

Cameroonian Refugees in Nigeria

June 2022

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

UNHCR provided a **fully equipped ambulance** and **four motorbikes** to the Governor of Taraba State, to **enhance humanitarian services** for refugees and locals.

Cameroonian refugees, UNHCR, host communities, and partners commemorated **World Refugee Day** in Akwa Ibom, Benue, Cross River, and Taraba States.



The Cameroonian refugee football team, UNHCR and partners Celebrate victory during the football competition organized in commemoration of the World Refugee Day in Ogoja, Cross River State. © UNHCR/ Lucy Agiende.

Operational Highlights

- On 20 June 2022, UNHCR, refugees, host communities, and partners **commemorated World Refugee Day**. This year's commemoration with the theme "**Whoever, Wherever, Whenever, Everyone has the Right to seek Safety**" aimed to show solidarity with refugees around the world, **celebrate the resilience of refugees**, and the **hospitality of the communities** hosting Cameroonian refugees in Akwa Ibom, Benue, Cross River, and Taraba (ABCT) States. Events during the commemoration included **football competitions, drama, radio shows, cultural dance displays, medical outreaches** including COVID-19 testing and vaccination, solidarity walks, essay competitions, craft exhibitions, beauty pageants, musical performances, indoor games, cooking competitions, and community sensitization. The commitments of the athletes and participants were rewarded with trophies and gifts.
- On 13 June, UNHCR **provided one fully equipped ambulance** and **four motorbikes** to the Governor of Taraba State, H.E Darius Dickson Ishaku, to **enhance humanitarian services including health emergencies** for refugees and locals, in appreciation for the immense support and hospitality of the host communities to Cameroonian refugees.
- UNHCR commenced the **construction and rehabilitation of two blocks of seven classrooms** each in two public primary schools, to **improve the learning environment for refugee and host community students** in Taraba State.



PROTECTION

Protection Monitoring

- In Cross River State (CRS), UNHCR and its partners visited the Belekete border community in Obanliku, to confirm the **spontaneous arrival** of **over 100 new refugees** from a village in the Akwaya sub-division of Cameroon, and to **assess their urgent needs**. The new arrivals who are hosted by locals informed that separatist fighters attacked the villagers, following their refusal to pay the demands for cash which are allegedly used to purchase arms. Five individuals were reportedly killed, and many were injured during the attack. UNHCR and partners are providing urgent assistance including healthcare services and will continue to monitor the situation.
- UNHCR collaborated with 12 government, national and international partners to conduct **border** and **protection monitoring** in ABCT States. More than **200 protection incidents** and **risks** including **medical care, child protection, Gender-Based Violence (GBV)**, documentation and education were examined, and cases were referred to partners providing protection and multisectoral assistance.
- From 6 to 13 June, an **inter-agency technical mission** including UNHCR, the Federal Ministry of Health, Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, and Disaster Management, the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants, and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI), State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), and other partners, visited Taraba State to assess the **implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees and humanitarian interventions**. The team held meetings and focus group discussions with government officials from education, health, water/sanitation, livelihoods, women's affairs and planning sectors, refugees, and host communities. The objective of the meeting was to **assess the inclusion of refugees in basic social services**, identify challenges and examine the

impact of security on social inclusion of refugees and locals. A comprehensive assessment report was presented to the Governor of Taraba State and government officials.

Protection Response

- On 16 June, UNHCR and partners commemorated the **International Day of the African Child** whose theme this year was "**Eliminating Harmful Practices Affecting Children: Progress on Policy & Practice since 2013**". Cultural dances, recitations, drama, speech presentations, debates, poem recitation, and talent/creative skills displays by refugee and host community children took place in Ogoja, CRS, to celebrate the resilience of the African child.
- NCFRMI and UNHCR **registered** and provided **evidence of documentation** to **108 additional Cameroonian refugees** from the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon, mostly **women**, and **children** in Benue, CRS, and Taraba.
- Awareness sessions on **prevention and response to sexual exploitation and abuse, GBV, child protection, legal rights**, referral pathways, and reporting channels reached over **2,500 refugees** and locals including students in ABCT States.
- The UNHCR **protection desks** supported over **100 vulnerable refugee households** including sick refugees to access their cash for food, in Benue, CRS, and Taraba.
- In ABCT States, **50 GBV cases** were reported. The cases which include physical assault, **denial of resources, rape, forced marriage**, and psychological/emotional abuse were referred for multisectoral assistance including healthcare, psychosocial/mental health support, material and legal services provided by UNHCR and partners, to promote their recovery and coping mechanism.
- **Some 140 refugee children received birth certificates** issued by the National Population Commission with support from UNHCR and partners in ABCT States.
- UNHCR and partners, Foundation for Justice, Development and Peace (FJDP), NCFRMI, and SEMA **trained 15 border protection monitors** on advocacy skills, **tracking of new arrivals trends, profiling/interviewing skills**, procedures and principles of case identification, and documentation, to improve protection assistance to refugees and internally displaced persons in Benue State.
- In CRS, **eight anti-human trafficking community watch groups** were **established** by UNHCR through Caritas in Ogoja, Boki, and Ikom, as part of the strategy to **prevent** and mitigate incidences of **trafficking in persons**, particularly among refugees. **Two suspected cases of human trafficking** of refugees **were reported** to the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) in Calabar for investigation. **Four refugees received legal representation in court**, while 10 refugees benefited from various legal representations.
- To improve access to dignity kits, UNHCR provided **sanitary pads** to some **150 girls of reproductive age** from three secondary schools in Benue State.

Challenges

- In Taraba State, about 35% of the refugee population live in communities with difficult terrain and challenging accessibility to UNHCR and partners, especially during the rainy season due to flooding of rivers and slippery roads, thereby hindering humanitarian assistance to refugees in these communities.



WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH):

- UNHCR partner, Save the Children distributed WASH items through the humanitarian funds to **50** refugees and host community households who rendered support to newly arrived refugees.



HEALTH:

- Over **3,000 refugee** and **host community children** were assessed for malnutrition by UNHCR partner, the Nigerian Red Cross Society, in ABCT States. Some **120 children** identified with severe and moderate acute malnutrition, received **supplementary food** locally produced **with nutritious grains** to improve their growth and wellbeing.
- In ABCT States, UNHCR is providing support to more than 30 primary, secondary, and tertiary health care facilities to improve access to medical care services for refugees and locals in ABCT States. Over **8,000 refugees** received **healthcare services** including **antenatal/post-natal** services, **nutrition, mental health services**, and **COVID-19 vaccinations** at the UNHCR-supported facilities. Malaria and diarrhea were the main cause of illness among refugees and locals.
- About **130 refugees** and locals, mainly **pregnant women, children under 5 years**, and the elderly, received **mosquito nets** to help prevent malaria in ABCT States.
- Some **80 refugee** and **host community women** received **delivery kits required** during childbirth in Benue, Cross River, and Taraba States.



FOOD SECURITY

- Over **8,000 refugees** received **cash assistance** to **purchase food** for **three months** in Calabar, Ogoja, Adikpo, and Takum local government areas (Benue, Cross River, and Taraba States). The distribution is ongoing, thanks to the generous donation from the Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiative.



LIVELIHOODS

- Some **400 refugees** are **undergoing vocational training** including hairdressing, catering, graphics design, cosmetology, vulcanizing, photography, tailoring, Information and communication technology, shoe making, aluminum works, electrical works, catering, and carpentry, with support from UNHCR in Benue and CRS. Upon completion of training, they will receive starter kits to establish their business ventures.
- UNHCR partner Mediatrix Development Foundation **trained 65 refugee women on tie and dye techniques/designs** to empower them with skills for income generation, as part of the activities to commemorate World Refugee Day in Ogoja, CRS.
- **100 individuals (70 refugees & 30 locals)** were trained on **entrepreneurship development** to help them improve their business skills and identify available business

opportunities for income generation by UNHCR, through Mediatrix, and the National Directorate for Employment in Ogoja, CRS.

- UNHCR **provided starter kits to 58 refugees** in the small business category through CUSO International in Calabar, CRS. The kits will enable them to **establish their businesses** and **improve their self-reliance**. Routine monitoring will be conducted to provide technical assistance and ensure that starter kits are utilized appropriately.
- About 60 refugees and locals from Adagom 1 & 3 and Ukende refugee settlements were trained on cooperative formation and management by a volunteer from John Ogonowski and Doug Bereuter West Africa in Ogoja, CRS.



EDUCATION:

- Over **1,000 refugee** and host community children participated in **educational, art, and recreational activities** at the child-friendly spaces and preschool in ABCT States.
- UNHCR **provided 22 school desks** to Anongo Primary School at the Uji border community in Benue State for refugee students and locals. In Taraba State, UNHCR **paid tuition fees for 43 refugee pupils** in primary school.
- Sensitization sessions on the importance of **education and the dangers of drug abuse** by UNHCR and partners reached **over 4,000 refugees** and locals in ABCT States. The aim of the sensitization is to increase enrolment and retention of refugee children.

Challenges

- Even though refugees in Taraba State have been granted access to attend public schools, some communities do not have a public secondary school where refugees and locals can access secondary education. The presence of refugees has overstretched the existing educational facilities including inadequate number of teachers to provide quality education for refugees and locals.



SETTLEMENT COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT, SHELTER AND NFIS

- UNHCR provided **non-food items** and **dignity kits to over 360 internally displaced women** in Makurdi to commemorate World Refugee Day in Benue State.
- Over **50 vulnerable refugees** and **new arrivals** 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.
- Nearly **1,000 refugee women and girls** of reproductive age and **elderly women received dignity kits** provided by UNHCR in the Ikyogen refugee settlement and border communities in Benue State.
- **Forty vulnerable refugee households** completed the **construction of their transitional shelters** in Ukende, Adagom 3, and Ikyogen refugee settlements (CRS and Benue). UNHCR supported the households with shelter kits and cash to pay for the construction through its partner Rhema Care.

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 Governments 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, FJDP, Mediatrix Development Foundation, Rhema Care Integrated Development Centre, Jesuit Refugee Service, and the Nigeria Red Cross.

External/Donors Relations

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