

Cameroonian Refugees in Nigeria

July 2022

Some **79,000 Cameroonian refugee men, women, and children** are registered in Akwa-Ibom, Anambra, Benue, Cross River, Enugu, and Taraba States.

Over **29,000 refugees received cash assistance** to purchase **food of their choice** in Benue and Cross River States.

Four Cameroonian refugees gained **scholarship admission** to Italian Universities through the Universities Corridors for Refugee Programme (UNICORE).



Cameroonian refugees receive cash for food assistance provided by UNHCR, with support from Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives in Ukende refugee settlement, Cross River State. © UNHCR/ Lucy Agiende.

Operational Highlights

- UNHCR in collaboration with its high-profile supporter Ms. Judith Audu, government agencies, and partners produced a **short film on anti-human trafficking**, to **create awareness** of **human trafficking among refugees** and locals in Nigeria. Refugees constituted the main cast in the movie alongside government officials from the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants, and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI), the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), UNHCR, and partners. The film is expected to be released in September 2022.
- **Five refugees** including two females (four Cameroonians and one Syrian refugee) **gained admission under the UNICORE master's degree scholarship programme** into various universities in Italy. UNHCR supported the students throughout the application and interview process and is assisting successful candidates with their travel and visa arrangements, to enable them to commence their studies in September 2022. UNICORE aims to offer scholarship opportunities to 69 qualified refugee students currently based in Nigeria, Cameroon, and Niger to undertake a master's degree programme in Italy. Also, **one refugee** from the Democratic Republic of Congo was accepted by Luiss University for an **undergraduate scholarship programme**.
- The ProFuturo Foundation in collaboration with UNHCR, commenced the **digital education programme for refugee and host community pupils** with the training of **some 100** teachers, trainers/coaches, Ministry of Education officials, partners, and headteachers from five primary schools in Benue and Cross River States, on digital education and educational innovation. The project aims **to promote access to a high-quality and well-rounded education** for refugee children and locals in five primary schools, from September 2022.



PROTECTION

Protection Monitoring

- In Akwa Ibom, Benue, Cross River, and Taraba (ABCT) States, UNHCR and partners **undertook over 50 advocacy, detention, and border monitoring visits** to police stations, immigration checkpoints, correctional centres, and state ministries of education and women's affairs, to advocate against the arbitrary arrest and detention of refugees, as well as for the inclusion of refugees in the State programmes, freedom of movement, and access to justice.
- More than **300 newly arrived Cameroonian refugees** were profiled by UNHCR and partners in the Abande community of Benue State. These **refugees have fled the ongoing conflict by separatist fighters demanding cash to buy arms as well as the ethnic clashes** in the Southwest region of Cameroon. Refugees hosted by locals are in urgent need of food, healthcare, and non-food items. They will receive food and core relief items upon registration which is ongoing by UNHCR and NCFRMI. UNHCR had previously renovated the primary health centre in Abande and provided equipment to respond to the health challenges of the new arrivals.

Protection Response

- UNHCR and NCFRMI **registered 1,306 additional Cameroonian refugees** and issued **proof of documentation**, in Benue, Cross River, and Taraba States. Most of them are **women and children** from the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon who fled due to the ongoing conflict by separatist fighters.
- In ABCT States, **53 gender-based violence (GBV) survivors received multisectoral assistance** including healthcare, material, psychosocial/mental health support, and legal services provided by UNHCR and partners, to promote their recovery process. Reported cases included **sexual and physical assault, denial of resources, rape**, and psychological/emotional abuse.
- The National Population Commission, supported by UNHCR and partners issued birth certificates to 300 **refugee** and **Internally Displaced children** in ABCT States.
- UNHCR and its partner Foundation for Justice, Development and Peace (FJDP) **trained 44 frontline security and law enforcement personnel on international protection**, to enhance their skills in **detention/border monitoring** and **the protection of refugees**, and internally displaced persons in Makurdi, Benue State. The training focused on how to promote and protect the rights of refugees in accordance with humanitarian principles and relevant laws. Officials from the Nigerian Immigration Service, Police Force, National Security and Civil Defense Corps, Department of State Services, Nigeria Correctional Service, NAPTIP, Ministry of Justice, and National Human Rights Commission participated in the training.
- More than **150 girls and women of reproductive age** including GBV survivors **received dignity kits** to promote their personal hygiene, following a sensitization programme conducted in Benue and Cross River State (CRS).
- In CRS, UNHCR partner Caritas **sensitized ten volunteer caregivers, who will be providing foster care to newly arrived unaccompanied and separated children**, on the provision of adequate care and protection to their foster children.
- Over **60 child protection cases** comprising of **child labour, unaccompanied and separated children**, physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and abandonment were **identified and managed** by UNHCR and its partners according to case management procedures in Benue, CRS, and Taraba States.
- UNHCR and its partner the Jesuit Refugee Service **trained 27 government and security officials**, to **effectively identify and manage refugee children at risk** and **set up child protection response systems** in Takum and Kurmi local government areas of Taraba State. Officials from the Nigerian Immigration Service, Police Force, National Security and Civil Defence Corps, Local Emergency Management Agency, and Ministry of Women Affairs and Child Development took part in the workshop.
- Some **30 refugees received various legal interventions** including **eight court appearances and representations** and nine refugee detainees were released from detention, with support from UNHCR and its partners in ABCT States.
- In Benue State, UNHCR in collaboration with FJDP **trained about 100 community volunteers, government agencies**, and partners on **GBV prevention**, response and risk mitigation, **child protection, the legal framework for child protection**, case

management systems, response and documentation, and **prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse** (PSEA).

- **Awareness** sessions on **PSEA, GBV, child protection, legal rights**, referral pathways, and reporting channels by UNHCR and its partners reached over **3,500 refugees** and locals in ABCT States.

Challenges

- Some new arrivals particularly women and girls are exposed to sexual exploitation and abuse due to a lack of shelter.
- Most survivors of sexual, psychological, and emotional abuse conceal the identities of perpetrators for fear of reprisal attacks.



HEALTH:

- In ABCT States Some **100 refugee children** identified with severe and moderate acute malnutrition through nutritional assessment, received **supplementary food** to promote their wellbeing and growth. With the support from Probitas Foundation, UNHCR and partner, the Nigerian Red Cross Society, trained refugee mothers to produce locally made supplementary food using **nutritious grains**.
- About **7,000 refugees** received **healthcare services** including **mental health services antenatal/post-natal, nutrition, and vaccinations** including **COVID-19** at over 30 UNHCR-supported facilities in ABCT States. Malaria, peptic ulcer, and diarrhoea were the main cause of illness among refugees and locals. UNHCR continues providing primary, secondary, and tertiary health care facilities to improve medical care services for refugees and locals.
- Over **70 refugee** and **host community women** received **delivery kits** for **childbirth**, and **38 refugees** and locals, mainly **pregnant women, children** under 5 years, and the **elderly**, received **mosquito nets** to help prevent malaria, at the UNHCR-supported health facilities in ABCT States.



FOOD SECURITY

- Over **29,000 refugees** received **three months' value of cash for food assistance** provided by UNHCR through **digital transfers** using their **UNHCR-facilitated ATM cards** and cash-in-hand in Benue and Cross River States. The distribution which started in June, reached **over 37,000 refugees**. With the generous contribution of the Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives, UNHCR continues to provide life-saving assistance to address the food security needs of Cameroonian refugees in Nigeria.



WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH):

- In ABCT States, UNHCR has **constructed and rehabilitated over 35 boreholes** (including **solarized boreholes**) and **water treatment plants** in the refugee settlements, schools, primary health centres, and host communities, to **improve the water supply for refugees and locals**. Extensive water quality tests and chlorination were conducted at the boreholes and treatment plants by UNHCR and its partner, Save the Children, to ensure compliance

with the Nigerian drinking water standards, at the four refugee settlements of Adagom 1&3, Ukende and Ikyogen in Benue and CRS.

- **Routine maintenance of WASH facilities** was conducted in the refugee settlements, schools, primary health centres, and host communities, including the **rehabilitation of 13 damaged pipes/taps** and water storage tanks, to **ensure access to potable water for refugees** and locals in Benue and CRS.
- Hygiene volunteers conducted **door-to-door sensitization** to some **1,600 refugees** on **personal** and **environmental hygiene** in the four refugee settlements in Benue and CRS, to **promote good hygiene practices**.



LIVELIHOODS

- In Benue and CRS, UNHCR **trained 94 refugees** with existing businesses on **business management** and financial literacy through its partner CUSO International in Adikpo, Calabar, Ikom, and Ogoja. The training equipped refugees with essential business skills such as **financial planning, budgeting, bookkeeping, and credit management**. Fourteen refugees without bank accounts were linked to financial service providers and facilitated for account opening.
- UNHCR **provided starter kits to 15 individuals** (including 3 locals) who **completed their vocational training in tailoring, catering & pastries, and hairdressing** in Adagom 1&3, and Ukende refugee settlements in CRS, through its partner Mediatrix. Beneficiaries received various starter kits including sewing machines, weaving machines, equipment and furniture. according to their areas of specialization, to help them establish their business ventures.
- In CRS, **30 refugee poultry farmers participated in a practical demonstration training in poultry farming** organized by UNHCR, through CUSO International in Ikom local government area. Participants were divided into two groups to jointly raise 25 chicks through practical and technical demonstrations.
- In Taraba State, UNHCR and the Food and Agricultural Organization are implementing a joint livelihood/agricultural support project, with funding from the European Union Humanitarian Aid. Thus far, **337 refugee households and 278 host community households** have **received seedlings including groundnuts and maize**, as well as **fertilizers** to cultivate their farms during the rainy season.

Challenges

- In Taraba State, sporadic community clashes especially in Takum have prevented/delayed distribution of farm inputs to some project areas as humanitarian access has been problematic.



EDUCATION:

- UNHCR **paid school levies/fees for over 2,000 refugee students** in primary and secondary schools, for the third-term academic session in Benue and CRS.
- Over **200 refugee students** participated in **after-school catch-up classes** organized by UNHCR through its partner Caritas in Adagom 1 &3 and Ukende refugee settlements, CRS.

Challenges

- Low level of participation/resumption of refugee students in schools was observed during the third-term academic session, which will probably affect their performance during the

promotion examinations. The refugee students were identified to have skipped school to assist their parents in farming activities, which is their major source of livelihood.



SETTLEMENT COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT, SHELTER AND NFIS

- Over **400 refugees including new arrivals** and **GBV survivors received non-food items** including kitchen sets, blankets, mosquito nets, buckets, solar lanterns, and jerrycans in Benue, Cross River, and Taraba States.

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 among 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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