

West and Central Africa



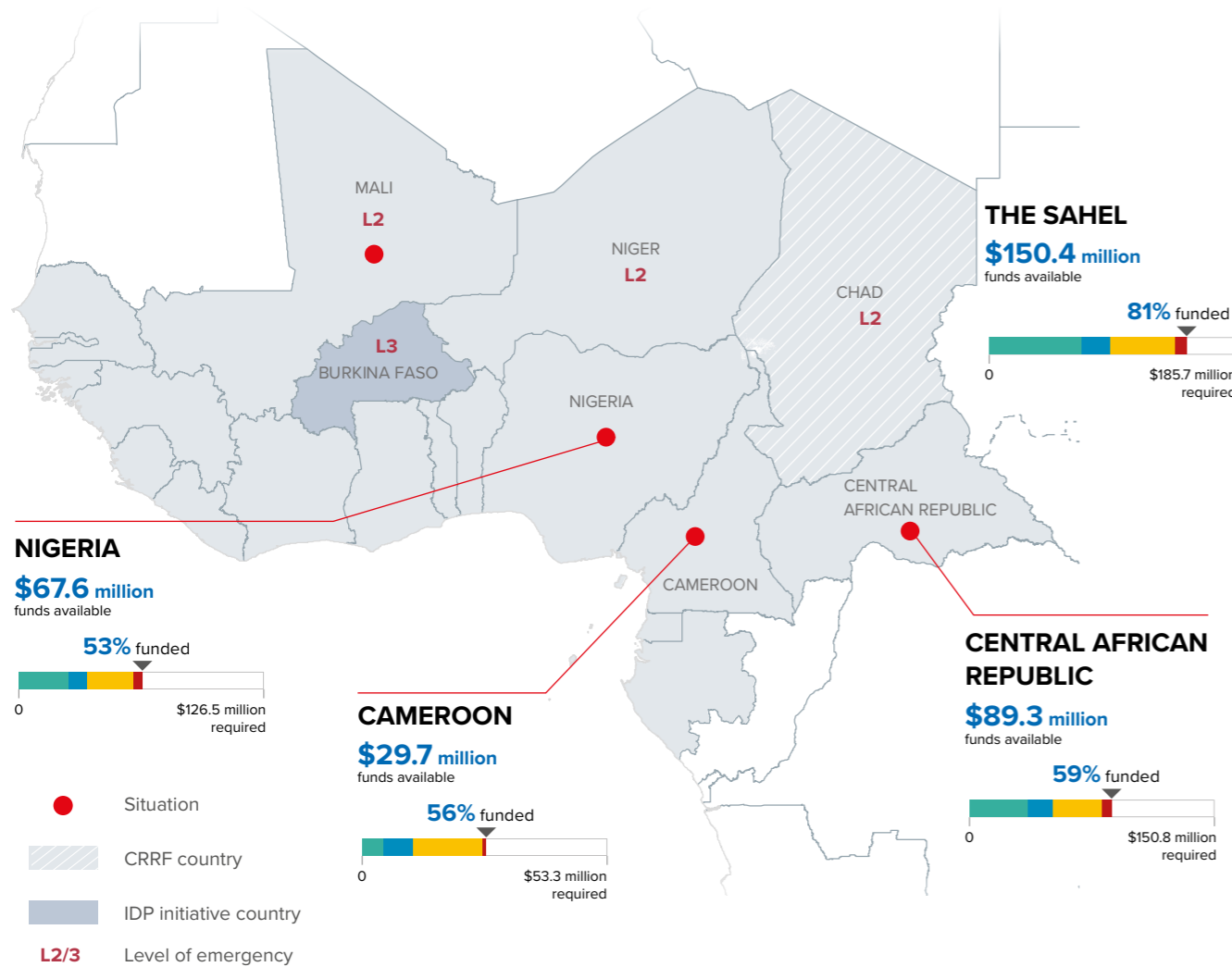
Aishetu fled her village in north-east Nigeria with her eight children after her husband was murdered by an armed group that threatened to kill her as well. Now she lives in Bakassi IDP camp where she runs her own small shop selling snacks and sodas. She not only provides for her own family, but also cares for 16 IDP children orphaned by the same violence that left her a widow. She hopes that through education, her children can grow and help those around them.

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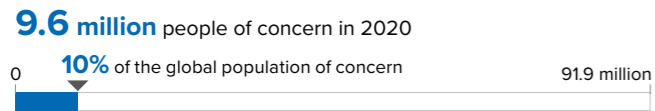
“ I don't need anything except education for my children. ”

—Aishetu, Nigerian IDP

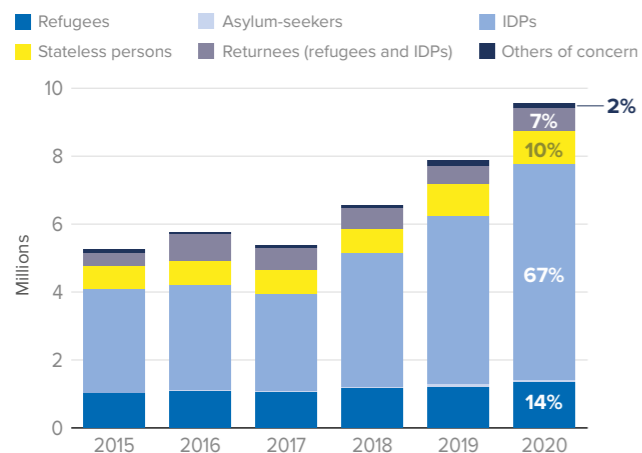
OVERVIEW AND KEY DATA IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA IN 2020



PEOPLE OF CONCERN



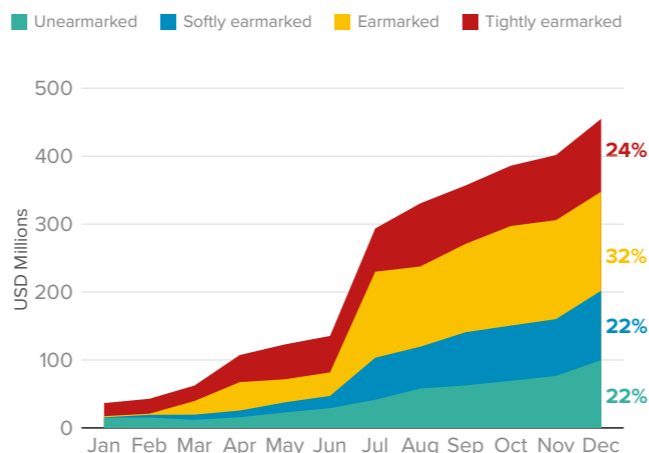
People of concern | 2015-2020



REGIONAL FUNDING OVERVIEW AND EARMARKING

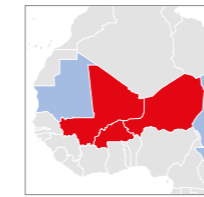


Monthly evolution of funding | 2020



MAJOR SITUATIONS IN 2020

THE SAHEL



25,008 children enrolled in primary school. **79,530** people of concern reached with core relief items. **154,024** people of concern received shelter assistance.

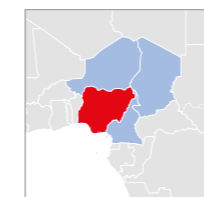
In 2020, the severe humanitarian and protection crisis in the Sahel region was exacerbated by the pandemic. Intensified violence and sociopolitical tensions caused further displacement, increasing IDP numbers by 80%. Devastating droughts, floods and other climate-related hazards left thousands without shelter.

UNHCR and partners prioritized prevention and response to gender-based violence, shelter, core relief items, education and environmental protection efforts. In line with its Sahel strategy, UNHCR increased gender-based violence prevention and response programming, conducting safety audits and assessments and setting up mobile clinics. 791 survivors received medical care and 825 received psychosocial support. 154,000 people got shelter support and almost 80,000 people of concern received core relief items.

UNHCR supported the intergovernmental Bamako Process which aims to enhance the protection environment in the Sahel. Jointly with the Danish Refugee Council and over 20 other protection actors, UNHCR also developed Project 21, a harmonized protection monitoring project piloted in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger to enhance evidence-based programming in the Sahel.

858,000 REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS IN BURKINA FASO, CHAD, MALI, MAURITANIA AND NIGER
1.5 million IDPs IN BURKINA FASO, MALI AND WESTERN NIGER
666,000 IDP AND REFUGEE RETURNÉES
138,000 OTHER PEOPLE OF CONCERN

NIGERIA



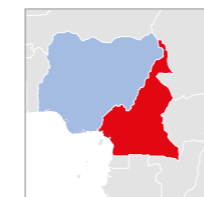
92,800 people of concern were assisted with civil registration or documentation. **17,077** households received shelter assistance. **20,318** people of concern received livelihoods support.

The Lake Chad Basin's volatile and precarious security situation impeded humanitarian access and protection in 2020. Displacement in border areas between Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria increased IDP numbers by 13% to over 2.9 million and refugee numbers by 10% to 305,000.

UNHCR maintained emergency assistance and emphasized medium-term responses including civil registration, documentation, social cohesion, resilience and self-reliance. An adapted protection strategy focused on access to territory and asylum, non-refoulement and prevention and response to gender-based violence. UNHCR's response provided 40,000 households with core relief items, and 20,318 people got start-up materials, loans or training as livelihoods support. UNHCR monitored protection in all four countries, with 9,247 protection monitoring missions in Nigeria alone. UNHCR led all four countries' Protection Clusters and the Shelter/Non-Food Item or Shelter/Camp Coordination and Camp Management Clusters in Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria. UNHCR also led its sixth coordinated [Nigeria Regional Refugee Response Plan](#), bringing together 40 partners to provide life-saving humanitarian assistance, protection and resilience programmes to almost 305,000 Nigerian refugees and their hosts in Cameroon, Chad and Niger.

305,000 REFUGEES IN THE LAKE CHAD BASIN
2.9 million IDPs IN THE FAR NORTH OF CAMEROON, SOUTH-WESTERN CHAD AND NORTH-EASTERN NIGERIA

CAMEROON

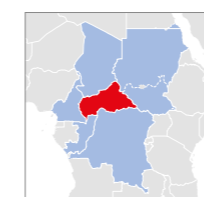


2,874 IDPs received identity documents. **20,740** people of concern received shelter support. **3,020** Cameroonian refugees received livelihoods support.

The crisis in Cameroon's North-West and South-West regions persisted, with a 5% rise in IDPs and a 22% increase in Cameroonian refugees in Nigeria, where UNHCR assisted more than 50,000 Cameroonians, providing food assistance in refugee settlements and coordinating out-of-camp approaches with local authorities to strengthen national services and support displaced populations and their hosts in south-east Nigeria. UNHCR distributed core relief items to 7,582 IDP households in Cameroon and supported Government efforts to provide documentation to IDPs and returning populations, ensuring that 2,874 IDPs received identity documents. UNHCR undertook protection monitoring and set up a gender-based violence response adapted to COVID-19 and security risks.

63,600 CAMEROONIAN REFUGEES IN NIGERIA
711,000 IDPs IN SOUTH-WEST AND NORTH-WEST CAMEROON
361,000 REFUGEE AND IDP RETURNÉES

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC



15,300 persons at heightened risk received support. **17,147** people of concern received livelihoods support.

UNHCR supported almost 5,000 Central African refugees' return journey in early 2020, as the 2019 peace agreement encouraged some refugees to voluntarily repatriate. But conflict erupted around December's elections, displacing 50,000 people and prompting UNHCR to suspend its voluntary repatriation activities from Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which had resumed in November after a seven-month halt due to COVID-19.

UNHCR operations in Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Republic of the Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo scaled up their response with shelter support, core relief items, as well as support for health care and water and sanitation infrastructure to respond to the pandemic. UNHCR also led the Protection, Shelter/Non-Food Item and Camp Coordination and Camp Management Clusters to ensure a comprehensive response.

643,000 CENTRAL AFRICAN REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS IN NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES
682,000 IDPs

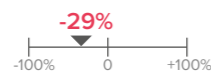
KEY RESULTS AND TRENDS IN 2020

UNHCR'S PROGRAMMATIC RESPONSE

CHILD PROTECTION

2,021 unaccompanied or separated children had a best interests assessment initiated or completed.

Evolution compared to 2019



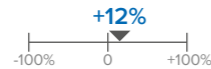
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

1,286 gender-based violence incidents reported for which survivors received psychosocial counselling.



CORE RELIEF ITEMS

65,227 households provided with core relief items.

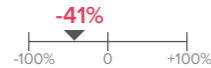


39,919 women received sanitary materials.

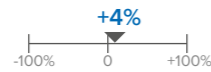


HEALTH*

0.39 under-5 mortality rate (per 1,000 under-5s per month) in refugee camps.



96% of births in refugee camps were attended by skilled personnel.



SHELTER

159,111 people of concern received emergency shelter.



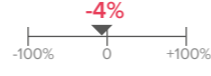
37% of households lived in adequate dwellings.



WASH

16.3 litres of potable water available on average per person per day in refugee camps.

Evolution compared to 2019

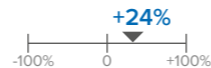


24% of households had a drop-hole latrine or drop-hole toilet.



EDUCATION**

165,024 children enrolled in primary education.



30,493 students enrolled in secondary education.



695 people of concern received tertiary education scholarships.



SELF-RELIANCE

8,990 people of concern enrolled in vocational training.



VOLUNTARY RETURNS

9,493 people of concern assisted to return voluntarily.



RESETTLEMENT

1,858 resettlement submissions.

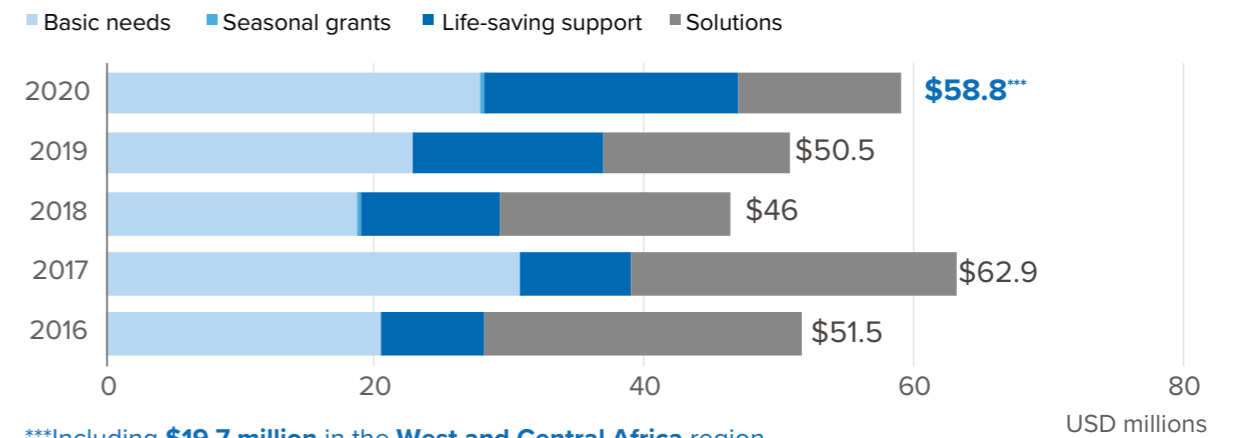


*Two countries reporting in 2020, compared to three countries reporting in 2019.

**While enrolment rates for the school year were high, a majority of those enrolled did not attend school due to COVID-19 restrictions.

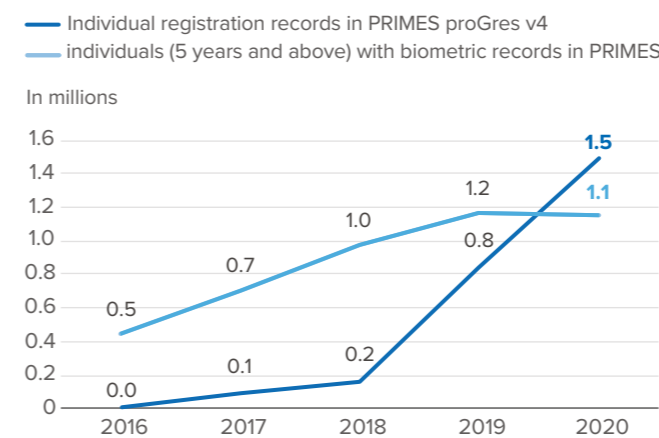
TRENDS IN RESPONSE

Cash assistance by sector in Africa | 2016-2020

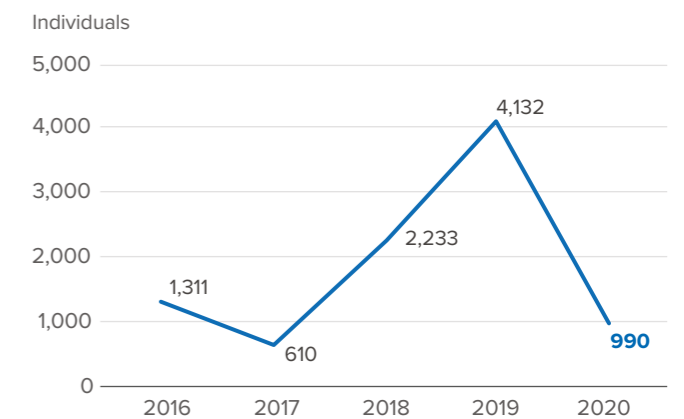


***Including \$19.7 million in the West and Central Africa region.

Individual registration records | 2016-2020



Resettlement departures | 2016-2020



UNHCR'S COVID-19 RESPONSE



4,550,163 refugees, IDPs and other people of concern accessed protection services.



1,051,337 refugees and other people of concern received essential health care services.



113,481 refugees and other people of concern provided with mental health and psychosocial support services.



30,419 children 6-59 months admitted for treatment of moderate acute malnutrition.



45,951 children and youth supported with distance/home-based learning.



1,029,958 refugees, IDPs and other people of concern received cash assistance related to the impact of COVID-19.



228,843 women and girls accessed sexual and reproductive health services.



15 country operations reported all geographic areas inhabited by people of concern were reached by COVID-19 information campaigns.



14,921 children 6-59 months admitted for treatment of severe acute malnutrition.



200,309 refugee children and youth out of school due to mandatory school closures.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACT

Safeguarding access to protection and asylum

In 2020, UNHCR worked to maintain access to asylum in all countries in West and Central Africa amid widespread border closures due to the pandemic. Efforts to strengthen national asylum systems yielded significant improvements in Chad and Niger.

A new asylum law was adopted in Chad that aimed to strengthen protection of the 483,000 refugees and asylum-seekers currently residing in the country. It will also guide the establishment of an efficient national asylum system, pursued under the Asylum Capacity Support Group mechanism, and a fair refugee status determination process.

A new technical committee to reform the institutional and normative asylum system in Niger was established.

Responding with life-saving assistance

In 2020, UNHCR mobilized to respond to the pandemic across West and Central Africa. UNHCR supported the construction of over 50 isolation and quarantine centres and the rehabilitation or construction of 60 health facilities, including in Cameroon, Chad, Nigeria and Senegal. It also helped to train over 500 community health workers and 200 health professionals across the region and contributed to the rehabilitation and equipping of 30 COVID-19 treatment centres, including in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Guinea, Nigeria and Togo. In total, over 1 million refugees and other people of concern received essential health care services across the region in 2020.

The pandemic exacerbated many of the protection issues faced by people of

concern in the region, prompting UNHCR to innovate, adapt and reprioritize its approach to assistance delivery. In response to increasing reports of gender-based violence, UNHCR expanded its services and accessibility. Mobile clinics were set up with teams of specialists who provided medical, psychosocial, legal and material support to over 2,000 survivors by visiting safely accessible locations. Remote services were also made available by phone and WhatsApp, and community-led activities were strengthened to prevent child marriage, female genital mutilation and domestic violence.

After schools closed in March 2020 due to COVID-19, UNHCR quickly developed and implemented distance learning programmes that reached over 100,000 refugee, IDP and host community children. Crucial support was also provided for schools to reopen safely, including water, sanitation and hygiene interventions in 380 schools and the training of around 2,000 teachers to ensure safe practices. The return to school was also supported through community messaging, grants and cash assistance, transportation allowances and distribution of school kits.

Violence and civil unrest continued to trigger forced displacement throughout the region, and UNHCR continued to provide life-saving assistance despite the difficult context. More than 150,000 people received emergency shelter, and over 300,000 received core relief items. UNHCR was able to biometrically register more than 1.2 million people across the region in a COVID-sensitive manner by implementing physical distancing policies, requiring and distributing masks, and incorporating additional sanitation measures.

Seeking durable solutions for protracted refugee situations

Finding durable solutions remained a priority across the region. Despite security challenges, the Government of Niger and UNHCR were able to close Malian refugee camps in early 2020 as refugees integrated in host communities. This initiative was supported through partnerships with development actors. The multi-year Refugees and Host Communities Support Project programme, financed by the World Bank and supported by UNHCR, benefited over 160,000 refugees and host community members in Niger by funding livelihoods opportunities and strengthening access to basic public services. A total of 6,800 refugees in Chad received similar support from the World Bank and the Government of Chad, and similar projects were underway in Burkina Faso and Cameroon. In Chad, UNHCR continued implementing its “alternatives to camp” initiative, which works to sustainably integrate new arrivals into host villages and aims to convert 30% of refugee camps into villages by 2024. In Ghana, nearly 2,000 former Liberian refugees had their five-year residency permits renewed thanks to UNHCR’s continued advocacy, allowing them to continue to work legally.

Although voluntary repatriation efforts were severely impacted due to COVID-related border closures and post-electoral violence forced UNHCR to suspend its return programmes in the region, UNHCR assisted almost 5,000 Central African refugees and around 330 Ivorian refugees to return home in the first half of 2020. Additionally, more than 5,000 Malian refugees decided to return to Mali due to the dire security situation in Burkina Faso, and were assisted by UNHCR through documentation, a cash grant for transportation, and a reintegration grant upon arrival.

Despite travel restrictions linked to the COVID-19 pandemic, over 990 of the most vulnerable refugees in the region were

able to depart for resettlement in 2020. This achievement was made possible by the rapid rollout of COVID-19 prevention measures and remote interview procedures. Focused information sharing and counselling efforts targeted those affected by resettlement departure delays. Reinforcement of anti-fraud prevention, detection and response mechanisms, in line with UNHCR’s policy addressing fraud, ensured robust levels of integrity within resettlement activities across key resettlement operations.

Ensuring protection and durable solutions for IDPs

The number of IDPs in West and Central Africa increased by 28% in 2020, largely due to escalating violence in central Sahel countries, where some 1.1 million IDPs were driven from their homes in Burkina Faso alone. The Lake Chad Basin situation and continued instability in Cameroon and the Central African Republic were also major drivers of internal displacement, and in Chad, 336,000 people were internally displaced in 2020.

In response to the situation in the central Sahel, UNHCR and partners provided some 115,000 people with essential health care services and almost 14,000 people (including children, parents and primary caregivers) with mental health and psychosocial support. Around 13,400 households found to be most vulnerable and affected by COVID-19 were provided with livelihoods support. In addition, around 106,300 people of concern received shelter support and some 15,906 households were provided with core relief items and unrestricted cash grants, while over 850,000 people benefited from protection services.

UNHCR’s renewed engagement in IDP responses is expected to help in addressing critical needs, particularly where there is a surge in internal displacement, and to engage more States on durable solutions where there are protracted IDP situations.

Reducing and preventing statelessness

Efforts to address statelessness continued to bear tangible results in terms of data collection, legal reforms and research. A 2019 mapping exercise in Côte d'Ivoire revealed that over 954,000 persons were stateless or at immediate risk of statelessness, highlighting the severity of the issue. In September 2020, Côte d'Ivoire became the first African country to establish statelessness determination procedures. This will allow stateless individuals to access the rights enshrined in the 1954 Statelessness Convention. The Governments of Nigeria and Sierra Leone also adopted national action plans to address statelessness.

In Mali, recommendations from the final report of the study on statelessness will help inform the country's national action plan. In December 2020, a stocktaking event was convened by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC) and UNHCR, during which a regional roadmap was adopted to guide the implementation of the pledges made at the High-Level Segment on Statelessness.

In 2020, 60 trainees from 30 countries participated in the second statelessness and nationality course in French, which was organized by the Catholic University of Central Africa and UNHCR in Cameroon.

Implementing pledges made at the Global Refugee Forum

Of the 133 pledges relating to West and Central Africa made at the High-Level Segment on Statelessness in October 2019 and at the Global Refugee Forum in December 2019, one was fulfilled in 2020 and six are in progress.

Chad's asylum law made it one of the first countries in the region to fulfil a pledge made during the 2019 Global Refugee Forum. The law ensures fundamental protections for refugees and asylum-seekers, including freedom of movement, the right to work and access to health care, education, and justice, and conforms to international standards enshrined in the 1951 Refugee Convention and its Protocol and the 1969 OAU Convention on Refugees. The Asylum Capacity Support Group reinforced the capacities of Chad and Niger's asylum systems, with the support of France.

EXPENDITURE VIA PARTNERS | 2020

\$163.7 million spent via **117** partners in West and Central Africa



FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Consequences of underfunding

The effects of underfunding were reflected in the response to the COVID-19 emergency. Throughout the region, operations struggled to mobilize resources to respond to the secondary effects of the health crisis: an increase in incidence of gender-based violence, a rapid reduction in livelihoods opportunities, and thousands of displaced children out of school due to the pandemic.

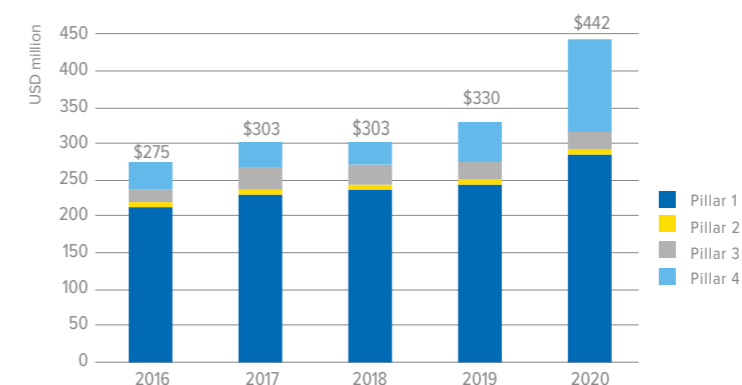
In 2020, underfunding in the Central African Republic meant that two out of every three IDPs (more than 400,000 people) were not able to receive important core relief items and shelter support. Cameroon hosted more than 316,000 Central African refugees by the end of 2020, but over 60% did not receive food assistance, 30% did not have access to safe drinking water, and 34% of refugees still lived in substandard emergency shelters due to a

lack of funding. Despite increased health needs due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there were 40 health centres in Cameroon that UNHCR was not able to financially support.

The effects of underfunding were also significant in the Nigeria situation. An estimated 36,000 IDPs in Niger's Diffa region were not registered due to lack of funding. In Nigeria, of nearly 210,000 IDP households surveyed, more than 20% were living in damaged or makeshift shelters.

The repercussions of underfunding were profoundly felt in the Sahel. While violence and the COVID-19 pandemic kept thousands of displaced children out of school in the region, 80% did not have access to distance learning programmes. In Mali, UNHCR was only able to address the shelter and core relief item needs of 30% of the displaced population.

EXPENDITURE IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA | 2016-2020



BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA | USD

OPERATION		PILLAR 1	PILLAR 2	PILLAR 3	PILLAR 4	TOTAL	% OF REGIONAL TOTAL	% OF EXP VS BUDGET
		Refugee programme	Stateless programme	Reintegration projects	IDP projects			
Regional Bureau for West and Central Africa ¹	Budget	13,709,130	-	-	-	13,709,130	2%	
	Expenditure	12,937,879	-	-	-	12,937,879	3%	94%
Regional activities for West and Central Africa ¹	Budget	4,060,388	170,000	-	-	4,230,388	1%	
	Expenditure	494,946	71,899	-	-	566,845	0%	13%
SUBTOTAL	Budget	17,769,518	170,000	-	-	17,939,518	3%	
	Expenditure	13,432,825	71,899	-	-	13,504,724	3%	75%
Burkina Faso	Budget	22,538,553	379,848	-	57,742,340	80,660,740	12%	
	Expenditure	17,937,603	186,993	-	51,975,538	70,100,134	16%	87%
Cameroon Multi-Country Office ²	Budget	72,906,572	861,229	-	22,942,182	96,709,983	15%	
	Expenditure	37,898,439	151,568	-	12,076,299	50,126,307	11%	52%
Central African Republic	Budget	15,715,004	841,245	13,335,411	17,620,978	47,512,639	7%	
	Expenditure	12,238,756	389,107	8,761,423	13,690,873	35,080,159	8%	74%
Chad	Budget	115,758,689	909,076	-	7,921,023	124,588,788	19%	
	Expenditure	68,297,710	282,582	-	5,107,894	73,688,186	17%	59%
Côte d'Ivoire	Budget	3,116,885	6,004,664	2,975,895	703,660	12,801,104	2%	
	Expenditure	2,608,226	3,834,625	1,770,459	550,571	8,763,881	2%	68%
Ghana	Budget	8,395,829	-	-	-	8,395,829	1%	
	Expenditure	7,737,629	-	-	-	7,737,629	2%	92%
Liberia	Budget	11,485,933	-	-	-	11,485,933	2%	
	Expenditure	10,774,007	-	-	-	10,774,007	2%	94%
Mali	Budget	22,741,660	-	9,674,017	15,185,937	47,601,614	7%	
	Expenditure	12,792,993	-	8,886,410	7,826,692	29,506,094	7%	62%
Niger	Budget	80,037,457	967,348	-	27,764,248	108,769,053	16%	
	Expenditure	69,868,529	515,707	-	14,190,418	84,574,655	19%	78%
Nigeria	Budget	38,701,814	-	15,062,665	36,848,346	90,612,825	14%	
	Expenditure	22,076,575	-	3,472,260	22,337,199	47,886,035	11%	53%
Senegal Multi-Country Office ³	Budget	16,452,531	1,476,864	-	-	17,929,395	3%	
	Expenditure	10,105,824	602,471	-	-	10,708,295	2%	60%
TOTAL	Budget	425,620,444	11,610,274	41,047,988	186,728,715	665,007,422	100%	
	Expenditure	285,769,116	6,034,952	22,890,552	127,755,485	442,450,105	100%	67%

¹ Regional Bureau and regional activities cover the whole of West and Central Africa region.

² Coordinates activities in Cameroon and Gabon and also covers Equatorial Guinea and Sao Tome and Principe without presence in the latter countries.

³ Coordinates activities in Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal and Togo and also covers Benin, Cape Verde, Gambia and Sierra Leone without presence in the latter countries.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA | USD

DONOR	PILLAR 1	PILLAR 3	PILLAR 4	ALL PILLARS	TOTAL
	Refugee programme	Reintegration projects	IDP projects		
United States of America	33,763,848		6,142,310	155,102,657	195,008,815
USA for UNHCR	701,700		21,257,753	35,273	21,994,727
Germany	5,106,867			16,116,986	21,223,853
European Union	14,890,604	1,538,595	4,332,716		20,761,915
Central Emergency Response Fund	5,235,671		11,168,917		16,404,589
Japan	9,932,661		4,393,592	1,127,644	15,453,897
France	1,846,939		285,088	5,914,150	8,046,177
African Development Bank Group	5,273,109				5,273,109



VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA | USD

DONOR	PILLAR 1	PILLAR 3	PILLAR 4	ALL PILLARS	TOTAL
	Refugee programme	Reintegration projects	IDP projects		
Private donors in Qatar	5,000,000				5,000,000
UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe (National partner in Germany)				4,312,349	4,312,349
Country-based pooled funds			3,009,024	250,036	3,259,060
Italy	2,065,222			1,102,536	3,167,757
Canada	38,197		189,107	2,609,993	2,837,298
Spain	2,372,136		380,702		2,752,837
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	1,482,094		1,192,170	6,759	2,681,023
Sweden				2,074,689	2,074,689
Education Cannot Wait	1,078,980		282,417	209,888	1,571,285
Private donors in Japan	1,018,539		447,701	58,610	1,524,850
UK for UNHCR				1,436,347	1,436,347
Qatar	1,363,376				1,363,376
United Nations Peacebuilding Fund			399,999	961,663	1,361,662
Luxembourg	313,808			941,423	1,255,230
Switzerland				1,119,010	1,119,010
WFP			938,399	60,996	999,396
Private donors in Italy	574,540			225,856	800,395
Belgium				614,573	614,573
United Arab Emirates			415,000		415,000
UNAIDS	330,250			78,900	409,150
Private donors in the United States of America	318,086			42,600	360,686
Private donors in the United Arab Emirates	268,900			25,048	293,948
UNDP	281,110				281,110
Private donors in France				204,109	204,109
Monaco	196,586				196,586
Private donors in China	166,500				166,500
Iceland				144,760	144,760
UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund	104,390				104,390
Liechtenstein				72,098	72,098
Nigeria				63,735	63,735
España con ACNUR (National partner in Spain)	28,691			13,236	41,927
Private donors in Switzerland				33,877	33,877
Private donors in Kenya	27,940			1,749	29,689
Private donors in Canada				28,455	28,455
Private donors in Nigeria				11,794	11,794
Holy See				7,500	7,500
Private donors in Thailand	4,146				4,146
Private donors in Singapore				2,663	2,663
Private donors in Belgium				896	896
Private donors in India				499	499
Private donors in Denmark				345	345
Private donors in Lebanon	223				223
Private donors in Mexico				104	104
Private donors in South Africa				93	93
TOTAL*	93,785,112	1,538,595	54,834,895	195,013,900	345,172,502

* Notes:

¹ Contributions include 6.5% indirect support costs.

² Overall contributions to Africa have been apportioned to the three regions of Africa.

³ Includes a total of \$8.0 million acknowledged in past years for activities with implementation in 2020 and excludes \$12.6 million acknowledged in 2020 for activities with implementation in 2021 and beyond.

⁴ Includes contributions earmarked to the Central African Republic, Nigeria and Sahel situations.