



Cameroon: Facts and figures 2015

The Far North Region of Cameroon continues to be the scene of clashes and violence, leaving many people dead or wounded and prompting hundreds of thousands to flee their homes. Many of the displaced have sought refuge in already struggling communities, putting further strain on means of subsistence, resources and services, including food, drinking water and health care.

Meeting basic needs

The ICRC's assistance programme is designed to help victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence recover their self-sufficiency and preserve or restore their livelihoods.

In 2015, food distributions for displaced people lasted from June to December. In Mayo-Sava, Mayo-Tsanaga and Logone-et-Chari departments, almost 9,000 displaced families received food rations on three occasions, and almost 5,500 resident families received a single ration. Each ration comprises 75 kg of millet, 25 kg of beans, 1 kg of salt, 10 litres of palm oil and 12 kg of nutrient-rich "Super Cereal".

Some 6,950 displaced families also received essential household items.

In June 2015, as part of its agricultural programme aimed at reviving food production, the ICRC distributed millet, okra, maize and bean seed, along with a one-off food ration, to 5,100 host or extremely vulnerable families. A total of 75 tonnes of seed and 250 tonnes of fertilizer were distributed.

Distributions were carried out with the invaluable help of Cameroon Red Cross volunteers.

Improving access to water and sanitation

The ICRC and the Cameroon Red Cross carried out an assessment of the drinking water distribution system in host communities in Mayo-Sava and Mayo-Tsanaga. Across 62 villages, 220 of the 257 water points and 43 of the 84 hand pumps assessed were found to be in need of repair or replacement.

Supporting health care

The ICRC contributed to a training workshop for 29 hospital staff organized by the Ministry of Public Health, teaching a module on the stabilization and surgical treatment of bullet wounds.

Following an assessment of the health-care system in the Far North Region, the ICRC took the decision to support the integrated health centres in Maltam (Logone-et-Chari) and Meme (Mayo-Sava) in 2016.

Putting dispersed families back in touch

Working closely with the Cameroon Red Cross, the ICRC pursued its efforts to help people separated from family members by conflict to trace and contact their relatives throughout Cameroon and in neighbouring countries. Particular attention is paid to the plight of unaccompanied children. The ICRC and Cameroon Red Cross are currently processing nearly 3,000 tracing requests, notably for people living in the refugee camps in the East and Far North regions of Cameroon. In 2015, the ICRC, with the support of the region's National Societies, reunited 26 children with their loved ones.

Visiting detainees

The ICRC continued to visit places of detention to promote the humane treatment of detainees and to assess whether their living conditions complied with Cameroonian legislation and international standards.

In 2015, the ICRC:

- visited 5,500 detainees, mainly in places of detention in the Far North and East regions and in Yaoundé;
- kept individual track of 288 detainees;
- assisted the prison authorities in treating severe and moderate malnutrition among inmates in the places of detention worst affected by the increase in the prison population following the armed conflicts in the Far North and East regions (programme currently under way in the central prisons of Maroua and Bertoua);
- upgraded health-care and water infrastructure in the same detention facilities;
- provided 200 detainees in Yaoundé's main prison with hygiene kits and mosquito nets.

Cooperating with the Cameroon Red Cross

The Cameroon Red Cross is the ICRC's main operational partner in the country. The ICRC has stepped up its support to the National Society, in particular through first-aid training (with 42 trainers, 140 Cameroon Red Cross first-aiders and 40 community members trained in 2015), as well as through courses on intervention techniques in areas at risk, economic security assessment, restoring family links, protection and prevention of misuse of the emblem, and operational communication.

The ICRC is also bolstering the National Society's operational capacity by developing three of its premises in the Far North Region and providing logistical support in the form of 6 vehicles and 12 motorbikes donated in November.

Promoting international humanitarian law

The ICRC held regular bilateral talks with the armed and security forces, reminding them of their obligations under international humanitarian law (IHL) and of the duty to protect persons not, or no longer, taking part in the fighting.

- 1,400 members of the armed and security forces and the penitentiary police were familiarized with the rules of IHL and international human rights law and with the ICRC's mandate.
- 40 military judges attended an advanced IHL training seminar.

The ICRC has been present in Yaoundé since 1992, in Maroua since 2013, in Bertoua since 2014 and in Kousséri since 2015.