

This report is produced by OCHA Cameroon in collaboration with the COVID-19 Task force. It covers the period from 1 to 15 September 2020. The next report will be issued on 30 September 2020.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Phase three of the response strategy to COVID-19 in Cameroon was closed on 22 August 2020 with 20,303 confirmed cases since the onset of the pandemic, including 18,983 recoveries and 415 deaths as of 14 September 2020.
- 83 pregnant women are confirmed positive to COVID-19 as of 14 September 2020, including two deaths essentially in the North West region.
- On 17 August 2020, the Minister of Secondary Education instructed to start the 2020/2021 school year registrations for classes to resume on 5 October 2020 within the novel coronavirus environment.
- As of 31 August 2020, over 3,295 contestants to the Chadian Baccalaureate examination had been screened at the Cameroon-Chad border in Kousseri, including only one positive case. They were returning from Ndjamena where they wrote the examination starting on 21 August 2020.
- The Tignere Health District in the Adamaoua region recorded its first positive cases since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic on 29 August.
- Due to the resumption of commercial flight operations in most West and Central Africa countries, World Food Programme global air passenger service has been temporarily suspended.



Kousseri: COVID-19 tests being administered to students who returned from writing the Chadian Baccalaureate.

20,3K

COVID-19 cases

340,1K

Samples tested for COVID-19 (TDR+PCR)

2.1%

Fatality rate

15

Laboratories for testing available in nine regions

10.8MT

Material and equipment for care and prevention transported

SITUATION OVERVIEW

On 22 August 2020, the Ministry of Health in Cameroon closed phase three of the response strategy to COVID-19 in Cameroon after an evaluation of the five pillars that supported it. The same five pillars (Coordination, Communication and community engagement, Monitoring, Rapid Intervention and Intervention Teams and investigations, Points of entry and Laboratories) were renewed for phase four of the response which started on 23 August 2020. Indicators of key performance and level of activity will be produced and collected according to a predefined frequency at the level of each health district in the country.

Since the onset of the pandemic, 83 pregnant women tested positive to COVID-19 in Cameroon, including two deaths that occurred in the North West region, as of 14 September 2020. This might be a result of the ongoing conflict in the region that jeopardizes civilians' access to health facilities and health care. In addition, the rumors of a COVID-19 vaccine being tested on people in hospitals made many pregnant women leave hospitals.

Schools will resume in earnest nationwide on 5 October 2020 as instructed by the Minister of Secondary Education Professor Nalova Lyonga. Parents and school personnel are worried that children could catch the virus with the resumption of classes. Barely a month to school resumption, Public Health officials are working on new approaches to control the spread of the virus. Over 3,295 students including 3,072 Cameroonians and 223 Chadians have returned from Ndjamena where they wrote the Chadian Baccalaureate examination starting on 21 August 2020. Several weeks earlier, Chad responded favorably to a request made by the Cameroonian Embassy in Chad to lift the border closure measure for this special occasion. Back from the examination, these students have been screened, including one positive case as of 2 September 2020.

The Faro and Déo division in the Adamaoua region joined the list of administrative units affected by the pandemic in the country. This happened after a massive screening campaign launched on 28 August 2020 by the Head of the Tignere Health District. The screening resulted in 12 positive cases as of 9 September 2020. The previous apparent absence of cases in the Tignere health district since the outbreak of COVID-19 had been questioned. Out of the nine health districts in the region, Banyo and Bankim are the only districts that remain free of cases.

The World Food Programme (WFP) has released the report of its worldwide global service intervention under the framework of the global humanitarian response plan. Due to the resumption of commercial operations in most West and Central Africa countries, the WFP global air passenger service has been temporarily suspended. In total, 1,184 flights were conducted for 21,166 passengers to 64 destinations worldwide. To date, 56,823 cubic meters of cargo have been shipped on behalf of 55 organizations in 167 countries through UNHAS. The month of August 2020 saw the largest shipments to date due to the large volumes of supplies becoming available. In Cameroon, 548 passengers flew between 26 May and 19 August 2020 in 19 flights, an average of 28 passengers per flight.

Gaps & constraints

- **Infection and Prevention Control (IPC):** The opening of borders and the Back to School campaign can hinder the control of the pandemic so far within certain categories of the population.
- **Education:** Many schools might not be able to have adequate WASH facilities (clean water, hygiene kits and disinfectant). There is a major need to improve and sustain safe school environments, provide all children with reusable facemasks and ensure physical distancing.

INTER-AGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

Cameroon HRP COVID 2020

US\$ 81.7 million requested

US\$ 21.1 million funded

Funding by sector

(in million US\$)



	Funded	Unmet	%Coverage
Health	2.2	16.0	12.3
Food Security	7.0	4.5	60.9
WASH	0.5	10.8	4.8
Refugee Response	9.4	0	0
Protection: CP	6.9	0	0
Protection: GBV	0.4	6.4	5.6
Education	0.5	4.4	10.3
Protection	3.4	0	0
Nutrition	2.2	0	0
Early Recovery	2.1	0	0
Coordination	2.0	0	0
Shelter and NFI	1.6	0	0
Multi-P. Cash Assistance	1.5	0	0
Multiple clusters/sectors	10.4	-	-

All humanitarian partners, including donors and recipient agencies, are encouraged to inform OCHA's Financial Tracking Service (FTS - <http://fts.unocha.org>) of cash and in-kind contributions by e-mailing: fts@un.org

CASE MANGEMENT AND IPC

Needs:

- Furniture and equipment in planned isolation centers and units for the management of COVID-19 cases in the East region.
- A training on the logistic management of drug inputs is crucial for health personnel in the Regional Delegation of Public Health for the Far North region.

Response:

- OCHA sub-office in Maroua has received and started the distribution of 400,000 masks among local health sector partners.
- Support to the Maroua Health District filling in and updating the contact tracking databases (OCHA/WHO).
- UNHCR is constructing twelve units for the management of COVID-19 cases with sustainable material at District Hospitals of Batouri, Garoua-Boulai (East region), Meiganga (Adamaoua region), Djohong, Touboro (North region) and Mokolo (Far North region) in support to the government's response to the pandemic. Each district hospital will have two units. The agency has equally proceeded with the installation of three additional Refugee Housing Units (RHUs) at the COVID-19 quarantine and isolation center for the management of COVID-19 cases at the Ngarissingo site.
- UNCHR received 150,000 surgical masks from CERF funding to UNDP to be distributed in the Eastern regions.
- The COVID-19 tracking, testing, and treatment campaign is ongoing in all health districts. The regional delegation in the North West region has scaled-up RDT testing sites for COVID-19 with rapid response teams (RRTs) to all health districts to support with surveillance, case identification, contact tracing and risk communication. Health teams conduct testing and treatment in all public and confessional health facilities in the region as well as some public places in collaboration with community representatives of each health district.
- A Medical Logistic Officer has arrived in Cameroon on WFP's initiative to reinforce the capacities of medical teams in the cities where the 36 mobile tents donated by the Swedish government will be set up.
- UNICEF donated 30 telephones and one tablet with communication credit to improve data collection and processing, as well as 31 speakers and 65 USB flash drives to the communication focal points and data managers of the Centre and South-West regional public health delegations. These USB flash drives contain audio-visual spots destined to the mobile screening strategy.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Difficulties to install the 36 tents donated by the Swedish government in some towns due to heavy rains and floods, particularly in Maroua.
- Lack of expertise from health personnel in using these tents, as well as poor management of drugs inputs from medical stores.
- One laboratory for the Littoral region is insufficient, considering that the region is home to Douala, the country's second most densely populated city.

RISK COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (RCCE)

As of 9 September 2020, key messages related to the prevention of COVID-19 and the use of COVID-19 management services available reached 19,543,745 people, including 91,314 new participants since 31 August 2020.

12,447 new calls were received on the number # 1510 since 31 August 2020 for a total of 640,504 calls since the beginning of the activation of intervention global strategy till date.

Breakdown of latest figures of people reached by the RCCE by region from the beginning of the activation of IGS till date

Time period	Center	Littoral	East	Far North	Adamawa	North	West	South	North-West	South-West
As of 15 September	4,261,382	3,492,342	2,111,201	2,183,361	1,428,992	1,350,103	1,010,088	2,011,887	1,046,938	647,451
From 15 to 30 August	4,059,851	3,491,478	2,085,861	2,043,798	1,414,025	1,325,309	1,010,088	2,003,805	802,445	627,829

Needs:

- Given the poor compliance with protection measures by the population and the proliferation of rumors across the country, the Ministry of Health needs to elaborate regional response plans.

Response:

- The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in West and Central Africa has produced a report on community feedback and rumour tracking (from 10 to 23 August 2020) that has been disseminated through the Cameroonian Red Cross's Facebook and Twitter pages and RCCE partners.
- WHO, Plan International, Alima, UNICEF and UNFPA are collaborating to produce contextualized new messages and communication materials for the regional response micro-plans to be elaborated by the Ministry of Health.
- Advocacy sessions are ongoing with religious leaders and traditional healers in the West, East, South, Adamaoua, Littoral, North-West and South-West regions to lead their communities to the new mobile screening strategy of the MINSANTE with the support of UNICEF.
- Since April 2020, 180 panels bearing the key messages of COVID-19 prevention have already been produced and installed by UNHCR in refugee and displaced persons reception sites. 15,741 people have been reached through door-to-door visits and community sessions in the departments of Kadey and Boumba and Ngoko (East region).
- MINSANTE PHEOC with the support of the EU, WHO and the International Rescue Committee are currently administering RCCE 5 Steps training sessions for 110 new volunteers in the Far North region.

Gaps & Constraints:

- There is a common belief among the population that in the long run, the face mask will cause lung disease to people.
- Communities comply less with sanitary measures. They believe handwashing is a thing of the past.

POINTS OF ENTRY (POE); OPERATIONAL SUPPORT AND LOGISTICS

Globally, 1,295 people out of 4,382 passengers from air and land transport means were screened with RDT at points of entry by health sector partners between 27 August and 2 September 2020, with a total 6 positive cases.

Needs:

- The existing list of 66 identified entry points needs to be updated.
- A specialist in the storage and maintenance of medical equipment is required for health personnel in the Centre, East, Far-North, Littoral, South West and West regions who benefitted from the Swedish government's donation of 36 mobile tents.

Response:

- The Ministry of Health, in collaboration with IOM is conducting voluntary massive screenings in health facilities in Garoua Boulai, Nkenzou and Ngueli points of entry (East region). So far, six cases have been recorded. Their contamination happened in the Central African Republic.
- IOM held a coordination meeting in collaboration with the Deutsche Gesellschaft (GIZ) and some 20 local POE partners to present the results of a participatory mapping exercise in the West region. The objective is to understand the issues that could arise with recent displacement in the North and Far North regions, identifying points of mobility for data collection. Globally, it is intended to develop a contingency plan for the potential reopening of land and air borders based on migration trends to better plan health and prevention measures at entry points.
- The WFP proceeded with the distribution and installation of the 36 tents donated by the Swedish government which were deployed in the Centre, East, Far-North, Littoral, South West and West regions.

Gaps & Constraints:

- The financial constraints prevent IOM to conduct screening and sensitization activities with partners.
- The Regional Delegation of Public Health for the Far-North region is out of stock regarding PPE and RDTs.
- Difficulties to install the medical tents due to floods, limited space or lack of expertise.

SOCIO ECONOMIC AND HUMANITARIAN SUPPORT

COVID-19 has significantly impacted Cameroon's economy and businesses, especially in the regions hard-hit by humanitarian crises like the North West, the South West, the Far North and the East regions. Trained health personnel are currently supporting the psychological first aid response in seven regions (Center, Adamaoua, Far North, East, West, North West, South).

UNAIDS, with the support of WFP, launched a cash transfer program in partnership with Community Based Organizations in the country to support people living with HIV whose vulnerability has been exacerbated by the socio-economic impact of COVID-19. Nearly 1,000 people will benefit from 76,000 CFA Francs once every month.

The Secretary General launched a COVID-19 socio-economic trust funds for which UN agencies in Cameroon submitted 3 concept notes which were not selected for the development of the full proposal. Only 17 concept notes among 104 from other countries were recommended. The concept notes not selected will be kept in a database to be presented to other donors.

Needs:

- Reinforce awareness in households that the pandemic is not over yet.
- Gender-based violence survivors need livelihoods support and income-generating activities.

Response:

Coordination

- Technical and financial partners of the Regional Delegation of Public Health-Adamaoua, held a consultation meeting chaired by the Governor of the Adamaoua on the 27 August 2020 to present their COVID-19 activities and perspectives.

Health

- In the South West region, WHO trained 15 social workers and protection monitors in collaboration with INTERSOS on mental health in humanitarian context. Two IDPs from the North West region based in Kumba with INTERSOS were evaluated. A group of 30 women in Kosala Kumba were sensitized on mental health and illness during a mental health talk.
- In the North West region, the WHO Primary Health Care (PHC) mobile clinics carried out community sensitization in Momo, Ngo Ketunjia, Manyu, and Kupe Manenguba. In total, around 1,349 persons were sensitized on COVID-19 signs and symptoms and preventive measures against the disease.

Protection

- Hope for a Better Future in partnership with UNDP and Global Aid for Africa are strengthening the capacities of over 100 women on COVID-19 and Gender-based violence in Donga Mantung (North West Region). This project which covers Nkambe, Ndu, Misaje, Nwa, and Ako. In addition to the training, five women were provided with resources to start up their own micro-business.
- UNHCR is in discussion with the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) in the East region, on a project carried out by the DRC to financially assist COVID-19 affected people in the Mbere division. The project targets both refugees and the host community. It strives at mitigating the impact of COVID-19 by allocating 44,000 CFA Francs to families whose heads of household are in isolation or under quarantine and cannot fend for them as a result.

Education

Ahead of the Back to School campaign, UNICEF will implement a strategy in support to the Government, especially in the North West and the South West regions, which intends to equip the country's functional schools with hand-washing stations and washing kits.

Gaps and constraints:

- Slackening of compliance with barrier measures.

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For more information, please visit <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/cameroon/covid-19>