

# DREF Bulletin Update



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies  
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge  
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja  
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

## ***CAMEROON: POPULATION MOVEMENT IN CENTRAL AFRICA***

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Update no. 1  
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*The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 185 countries.*

### **In Brief**

**Period covered by this update: 26 April to 26 June, 2006.**

**History of this Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF)-funded operation:**

- CHF 35,000 was allocated from the Federations DREF on 24 April 2006 to respond to the needs of this operation
- This operation was expected to be implemented for 2 months, and be completed by 26 June 2006; however, this update extends the operation's time frame for one month (until 26 July) in order to focus on local committees located along the border of Cameroon and the Central African Republic (CAR); given the enclosed nature of those committees and the persistent insecurity in CAR.

This operation is aligned with the International Federation's 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 of humanity".

**Global Agenda Goals:**

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

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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.

*For longer-term programmes in this or other countries or regions, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for national society profiles, please also access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>*

## **Background and current situation**

Since 2005, political situation and security issues have been of great concern in Chad and Central African Republic (CAR). The dissolution of the presidential guard in Chad by the President has caused unrest and rebellion in the country. There was fear that the socio-political situation was going to deteriorate, leading to armed conflicts and consequently, massive population displacements. However, the presidential elections in Chad went on in a rather calm atmosphere some Chadians who had run into Cameroon have now returned home. Unfortunately, the situation in CAR is becoming more and more alarming. A significant number of people, especially the Fulani who live in the North and North West of CAR, are regularly running into Cameroon. Evaluations made on the field have revealed that about 10,000 people (women, children, single persons and families) have found refuge in localities of Cameroon along the border with CAR.

## **Red Cross and Red Crescent action**



With the Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF), the Federation was to support training while the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was to provide basic equipment for the trained brigades. The Federation's Central Africa sub-regional office (CASRO) took measures to get Cameroon Red Cross Society (CRCS) volunteers and first aid workers ready to manage population movements. In collaboration with ICRC delegation for Central Africa, CASRO supported the national society in implementing the following activities:

*Photo left: Red Cross volunteers training refugees who arrived in Garoua-Boulai, Cameroon on 25 June 2006.*

### **Evaluation and identification of risky zones**

Based on the evaluation and assessment done by CRCS volunteers, the following localities were identified as likely to have population displacements:

- Along the borders of Cameroon and Chad: Kousseri (Logone and Chari Division); Maroua (Diamaré Division); Kaélé (Mayo-Kani Division); Mora (Mayo Sava Division); Yagoua (Mayo Danay Division); Mokolo (Mayo Tsanaga Division).
- Along the borders of Cameroon and CAR: Garoua-Boulai and Bertoua (Lom and Djerem Division); Yokadouma and Gari Gombo (Boumba and Ngoko Division); Kentzou and Batouri (Kadey Division); Meingaga (Mbéré Division, Adamaoua Province); Toubouro (Mayo Rey Division, North Province).

### **Sensitization, selection and training of volunteers**

Leaders, volunteers and first aid workers of the above-mentioned committees have been sensitized and sent out to conduct sensitization activities in their respective administrative and traditional authorities.

In May 2006, 25 volunteers from local and divisional committees of the CRCS in the Far North and East provinces of Cameroon were trained on population movement management. During the training, presentations and practical exercises were carried out to prepare the trainees to go to the field. The Kousseri focal point of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) facilitated the training, while coordination was assured with the UNHCR representative in Yaoundé. The training was extended to the East Province of Cameroon in June 2006 for 15 Red Cross volunteers and first aid workers of local committees located along the borders of CAR. The various points through which refugees could enter Cameroon have been identified and focal points have been appointed to follow up the situation on a daily basis, in collaboration with the UNHCR.

The situation along the borders of Cameroon and Chad is presently calm. However, measures have been taken to ensure rapid intervention when needed. CAR refugees, mostly nomads, continue to enter Cameroon in large numbers and on a daily basis. On their arrival, they are welcomed and identified by Red Cross volunteers as well

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as local and administrative authorities. Some of them occupy the spaces they have been provided, whereas others simply vanish in the bush, thereby making their management very complicated.

**Impact**

The above-mentioned activities have so far contributed to building the operational capacities of the CRCS at local branches level along the borders, and to strengthening the visibility of the NS before the population as well as the administrative and local authorities.

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