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FIGURES

(HUMANITARIAN NEEDS OVERVIEW 2022, UNHCR, IOM, OCHA)

3.9 million

People in need of humanitarian assistance

2.6 million

People targeted (Humanitarian Response Plan 2022)

936,767

Internally displaced people

474,982

Refugees and asylum seekers

518,853

Returnees (previously IDPs)

FUNDING

(HRP 2022, FINANCIAL TRACKING SERVICES –FTS)

US\$ 376 million

Requested

13.5 per cent

Funded as of 30 June 2022

UN AND NGO PARTNERS RAISED THE ALARM ON THE INCREASING NEEDS IN CENTRAL AND WEST AFRICA



An IDP family in the far North region
Credit OCHA/ Bibiane Mouangue

Over 30 million people in the Sahel require life-saving assistance and protection in 2022, an increase of almost two million from 2021.

Six countries (Burkina Faso, Cameroon (Far North), Chad, Mali, Niger, and Nigeria) have developed response plans for 2022, requiring a total of US\$ 3.8 billion.

Insecurity and violence are depriving affected populations of vital services, including access to health, education

and water, sanitation, and hygiene services, resulting in a vicious cycle of vulnerability.

“About 7,900 schools are closed in the Sahel due to violence, a 56 per cent increase since 2021”, warned Marie-Pierre Poirier, UNICEF Regional Director for West and Central Africa.

Growing needs in the Sahel are being exacerbated by the ever-shrinking humanitarian space, which is dragging the entire response into a negative spiral. “Although needs are continuously exacerbating, reaching people in conflict-affected areas is an ongoing challenge due to rising criminality, kidnappings, and increasing violence”, says Maureen Magee, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) Regional Director for Central and West Africa.

“While needs are at record highs across the Sahel, resources are at rock bottom, and the cost of responding is skyrocketing forcing us to provide half rations in many countries across the Sahel” said Elvira Pruscini, World Food Program’s Deputy Regional Director for West Africa. “Life-saving assistance is essential and should be complemented with multiyear resilience interventions to reduce humanitarian needs over time and pave the way toward sustainable solutions to hunger and malnutrition. We can and should also be supporting national food and social protection systems to immediately mitigate this crisis while supporting governments”.

“Between June and August 2022, over 18.6 million people (15 per cent of the region’s total population) are expected to experience severe food insecurity, including 2.1 million people experiencing emergency levels of food insecurity,” noted the Regional Representative for West and Central Africa at the international organization Action Contre la Faim, Mamadou Diop.

Women are primarily impacted by harmful social norms and multiple discriminations based on age and gender, which are exacerbated by the socio-economic crisis and conflict. “For far too many women and girls who are experiencing displacement, gender-based violence is a daily occurrence. Forced marriage and child marriage, physical and sexual violence, and sexual exploitation all contribute to thousands of people feeling trapped and powerless”, noted the Regional Vice President for West Africa for the International Rescue Committee, Modou Diaw.

Funding shortfalls remain among the significant challenges to delivering effective aid. By June, only 15 per cent of the required US\$3.8 billion has been received to support the humanitarian response plans for Burkina Faso, northern Cameroon, Chad, Mali, Niger, and north-east Nigeria. “It is urgent to secure humanitarian aid for the most vulnerable as millions of people struggle every day. Without sufficient resources, the crisis will further escalate, eroding communities’ resilience and putting children, women, and men at risk”, warned the Head of West and Central Africa Office at OCHA, Charles Bernimolin.

DESTRUCTION OF THE MAMFE HOSPITAL



Mamfe district hospital after it was destroyed
Credit: partner

On 8 June 2022, the hospital was set on fire and destroyed following clashes between NSAGs and State security forces in Egbekow.

The hospital served as main medical reference covering medical needs of remote areas in Manyu division. Its destruction deprived thousands of people of urgently needed care and further weakens the local health system.

From January to June 2022, there have been at least five attacks against healthcare with health workers or patients threatened, abducted, injured, or killed, as well as medical infrastructures damaged or destroyed. All those incidents are strongly condemned.

All parties must protect healthcare and refrain from hindering access to medical services.

Attacks on healthcare workers, patients and facilities are serious violations of international law, they must be investigated, and perpetrators must be held to account. Health care workers are every day saving the lives of thousands of people and must be allowed to work without fear or concern for their safety or that of their patients.

WITHDRAWAL OF MSF TEAM IN FOTOKOL, FAR NORTH REGION

On 25 May 2022, MSF announced the withdrawal of its personnel in Fotokol, Logone et Chari division, Far North region, for security reasons.

This decision came a few months after the abduction of five MSF staff in Fotokol. However, the organisation continues to provide assistance with drugs and medical equipment in order to ensure that patients still have access to health care. In addition, MSF maintained its operations in the Logone et Chari division in Kousseri.

The security situation remains volatile in the Far North region, especially in the Mayo-Sava, Mayo-Tsanaga with attacks from non-State armed groups (NSAGs).

ISSUANCE OF THE FIRST REFUGEE IDENTIFICATION CARDS BY THE CAMEROONIAN STATE



The DGSN representative giving an ID refugee card
Credit UNHCR/ Inandjo

On 30 June 2022, during an official ceremony, the Government of Cameroon issued 300 refugee identification cards in Mandjou and in Gado in the East region.

This initiative is part of the pilot phase of the enrolment and issuance of refugee cards by the Government, supported by UNHCR and funded by the World Bank, initially targeting 6,000 people. "The refugee cards will reinforce freedom of movement of refugees, facilitate their access to bank services, job opportunities, their fundamental rights and other social and economic services" said UNHCR Deputy Representative Cesar Tshilombo.

This initiative is in conformity with article 13 (1) of Law n°2005/006 of 27 July 2005 on the status of refugees in Cameroon which stipulates that "any person recognised as a refugee in Cameroon receives a refugee card" and is in line with the implementation of Cameroon's commitments at the World Forum on Refugees (Geneva, December 2019), which aim to strengthen the protection environment of the beneficiaries and to promote their socio-economic inclusion.

More than 218,000 people are eligible for refugee cards, which meet the same security standards as national identification cards issued to Cameroonians. Over 97 per cent of the requested funds to produce the refugee cards are still to be mobilized.

As of 30 June 2022, Cameroon generously hosts 474,982 refugees.

FAMILIES IN THE SOUTH-WEST TURN TO FARMING TO SURVIVE



James, holding the mushroom harvest of the day
Credit OCHA/ Ariane Maixandeu

Since 2017, the North-West and South-West regions have been characterised by a high level of violence and insecurity. Hundred thousands of vulnerable civilians have been forced to flee.

As of March 2022, 366,315 people were internally displaced in the North-West and South-West regions.

Like many others, James left his home in the periphery of Muea in the Buea sub-division with his wife, son, and three daughters to find safety in Buea town, in the South-West region. “We were often exposed to crossfire. There was no other option than to move elsewhere,” said James.

Later on, James was identified to participate in a FAO agricultural project implemented by the Center for Rural Action (CEFORA) and funded by the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). He was provided with the basic materials to start a mushroom farming small project and trained to be able to sustain and grow this activity. Incomes generated by as a result will help James to provide for himself and his family.

Lifaje and Lifanje come from the same village and tribe and decided to partner for their egg production. They were trained in chicken farming and provided with the needed inputs. They have divided the tasks between themselves, to allow enough time to pursue additional income generating activities. Lifaje, for example, has a small shop in Buea. “The project allowed us to learn new skills to support and feed our families, says Lifaie. “But we are worried whether we can sustain our activity with the recent rise in prices in commodity, in terms of basic food item such as rice, flour and meat, but also grains to feed the chicken.”

Tani is a single father, raising his five daughters alone. They left their village of Mbengul in the North-West region, after losing all his harvest in 2018 because of the conflict and sought refuge in Buea town. “Everybody was scared, it was terrible,” he said. After working odd jobs for years, a friend told him about the agricultural project. Eager to be self-sufficient, he joined the programme and was trained and given material, fertilisers and seeds to start short cycle vegetable crops to generate an income for himself and his family. “My five girls are in school here in Buea, I want to make sure they have what they need to succeed,” said Tani.

In the North-West and South-West regions, forced displacement has contributed to the weakening of family and community safety nets, the depletion of basic resources and services and an increase of social tensions. The continuous population movement adds to the pre-existing difficulties of accessing adequate basic services and leads to a shortage of educational and economic opportunities.

These projects aim to provide emergency livelihood and nutrition support to vulnerable people, including host communities, internally displaced persons (IDPs), people living with disabilities, and survivors of sexual gender-based violence. Activities in mushroom farming, tomato gardening, or egg production allow participants to be trained on a specific trade. The harvests can be consumed by their family and excess sold to generate additional revenue to sustain and grow their activity independently. Such projects remain indispensable to best support most vulnerable families and communities.

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