

Cameroonian Refugees in Nigeria

February 2021

63,333 *Cameroonian refugee men, women and children are registered in Akwa-Ibom, Benue, Cross River and Taraba States in Nigeria.*

*UNHCR built and equipped an isolation centre for the COVID-19 response in Adikpo General Hospital, Benue State. **No refugee has tested positive** to the COVID-19 virus thus far.*

*Some **8,000 refugees** received **cash for food of their choice** in Ikyogen, Adagom and Ukende Refugee Settlements in Benue and Cross River States this month.*



These refugees receive cash to buy food of their choice for their families in Adagom Refugee Settlement, Ogoja, Cross River State. ©UNHCR/Lucy Agiende

Operational Highlights

- UNHCR constructed an **isolation centre** for the response to the **COVID-19** pandemic at the General Hospital Adikpo, Benue State, with **medical equipment, furniture and supplies**, including beds, mattresses, bedside lockers, pulse oximeters, infra-red thermometers, bedsheets, medical scrubs/shoes, digital blood pressure apparatus and drug trolleys. This helps improve the COVID-19 response for refugees and the local population.



PROTECTION

Protection Monitoring

- UNHCR collaborated with twelve government agencies, national and international partners to systematically **identify protection incidents**, analyse the protection trend and refer cases to partners providing protection and multisectoral assistance, including **legal assistance**, advocacy, **capacity building**, awareness, services related to gender-based violence and material assistance.
- UNHCR and its partners visited Immigration check points and border localities in Benue, Cross River, and Taraba (BCT) States over 25 times to **monitor the border** in order to ensure that refugees have access to territory, to assess the presence and needs of new arrivals and advocate for the protection of refugees. **No case of denial of access to territory or refoulement was recorded.**
- The protection desks addressed over 100 protection concerns by refugees for **unaccompanied/separated children**, child-headed households and critically sick refugees during the cash distribution for food in Adagom and Ukende settlements, Cross River State (CRS).
- In BCT States, at least 20 detention monitoring visits were undertaken to Police stations, Correctional Centres, and Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps, to advocate against arbitrary arrest/detention of refugees and provide **legal support to refugees in detention.**
- **Over 650 new arrivals**, mostly women and children were **profiled** by UNHCR together with partners in Sardauna Local Government Area (LGA), Taraba State. They fled from Nwa subdivision of Cameroon because of increasing clashes, resulting in killings and burning of houses. Critical needs of the newly arrived asylum-seekers include food, non-food items such as mats and healthcare. More arrivals are anticipated given the volatile security situation.

Protection Response

- **Registration:** UNHCR and the Government of Nigeria **registered 109 additional refugees** in Cross River State while adhering to WHO's COVID-19 prevention protocols.
- More than **1,500 refugees** received **ID cards** in Benue and CRS, which will help them enjoy freedom of movement and access to basic social services.
- UNHCR secured the **release of 17 refugees** who had been detained due to lack of documentation in Calabar, CRS. They were registered, provided with ID cards, and supported with non-food items such as mosquito nets, solar lanterns, jerry cans and dignity kits.
- A two-day **training on Prevention from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Gender-Based Violence (GBV)** was conducted for 26 security/government personnel including from the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and IDPs (NCFRMI), Nigeria Immigration Service, and police in Adikpo, Benue State.
- **Awareness sessions** on harmful traditional practices, **school enrolment** and civil registration reached over 400 refugees in Ikyogen settlement, Benue State.

- An **advocacy** visit was paid to the Kwande Local Government and National Population Commission, to strengthen collaboration and support of birth and death registration of refugees in Benue.
- At least **19 GBV survivors** received multi-sectoral assistance, including **medical, legal, and psychosocial support** through the established referral pathways in BCT States. Fourteen GBV survivors received dignity kits in Ikyogen settlement, Benue State.
- In Benue and CRS, UNHCR and its partners conducted risk **assessment on sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA)** through Key Informant Interviews and **Focus Group Discussions with over 150 refugee** women, men, boys, and girls, including individuals with disabilities and elderly people. The assessment will help strengthen and reinforce SEA prevention and response mechanisms for refugees and locals.
- More than **500 refugees** were reached through **sensitization and awareness on Gender Based Violence prevention and response** in BCT States. GBV flyers with toll free lines for reporting incidents and with key messages were distributed to refugees and locals in Taraba State.
- In Benue State, **Best Interest Assessments** were conducted for 16 **refugee children** at risk, with referrals to mental health and psychosocial support services in Ikyogen settlement.
- Over **120 refugee boys and girls** received **birth certificates** by the National Population Commission in BCT States.

Challenges

- Refugee leaders highlighted **insufficient livelihood opportunities** for refugees resulting in negative coping mechanisms, lack of drugs at the health centers, no health care for uninsured refugees and lack of ambulance to transport critically ill refugees to the health facilities as their major concerns.



WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH):

- Close to **2,000** refugee families received **water treatment tablets** (Aqua tabs) to support household water treatment and safe storage in Adagom, Ukende and Ikyogen settlements. Some 800 refugees received soap and **hand sanitizers** for hand washing, personal hygiene and COVID-19 prevention.

Challenges

- The main gap in the WASH sector remains the **inadequate water supply** in the refugee settlements, despite the construction and rehabilitation of over 15 boreholes and hand dug wells by UNHCR. The yield remains insufficient and will merely meet about 20 percent of refugees' water need.



HEALTH:

- UNHCR is providing technical support to health facilities and workers through provision of COVID19 prevention equipment, on-site mentoring, capacity-building, and supply of **lifesaving medication to over 22 health facilities** in Benue, CRS, and Taraba States.
- Medical equipment/supplies and **furniture** were provided to the **Primary Health Centre (PHC)** Ikyogen and Garden PHC Calabar, Benue and CRS, to improve health care for refugees and locals. The items included mattresses, bedside lockers, pulse oximeters, Infra-red thermometers, bedsheets, medical scrubs/shoes, digital blood pressure apparatus, drug trolleys and mobile IV fluid stands.
- Hand washing stand/buckets, **500 surgical masks**, liquid soap, and disinfectants were donated to the Nigerian Police Ogoja Division (CRS), to help prevent COVID-19.
- More than **4,000 refugees** and **host community members** received health care services at the various supported facilities. Malaria and diarrhoea were the major causes of illness.

- At least 20 refugee and host community **women received delivery kits** including handbag, wrapper, mackintosh, dignity kits, surgical gloves, umbilical cord clamps and gauze swabs, to improve maternal health in BCT States.
- COVID-19 prevention and WASH items including hand sanitizers, liquid soap, disinfectants, waste bins, knapsack sprayer and **hand washing buckets/stand** were provided to Primary Health Centre Ikgang and Primary Health Centre Big Quo, to help prevent COVID-19 among refugees and locals.

Challenges

- Lack of medication and consumables such as injection needles in all the primary health centres (Benue, CRS, and Taraba) continues to affect the provision of basic healthcare services to refugees and locals.
- Solar electricity, refrigerator and furniture are urgently needed at the isolation centre constructed by UNHCR in Adikpo General Hospital, Benue State.



EDUCATION :

- Following UNHCR advocacy, the **University of Calabar**, CRS, has committed to **enrolling ten eligible refugees without tuition fees**. Profiling and verification processes for potential beneficiaries have begun across all locations.
- In Benue State, 29 **refugee students** including seven students **with specific needs**, were enrolled into primary and secondary schools in Ikyogen, while 15 students were enrolled for the Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination.

Challenges

- **Shortage of teachers** across public schools where refugees are enrolled, significantly affects the quality of education provided to refugees and locals. The teacher/student ratio is over 1:100. UNHCR continues to advocate to the national education authorities for deployment of teachers.



LIVELIHOODS

- Earlier trained **342 refugee families** in Ikyogen settlement received agricultural inputs and start-up kits, including **fertilizers**, watering cans, shovels, hoes, cutlass, **seedlings** (tomato, okra, pepper, amaranthus and huckle berry, to promote their livelihoods and food security. Beneficiaries were allotted about 100m² of farmland each for cultivation from the 181 hectares of **land made available by the government**.

FOOD SECURITY

- **7,965** individuals from 1,766 refugee families **received cash for food** in Ikyogen, Adagom and Ukende settlements (Benue and CRS), following WHO's COVID-19 prevention protocols.

Challenges

- Refugees continue crossing back and forth to Cameroon in search of food and livelihood opportunities to sustain their families. **Prices of basic food commodities** in refugee populated areas have increased significantly on average by 30% on core food commodities compared to early 2020, because of the COVID-19 pandemic.



SETTLEMENT COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT, SHELTER AND NFIS

- UNHCR and its partner the State Emergency Management Agency monitored and managed the four refugee settlements (Adagom, Adagom 3, Ukende and Ikyogen), in CRS and Benue, ensuring

integration with host communities and providing security for refugees. More than 30 potential crises between refugees and locals were resolved through **community engagement or negotiations**.

- About **2,500** refugees received **non-food items** including sleeping mats, blankets, **mosquito nets**, kitchen sets, jerrycans, dignity kits and buckets in Akwa Ibom, Benue, CRS, and Taraba.

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 in Ogoja, with UN agencies 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 Foundation for Justice Development and Peace, MEDATRIX Development Foundation, Rhema Care Integrated Development Centre, Jesuit Refugee Service and the Nigeria Red Cross. Operational partners include ICRC, UNFPA, FAO and WHO.

External/Donors Relations

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Canada 10.2 million | Denmark 14.6 million | France 4 million | Germany 70.9 million | Ireland 3.3 million | Private donors Australia 11.4 million | Private donors Germany 5.1 million | Private donors Japan 4.5 million | Private donors Lebanon 2.1 million | Private donors Republic of Korea 2.5 million | Private donors United Kingdom 2.6 million | Private donors USA 8.7 million | Spain 3.4 million | Sweden 3 million | United Kingdom 24.8 million | United States of America 46.8 million

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