

Humanitarian crisis due to climate and security challenges in the Far North Cameroon: how the international assistance is organised?

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Abstract

Humanitarian needs in Cameroon have been growing steadily over the years due to the multiple crises the country has been going through. This study analyses the international assistance provided to the populations of Far North Cameroon who are facing security and climate challenges. The study was implemented through the analysis of pertinent documentation (articles, newspapers, books and reports) related to the issue. Our analysis shows that, the humanitarian needs are critical in the Far North of Cameroon. Indeed, about 33% of households are food insecure, including 3% in a situation of severe food insecurity, 6% of children are affected by Global Acute Malnutrition. Following this situation, only 26% of the requirement was funded in 2020, making Cameroon the world's most neglected displacement crises by the international community. These funds were received from both foreign countries and private donors from all the continents. The international humanitarian assistance is coordinated by OCHA in collaboration with Cameroon governmental partners, implementing and operational partners and United Nations agencies.

Keywords: Humanitarian assistance, Crisis, Climate change, Far North Cameroon, International cooperation

1. Introduction

According to the Humanitarian Needs Overview report issued in June 2020 of the United Nations, about 6.2 million people in Cameroon need humanitarian assistance (OCHA 2020d). This ranks Cameroon among the countries most in need of humanitarian assistance worldwide, according to the Global Humanitarian Overview 2020 report of United Nations (OCHA 2019). The assistance need is due to the fact that Cameroon continued to be affected by four concurrent and complex humanitarian crises: the armed conflict in the Far North region coupled with climate challenges; violence in the North West (NW) and South West (SW) regions related to the Anglophone crisis; consequences of the influx of refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR) into the eastern regions (Adamawa, North and East); and since early March 2020 the COVID-19 outbreak. (OCHA, 2020b; UNICEF, 2020).

In November 2017, tensions in the North West and South West regions turned into violence with dramatic humanitarian consequences (Agwanda et al., 2020; Ekah, 2019; Mehler, 2014; Nganji and Cockburn, 2020). Almost 680,000 Cameroonians are internally displaced in addition to the 58,000 people who have sought refuge in neighbouring Nigeria (UNHCR 2020d). 80% of health and education services in the two regions were non-functioning even before the COVID-19 outbreak (Achu 2019). Internal Displaced Persons (IDPs) and host communities, particularly in rural areas, need immediate protection, food, shelter/NFI, water and sanitation assistance (OCHA 2020d).

To the east, Cameroon continues to provide refuge to over 272,000 vulnerable refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR) (UNHCR 2020a). Access to livelihoods, food, WASH, health services and education remains limited (OCHA 2020d). In accordance to a tripartite agreement between CAR, Cameroon and UNHCR, prospects for large-scale return, some hundreds of CAR citizens are gradually returning to their country. According to Fisayo-Bambi (2020) from Africa News, the first wave of volunteer Central African refugees from the Gado-Badzere camp in Cameroon crossed the border early December 2020 to return to their country, taking advantage in particular of the gradual return to calm observed. The COVID-19 pandemic crisis occurred in Cameroon in March 2020 (Mbopi-Keou, Pondi, and Sosso 2020; Mviena et al. 2020). An additional 2.3 million people are estimated to be in need of humanitarian assistance due to the impact of COVID-19, bring the total number of people in need from 3.9 million prior to the COVID-19 outbreak to 6.2 million (OCHA 2020d).

This paper will focus on the Far North crisis where the Boko Haram insurgency, compounded by chronic vulnerability, food insecurity and the growing impact of climate change, has left 1.2 million people in need of urgent assistance (OCHA 2020d). According to Heungoup (2016) from Crisis Group, Cameroon is the second most-affected country by the Boko Haram violence in the Lake Chad Basin. About

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527,000 persons are displaced and face significant protection risks (UNHCR 2020b). Local communities, whose pre-existing vulnerabilities have been exacerbated by these arrivals, the escalating violence and the disruption of livelihoods and basic social services, are also in need of support.

Demographic pressure and the displacement of people fleeing the war with Boko Haram together with climate change challenges (inundation, soil erosion), weigh heavily on the region, especially at this time of the rainy season when granaries are empty, and roads and infrastructure hit by floods. According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 33.7% of the population of Cameroon's Far North will be food insecure in 2018 and 38% were living below the poverty line. This situation generates a large number of IDPs, whose numbers vary according to the month and the security or climatic conditions. For the period between March and April 2019, there were officially 423,835 IDPs in the region: 94% had fled the Boko Haram conflict, 5.9% the climatic conditions, 0.1% intercommunal conflicts.

Literature on humanitarian crisis in Cameroon revealed a decline humanitarian funding volumes in the country over the period 2016 to 2020 (Kamdem, 2020). Thus confirming the hypothesis of a correlation between the funding of humanitarian needs and the deterioration of the security situation in the country. Tedjou Nzokou (2020) noticed that humanitarian emergency actions tend to come closer and closer to what could be considered as actions in support of economic development in the affected areas in Cameroon. However, the specificity of Far North Cameroon that is facing humanitarian crisis since a decade due to climate and security issues remain poorly known.

The aim of this study is to analyse the international assistance provided in 2020 to the populations of Far North Cameroon who are facing security and climate challenges. Specifically, the study will 1) assess the humanitarian needs in the Far North Cameroon, 2) evaluate the financial assistance received as for 2020, 3) analyse the source of funding and 4) characterise the coordination of international assistance in the Far North Cameroon.

2 Theoretical frameworks

2.1 Causes of humanitarian crises

A humanitarian crisis is understood as a situation in which there is a widespread threat to human life, safety, health and well-being (Klugman 1999). Each humanitarian crisis is caused by exceptional factors that are specific to the affected region. While conflicts, epidemics and natural disasters have been main drivers behind the surge of most humanitarian crises the causes of these crises are usually more sophisticated and complex than they appear (SESRIC 2017). Different causes of humanitarian crisis are not independent from each other, but on the contrary are intertwined and in many cases the lines between the reasons and the impacts of

humanitarian crises are obscure. Fragility, poverty, conflict, governance, economic decline, displacement, natural disasters and human rights violations are all among the causes as well as the consequences of humanitarian crises (Al Chukwuma and Iortyer 2014; Stewart 1999). Combined threats of instability, conflict and violence, often coupled with and accelerated by other factors, including natural disasters and climate change pose significant humanitarian and development challenges.

The United States Institute of Peace reported six main causes, principally structural and operational in nature, of the humanitarian crisis, which first began to manifest itself in the former Yugoslavia (early 1990s), Kosovo (1999), Afghanistan (2001), and Iraq (2003) (Jessen-Petersen 2011). These causes include 1) the changing nature of conflict that became mostly internal, often a struggle over identity and frequently targeted against the civilian population, where humanitarian workers and organizations are often thrown into the middle of these conflicts with a constant risk of being perceived as taking sides; 2) the militarization of international action, which is aggravated by the fact that key military forces often come from the countries that are also donors to the humanitarian organizations. Jessen-Petersen (2011) suggested that organizations must insist on acting in a humanitarian operation with military support rather than in a military operation with humanitarian support; 3) a new operational focus; 4) the proliferation of humanitarian actors; 5) the lack of coordination; and, 6) the lack of diversity within humanitarian organizations. Jessen-Petersen (2011) suggested a more visible and active presence of national and local organizations from the South would go a long way in dispelling the perceptions that humanitarians are part of a Northern and Western agenda.

Regarding diseases, there have been many major epidemics in the recent past. This includes Ebola, Zika, Dengue, Chikungunya, acute flaccid myelitis, and H1N1 influenza to name a few (Guan, Zheng, and He 2003; Nassar et al. 2018). Although the current COVID-19 pandemic is affecting a relatively small proportion of the global population, its effects have already reached everyone. The pandemic has the potential to differentially disadvantage chronically ill patients, including those with Parkinson's disease (PD). The first health care reaction has been to limit access to clinics and neurology wards to preserve fragile patients with PD from being infected. In some regions, the shortage of medical staff has also forced movement disorders neurologists to provide care for patients with COVID-19. Every epidemic is an opportunity because it helps to develop advanced therapies, which may serve as guidance in the current pandemic and for emergency situations that we may face in the future (Fasano et al. 2020).

In some case, the political instability can lead to healthcare humanitarian crisis. It is the case of Venezuela that has faced a severe economic crisis precipitated by political instability and declining oil revenue. Public health provision has suffered particularly (Burki 2015; Hotez et al. 2017). Llewellyn (2018) assessed the impact of

Venezuela's healthcare crisis on vector-borne diseases and the spill over to neighbouring countries. Between 2000-2015 Venezuela witnessed a 365% increase malaria cases followed by a 68% increase (319,765 cases) in late 2017. The re-emergence of many vector-borne diseases represents a public health crisis in Venezuela and has the possibility of severely undermining regional disease elimination efforts. As for any humanitarian crisis, the national, regional and global authorities must take action to address these worsening epidemics and prevent their expansion beyond Venezuelan borders.

Concerning climate change, , the fifth report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 2014 focused on assessing the socio-economic aspects of climate change and the consequences for sustainable development, regional aspects, risk management and the establishment of an intervention framework based on adaptation and integration measures: increase in the rate of undernourishment in Africa, increase in the causes of vulnerability for poor populations, resurgence of climate-related "natural" disasters, etc. Climate change today threatens the vital rights of the most vulnerable populations: access to water, food, health and economy. It thus accentuates inequalities (Castanier 2019). According to Peters et al. (2019), it is truly alarming since 120 million more people could fall into poverty in the next ten years if nothing is done about climate change and the number of natural disasters has doubled in the last 20 years, partly due to the impacts of climate change. Furthermore, some slower changes, such as variability in rainfall and temperature lead to lower agricultural yields (2% per decade on average this century) even as global demand increases (14% per decade until 2050).

Agrawala et al. (2001) reported a humanitarian crisis that affected 60 million people in Central and Southwest Asia due to a persistent multi-year drought in the area. It was the largest region of persistent drought over the past three years anywhere in the world. The report discusses underlying climate-related mechanisms that might explain the causes for the persistent drought, and presents seasonal climate forecasts and their implications for the region. Significant shortfalls in precipitation have led to widespread social and economic impacts, particularly in Iran, Afghanistan, Western Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Agriculture, animal husbandry, water resources, and public health have been particularly stressed throughout the region. This shows how severe the environment related humanitarian crisis can be.

The mission of humanitarian organisations is therefore to fight against extreme poverty by helping to limit the impacts of climate change and helping people adapt to climate change. Then, Humanitarian, environmental and development NGOs must work together to address this issue. Ryfman (2007) said that like other aid agencies before them, NGOs now get questioned about their working methods, their management, structural expenses, labour costs and so on.

2.2 Definition and objectives of humanitarian action

According to Pringlem and Huntm (2015), humanitarian action is the active provision of aid designed to save lives, alleviate suffering, restore and promote human dignity in the wake of disasters and during large-scale emergencies. Humanitarian action includes the protection of civilians and those no longer taking part in hostilities, and the provision of food, water and sanitation, shelter, health services and other items of assistance, undertaken for the benefit of affected people and to facilitate the return to normal lives and livelihoods.

The objectives of humanitarian action are to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity during and in the aftermath of man-made crises and natural disasters, as well as to prevent and strengthen preparedness for the occurrence of such situations (Oloruntoba and Gray 2006).

Humanitarian action should be guided by the humanitarian principles of humanity, meaning the centrality of saving human lives and alleviating suffering wherever it is found; impartiality, meaning the implementation of actions solely on the basis of need, without discrimination between or within affected populations; neutrality, meaning that humanitarian action must not favour any side in an armed conflict or other dispute where such action is carried out; and independence, meaning the autonomy of humanitarian objectives from the political, economic, military or other objectives that any actor may hold with regard to areas where humanitarian action is being implemented.

According to Olsen, Carstensen, and Høyen (2003), the volume of emergency assistance any humanitarian crisis attracts is determined by three main factors working either in conjunction or individually. These are the intensity of media coverage, the degree of political interest, particularly related to security, that donor governments have in a particular region. Third, the volume of emergency aid depends on strength of humanitarian NGOs and international organisations present in a specific country experiencing a humanitarian emergency. The empirical analysis of a number of emergency situations shows that only occasionally do the media play a decisive role in influencing donors (Robinson 2002; Shaw 1996). Rather, the security interests of Western donors are important together with the presence and strength of humanitarian stakeholders, such as NGOs and international organisations lobbying donor governments.

2.3 General principles of humanitarian aid

Humanitarian action is founded on the principle of humanity that all human beings are entitled to be treated humanely and to receive lifesaving assistance simply by virtue of being human and on the humanitarian imperative that people have a right to receive humanitarian assistance and humanitarian actors have a right to provide assistance wherever it is needed (Pringlem and Huntm 2015). Rysaback-Smith (2015) highlighted seven principles for humanitarian action which include:

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1. Respect and promote the implementation of international humanitarian law, refugee law and human rights.
2. Strive to ensure flexible and timely funding, on the basis of the collective obligation of striving to meet humanitarian needs, while reaffirming the primary responsibility of states for the victims of humanitarian emergencies within their own borders.
3. Allocate humanitarian funding in proportion to needs and on the basis of needs assessments.
4. Request implementing humanitarian organisations to ensure, to the greatest possible extent, adequate involvement of beneficiaries in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of humanitarian response.
5. Strengthen the capacity of affected countries and local communities to prevent, prepare for, mitigate and respond to humanitarian crises, with the goal of ensuring that governments and local communities are better able to meet their responsibilities and co-ordinate effectively with humanitarian partners.
6. Provide humanitarian assistance in ways that are supportive of recovery and long-term development, striving to ensure support, where appropriate, to the maintenance and return of sustainable livelihoods and transitions from humanitarian relief to recovery and development activities.
7. Support and promote the central and unique role of the United Nations in providing leadership and co-ordination of international humanitarian action, the special role of the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the vital role of the United Nations, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and non-governmental organisations in implementing humanitarian action.

Humanitarian action observes three additional guiding principles: neutrality, impartiality, and independence (Pringle and Hunt, 2015). Neutrality refers to abstaining from engaging in military operations or taking sides in hostilities or controversies of a political, religious, or ideological nature. Impartiality means providing assistance based on need alone and without discrimination, with priority given to the most urgent cases of distress. The principle of independence stipulates that humanitarian organizations should not have links to parties in the conflict nor have a stake in its outcome. Principled humanitarian action thus serves the interests of beneficiaries rather than political, religious, or other agendas. It is not to serve as cover for military operations, religious proselytization, or commercial enterprise, nor is it to be manipulated by economic or geopolitical strategic interests. Terms and conditions of humanitarian action guided by these principles are enshrined in the Geneva Conventions and protected under international humanitarian law.

Seybolt (2009) demonstrated that humanitarian aid operations have saved the lives of millions of people, but they have sometime failed to help many people and can have unintended political consequences. A major reason for the deficit is poor coordination among organizations. In contrast to “lessons learned” studies that

dominate the literature on this topic, the article of Seybolt uses systemic network theory, drawn from business management literature. It presents the humanitarian aid community as a complex, open, adaptive system, in which interaction of structure and processes explain the quality of the response to environmental demands. Comparison of aid operations in Rwanda in 1994 and Afghanistan in 2001 probes the argument that the humanitarian system is becoming more effective by developing characteristics of a network through goal-directed behaviour of participating organizations. Other studies find that the development of network characteristics in the system when clusters of organizations learn to coordinate more closely, but the system is constrained by the workload of a crisis environment, lack of trust among organizations, and the political interests of donor governments (Hansch and Thompson 2002; Hirschfeld and Sharma 2001).

Hilhorst and Jansen (2015) presented the humanitarian space as an arena where a multitude of actors, including humanitarians and the disaster-affected recipients of aid, shape the everyday realities of humanitarian action. It is thus a socially negotiated arena and explored the way in which actors employ the idea of humanitarian space to further their projects and ambitions. By focusing on the everyday practices of aid, Hilhorst and Jansen (2015) show how humanitarian headquarters claims to political neutrality and the application of universal normative values are negotiated through the micro-physics of power in humanitarian arenas. With the cases of the Kakuma refugee camp and the Asian tsunami of 2004, they demonstrated the political aspect of humanitarian actions by showing how agencies can access the humanitarian arena and realize their programmes, and how certain people become eligible to receive aid and others do not. Furthermore, in the "The consequences of Chaos: Syria's humanitarian crisis and the failure of protect", Ferris and Kirisci (2016) demonstrate how after a decade of war in Syria the international community is still struggling to respond. This because of the absence of viable political solutions to the conflict, governments in the region and the broader international community are all struggling to respond to the humanitarian needs of Syrian refugees and internally displaced persons. This highlights the fact that the political aspect of humanitarian actions should not be neglected.

2.4 Good practices in donor financing, management and accountability

Rysaback-Smith (2015) summarised the good practices in humanitarian actions in terms of funding, promoting standards and enhancing implementation and learning and accountability.

In terms of funding, humanitarian action must:

- Strive to ensure that funding of humanitarian action in new crises does not adversely affect the meeting of needs in ongoing crises.
- Recognise the necessity of dynamic and flexible response to changing needs in humanitarian crises, strive to ensure predictability and flexibility in funding to

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United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and to other key humanitarian organisations.

- Explore the possibility of reducing, or enhancing the flexibility of, earmarking, and of introducing longer-term funding arrangements, while stressing the importance of transparent and strategic priority-setting and financial planning by implementing organisations.
- Contribute responsibly, and on the basis of burden-sharing, to United Nations Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals and to International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement appeals, and actively support the formulation of Common Humanitarian Action Plans (CHAP) as the primary instrument for strategic planning, prioritisation and co-ordination in complex emergencies.

In terms of promoting standards and enhancing implementation, humanitarian action shall:

- Request that implementing humanitarian organisations fully adhere to good practice and are committed to promoting accountability, efficiency and effectiveness in implementing humanitarian action.
- Promote the use of Inter-Agency Standing Committee guidelines and principles on humanitarian activities, the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the 1994 Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief.
- Maintain readiness to offer support to the implementation of humanitarian action, including the facilitation of safe humanitarian access.
- Support mechanisms for contingency planning by humanitarian organisations, including, as appropriate, allocation of funding, to strengthen capacities for response.
- Affirm the primary position of civilian organisations in implementing humanitarian action, particularly in areas affected by armed conflict. In situations where military capacity and assets are used to support the implementation of humanitarian action, ensure that such use is in conformity with international humanitarian law and humanitarian principles, and recognises the leading role of humanitarian organisations.
- Support the implementation of the 1994 Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets in Disaster Relief and the 2003 Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets to Support United Nations Humanitarian Activities in Complex Emergencies.

In terms of learning and accountability, humanitarian action should:

- Support learning and accountability initiatives for the effective and efficient implementation of humanitarian action.
- Encourage regular evaluations of international responses to humanitarian crises, including assessments of donor performance.

- Ensure a high degree of accuracy, timeliness, and transparency in donor reporting on official humanitarian assistance spending, and encourage the development of standardised formats for such reporting.

2.5 Context of humanitarian aid in Far North Cameroon

Cameroon has been officially at war with Boko Haram since May 2014 (International Crisis Group 2017). Despite a gradual lowering in the conflict's intensity, which peaked in 2014-2015, the continuing violence, combined with the sharp rise in the number of suicide attacks between May and August 2017, are reminders that the jihadist movement is by no means a spent force. Since May 2014, 2,000 civilians and soldiers have been killed, in addition to the more than 1,000 people kidnapped in the Far North region.

The districts of Mayo-Moskota, Mayo Tsanaga and Kolofata (Mayo Sava Division) are still the scene of daily attacks by non-state armed groups (NSAGs), against civilians. On 1 August 2020, a group of men and women launched a suicide attack in the locality of Nguetchewe. A double suicide attack perpetrated by young women resulted in the deaths of 21 people and injured 13 others among the 1,400 people internally displaced persons (IDPs) who had found refuge in the village for the past two years. A joint mission bringing together NGOs and United Nations agencies visited the site on 7 August 2020. The resident population and IDPs were in shock of the tragedy. Terrorized by the ever-present threat of a new attack, they spent the night hidden in the bush on the outskirts of the village. Following the Governor's visit of the Far North region on 3 August, a unit of gendarmes has been deployed to enhance security in the area, Nguetchewe, which prevented a further massive movement of population.

More than 70 incidents against civilians were attributed to NSAGs during the month of August 2020 in the three divisions: Mayo-Tsanaga, Mayo-Sava and Logone and Chari. The majority of these incidents occurred in villages without a defence system, military or civilian (Vigilance Committees) and whose access is made difficult for any vehicle, particularly the security forces, due to the state of the roads. As part of a tactical redeployment aimed at putting a brake on these continuous movements of people who desert isolated villages to take refuge in the more remote localities. The Rapid Intervention Battalion (BIR) dismantled two small outposts in the Kolofata district of Kordo and Gederou on 11 and 13 August to establish a more solid base in Gréa. These sudden withdrawals caused panic among the communities of the villages in these areas. By 12 August, 775 households (5,950 people) from Kordo arrived in Kolofata town. Three days later, 435 households (3,045 people) from Gederou and its surroundings moved to Gance in search of safety. According to the civil and military authorities, these movements of short distances (less than 10 kilometres) will also be of short duration with the improvement of the security situation from September 2020. Humanitarian needs assessments conducted by NGOs and UN

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agencies from 18 August onwards highlight urgent needs in terms of shelter, protection and basic necessities.

Further north in Logone and Chari, the number of incidents affecting the civilian population remained relatively low. The military authorities also report an increase in cases of surrender of armed group elements from the Nigeria, sometimes with entire families. These surrenders are provoked by two factors in particular: the pursuit of aerial bombing by the Nigerian army on the isolated bases of armed groups on the one hand, and the very difficult living conditions, without food supplies in the middle of the lean season on the other hand. The Islamic State in Africa (ISWAP) released footage of the execution in Nigeria on 22 July 2020 of three members of organisations humanitarians. On 13 August, the armed group also reiterated its threats against humanitarians on its An' Nabaa website in the region.

In addition to the war, issues related to climate change are contributing to increase humanitarian needs in the region. Indeed, the very high rainfall in the second half of July 2020 caused a lot of damage to the crops and on the roads in the Far North region of Cameroon. At the beginning of August, the Cameroonian Red Cross (CRC) has identified 813 families (5,553 people) severely affected by the floods in the division of Mayo. Kanay, upstream of the dyke - Maga dam. The intensification of the rains in August and the typology of the basins slopes in the region threaten in the short term to cause larger-scale flooding downstream of the river Logone, in the division of Logone and Chari, especially in the districts of Zina, Logone Birni, Wasa, Makary and Fotokol. The land access roads in these districts are already impassable, preventing the continuity of humanitarian assistance programmes. Members of the intersectoral coordination group in Maroua have launched a process to collect information on the impact of the floods. This information will make it possible to mobilise specific resources for a coordinated response to the needs of flood-affected households.

3. Discussion

3.1 Evaluation of needs and response per sector for humanitarian aid in the Far North Cameroon

3.1.1 Education sector

Under the aegis of the Regional Directorate of Basic Education (DREB), which chairs the group of sector coordination for education, the partners supporting the sector have given themselves the task of as an objective to limit the number of pupils to 50 per class in primary school. This ambitious objective aims first of all to strengthen compliance with measures to combat the spread of COVID-19, while at the same time improving the pedagogical conditions in each school. A system of rotation and staggered class hours should help to alleviate overcrowding in the classrooms throughout the region.

An ad-hoc agreement between the Cameroonian authorities and their Chadian counterparts has enabled students to Cameroonians from Kousseri to take their baccalaureate examination in N'Djamena (UNICEF, 2020). From 13 to 21 August more than 1,500 students Cameroonians residing in Kousseri were thus authorised to cross the border, which had been closed due to the pandemic of COVID-19, to take the exam in their high school in N'Djamena.

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) continues to develop its programmes to support primary education in the divisions of Mayo-Sava and Mayo-Tsanaga (OCHA 2020d). NRC provides assistance to foster equal access to education for the children of the most vulnerable families, particularly among internally displaced households in the two divisions. For example, NRC is providing support to primary schools in Nguetchewe (Mayo Tsanaga), which was violently hit by an attack by armed groups on 1 August, in the form of teaching materials, recreational kits and the revitalisation of school governance structures.

3.1.2 Food security sector

The level of food insecurity prevailing in the Far North region remains worrying (OCHA, 2020b). While households are going through the hunger gap (June-September) or food stocks are decreasing - in Mayo-Danay and Logone and Chari, 57% of households have exhausted their stocks - and market prices are rising sharply, the Project for the Strengthening of the National Monitoring and Early Warning System (PRESNAP) notes that 33% of households in the region are food insecure, including 3% in a situation of severe food insecurity. The divisions of Mayo-Danay, Mayo-Tsanaga and Logone and Chari are the most threatened by food insecurity. The impact of climate-related hazards, locust invasions and floods on the situation. The coming harvests (September - November). In the divisions of Mayo-Sava and Logone and Chari, the violence armed groups are causing population displacements, depriving many households of access to their fields, and therefore at their harvest.

Following the violent attack on host communities and IDPs in Nguetchewe on 1 August, the Programme (UNHCR 2020a). In August 2020, World Food Programme (WFP) distributed family food rations to 700 households. After the new waves of travel to the city of Kolofata in June and August 2020, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) conducted a food needs assessment of the more than 15,000 IDPs who have found refuge in the city. The ICRC plans to provide food aid to the most vulnerable displaced households and host families at the beginning of September 2020. On 30 July, the ICRC provided family food aid (50kg of rice and / 5l of oil) to 416 families (2,496 people) displaced in tilde in the division of Logone and Chari.

3.1.3 Health sector

As of 28 August, 324 positive cases of COVID-19 have been registered in the region since the beginning of the epidemic, resulting in nine deaths (OCHA 2020d). The number of cases is increasing significantly by report in July (152 cases as at 31 July). This is essentially the result of the multiplication of the number of tests carried out in the region from July onwards. At the end of August 2020, a total of 60,533 tests - mainly rapid TDR tests - had been carried out. The fear of coronavirus contamination is leading to a worrying decrease in the number of consultations in health facilities, primary or secondary, in the region. Maroua Regional Hospital saw a 40% drop in attendance between July (2,500 consultations) and August (1,500 consultations).

The measles epidemic is still active in 12 health districts (HDs) while suspect cases have been identified in 14 other HDs (out of a total of 31 HDs in the region). The Regional Public Health Delegation (DRSP) is leading the response in the 12 HDs affected.

Primary health care provision has severely deteriorated at the Kerawa Integrated Health Centre (IHC), which serves more than of 20,000 people in Kolofata (Mayo-Sava Division). Withdrawal due to lack of funding support from the International Medical Corps (IMC) at the end of the first quarter of 2020 has caused the break in the regular supplies of medicines and medical supplies and has ended the system of free care for IDPs. However, in August, IMC obtained a new grant that will allow the organisation to take over its activities in Kerawa from September 2020.

3.1.4 Nutrition sector

The malnutrition rate among children under five years of age in the Extreme-North is still a cause for concern (OCHA 2020a). Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) affects 6% of them, of which 2.4% are in a state of severe acute malnutrition (SAM). This represents a deterioration relative to June, when the MAS rate was 1.84%. This deterioration is linked to several factors, including the lean season (June - August). The divisions of Mayo- Sava and du Logone and Chari are the most affected, mainly due to attacks by predation on households by NSAGs, and the inherent population movements that prevent access to land for displaced persons. In Mayo-Sava, only 18.7% of IDPs have access to land. Children under the age of five are provided with a minimum dietary diversity.

In July 2020, the Severe Ambulatory Nutritional Centres (*Centre Nutritionnel Ambulatoire Sévère*, CNAS) of the Ministry of Health supported by UNICEF and NGOs received 2,841 cases. In addition, 298 children were referred for appropriate treatment in the region's Internal Therapeutic Nutritional Centres (*Centre de Nutrition Thérapeutique Interne*, CNTI). In the Minawao refugee camp, Plan International and IMC are supporting nutritional programmes and the care of malnourished refugee children. The International Emergency and Development Aid (IEDA) develops

prevention activities in the communities of Kousseri and Goulfey in Logone and Chari. The NGO Alima provides paediatric and nutritional care for children under the age of five in the Mayo-Tsanaga division. The regional delegation of Public Health (DRSP) has distributed 300 boxes of nutritional supplements (Plumpy Nut) in the CNAS of the region, including that of Nguetchewe in Mayo-Tsanaga. Unfortunately, shortages of inputs, including plumpy nut, affect nine health districts (out of a total of 31 in the region).

3.1.5 Protection sector

The incessant attacks by armed groups on the isolated border villages of Mayo-Sava combined with the redeployment of the Rapid Intervention Battalion (*Bataillon d'intervention rapide*, BIR) in the Kolofata district triggered the preventive displacement of more than 8,995 people looking for safety (OCHA 2020a). At least 5,950 people in the Kordo area are Arrivals in Kolofata city between 12 and 15 August. A week later, the populations of localities located on the Gance - Amchide axis, many of which had returned to their village in 2019, have found refuge in Gance where 3,045 new IDPs have been identified.

By June 2020, 539 new IDPs and 3,127 Nigerian refugees had been identified by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in the framework of the DTM Round 21- June 2020 in the localities of Mogogné, Ayouri², Gadelayo in Kossa canton, Mora district in Mayo-Sava (UNHCR 2020b). The inaccessibility of the zone during the rainy season did not allow for a more in-depth needs assessment to be conducted for these localities. All of these populations are in a vulnerable situation and their needs are not yet covered due to lack of access and available resources.

The protection monitoring system provided by the NGO Intersos throughout the Far East region is a good example of this. Nord recorded 452 new protection incidents in August, a slight decrease from the previous month of July (547 incidents). The majority of incidents concern the spoliation of property and land. If men appear represent a large majority of the victims, because they are the main reporters for the whole household whose members are then not registered as victims. All categories of violations combined, the NSAGs are held responsible for 39% of the incidents, civilians (communities) come second with 35% of the incidents, with the remaining 26% divided between the Armed Forces and members of the Vigilance Committees.

Intersos also intervenes in victim assistance. In August, Intersos, among other things, handed over batches of 19 people (18 women and one man) identified as having special needs in Kerawa, and Tolkomary. In Kolofata, Tolkomary, Kerawa and Amchide, 35 at-risk children including 24 separated children (ES), three children unaccompanied (ENA), one girl victim of kidnapping, one girl victim of abuse, three vulnerable children and three unaccompanied minors. Child heads of household received kits of basic necessities and psychosocial assistance.

3.1.6 Shelter / Basic necessities sector

Following the multisectoral evaluation conducted among the returnee population in Gorétal Goutoum (Hile Alifa subdivision- Logone and Chari division) from 11 to 13 July 2020, the Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) responded to the immediate needs of the most vulnerable families (OCHA 2020d). 98 of them (674 people) have each shelter kits (tarpaulins, ropes, etc.), a set of basic necessities, and a set of basic equipment (buckets, basins, mats, loincloths, soaps, jerry cans, etc.), and a "hygiene/dignity" kit delivered to individuals, specifically for women. The distribution was carried out on 8 August, despite the very poor condition of access roads and despite the reluctance of the authorities to authorise support materials in a security context that is still very fragile.

On 30 July, the ICRC distributed kits containing basic necessities (clothing, mosquito nets, cooking utensils, cover, jerrycan, bucket...) to 339 households (2,034 people) displaced by the conflict in Tilde in Logone and Chari. In Nguetchewe, NRC distributed hygiene/dignity kits to 100 women among the displaced population who suffered the attack of murderer of the 1st of August. In addition, 100 displaced households (976 people) each received a shelter kit and a set of goods from first necessity. Beyond the direct impact of the attack at the beginning of the month, the IDPs of Nguetchewe had only received no assistance since 2018.

3.1.7 Water, Hygiene and Sanitation sector

According to the survey relayed by the National Early Warning Monitoring System (PRESNAP), access to drinking water in the region during the rainy season is mostly (64%) possible thanks to the many hand-operated wells (OCHA 2020c). During this season, 91% of people have access to a water point less than one kilometre away (15 minutes' walk on average). These relatively satisfactory data in terms of physical access to drinking water do not, however, reflect the real situation. In terms of quantity, 105 litres of water - drinking water or not - are available per day and per household, i.e. just under 15 litres per person per day, the minimum reference standard used by humanitarian organisations. The lowest quantities affect households in the Diamare and Mayo-Danay divisions, which are not, however, directly affected by the armed conflict.

The multiple influxes of displaced persons into the town of Kolofata in July and August 2020 have accentuated the need for access to water, hygiene and sanitation in overcrowded areas of the city. Several organisations were involved in covering these needs in August (OCHA 2020c). The International Rescue Committee (IRC) provided slabs and straw mats for family latrines to 180 displaced households and carried out the following activities the extension of the network of three standpipes with the installation of six taps. The IRC also carried out raising awareness of hygiene and COVID-19 risks among host communities and displaced families who are welcomed there. The organisation has distributed 110 additional sanitation kits

(kettles, jerry cans, tablets, etc.). "Aquatab" for water purification, etc.). In Nguetchewe, the displaced community severely wounded by the 1 August attack received 100 hygiene kits from NRC (jerry can, kettle, soaps, buckets, cups). NRC has conducted community awareness sessions for accompany these distributions.

This corroborate the findings of Tedjou Nzokou (2020) that humanitarian emergency actions tend to come closer and closer to what could be considered as actions in support of economic development in the affected areas in Cameroon. This objectively corresponds to long-term actions as opposed to what an emergency situation would impose. This tendency would be imposed by the realities of structural crises in the contexts concerned, characterised by abysmal poverty and consequently the destruction of the productive capacities of the populations concerned, leading to a situation of permanent vulnerability. The humanitarian community present in Cameroon is deploying a number of actions in favour of the affected areas. Even if vulnerable populations are the main beneficiaries of the assistance programmes put in place, it remains that humanitarian actors tend to favour state structures, as they channel most of the financial assistance through these structures.

3.2 Financial assistance received

Humanitarian needs overview report - June 2020 estimates that \$126.2 million are needed in the Far North region of Cameroon as humanitarian assistance. Table 1 summarises the needs, funding received and the gap for the year 2020 in Far North Cameroon.

Table 1. Funding status of the humanitarian needs in the Far North Cameroon in 2020

Sector	Funded (Million US \$)	Unfunded (Million US \$)	Percentage funded (%)	Gap (%)
Refugee response	0	36.0	0	100
Food security	1.0	14.6	6	94
MP Cash assistance	3.8	8.1	32	68
EHA	1.5	10.3	12	88
Nutrition	0	9.6	0	100
Education	0.8	8.8	8	92
Protection: BGV	0.1	7.8	1	100
Health	0.3	7.4	4	96
Protection	0.6	4.3	12	88
Protection of children	0.7	3.9	15	94
Early recovery	2.1	1.7	55	45
Shelter / Basic necessities	1.8	-	102	96
Coordination	0.8	0.7	54	46

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Multisector	4.7	-		
Non specify	14.3	-		
Average			26	74

Source: humanitarian situation in the Far North Cameroon, OCHA (2020c)

Table 1 shows that only 26% of the requirement in was funded for the year 2020, representing 32.3 million US\$ compared to the 126.2 million US\$ of the estimated needs. This lines with the results of Kamdem (2020) who revealed that humanitarian funding volumes in Cameroon are declining over the period 2016 to 2020. Similarly, coverage rates for humanitarian health needs are falling, and are lower than those recorded in other sectors such as food security and nutrition. This support the fact that Cameroon was pointed as the world's most neglected displacement crises by the international community in 2019 (NRC 2019). In addition to the low rate of financing of the needs of the disaster victims, the low media coverage is also one of the indicators of neglect. However, we note that humanitarians have to justify not working with existing social protection systems. Furthermore, we note that cash-based humanitarian assistance, although it has its positive points, highlights risk factors such as aid dependency, the risk of inflation, marginalisation of certain local realities and, above all, the exposure of beneficiaries due to the management of their digital data.

The insufficiency of humanitarian aid funds is not unique to Cameroon, it is a global problem. Indeed, the 2021 Global Humanitarian Overview (GHO) presented funding requirements of \$35.1 billion to assist 159.9 million of the 235.4 million people in need (OCHA 2020c). While humanitarian funding is constantly increasing, it is not increasing at the same speed as needs. The scale, frequency and duration of crises that demand international humanitarian response is increasing, aggravated by long-term trends such as climate change, population growth, rapid and unsustainable urbanisation, resource scarcities as well as increasingly protracted armed conflicts (Churruca Muguruza 2016). These are, and will continue to be, among the main drivers of humanitarian crises, which in turn generate growing humanitarian needs globally. Funding for the plans included in the 2020 GHO reached \$19.11 billion, 50.1% of total requirements (OCHA 2020c). This funding gap is expected to continue to grow, as is the need for front-line lifesaving humanitarian assistance while resources are limited. We should now promote a more effective global humanitarian action to reach the maximum of people in need with the limited resources available and have the maximum impact.

3.3 Source of funding

The report from UNHCR (2020d) shows that humanitarian funding received by Cameroon in 2020 came from both foreign countries and private donors from all the continents. Only part of this funds in dedicated to the Northern region. The following are details of earmarked and unearmarked contributions (in USD):

Type of contribution	Donors	Amount (in million USD):
Earmarked contributions	USA	5.5
	France	1.2
	Qatar	1.2
	Sweden	0.7
	The United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)	0.5
	Canada	0.4
	Luxembourg	0.2
	Japan	0.1
	the UN programme on HIV/AIDS	0.03
Other Earmarked Contributions from the major donors of earmarked and regional funds	Germany	39.2
	United Kingdom	24.8
	United States of America	21.9
	Denmark	14.6
	Canada	10.2
	Private donors USA	7.4
	Private donors Japan	3.9
	Private donors Australia	3.7
	Sweden	3.3
Unearmarked Contributions from the major donors of unrestricted and regional funds	France	2.8
	Sweden	76.4
	Norway	41.4
	Netherlands	36.1
	Denmark	34.6
	Private donors Spain	33.1
	United Kingdom	31.7
	Germany	25.9
	Private donors Republic of Korea	17.3
	Switzerland	16.4
	France	14
	Private donors Japan	11.7
Unearmarked Contributions from other donors of unrestricted and regional funds	Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Kuwait, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, New Zealand, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar,	

	Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Private donors.	
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Many factors can influence the decision to engage in an international humanitarian action. The link between a state's foreign policy interests and its engagement in international humanitarian action has been demonstrated by several authors (Halperin and Michel 2000; Rowlands 2008; El Taraboulsi-McCarthy and Willitts-King 2016). The interest can be economical, national security or to political power and influence. It is noticed that the funding to support the humanitarian crisis in the Far North region has been provided by Cameroon's main economic partners with the exception of China. This is in line with the work of Okouda (2020) and Soppo Ntoubu (2020) on the Impact of COVID 19 on Cameroonian economy, thus highlighting main economic partners supporting Cameroon to face the crisis. Unsurprisingly, the United States tops the list of the largest donors in support of the resolution of the humanitarian crisis in the Far North region. This corroborates the work of Cooke (2013), highlighting the efforts made by the United States over the various administrations to provide a particular support to African countries.

El Taraboulsi-McCarthy and Willitts-King (2016) also highlighted the humanitarian imperative, geopolitical alliances and foreign policy influence as humanitarian foreign policy drivers. States often engage in humanitarian action – whether through the provision of financial or in-kind aid or diplomatic intervention – on the basis of a moral or religious obligation, or out of a sense of solidarity. Although this is not always described in terms of humanitarian principles or international legal obligations, these concepts can be viewed as in alignment with the core principle of humanity. Religious obligations such as *zakat* are a key driver of aid provision by Islamic countries to other Muslim populations in need (Binder and Erten 2013). This can justify the presence of many Islamic countries among the contributors in Far-North Cameroon humanitarian crisis considering that Islam is the second religion in Cameroon with high concentration of Muslim in the Far-North region (Seignobos and Nassourou 2005).

3.4 Coordination of international humanitarian assistance

As presented by several studies (Beigbeder 1991; Binder, Meier, and Steets 2010), the coordination of the international humanitarian assistance is under the lead of OCHA with UNHCR as co-lead, given the mixed situation involving IDPs, returnees and refugees. They are collaborating with several partners, including:

Type of actor	
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Governmental Partners	Ministries of: External Relations, Territorial Administration, Economy, Planning and Regional Development, Public Health, Women's Empowerment and the Family, Social Affairs, Justice, Basic Education, Water and Energy, Youth and Civic Education, the National Employment Fund, the <i>Secrétariat Technique des Organes de Gestion du Statut des réfugiés</i> and others.
Implementing Partners	Africa Humanitarian Action (AHA), African Initiatives for Relief and Development (AIRD), <i>Agence pour le Développement Economique et Social</i> (ADES), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), FAIRMED, International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), Intersos, International Medical Corps (IMC), Lutheran World Federation (LWF), Plan International, Première Urgence - Internationale (PUI) and Public Concern.
Operational Partners	They are classified per sector as follow: - Shelter and NFI: <i>Action contre la Faim</i> (ACF); International Emergency Development Agency (IEDA Relief); PC; United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) - Education: Children's Life in Rural Area (CLIRA), Community Humanitarian Emergency Board International (COHEB); International Rescue Committee (IRC); Ministry of Social Affairs (MINAS); Ministry of Basic Education (MINEDUB); Ministry of Professional Training (MINFOP); Ministry of Secondary Education (MINESEC); Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC); PLAN INTER.; United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF). - Food and security: <i>Action contre la Faim</i> (ACF); <i>Centre d'Appui à l'Auto Promotion pour le Développement</i> (CAPROD); CARE international; Cardiovascular Research Foundation (CRF); Catholic Relief Services (CRS); DEMTOU; Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO); International Rescue Committee (IRC); JAPSSO; KADEPI. LWF; MINADER; MINEPIA; Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC); PC; World Food Programme (WFP); PLAN INTER.; Livestock Development Project in Cameroon (PRODEL), <i>Première Urgence Internationale</i> (PUI), <i>Solidarités Internationales</i> (SI). - Livelihood: ABIOGET; <i>Action contre la Faim</i> (ACF); Association for the Training, Integration and Insertion of. Refugees and Displaced Persons (AFIIRD); APC; <i>Centre d'Appui à l'Auto Promotion pour le Développement</i> (CAPROD); CARE international; CMJ; Multifunctional centres for the promotion of young people (CMPJ); COMPRESSA; Centre for the Advancement of Women and the Family (CPFF), Cardiovascular Research Foundation (CRF); Catholic Relief Services (CRS); DREAM Sol;

	Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO); National Employment Fund (FNE); German cooperation (GIZ); International Emergency Development Agency (IEDA Relief); Lutheran World Federation (LWF); Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER); Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industries (MINEPIA); Women Empowerment and the Family Center (MINPROFF); Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), <i>Première Urgence Internationale</i> (PUI), UN Women; World Food Programme (WFP), PC, PLAN INTERN, Livestock Development Project in Cameroon (PRODEL); Network of Community Education Facilitators (RESAEC); United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Programme for the Improvement of the Competitiveness of Family Farm Agropastoral Holdings (ACEFA); Programme to support for the renovation and development of Vocational Training in the agriculture, livestock and fisheries sectors (AFOP); Ministry of Professional Training (MINFOP); Project to support the development of agricultural sectors (PADFA); Project of support for the Development of Rural Microfinance (PADMIR), World Food Programme (WFP), Agricultural Investment Market Development Project (PIDMA), PLAN INTER, National project for the structuring and support of producers and agricultural extension services (PROSAPVA), SAR/SM, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). - Logistic: African Initiatives for Relief and Development (AIRD). - Protection: Standing Committee for the Defence of Human Rights (CPDH); INTERSOS; Ministry of Social Affairs (MINAS); Ministry of Justice (MINJUSTICE); Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC); United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR); Unique Psychological Services (UNIPSY). - Health: <i>Action contre la Faim</i> (ACF); American Heart Association (AHA); The Alliance for International Medical Action (ALIMA); CHEMONICS; CODAS-CARITAS; Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC); Cardiovascular Research Foundation (CRF) ; Catholic Relief Services (CRS); DEMTOU humanitaire; International Medical Corps (IMC); World Health Organisation (WHO); Ministry of public health (MINSANTE); United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); MSF Suisse; PLAN INTER.; United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF).
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	- Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH): <i>Action contre la Faim</i> (ACF); AIDER; CODAS-CARITAS; International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC); Cardiovascular Research Foundation (CRF) ; Catholic Relief Services (CRS); EGTCAM SARL; EN COURS; International Emergency Development Agency (IEDA Relief); Lutheran World Federation (LWF); Ministry of water and energy) MINEE; Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC); PC; PLAN INTER.; <i>Première Urgence Internationale</i> (PUI); <i>Solidarités Internationales</i> (SI); United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR); United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Adventist Relief Agency (ADRA), <i>Afrique Solidarité</i> (ASOL), Red Deportee, International Emergency Development Agency (IEDA Relief), <i>Action Contre la Faim</i> (ACF), and CARE International
UN Agencies	World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), World Health Organisation (WHO), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UN Women, Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The operational aspect in the aid to the humanitarian crisis in the Far North region affects many sectors, which requires the intervention of state actors (Ministries), NGOs, development partners (FAO, UNICEF, ...) etc. This recourse to several categories of actors in the operational implementation of humanitarian aid in the Far North region corroborates the work of Romain in 2018 on "Monetary transfers in humanitarian aid" highlighting the need for associate various categories of actors when implementing humanitarian aid. It is noticed the presence of religious related organisation, supporting the idea of several authors (Ager, Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, and Ager 2015; Duriez, Mabilie, and Rousselet 2009; Lachenal and Taithe 2009; Walker et al. 2012) who believe that the modern humanitarian phenomenon demonstrates the vitality of religious humanitarianism. The most important NGOs are either explicitly religious or religiously inspired; moreover, the religious phenomenon often plays a role in the motivations of humanitarian volunteers from organisations with no links to religious groups.

4. Conclusion

This study seeks to analyse the international assistance provided to the populations of Far North Cameroon who are facing security and climate challenges. Through the assessment of humanitarian needs in the Far North Cameroon, the evaluation the financial assistance received as for 2020, the analysis the source of funding and the characterisation of the coordination of international assistance in the Far North Cameroon. Our results show that, the humanitarian situation is critical in the Far North of Cameroon. This because about 33% of households are food insecure, including 3% in a situation of severe food insecurity, 6% of children are affected by Global Acute Malnutrition. But only 26% of the requirement in was funded for the year 2020. This support the fact that Cameroon was ranked as the world's most neglected displacement crises by the international community. These funds were received from both foreign countries and private donors from all the continents. The international humanitarian assistance is coordinated by OCHA in collaboration with Cameroon governmental partners, implementing and operational partners and United Nations agencies.

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