Central African Republic (CAR) – UPDATE ON THE CHAD SITUATION

1 – 30 March 2024

Raising awareness among Chadian asylum-seekers to improve the quality of humanitarian assistance. @UNHCR

Overview of the situation

Since April 2023, inter-community conflicts stemming from disputes between nomadic Peuhl herders and local farmers in Chad have led to population movements from Chad to villages in the Central African Republic. On 6 May, the situation deteriorated further between the two communities after a Chadian army detachment clashed with rebels on the Chad-CAR border following the interception of a shipment. This altercation resulted in the death of an army general.

Since the beginning of the crisis, 38,014 people have arrived in CAR as of 30 March 2024, comprised of 31,779 asylum seekers and 6,235 Central African returnees in the communes of Mia-Pende (44,817 inhabitants) and Bah Bessar (42,629 inhabitants), located some 60 kilometers north of Paoua. These locations are among the poorest in the country. The government has identified a site in Betoko where asylum seekers can register and receive multisectoral assistance. Chadian asylum-seekers are in more than 53 villages in CAR along the border with Chad. 55% of them are women and children.

Betoko site hosts 3,202 individuals (804 households), of whom 424 have specific needs. Family documents and assistance cards have been issued and distributed, granting families access to assistance.

Highlights

In March, UNHCR and its partners CNR, AIRD, FCA, NOURRIR, and VCW organized a relocation convoy from Markounda - a particularly remote and insecure area - consisting of 81 households and 310 people to the Betoko site.

CNR encourages the asylum seekers in the other villages to self-relocate if they want to. However, the majority prefer to remain in the villages. Some individuals arrived at Betoko site by their means.

Response Overview

Protection

A border monitoring system has been set up in Markounda by UNHCR's partner, Finnish Church Aid (FCA). Awareness sessions were organized to promote the complaints mechanism, thereby improving communication with asylum-seekers and contributing to the quality of humanitarian assistance. Betoko has one safe space (Ma Mbi Si) for GBV survivors, two child-friendly spaces, and one orientation center for asylum-seekers to have their questions and doubts answered.

Education

During March, 510 children, including 256 boys and 254 girls, benefited from the child-friendly space educational and socio-recreational activities by Finn Church Aid.

In March, 447 asylum-seeking children, including 230 girls and 217 boys, were enrolled in Betoko two elementary schools as soon as they joined the site. They benefited from school kits provided by the national organization Arbre de Vie, a UNICEF partner. At Betoko Middle School, 39 boys and 24 girls are enrolled.

Health and Nutrition

UNHCR's operational partner VCW (Vision to Change the World), in collaboration with the Betoko Health Center, has conducted 603 medical consultations, 303 of which have included asylum-seekers since the beginning of March. The main pathologies recorded are malaria, respiratory infection, and diarrhea. 44 prenatal consultations (21 for asylum seekers) were provided during the reporting period.

Shelter, Core Relief Items (CRIs) and Food Security

On 30 March, UNHCR partner NOURRIR built 1,300 emergency shelters in Betoko to accommodate people relocated from Markounda. Of the 2,000 shelters planned, 1,150 are now ready to receive people.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

As of March, World Vision International installed two water points to supply the Betoko site with drinking water.

UNHCR and its partner NOURRIR provided 12,000 liters of water daily at the Betoko site to meet household needs.

Coordination

UNHCR is supporting the Commission nationale pour les réfugiés (CNR) in leading and coordinating the Chadian response. In Paoua, regular meetings with all relevant actors working in the area facilitate sharing opportunities, challenges, and solutions for asylum-seekers.
Below is the list of partners by sector:

- General Protection and GBV: IOM, DRC, INTERSOS, UNFPA, AVN (Arbre de Vie pour une Nation), UN Women, MDA (Médecins d'Afrique), FCA (Finn Church Aid)
- Child Protection: UNICEF, AVN, War Child UK
- Shelter and NFI: IOM, DRC, NOURRIR
- Health and Nutrition: IOM, UNICEF, MDA, VCW
- Food Security: WFP, DRC, UN Women, Mercy Corps
- Education: UNICEF
- WASH: UNICEF, DRC, NOURRIR
- Social Cohesion: GADY (Groupement agro pastorale pour le devéloppement de Yongoro), UN Women
- Economic Inclusion: DRC
- Logistics: AIRD
- Coordination: CNR

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