0624

**Mohamed Rahmathullah**, Associate Reporting Officer, Abuja  
[mohamrah@unhcr.org](mailto:mohamrah@unhcr.org); Cell +234 9010660548

[www.unhcr.org/ng](http://www.unhcr.org/ng) - [Data portal](#) - [Twitter](#) – [Facebook](#) - [Instagram](#)