

Operational Context

Since the Government of Cameroon announced the crackdown on pro-independence demonstrators, the situation in north-western Anglophone region continues to significantly worsen with more people reportedly killed and others arrested. Consequently, there is rising population movement resulting to an outflow of asylum seekers into Nigeria. In addition to civilians killed, ten military and police officers have reportedly been killed during clashes with the secessionists since they unilaterally declared independence on 1 October. Cameroon is accusing the pro-independence activists of engaging in guerilla warfare by using the porous border region between Nigeria and Cameroon to attack government forces.

New Arrivals

More Cameroonians continue to cross into Nigeria's Cross River State via several unofficial entry points. This is because the main border crossing point is officially closed. The UNHCR partner in the area, Rhema Care and local officials have confirmed the new arrivals but the porous nature of the border makes it difficult for UNHCR to know the actual number of new asylum seekers arriving in areas such as Amana, Akamkpa, Agbokim, Ikom/Ajasso and Boki in Cross River State in South-South Nigeria.

The asylum seekers are reportedly coming from the Cameroonian border towns of Akwaya, Otu, Eyumojock, Nsan, Dadi & Bodam in the south-west Anglophone region. Women and children are in the majority of those arriving and being hosted by locals in Nigerian communities near the border with Cameroon.

UNHCR is concerned that as the crisis in Cameroon continues and the government adopts extra security measures, more asylum seekers will arrive.

Response & Advocacy Efforts

The joint-UNHCR and government registration team is continuing the biometric registration for the new arrivals. By 16 December, **7,204** asylum seekers had been officially registered, to whom UNHCR is providing protection and life-saving support such as food and non-food items (NFIs).

While UNHCR and partners distribute food and other basic relief items, bad condition of the roads, worsened by the rainy season, hampers efforts to access people and effectively provide support. To address the increasing needs, UNHCR is deploying more staff in the region. Other organizations, such as Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Save the Children, the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) and local authorities are gearing up their participation in the response.

To reinforce coordination and response efforts, UNHCR and partners have developed a contingency plan for an estimated 40,000 new arrivals from Cameroon with a projected budget of \$18 million.

Meanwhile, to further ensure inter-agency collaboration and participation, UNHCR is organizing a technical coordination meeting on 18 December in Calabar, Cross River State to discuss among other issues, the trends of arrivals, priorities and response capacities.

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