

DREF operation update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Cameroon (Central Africa): Population Movement

DREF operation n° MDRCM006
Update n° 01
8 February, 2008

The International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is a source of un-earmarked money created by the Federation in 1985 to ensure that immediate financial support is available for Red Cross and Red Crescent response to emergencies. The DREF is a vital part of the International Federation's disaster response system and increases the ability of national societies to respond to disasters.

Period covered by this update: 5 to 7 February, 2008.

Summary: CHF 300,000 was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 4 February, 2008 to support the national society in delivering assistance to some 15,000 beneficiaries.

The operation to reduce the vulnerability of Chadian refugees in Kousseri started on 4 February, 2008. The Federation's Representative in Yaoundé has deployed its Regional Disaster Management Delegate and Officer, as well as the Regional

Communication's Officer in Kousseri to support the Cameroon Red Cross Society (CRCS) response to this refugee situation. The CRCS is represented in the field by its National Programmes Coordinator, the National Disaster Management Officer and two other executives from the national Headquarters, as well as 60 local Red Cross volunteers who have already started distributing food to the refugees. This operation is expected to be implemented over 2 months, and completed by 5 April, 2008. In line with Federation reporting standards, the Final Report (narrative and financial) is due 90 days after the end of the operation (by 5 July, 2008).

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Cameroon Red Cross volunteers have started distributing food to Chadian refugees

The situation

Chad experiences periods of instability that affect the general security in the country, causing humanitarian needs that necessitate external assistance. Such a situation is occurring now, with conflict taking place between rebel elements and Government forces, causing inhabitants of NDjamena to flee into neighbouring northern Cameroon (specifically the town of Kousseri, Logone and Chari Division, and the surrounding area).

On 6 February, 2008, a UNHCR Representative in Kousseri announced that about 52,032 refugees have been registered, 30,000 of whom are in a vulnerable situation and need immediate assistance. These vulnerable people are now residing in unsafe sites and under trees, but efforts are underway to find better accommodation.



Most refugees have been living under the tree since their arrival from N'Djamena

Although the situation is reported to have calmed down in N'Djamena, there is still the fear that more refugees will arrive in Kousseri in the days ahead. However, a limited number of persons have been seen going back to N'Djamena compared to the number of refugees.

So far, the Federation's Representative in Yaoundé has deployed its Regional Disaster Management Delegate and Regional Disaster Management Officer, as well as the Regional Communication's Officer in Kousseri. The Cameroon Red Cross Society is represented in the field by its National Programmes Coordinator, the National Disaster Management Officer and two other staff from the national headquarters, as well as 60 local Red Cross volunteers who have already started distributing food provided by WFP to the vulnerable refugees, mainly children.

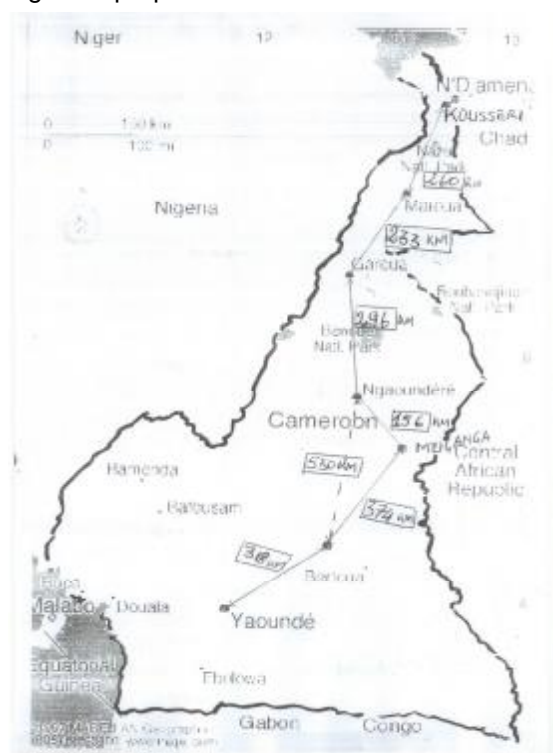
Coordination and partnerships

A coordination meeting was held in Kousseri on 6 February, 2008. The humanitarian organizations included the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the Cameroon Red Cross, UNHCR (from Yaoundé and N'Djamena), UNICEF (from Yaoundé and N'Djamena), the World Food Programme (from Yaoundé and Dakar), the United Nations, and COOPI.

During that meeting, it was disclosed that about 52,032 refugees have arrived in Kousseri, and that 30,000 of them are extremely vulnerable as they have been sleeping in unprepared sites and under trees. It was revealed that two big sites have already been identified to welcome refugees, namely Madana (ENIEG) and CETIC (with a group of small sites). The UNHCR representative called upon humanitarian actors to assist the refugees while they are still in transit sites as their condition is alarming.

In Madana, six sites have already been identified to welcome refugees. Family groups are expected to be constituted on 7 February, 2008. In order to know exactly what the needs of the refugees are, dialogue will be established with women that lead groups of refugees.

The Cameroon Government has authorized that Maltam I, a locality situated 33 km from Kousseri, with an intake capacity of 50,000 persons and a surface area of 233 hectares, be used as final site for the construction of refugees camps. This site is divided into two blocs that can accommodate 15,000 persons (bloc A) and about 30,000 persons (bloc B).



Partners found it unsafe to use the Maltam II site despite its 15 square metres elevated water tank and old water well because this site is often flooded during the rainy season. The refugees will be transferred to Maltam I as from 7 February, 2008 and refugees will be properly registered thereafter. It is expected that UNHCR and the Public Works Department of Cameroon Government in Kousseri will start the rehabilitation of the Maltam site on Friday 8 February, 2008.

Cameroon Red Cross volunteers are expected to start building temporary latrines in Madana and in the sites of CETIC, following approval from local administrative authorities.

UNHCR has signed an agreement with Cameroon Government for the supply of water in the Madana site. The installation work will last for the next three days. In addition, UNHCR has announced that 44 mt of non-food items will arrive in Kousseri on 7 February, 2008. A 15-mt truck arrived in Kousseri on 6 February and another will come on 7 February from Garoua.

UNICEF has made available 10,000 doses of anti-measles vaccines and syringes and boxes, and 10,000 capsules of vitamin A and nutritional supplements to be given to the local health district. Red Cross volunteers are expected to start the distribution of these drugs on 7 February 2008.

While waiting for a strategy to be developed for the proper distribution of food and non-food items, Red Cross volunteers have offered bread and sardines to about 500 refugees, with priority to women and children.

The Cameroon armed forces have been ensuring security of the various sites. Refugees will be thoroughly searched prior to their transfer to the final site in Maltam.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Progress towards objectives

On 6 February, the Federation in Yaoundé dispatched a plane carrying 816 blankets, 2,850 mats and 1,100 impregnated mosquito nets to Kousseri. Another plane carrying 2,184 blankets and 150 mats was sent to Kousseri on 7 February, while a third one will be dispatched on 8 February. By 8 February, 2008, all the materials planned for the operation will be available in Kousseri. These materials include:

- 10 jars of chlorine.
- 60 meters of flexible pipe.
- 20 pieces of connection tanks to tap stands.
- 1,500 pieces of 20 litre jerry cans.
- 200 pieces of plastic buckets.
- 1,500 pieces of 250 gr soap.
- 3,000 mats.
- 3,000 blankets.
- 7,500 boxes of chlorine tablets.
- 600 bottles of chemicals for disinfecting latrines.
- 20 sprayers.
- 500 kitchen sets airlifted from the Dakar regional stock.
- 50 sanitation kits including wheelbarrows, racks and shovels.
- 25 first-aid kits.
- 100 pieces of security patches.
- 500 cooking kits.
- 5 bicycles.
- 2 motorbikes.
- 5 handset telephones.
- Torches, batteries, megaphones.

A team from Geneva composed of a relief manager and the operational manager for Africa has arrived in Yaoundé and will be living to Kousseri. The team from Dakar is expected to arrive in Cameroon shortly. The Regional Health Coordinator left Yaoundé on 7 February to Kousseri where she will provide assistance in assessing the health needs of the refugees.

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

Objective: To contribute to reducing the vulnerability of over 15,000 Chadian refugees in Kousseri, Far North Province of Cameroon.

Activities planned: Distribution of food and non-food items to 2,500 families (blankets, mats, impregnated mosquito nets and hygiene kits).

Progress and impact: efforts have focused on logistics (see Progress towards objectives above under Red Cross and Red Crescent Action). The first impact of this action is that food and non-food items that are to be distributed to refugees are already available in Kousseri. The Red Cross personnel needed in the field is also already present and the planned intervention has started. Most refugees appreciated the initial distribution of bread and sardines distributed by Red Cross volunteers.



Challenges: The initial number of refugees estimated was 15,000. There are now at least 30,000 who need immediate assistance. Local authorities requested the Red Cross to wait until Saturday to start the distribution in a coordinated framework.

Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion

Objective: To contribute to reducing the vulnerability of over 15,000 Chadian refugees in Kousseri, Far North Province of Cameroon.

Activities planned:

- Building 500 emergency latrines.
- Disinfecting drinking water.
- Carrying out sanitation activities in welcome places and sensitizing refugees to hygiene rules.
- Providing the Mokolo local committee of the Red Cross with security patches, first-aid kits, stretchers, means of displacement, and buckets.

Progress and impact: So far, Red Cross volunteers have started digging holes for the building of latrines. The tablets for disinfecting water have been sent to Kousseri, and the Watsan Delegate from N'Djamena is currently in Kousseri to supervise all water and sanitation activities.

Challenges: Presently, water sources in the locality where the refugees are temporarily accommodated are limited, and there are concerns over a possible epidemic outbreak.

How we work

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.

of humanity".

- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

Contact information

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