Cameroonian Refugees in Nigeria
May 2022

Over 77,000 Cameroonian refugee men, women, and children are registered in Akwa-Ibom, Anambra, Benue, Cross River, Enugu, and Taraba States.

At least 300 refugees and locals received non-food items including blankets, kitchen sets and mosquito nets in Benue and Cross River State (CRS).

UNHCR launched the Network on Prevention from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) for the Cameroonian refugee response in CRS.

Cameroonian refugees process and produce local cassava meal/flour, using equipment provided by UNHCR to help improve food security and self-reliance for refugees in Ukende refugee settlement, Cross River State. © UNHCR/Lucy Agiende.
Operational Highlights

- On 29 May, over 500 Cameroonian refugees reportedly fled from Obonyi 2 village in Cameroon, following a renewed violence by separatist fighters in the Southwest region into border communities in Cross River State (CRS). According to reports, scores of individuals were allegedly killed, injured, and held hostage by the combatants. Some of the injured are receiving medical assistance at UNHCR-supported health centers in the State. More arrivals are anticipated.

Protection Monitoring

- UNHCR collaborated with 12 government, national and international partners to identify over 100 protection incidents including medical care, documentation, child protection, education, and Gender-Based Violence (GBV). Protection risks were examined and cases were referred to partners providing protection and multisectoral assistance in Akwa Ibom, Benue, Cross River and Taraba (ABCT) States.

- A two-day joint detention monitoring visit was conducted by UNHCR, National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI), State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), Foundation for Justice Development and Peace (FJDP), Save the Children and Rhema Care to advocate against the arbitrary detention of refugees and access to fair hearing and justice. The team met with the Police Area Command, Immigration Service, Security Civil Defence Corps, Medium Correctional Centre, and Juvenile Correctional Centre in Benue State. The officials were sensitized on refugee protection, Prevention from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), child protection, and the inclusion of refugees in National Identity Number registration.

- On 30 May, UNHCR and its partners visited the Bashu border community of Boki CRS, to verify reports of the arrival of over 500 new refugees and assess their urgent needs. The team interacted with the Nigerian soldiers, community leaders, health personnel, and the refugees. The newly arrived refugees informed that their village Obonyi 2 in Cameroon was attacked on 29 May by the separatist fighters following the refusal of the villagers to pay their demand for cash. Scores of villagers were shot dead, others were burnt, lynched and robbed of several millions of CFA francs and food supplies. Health workers at the Bashu Primary Healthcare Centre noted that 15 persons have been treated for gunshot injuries and machete wounds, while four refugees with severe injuries were referred to a secondary health facility. The new arrivals are hosted by locals who keep sharing their limited resources, including food and shelter. UNHCR and partners will continue to monitor the situation, conduct registration, and provide healthcare services for the new arrivals.

Protection Response

- On 13 May 2022, UNHCR launched the PSEA network for the Cameroonian refugee response in CRS. The meeting was co-chaired by UNHCR and NCFRMI with the representation from nine agencies/ partners responding to the Cameroonian refugee situation in ABCT States. The PSEA network includes at least one focal point designated by agencies to promote awareness, prevention, coordination, and oversight of sexual
exploitation and abuse. A refresher session on PSEA was conducted and the 2022 PSEA workplan was disseminated.

- An additional 152 Cameroonian refugees, mostly women, and children from the Northwest and Southwest regions, received evidence of documentation following registration by NCFRMI and UNHCR.

- UNHCR and partners sensitized at least 2,000 refugees and locals including students on GBV, child protection, PSEA, personal hygiene, referral, and reporting channels at the refugee settlements and host communities in ABCT States. A complaint box was installed at the Abande Primary Healthcare Centre in Benue State to strengthen the community feedback response mechanism on sexual exploitation and abuse.

- In Taraba State, UNHCR and its partner Jesuit Refugee Service trained 15 host community leaders on the rights and obligations of refugees.

Challenges

- Survivors of GBV are reluctant to disclose details of perpetrators for fear of reprisal.
- Poor attitude of refugee parents to document the birth of their children, despite continuous sensitization by UNHCR and partners.

**WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH):**

- On 28 May, UNHCR, in collaboration with Save the Children International, Nigerian Red Cross Society, and Rhema Care, sensitized over 300 women and girls of reproductive age on personal/menstrual hygiene management to commemorate the World Menstrual Hygiene Management Day, in schools and primary health centers in Benue and CRS. Some 250 vulnerable women and girls received sanitary pads to help promote their personal hygiene.

**HEALTH:**

- In ABCT States, at least 13,000 refugees and locals received health care services including antenatal/post-natal services, nutrition, mental health, and vaccination in about 30 UNHCR-supported facilities.

- Over 2,000 refugee and host community children were assessed for malnutrition at the refugee settlements, host communities, and UNHCR-supported health facilities in ABCT States. Some 150 children identified with severe and moderate malnutrition received supplementary feeding provided by UNHCR with support from Foundation Probitas, to improve their growth and wellbeing.

- Some 150 refugees and locals particularly the disabled, pregnant women, children under 5 years, and the elderly received mosquito nets to help prevent malaria in ABCT States.

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

- On 5 May, UNHCR partner CUSO International held a business training session with 184 refugees in the Ikyogen refugee settlement and host community in Benue State, to provide professional consulting services including the review of their business plans to promote their business ventures.

EDUCATION:

- UNHCR paid tuition fees to the school authorities for over 1,140 refugee students in public primary and secondary schools for the second term 2021/2022 academic year in Benue State.

- From 28 to 30 May, the University Corridors for Refugees (UNICORE) project team from Italy, including UNHCR and Caritas, conducted a familiarization visit to assess tertiary educational opportunities for Cameroonian refugee students in Nigeria. The team met with potential refugee candidates and UNHCR partners to discuss educational activities, priorities, scholarship opportunities, and challenges with the application process. Challenges identified included lack of internet access, lack of access to academic transcripts, and a low number of eligible candidates due to the restriction in the year of graduation. The UNICORE program is promoted by 33 Italian universities with the support of UNHCR, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Caritas Italiana, and other partners. It aims to increase scholarship opportunities in 2022 for 69 refugees currently residing in Niger, Nigeria, and Cameroon. The call for application was disseminated widely in all refugee locations by UNHCR and partners in ABCT States.

- UNHCR distributed about 100 textbooks donated by the Benue State Ministry of Education to two primary schools in Ikyogen, Benue State, to improve the quality of education for refugee pupils and locals.

- On 27 May, UNHCR and partner FJDP celebrated Children’s Day for refugee and host community children at a primary school in Ikyogen, Benue State. Various primary schools participated in cultural dances, and sports activities.

Challenges

- Most refugee parents and students moved to the border communities for farming activities and are yet to resume school.

- Insufficient classrooms to accommodate the early childhood care and development classes for refugee and host community students in Benue State.

SETTLEMENT COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT, SHELTER AND NFIS

- Some 300 vulnerable refugees, new arrivals, and locals received non-food items including blankets, solar lanterns, mosquito nets, wrappers, underwear, kitchen set, buckets, sanitary pads, soaps, shaving sticks, and toothbrushes in Benue and CRS.

- UNHCR provided transitional shelters to four refugee households of 18 individuals whose accommodations were destroyed by strong wind and heavy rain in the Ikyogen refugee settlement, Benue State.
UNHCR and partners sensitized some 500 refugees on environmental protection, flood/erosion prevention, and waste management/disposal in Ikyogen settlement, to promote environmental preservation and mitigate the effect of climate change.

The State Emergency Management Agency collaborated with UNHCR in Benue, Cross River, and Taraba States to manage and provide security to refugees and to ensure integration, conflict resolution, and peaceful co-existence among refugees and host communities.

Challenges

There is an urgent need to rehabilitate damaged emergency shelters and construct additional transitional shelters in Ikyogen refugee settlement, to address the shelter concerns of refugees in emergency shelters, especially during heavy rainfall.

Working in partnership


External/Donors Relations

UNHCR is grateful for the following support:


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.

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; Cell +234 901 066 0624

Mohamed Rahmathullah, Associate Reporting Officer, Abuja mohamrah@unhcr.org; Cell +234 9010660548

Data portal - Twitter – Facebook – Instagram

NEW! www.unhcr.org/ng - Data portal - Twitter – Facebook – Instagram