

Cameroonian Refugees in Nigeria

August 2021

Some **67,000** **Cameroonian** refugee men, women and children are **registered** in the Nigerian States of **Akwa-Ibom, Benue, Cross River** and **Taraba**.

About 300 refugees received **start-up kits** to establish their **business ventures**, after undertaking vocational and entrepreneurship **training** in Benue and Cross River States.

Over **26,000** **refugees** received **cash for food** in the month of August. This assistance allows these families in Benue and Cross River States to purchase food of their **choice** for three months and address **individual food needs**.



Cameroonian refugees receive start-up kits for business such as sewing machines, ironing tables and irons provided by UNHCR, upon completion of vocational training in tailoring in Adagom settlement, Cross River State. © UNHCR /Gabriel Adeyemo

Operational Highlights

- UNHCR facilitated the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the department of psychiatry of the University of Calabar Teaching Hospital and the Cross River State (CRS) Ministry of Health, for **mental health services** for **refugees** and **locals** in CRS. The MOU will improve access to quality mental health services, given that most refugees experienced some trauma during conflict or flight.



PROTECTION

Protection Monitoring

- UNHCR worked with 12 government agencies, national and international partners to systematically identify **protection incidents**, analyse protection risks and refer individuals to partners for protection and multisectoral support, including material and legal assistance, registration/documentation, health and services related to Gender-Based Violence (GBV).
- In Benue, Cross River and Taraba (BCT) States, UNHCR and partners undertook at least 45 **joint border monitoring** visits to assess the presence and needs of new arrivals, advocate for the protection of refugees and ensure they have access to territory. No case of refoulement was recorded during the reporting period.
- Some **300 new arrivals** were identified and profiled by UNHCR and partners in BCT States. They fled renewed violence in their communities in the South-West region of Cameroon, while came to reunite with their families. Urgent needs include food, healthcare, sleeping mats, and blankets.
- At least 50 **detention monitoring** visits were undertaken by UNHCR and partners to several police stations, correctional centres, and Nigerian security and civil defence corps, to provide **legal support to refugees in detention** and advocate against the arbitrary arrest and detention of refugees in BCT States.

Protection Response

- Some **120 refugee children** born in Nigeria received **birth certificates** from the National Population Commission in refugee settlements and host communities in Benue and CRS.
- Over 50 refugees received **ID cards** provided by the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants, and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI) and UNHCR in Cross River State, to help them move freely and access basic social services, including healthcare and banking.
- UNHCR and partners established **protection desks** in refugee settlements and host communities, to provide support to refugees on GBV prevention/response, legal issues, and registration, in BCT States.
- The protection desks managed by UNHCR and partners identified nearly **500 refugees** with various **specific needs**, including critically sick individuals, people with disabilities, unaccompanied/separated children, pregnant women and older individuals who were referred to **specialized services**, in BCT States.
- More than 50 **Gender-Based Violence** survivors received multisectoral assistance, in BCT States, including **medical, psychosocial, legal, and material assistance** through

established referral pathways to enhance their coping skills. Five refugees with **disability** received **walking aids** and six **GBV survivors** received **dignity kits** in Benue and CRS.

- In BCT States, UNHCR and partners undertook six **best interest assessments** for refugee children at risk, while over 35 **child protection** cases were identified and managed according to case management procedures.
- More than 25 **awareness sessions** on child protection, death registration, **child rights**, birth registrations, prevention of GBV, teenage pregnancy, child marriage, sexual exploitation and abuse response and reporting channels **reached some 3,000 refugees and locals** in BCT States.
- To mark the **World Day Against Trafficking in Persons**, UNHCR in collaboration with the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons held a one-day **workshop** for more than 65 government officials from the Ministries of Women Affairs, Social Welfare and Humanity, Immigration Service, Department of State Service, Police Force, NCFRMI, refugees and partners on the theme “**Victims’ Voices Lead the Way**” in Calabar, CRS.
- UNHCR held a 2-day **workshop** on **Maintaining the Civilian and Humanitarian Character of Asylum** for 30 government officials, security agencies and partner organizations in Calabar, CRS. It focused on the **national framework on the protection of refugees**, including effective security management of refugee hosting areas and strategies for identification, screening, disarmament, separation, and control of armed elements. A communique was issued with nine recommendations for consideration at federal level, including the **extension of the refugee recognition period** and ID validity to five years and enrollment of refugees for the **National Identity Number**.
- About **500 adolescent refugees** received **mentorship** to help them achieve their full potential and acquire different skills in specific areas such as football, creative arts, gender advocacy, reading, and debate in the refugee settlements and host communities in CRS.
- UNHCR partner Caritas reached some 50 refugees including **GBV survivors, child protection** cases and **suicide attempt** survivors with **mental health and psychosocial support** services in Cross River State.

Challenges

- In all refugee hosting locations, negative coping mechanisms such as **alcohol abuse** and **survival sex** have been reported among youth and women-headed households, due to limited food and livelihood support.
- **Under-reporting of GBV incidents** remains a major concern as most survivors tend to endure with their abusers, due to fear of reprisal attacks and stigma.



WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH):

- About **2,000** refugee women and girls of reproductive age received **dignity kits** including soap, detergents, toothbrush, underwear, and towels provided by UNHCR in the refugee settlements and host communities in BCT States.
- UNHCR through Save the Children is undertaking installations to improve potable water supply to at least **50,000 refugees and locals** in BCT States including upgrading of two manual boreholes to **solar powered boreholes** in Primary Health Centre (PHC) Adagom and host community Ukende; construction of two **hybrid solar boreholes** in Adagom and Ikyogen settlements and drilling of two manual boreholes at the Cameroon Quarters in Takum and Lissam PHC's in **Taraba State**.

- Door-to-door awareness sessions on **COVID-19 prevention**, personal and **environmental hygiene**, open defecation, and cholera prevention reached over **4,000 refugees**, through hygiene volunteers in BCT States.

Challenges

- The main gap in the water – sanitation – hygiene sector remains **inadequate water supply** in the refugee settlements, despite the construction and rehabilitation of over 15 boreholes by UNHCR. The yield remains insufficient and merely meets about 40 percent of refugees' water need. UNHCR is currently operating a **water treatment plant at a very high cost** to supplement the water needs of refugees. Moreover, **latrines** and bathing facilities are inadequate in the refugee settlements.



HEALTH:

- UNHCR is providing support to more than 20 **health facilities** through the provision of **medical equipment**, incinerators, laboratory consumables, COVID-19 prevention items, and capacity-building for staff in Benue, Cross River, and Taraba states.
- In BCT States, over 3,500 refugees and locals received **face masks**, and more than 115 hand **washing buckets** with metal stands were distributed to schools, markets, and motor parks to help prevent COVID-19 in Benue State.
- The Wellbeing Foundation Africa donated **200 delivery kits** to **pregnant refugees** in Adagom Settlement, CRS.
- Over 500 refugees and locals, mainly pregnant women and children under five years of age, received **mosquito nets** from UNHCR in Benue and CRS, to **prevent malaria**. A hemoglobin machine and strips were provided to Adagom and Ukende PHCs in CRS.
- The Nigerian Red Cross Society **trained** over **70 refugee** and **host community** women, including pregnant and lactating mothers, on the **production** of **complementary food**, using locally available raw materials in Adagom settlement, CRS.

Challenges

- Lack of **medications** in the health facilities limits access to health care for most **refugees** who cannot pay for health services.
- There is no COVID-19 compliant **ambulance** for emergency evacuations in Adikpo, Ogoja and Takum (BCT States). Lack of transportation to facilitate emergency cases and other referrals in these locations remains a major challenge for refugees and locals.



EDUCATION:

- In Benue and CRS, UNHCR registered more than 105 refugee students for the **West African Examination Council Exams**, a prerequisite for university admission.
- A total of 20 refugee students in secondary school received **school uniforms** in CRS. Some 15 **teachers' tables** and **chairs** were provided to primary and secondary schools hosting refugee students in Ikyogen, Benue State, with support from UNHCR.

Challenges

- Levels of **school and university enrolment** remain **critically low** for refugee children and youth because of **limited funding** and support.
- **Refugee children** with **specific needs** have **limited access to education**, given the long distance between the refugee settlements Adagom, Ukende and Ikyogen (Benue and CRS) and the schools.
- **Poor quality** of education for refugees and locals in public schools remains a major concern, due to **shortage of teachers**. The teacher/student ratio is over 1:100. UNHCR continues to advocate to the national education authorities for deployment of teachers.



LIVELIHOODS

- 305 refugees who had received vocational training in leather works, electrical works, tailoring, hair dressing, catering and trading with support from UNHCR, received **start-up kits** through partners to establish their **businesses** in Taraba and CRS.

Challenges

- Livelihood opportunities, especially crop farming, are limited which leads refugees to cross into Cameroon in search of **food** and **livelihoods** to sustain their families.



FOOD SECURITY

- More than 26,340 refugees from over 6,940 families received **cash** to purchase **the food of their choice** for **three months**, in Benue and Cross River States.
- Nearly 16,600 individuals (4,295 families), representing 57 per cent of the targeted households, have undergone a **Multi-Sectoral Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment** across Adagom, Ukende and Ikyogen settlements.
- The Wellbeing Foundation Africa donated **1,000 cartoons** containing **food items** to vulnerable refugees including pregnant women in Adagom settlement, Cross River State.

Challenges

- **Food** remains one of the **critical needs** of refugees in settlements and host communities. Because of COVID-19, prices of basic food commodities in refugee hosting areas have

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