

CAMEROON

Displacement in Northwest and Southwest

On 7 October, presidential elections in Cameroon were accompanied by electoral related violence in the anglophone regions of Northwest and Southwest. The new violence is likely to have displaced more people, which would add to the estimated number of 246,000 that were displaced as of August 2018 since the beginning of the crisis in 2017. The newly displaced are likely to be in need of food, shelter, health and wash assistance.

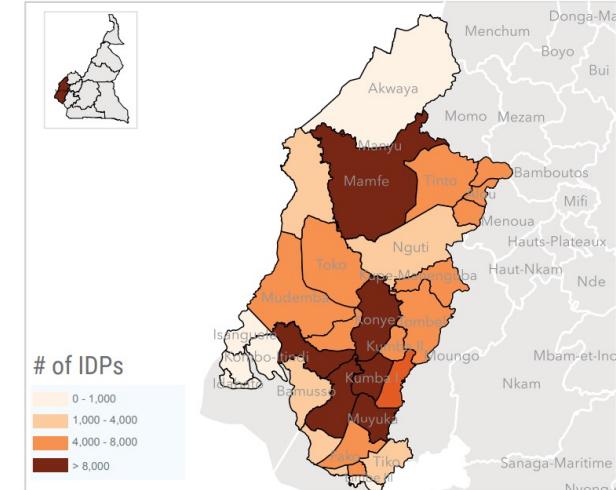
NEED FOR INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE



IMPACT



Displacement estimates in Southwest region.



Source: OCHA 16/08/2018

Anticipated scope and scale

Armed groups' activities have caused **displacement** in **Northwest** and **Southwest** regions. The slow onset of the crisis left doubt around the recent caseload, but based on estimations it is likely that there are now more than the already **246,000 displaced** in the two regions. The recent violence could exacerbate the vulnerable **food security, shelter** and **health** situation.

Key priorities



246,000+
estimated displaced



IDPs
in IPC 2 Stressed / IPC 3 Crisis



IDPs
living in the bush



Basic services
lack of access

Humanitarian constraints



Unpredictable security situation makes humanitarian access difficult. In addition, recent armed groups' activities left some roads and bridges blocked.

Limitations

Data on recent displacement not available. All the reported data comes from a variety of sources that utilise projected population estimations.

Crisis impact

In Cameroon people began fleeing from the Southwest and Northwest regions in fear of violence weeks before the presidential elections that were scheduled for 7 October 2018. Maurice Kamto declared victory against the former president, 85 year old Paul Biya, who was running for the seventh mandate after 36 years in power, even though results are supposed to be available only after 15 days according to Electoral Code obligations (RFI 08/10/2018). Generally, elections were held peacefully countrywide, with the exemption of the two anglophone regions where there was violence and a high level of abstention. Shootings were reported mainly in Northwest region, and also in Southwest. Violence has constrained the elections, dissuading people from participating. Authorities also decided to reduce the number of voting stations (RFI 08/10/2018).

The October violence was preceded by an unprecedented mass population movement in Northwest and Southwest anglophone regions of Cameroon, where armed groups were campaigning against holding elections by multiplying the attacks against the government forces. The crisis escalated in October 2017, with population displacement in the neighbouring regions of Cameroon, within Northwest and Southwest regions, and into neighbouring Nigeria's Cross River State (IFRC 02/10/2018). As of May 2018 there were 160,000 IDPs registered in the two regions. (OCHA 05/2018). The government of Cameroon released a later report estimating the number of IDPs in the provinces: respectively 66,262 in the Southwest Region and 8,732 in the Northwest Region (IFRC 02/10/2018; Government Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Plan 2018). In August 2018, OCHA estimated that approximately 246,000 people are displaced in Southwest Region (OCHA 16/08/2018).

As of 17 October, those numbers are likely to be higher due to the recent unrest in the Northwest region in particular, exacerbating the vulnerability of the IDPs and their host communities and hampering their access to basic services.

Food: Food is one of the most crucial needs, according to the latest IFRC assessment (IFRC 02/10/2018; Government Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Plan 2018). Violence in Northwest and Southwest regions has negatively affected agricultural production. As of September, poor households and IDP communities in the regions are facing Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food security outcomes. Predictions show that the area could reach Crisis (IPC Phase 3) food security outcomes by February 2019 (FEWS NET 09/2018). Displacement and violence are likely to have disrupted the livelihood activities of those affected (OCHA 05/2018).

Shelter and NFIs: Blankets, mosquito nets, mattresses and cooking utensils are reported as needs by the one assessment of IDPs conducted before the recent elections (IFRC 02/10/2018). Most crisis-affected people are living in the bush and left everything behind when they fled, therefore shelter and NFIs are crucial needs (OCHA 05/2018).

Health: Access to basic health services is one of the main concerns for the displaced, along with the exposure to significant risk of water-borne diseases. A spike in the violence put the available health centres under pressure due to the increased number of injured people and those suffering from trauma (IFRC 02/10/2018; OCHA 05/2018).

WASH: Displaced people are likely to have limited access to essential services, including clean drinking water and basic sanitation services, aggravated by a disrupted water supply system due to poor maintenance (OCHA 05/2018). Armed groups' activities in the Northwest and Southwest regions have caused the disruption of the waste disposal services. Waste is reported to be stockpiled around the city of Bamenda, capital of Northwest region. The disruption of waste management services can exacerbate the risk of diseases, especially for those who are displaced (Bamenda Online 14/10/2018).

Protection: Since the beginning of the crisis in 2017, the population has been subject to violence and abuse (Government Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Plan 2018). It is likely that with the increase of violent activities, the protection concerns of the new IDPs would be aggravated.

Vulnerable groups affected

Women: As of August 2018, 68% of the displaced were women (OCHA 16/08/2018). A displacement context tends to aggravate the risk of gender based violence, exposing women to gender-based violence, exploitation and abuse, and risk of early pregnancies (OCHA 05/2018).

Children: The crisis has had a significant impact on children's right to education, with an estimated 42,500 school-aged children having limited access to education services in the past two years. Armed groups in the area have targeted schools in the past. Disruption in education services exacerbate the vulnerability of children, who are at risk of exploitation, child labour, early marriages and unwanted pregnancy (OCHA 05/2018).

Humanitarian and operational constraints

Humanitarian access is generally difficult in the regions, due to the unpredictable security situation, poor road conditions, travel restrictions, and checkpoints (Jeune Afrique 17/02/2018; OCHA 05/2018). The recent armed activities reported in the Northwest region by armed groups have caused the disruption of traffic. Some bridges have been broken down in the region in Akum and Ngoketunjia, disrupting traffic. Some roads are blocked by armed groups in the area (Bamenda Online 14/10/2018).

Aggravating factors

The spillover from the conflict in CAR has negatively impacted eastern Cameroon, as the Cameroonian government increasingly struggles to meet the needs of both refugees

and host populations. In addition, military actions continue against Boko Haram in the Far North region of Cameroon, maintaining a climate of insecurity. Multiple severe humanitarian crises in the country are likely to complicate response plans (CICAM 03/07/2018).

Contextual information

Drivers of the conflict

Almost 20% of the population (five million) of Cameroon are anglophone and reside in the two English-speaking regions of Southwest and Northwest. The anglophone and francophone parts of Cameroon became unified in 1961, and the anglophone minority has been marginalised ever since, both in public institutions and state positions (Responsibility to Protect 15/09/2018, ACLED 22/07/2018, Gov. of Cameroon 2010). Although the 1972 constitution gave equal status to both the French and English languages, sentiment grew within the anglophone population that the francophone population was better represented politically, economically, and socially.

This fueled claims for self-determination within the anglophone population (ICG 02/08/2017). Tensions escalated in October 2016, when anglophone lawyers and teachers began to protest at the increased use of the French language in courts and schools. The crisis deepened when the Cameroonian authorities violently repressed public demonstrations in November and December 2016, leading to further discontent (Centre for the Responsibility to Protect 15/09/2018, CICAM 03/07/2018). On 1 October 2017, the Southern Cameroons Ambazonia Governing Council (a secessionist group) symbolically declared the independence of the state of 'Ambazonia' (The Guardian 18/09/2018, The Centre for the Responsibility to Protect 15/09/2018).

Following the events of late 2016, the anglophone regions in Cameroon have faced an insurrection that has intensified over time. Civilians have increasingly been targeted, fueling large-scale displacement. (Amnesty International 18/09/2018) By the beginning of 2018, the anglophone crisis had become the overriding security threat and political concern in Cameroon. The 7 October presidential election led to further violence due to the candidature of President Paul Biya, in power since 1982 (and the longest-serving non-royal ruler in Africa), running for a seventh term (Centre for the Responsibility to Protect 15/09/2018, ICG 31/01/2018).

Displacement to Nigeria

As of 11 October, 26,000 refugees from the anglophone region of Cameroon are registered in Nigeria, specifically in Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Benue and Taraba states (UNHCR 11/10/2018).

Key characteristics

Demographic profile: 24,053,000 countrywide population (WORLD BANK 2018)

Health statistics: under-5 mortality rate 79.7/1,000 (UNICEF 2017)

WASH statistics: population using basic sanitation services 46%; population using limited sanitation services 15%; population using unimproved sanitation services 33%; population practicing open defecation 6% (UNICEF 2017)

Literacy levels: literacy rate (15-24 years) 80% (UNICEF 2017)

Response capacity

As of May 2018 limited international humanitarian response was planned to be scaled up in the affected regions. The Humanitarian Response Plan for Northwest and Southwest regions included UN agencies and INGOs active in the different clusters: education, food security, health, protection, shelter and NFIs, WASH (OCHA 05/2018). The Cameroon Red Cross is active in the regions, with the active support of IFRC. The government of Cameroon, through its Ministry of Territorial Administration and the Department of Civil Protection, developed an emergency assistance action plan some months ago (IFRC 02/10/2018).

Information gaps and needs

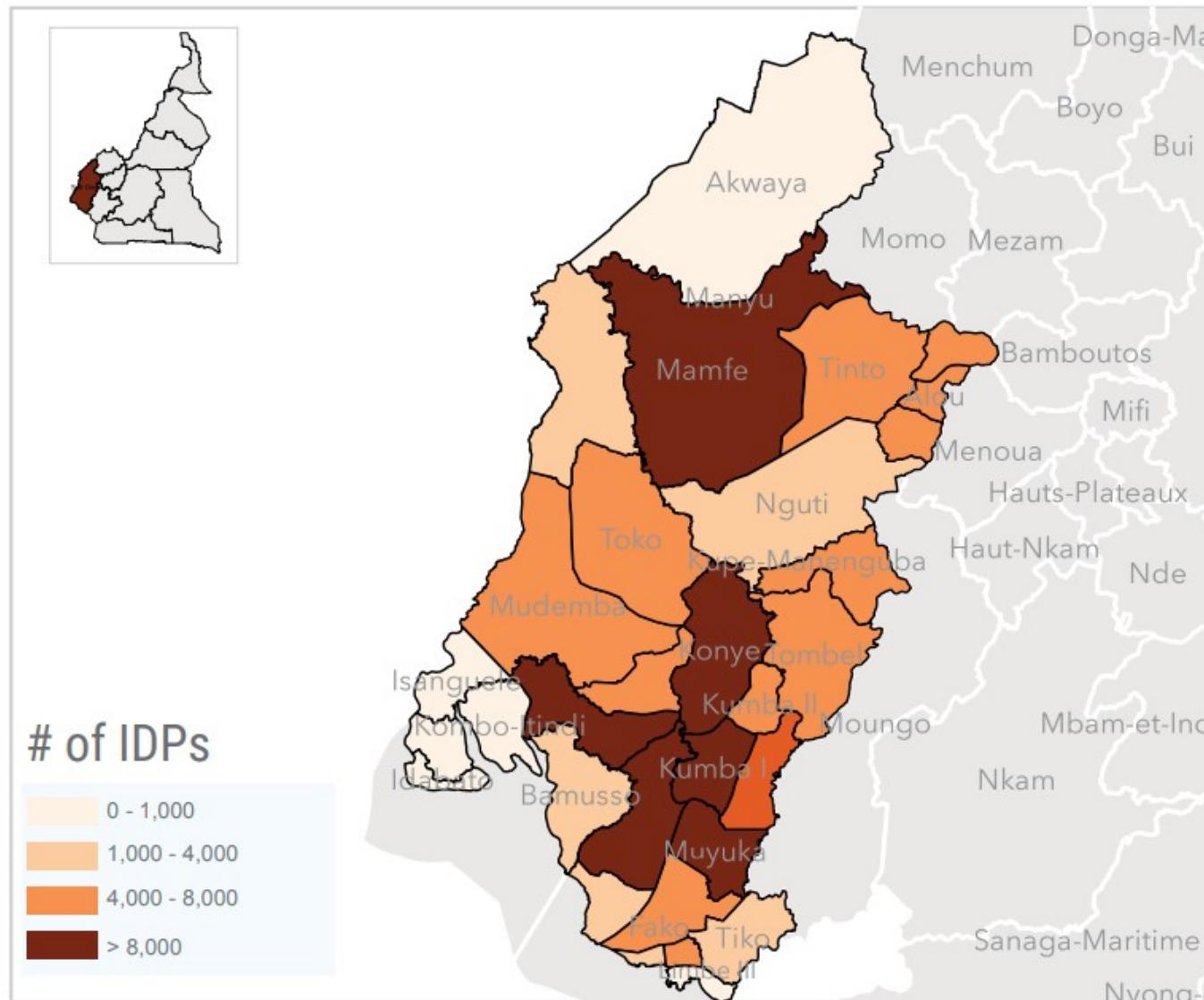
Current displacement figures are not available. Displacement data was collected before the current deterioration of the security situation.

Displacement estimations from different agencies

Geographical Location	OCHA displacement estimation 05/2018	Government estimation (after May)	OCHA estimation 08/2018
Northwest	Boyo: 3,000 Momo: 3,000 Ngok-Etunjia: 4,000 Total: 10,000	Boyo: 1,767 Njinikom: 841 Fundong, Bum: 1,314 Momo: 1,200 Mbengwi: 300 Ngie: 900 Njikwa: 1,500 Widikum: 900 Total: 8,732	n/a
Southwest	Meme: 135,000 Manyu: 15,000 Total: 150,000	Fako: 3,000 Kupe Maennguba: 14,281 Lebialem: 9,000 Manyu: 5,264 Meme: 28,867 Ndian: 5,850 Total: 66,262	Total: 246,000

Sources: OCHA 16/08/2018; OCHA 05/2018; Government Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Plan 2018.

Displacement estimated in Southwest region



Source: OCHA 16/08/2018