



NRC

NORWEGIAN
REFUGEE COUNCIL



CAMEROON COUNTRY PROGRAMME

ANNUAL REPORT

2023

NRC Cameroon, February 2024

Norwegian Refugee Council
Cameroon Country Office
Rosa Parks Avenue

www.nrc.no

Cover photo: Pouhe Patricia/NRC

The sunlight hits her face, which lights up with her most beautiful smile.
Balkissa and her daughter in front of her rehabilitated shelter, has regained her joy and happiness after years of sadness and despair.

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REFUGEE COUNCIL



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ACRONYMS TABLE

AAP	- Accountability to Affected Populations
AEP	- Accelerated Education Programme
BUNEC	- National Civil Status Registration Office
CAR	- Central African Republic
CFM	- Complaint and Feedback Mechanism
CHINGO	- Humanitarian Coordination of International NGOs
HLP	- Housing, Land and Property
ICLA	- Information, Counselling and Legal Assistance
IGA	- Income Generating Activities
LCD	- Legal and Civil Documentation
LFS	- Livelihoods and Food Security
MINADER	- Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MINAT	- Ministry of Territorial Administration
MINDDEVEL	- Ministry of Decentralisation and Local Development
MINEE	- Ministry of water and energy
MINEDUB	- Ministry of Basic Education
MINEPAT	- Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development
MINESEC	- Ministry of Secondary Education
MINDCAF	- Ministry of State Property and Land Tenure
MINAS	- Ministry of Social Affairs
MINPROFF	- Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family
NFI	- Non Food Item
NMFA	- Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NSAGs	- Non-State armed groups
PSEA	- Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
OCHA	- UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PSS	- Psychosocial Support
WASH	- Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene



(c) Poulhe Patricia/NRC



NRC IN CAMEROON

(c) Tom Peyre-Coste/NRC

Context overview

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) is an independent humanitarian organisation helping people forced to flee. NRC protects displaced people and supports them as they build a new future.

NRC started activities in Cameroon in 2017 and is currently responding to three humanitarian crises simultaneously in the Far North, Southwest, Northwest and East regions which, as of 31st December 2023, had led to the displacement of 453,661 people in the Far North region, 621,591 in Southwest and Northwest regions (NWSW), and more than 354,000 refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR).

NRC has a coordination office in Yaoundé, as well as an office in Maroua in the Far North region which opened in April 2017, followed by an office in Buea in the Southwest region in June 2018 and a sub-office in Bamenda in the Northwest region in March 2019. In these areas, NRC provides integrated multi-sector assistance, covering emergency needs and linking them to recovery interventions.

In addition, NRC opened a sub-office in Batouri in the East region in July 2019 to provide information, counselling, and legal assistance to refugees from CAR.

Social, political and security context

Cameroon continues to be impacted by the ongoing three complex and distinct crises namely, the Lake Chad basin conflict, the Northwest and Southwest (NWSW) crisis, and the Central CAR refugee crisis.

The situation in the Lake Chad basin continues to cause more and more displacement especially with the ongoing fighting between the two main NSAG factions, causing a new dynamic in the crisis affecting the Far North region. Local communities and civilian populations continue to be severely affected by frequent attacks and forcing hundreds to flee their homes.

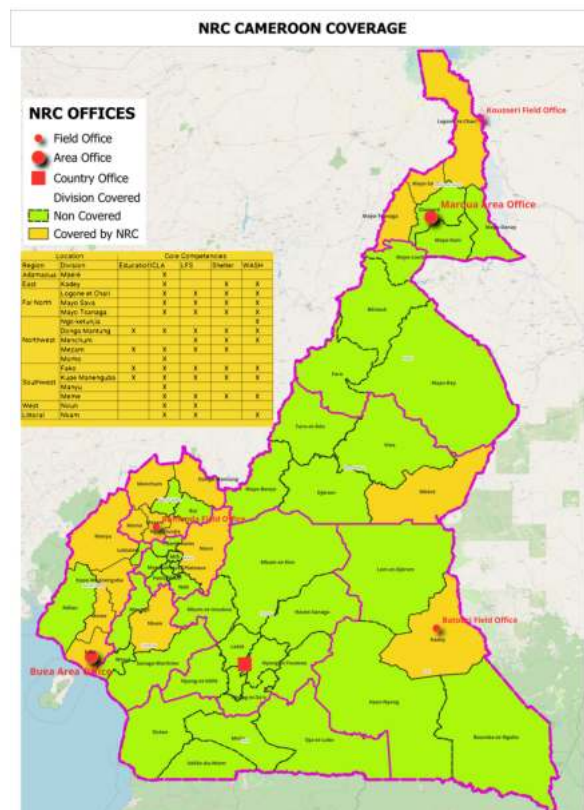
Characterized by general insecurity, lockdowns, and roadblocks the ongoing crisis in NWSW regions is in the seventh year and has affected every sector of the economy within the two regions and beyond. Hundreds of persons continue to flee their homes for safety because of ongoing clashes thereby causing more hardship on the newly displaced and the hosting communities.

On the other hand, though the East region remains relatively calm in terms of armed conflicts, communities continue to be affected by the impact of the Central African Refugees crisis since 2013. The refugees and local community members continue to compete for resources which are often very limited and is a major source of conflict.

Main programmatic objectives

NRC in Cameroon aims to bring meaningful changes in the lives of people affected by displacement and to offer adapted and context-sensitive solutions to their needs. NRC's programme also aims to roll-out the localization agenda through the development of projects with local partners, while developing durable solutions to address the crises' root causes.

NRC's programme focuses on protection outcomes and promotes integrated approaches for the delivery of quality assistance covering education, water, sanitation & hygiene (WASH), shelter, livelihoods and food security (LFS), and information, counselling and legal assistance (ICLA) .



Accountability

NRC in Cameroon aims to strengthen accountability and enhance community engagement in its responses. As such, NRC increased investments in community-led initiatives and solutions that empower displacement-affected populations to be self-driven and autonomous, including the creation of feedback mechanisms. In fact, in addition to the usual toll-free numbers, NRC deploys community-based complaint and feedback committees in charge of collecting project participants' insights. The committees provide NRC with additional information of communities' perceptions of the assistance and support, along with post distribution monitoring, to finetune our interventions. Not to mention that NRC is active in the Accountability to Affected People (AAP) working group led by World Food Programme and contributes with creative and sustainable solutions to improve its practice in terms of accountability.



1. MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2023, NRC expanded its operations to the Adamawa, Littoral and West regions in order to provide more holistic interventions and to reach displacement-affected people in crisis areas. For this purpose, NRC designed and started implementing cross-border projects to ensure CAR refugees receive adequate information and assistance for meaningful and dignified access to basic services upon voluntary return.

Developing a safe and inclusive programme was also a priority for NRC in 2023 and will remain a major focus in upcoming years. As such, NRC developed and included protection mainstreaming tools in all the phases of the project cycles. For a greater efficiency of the safe and inclusive programming, NRC focused on community engagement and strengthened its complaint and feedback mechanism through the development of new channels, the deployment of a dedicated staff and the creation/strengthening of community-based feedback and complaint mechanisms.

In addition, as a key advocacy actor through its leadership roles in coordination fora, NRC collaborates and coordinates with the members of the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), OCHA and other International and National NGOs. Moreover, NRC works closely with government's technical services such as MINADER, MINEFOP, MINEDUB, BUNEC, MINEE, MINSANTE, MINEPAT, MINPROFF, etc.

NRC is also administratively hosting the Coordination of Humanitarian International Non-Governmental Organization (CHINGO) in Cameroon since 2019, as well as leading the Housing, Land and Property (HLP) Area of Responsibility (AoR) within the Protection Cluster in Cameroon, and co-leading the WASH and NFI/Shelter clusters in NWSW and Far North.

This active role in humanitarian coordination has also been enhanced by a stronger coordination and communication with national authorities at all levels, with central administration, decentralized administration and decentralized authorities.



1.1 - WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE (WASH) AND SHELTER

1.1.1 - WASH

During the year of 2023, NRC greatly improved its Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) programming in terms of quality of the interventions, introducing more context-based, locally acceptable and environmentally friendly solutions to respond to immediate needs to both conflict-affected persons and those affected by epidemics. Within this period, NRC facilitated access to clean water and appropriate sanitation facilities, which are amongst the most urgent of all needs. As such, NRC applied an integrated approach across the WASH, ICLA, Shelter, Education and Livelihood & Food Security sectors in the Northwest, Southwest and Far North regions to support displaced families achieve dignified living conditions.

13 schools were targeted (08 in Far North and 05 in Northwest and Southwest), while **4,646 women**, as well as **180 female pupils** received menstrual hygiene kits to support them meet their needs in the Far North region, and 477 in the Littoral region. In addition, **07 boreholes equipped with solar pumps and 09 boreholes with hand pump were constructed** to enhance water availability in schools and surrounding communities. Moreover, 17 water governance committees were created and strengthened in areas of intervention.

2023 was also characterised by an increase in sensitization activities across the Northwest, Southwest and Far North regions, where both women and men were selected and trained as hygiene promoters to ensure broad acceptance of basic hygiene habits, and to provide a range of simple but effective services to enhance body hygiene, especially for young children who are most at risk of contracting communicable diseases such as flu, typhoid, and dysentery. As such, a total of 104 persons including hygiene promoters, community leaders, schoolteachers, pupils and religious leaders were trained and reached **49,277 individuals through door-to-door sensitization on good hygiene practices.**







(c) Pouhe Patricia / NRC

1.1.2 - Shelter

In 2023, NRC's shelter programme continued to see improvements in its interventions in the Northwest, Southwest, East and Far North Regions by reaching **23,258 individuals (51.4% female and 49.6% male)**. Along with the WASH, Education, ICLA and Livelihood & Food Security sectors, the shelter program supported access to education through the **construction and rehabilitation of 06 classrooms in 02 schools, providing a better learning space for 346 pupils in the Northwest, Southwest and Far North regions**. In addition, NRC piloted a cash for rents scheme that **supported 120 households** with rental assistance for an average of 06 months in Northwest and Southwest in integration with Income-generating activities of Livelihood & Food Security. In the East region, NRC piloted a mixed cash and in-kind modality intervention for the construction and rehabilitation of most vulnerable refugees and host community shelters, with a total of 57 households assisted through this approach.

NRC also conducted a permanent shelter support project that provided construction materials to 130 vulnerable displacement affected households in the Logone and Chari division, 115 in the Mayo Tsanaga Division, and 57 in the East region. This helped them improve their housing conditions, as some were able to build new houses that meet minimum standards for themselves, with the support of a well-established and trained shelter committee. In addition, 714 displaced families received essential household items and temporary shelter kits to improve their housing conditions in Mokolo, Wandai, Ldoubam, Sirak Gorai, Mikilik, Zamalva and Ségoulé, Hilé Alifa in the Far North Region, and 75 households in Nyabi village in the East region.

1.2 - LIVELIHOODS AND FOOD SECURITY (LFS)

In 2023, NRC's LFS program reached **28,695 people** in five regions of Cameroon (Far North, Northwest, Southwest, Littoral and West), including 15,847 women and 12,848 men. **57% were Internally Displaced People (IDPs), 11% returnees, 31% host communities and 1% refugees.** These vulnerable populations faced problems of food insecurity resulting mainly from inadequate food consumption and negative coping mechanisms. The type of intervention included immediate food aid through cash support for small-scale market gardening, support for small-scale income-generating activities (resources and capacity building), vocational training (training and starter kit) and support for small-scale livestock activities (production kits and capacity building).

In the Northwest and Southwest regions, 280 households were supported in livestock activities such as egg production, bee-keeping and pig breeding.





2,740 people benefited from food production inputs and equipment such as improved drought-resistant seeds, tools and training in agricultural production in the Far North, Northwest and Southwest regions. With the support of the MINADER, projects participants were able to improve their production of horticulture, cereals (sorghum and maize) and legumes (beans and cowpeas) to enrich family diets and provide additional income.

In addition, 702 participants (352 from the Northwest and Southwest and 350 from the Far-North) received training in business skills, risk and debt management, simplified accounting, support in drawing up business plans, and individual cash grants to support the development of their small businesses. 128 mentors were contracted to support the recipients, each of whom also received additional cash support to meet basic needs for 3 months, to protect the resources dedicated to developing their businesses.

1.3 - INFORMATION, COUNSELLING AND LEGAL ASSISTANCE (ICLA)

ICLA interventions in 2023 helped to promote understanding and respect of rights to legal identity, and HLP rights of affected people and the obligations of duty bearers under international law. **The programme reached 41,981 persons (53% female) in the Far North, Northwest, Southwest, Littoral, Adamawa and East regions with legal protection services.** This includes 25,953 persons (54% female) sensitized on HLP and LCD rights through 520 information sessions conducted in target communities which helped to address knowledge gaps on relevant rights and available remedies and improved understanding of the benefits and risks of exercising them. Specific sessions on women's rights contributed to addressing certain existing inequalities regarding the enjoyment of HLP rights by women. NRC produced and broadcasted key radio messages on 10 community radios and carried out 11 awareness raising campaigns and reached more people in hard-to-reach locations with information.

In addition, 3,751 persons (55% female) who had specific challenges claiming rights and entitlements to properties and to obtain documentation received counselling and this helped them to resolve their problems while cases needing specialized services were referred to competent establishments providing such services.

NRC also trained 1,822 people, among which 1,148 persons (42% female) were trained on HLP. Those trained were mostly local and traditional authorities, administrative authorities, humanitarian actors and other stakeholders involved in the registration of civil status events and protection of human rights. Capacity building included material support to 13 institutions promoting and protecting HLP and LCD rights.





1.4 - EDUCATION

In 2023, NRC continued educational activities in the Northwest, Southwest and Far-North regions, both in Formal and Non-Formal Education.

Regarding the non-formal education, NRC facilitated access to school aged children who have been out of school for a long time, through the Accelerated Education Program (AEP) in Mayo Sava division. **A total number of 1,004 pupils, including 488 girls, were enrolled in the AEP centers of Kolofata and Igawa Meme, and received regular support during the 2022/2023 school year.** In addition, 4,000 children (1,796 girls and 2,204 boys) from Mayo Sava and Mayo Tsanaga Divisions took part in the 8 weeks (about 2 months) accelerated curricula for the reintegration of out-of-school children (CARED) program. At the end of the program, they were reinserted into the formal education system.

To support the retention and increase the quality of teaching/learning process in formal education, 8,200 school kits were distributed to 3,784 girls and 4,416 boys in Mayo Sava, Mayo Tsanaga, Mezam and Fako Divisions. 146 teaching kits were provided for host schools to promote innovative and engaging teaching methods and practical approaches.





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These distributions contributed to increasing the attendance rate in targeted schools and ensure a better participation of children during the learning activities. In addition, capacity-building sessions were also organized for 265 formal schoolteachers and AEP monitors (88 women and 177 men), on diverse themes such as, safeguarding policy, effective classroom management, psychosocial support (Better Learning Program) and PSEA.

Emphasis was placed on community involvement and participation. School governance structures and community leaders were trained in their roles and responsibilities, financial management and other resources, and school development plans. In total, 332 people (163 women and 170 men) took part in the various training sessions. This training helped to improve effective school management and promote education within the targeted communities.

1.5 - PARTNERSHIPS

In 2023, NRC took a deeper dive into its efforts towards fostering effective collaboration and partnership with local and international institutions to deliver more effective, sustainable and people-centered humanitarian assistance.

1.5.1. Local Partnerships

NRC Cameroon's efforts in local partnership are focused on mutually benefiting partnership that promotes the localization agenda and durable solutions.

In 2023, NRC developed 07 agreements with local NGOs as strategic and implementing partners playing key roles in the implementation of WASH, ICLA, as well as LFS within difficult-to-access communities under most of the funded projects in the Northwest and Southwest regions. Overall, local partners contributed to reach 21,532 project participants (including 11, 230 women), contributing to 27% of people reached through NRC Programs during the quarter 3.

Moreover, to foster more localized efforts in its response, NRC carried out mapping actions for potential partners in the Far North and the East Region, creating a database of prospective local partners to collaborate with in 2024 as part of its program implementation.



1.5.2. Consortium Partnerships

To mutualize efforts towards the delivery of quality humanitarian assistance, NRC engaged in 04 consortium partnerships in 2023, that are still ongoing. The current consortia are notably:

- With the International Medical Corps (IMC) in the Northwest Region where both organizations are providing multi-purpose response for displacement affected populations in the region;
- With Plan International under an Education in Emergency Response in the Far North, Northwest and Southwest Regions;
- With the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Care International and Action Contre la Faim (ACF) to provide sustainable solutions to displacement affected populations and CAR refugees in the East region;
- With UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP, UNESCO and Plan International to provide multisectoral intervention in selected municipalities affected by various crisis, to enhance the access to quality inclusive education for school aged boys and girls.

People in need reached in 2023 under NRC programs through local partnerships

6,071

January - April

21,532

May - August

78,468

September - December



1.6 - ADVOCACY

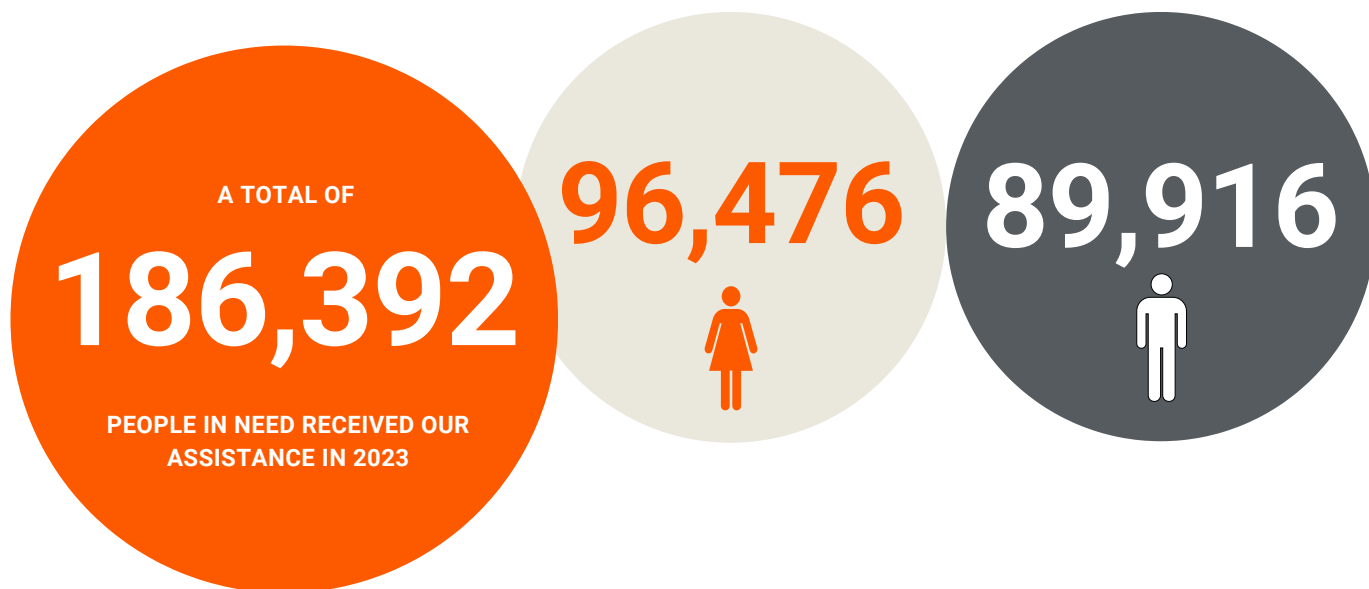
In 2023, NRC updated its advocacy strategy and action plan for 2023-2025. Advocacy initiatives focused on specific topics including education, legal assistance and protection needs for displaced people.

As a result, three (03) advocacy notes were developed and disseminated as part of : (1) the celebration of European Day in Cameroon, focusing on the urgent need to deliver quality education for school-aged children in Cameroon , (2) the commemoration of the World Day for the Protection of Education against Attack, focusing on the importance of ensuring the protection of schools, children and teachers at all times, developed through the Education Cannot Wait – Multiyear Resilience Programme consortium in Cameroon to meet the commitments made in the Safe Schools Declaration, and (3) the publication of the Cadre Harmonisé (Analysis of Risk Zones and Identification of Food and Nutritionally Insecure Populations (CH) in Cameroon) highlighting the impact of food insecurity on protection for crisis-affected populations.

Also, **NRC advocated with councils in the East region in collaboration with UNHCR and the National Civil Registry Office (BUNEC)** for a conscious and systematic identification of children without birth certificates and to develop a database for their communes to address the problem of double identification and waste of resources. This initiative led to the identification and registration of 7,000 children without a birth certificate, and the development of a referral pathway to boost support in a coordinated manner.



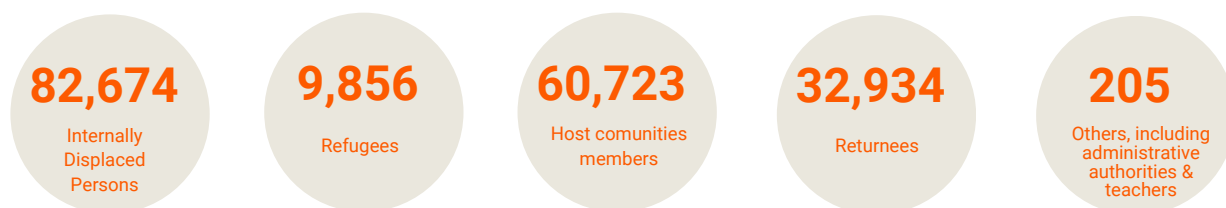
2. PEOPLE REACHED IN 2023



Total number of people assisted per programme



Total number of people assisted per displacement status



Total number of people assisted per location

Regions	Women	Men	Total
Far North	40,189	41,915	82,104
Northwest	30,232	24,194	54,426
Southwest	23,065	20,933	43,998
East	2,705	2,726	5,431
Adamawa	18	65	83
Littoral	110	85	195
West	287	161	448

3. STORY : A LITTLE HELP ALONG THE WAY

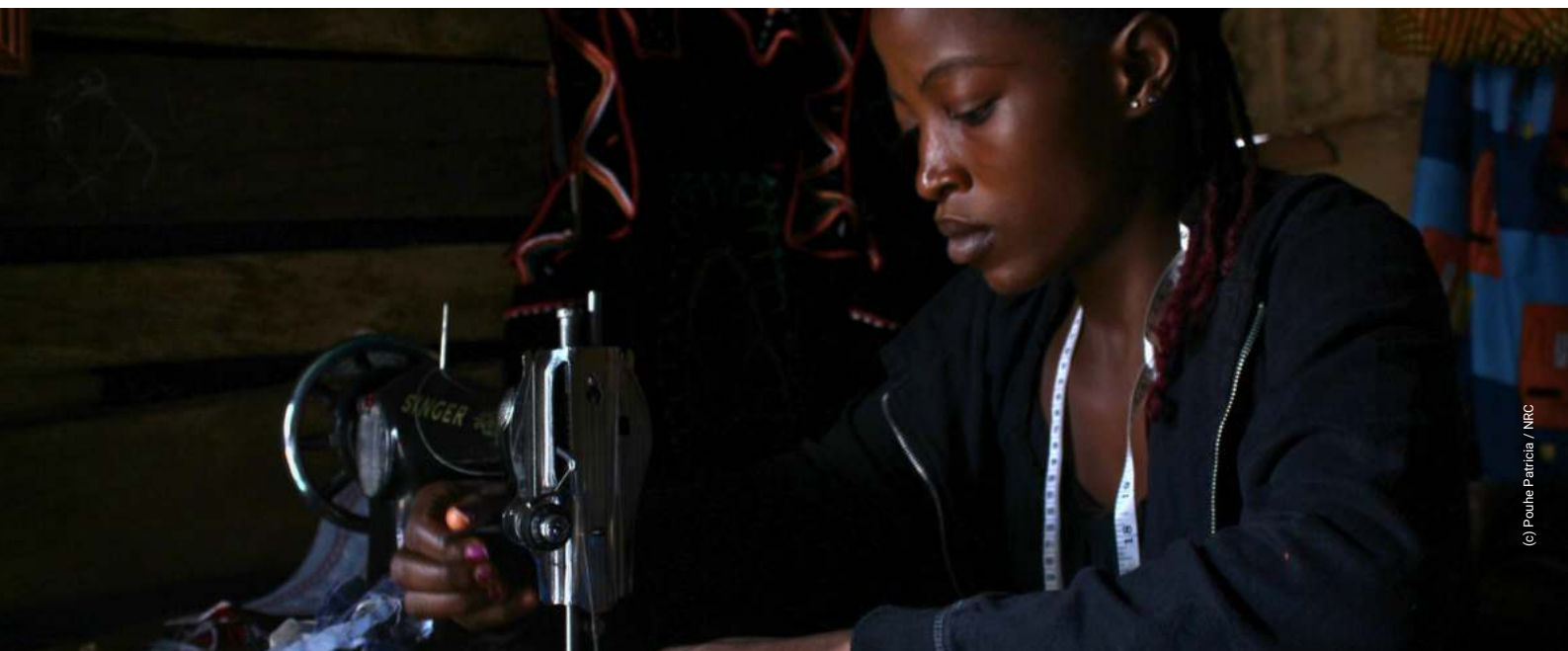
When refugees and internally displaced people are forced to flee their homes, careers, and communities, they also leave behind their financial security. While resettled in a new community, whether temporarily or permanently, they need to be able to plan for a safe, prosperous future, and they need access to financial resources to rebuild their lives.

In Cameroon, funds from **private donors allowed us to work together with nearly 9,000 people** to secure jobs and income. Most of them are women and many are their family's breadwinners.

Annabella, 26, has been displaced for the past four years, first as a refugee in neighbouring Nigeria and then internally displaced in Cameroon. *"We've used up all our money fleeing violence, conflict and poverty. It's been very difficult and traumatic. I was already pregnant with my second child when we fled to Nigeria, and my eldest was just a baby. I was terrified of what would happen to the children. But without any help, we were forced to return to our homeland,"* she says.

When Annabella, her husband, and their two children arrived in Bamenda in 2021, they were warmly welcomed by the local population and were allowed to stay for free in a small two-room house for three months, giving them time to settle in and figure out how to get by.

"I was among the lucky ones included in NRC's aid programme, and our family received 125,000 CFA Francs. This allowed me to take a three-month sewing course, buy a sewing machine and rent a space. Here, I both sell clothes and offer courses for other girls," Annabella says proudly, showing us around her workshop. *"Being dependent on others creates a lot of uncertainty, and you never know when the help will run out. So, my husband and I decided that it was best to use the money we received to learn a trade and start our own business. Now, I support the family, we have enough food, I can pay for my children's education, and I can actually save some of the money I earn."* she adds.



4. COORDINATION & COLLABORATION

In 2023, NRC remained the host agency of the international humanitarian NGOs coordination forum (CHINGO) in Cameroon, which grew from 23 to 26 organizations. Throughout the year, CHINGO's strategy was based on three main priorities:

Strengthening coordination among INGOs, with a key role in improving access to relevant information, strengthening commitment and coordination among members. The forum successfully led this year 39 internal coordination meetings under the various working groups at both national (plenary of heads of mission, Program directors, Human Resources-Administration- Logistics-Finance) and field level (Far North, East and Northwest/Southwest field coordinators).

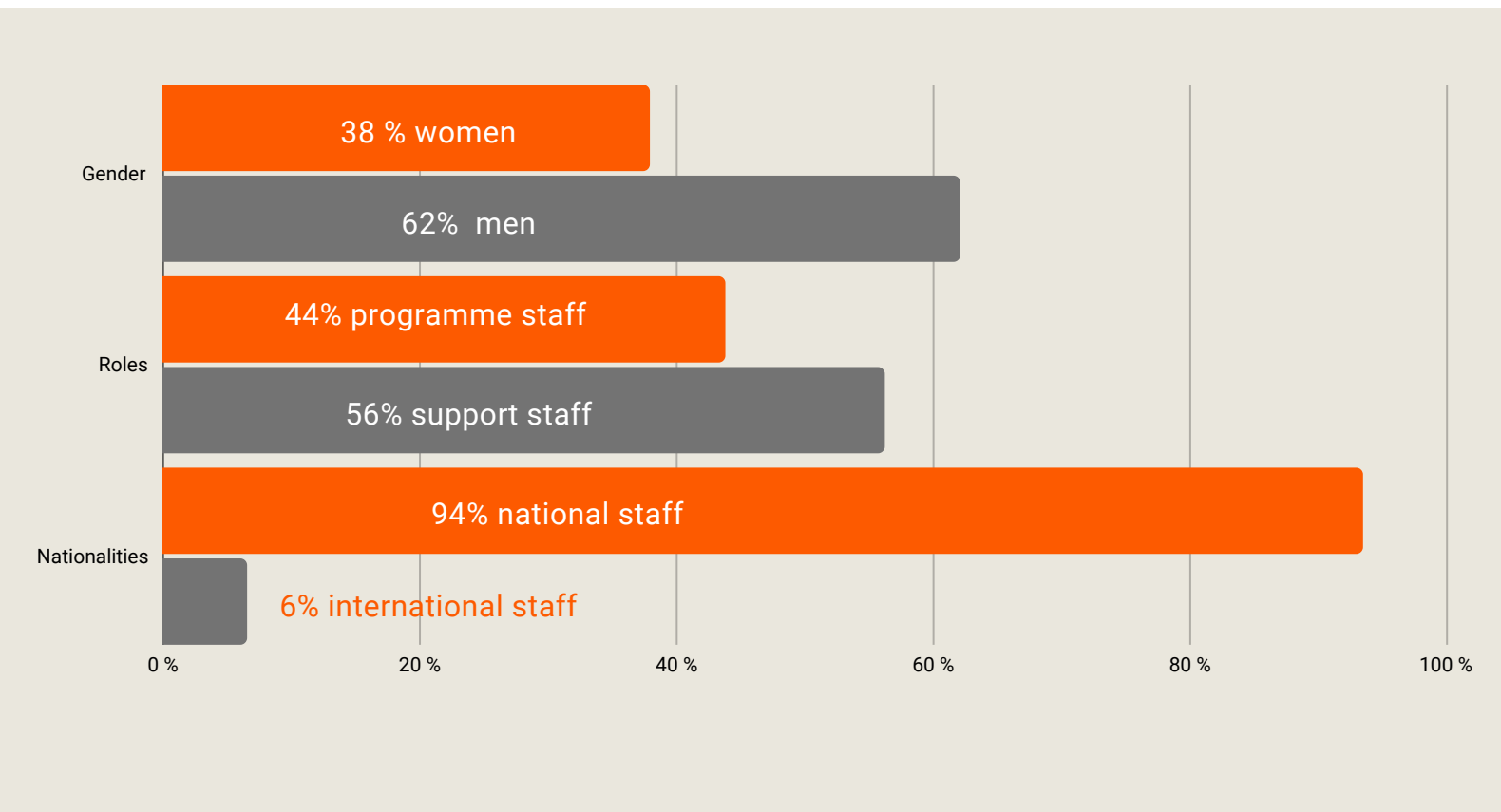
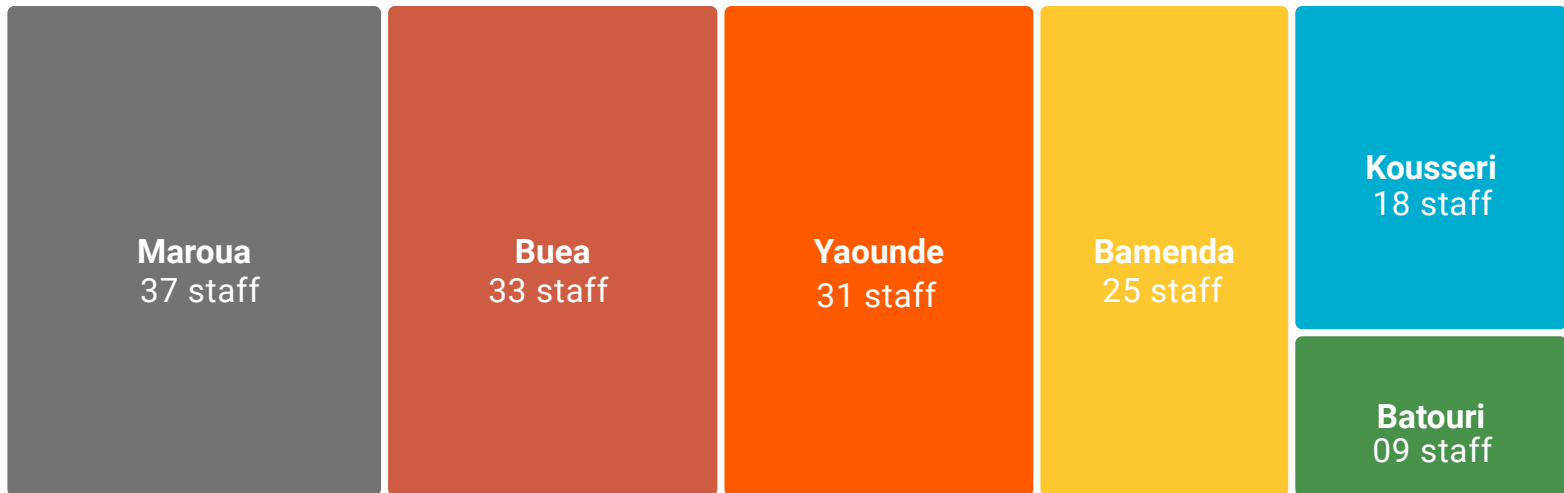
Ensuring key role in humanitarian coordination and a wider external representation of INGOs in external representation of INGOs such as in the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), and in discussions about issues related to development needs (Nexus Task Force, Localization, etc). CHINGO also actively worked in strengthening dialogue between international NGOs, the Cameroonian government entities, UN agencies, donors, the diplomatic community and civil society organizations at national level.

Advocacy on humanitarian and development context and priorities with a focus on access to vulnerable populations in affected areas, increasing funding (emergency and development) to better address needs in Cameroon.



5. HUMAN RESOURCES

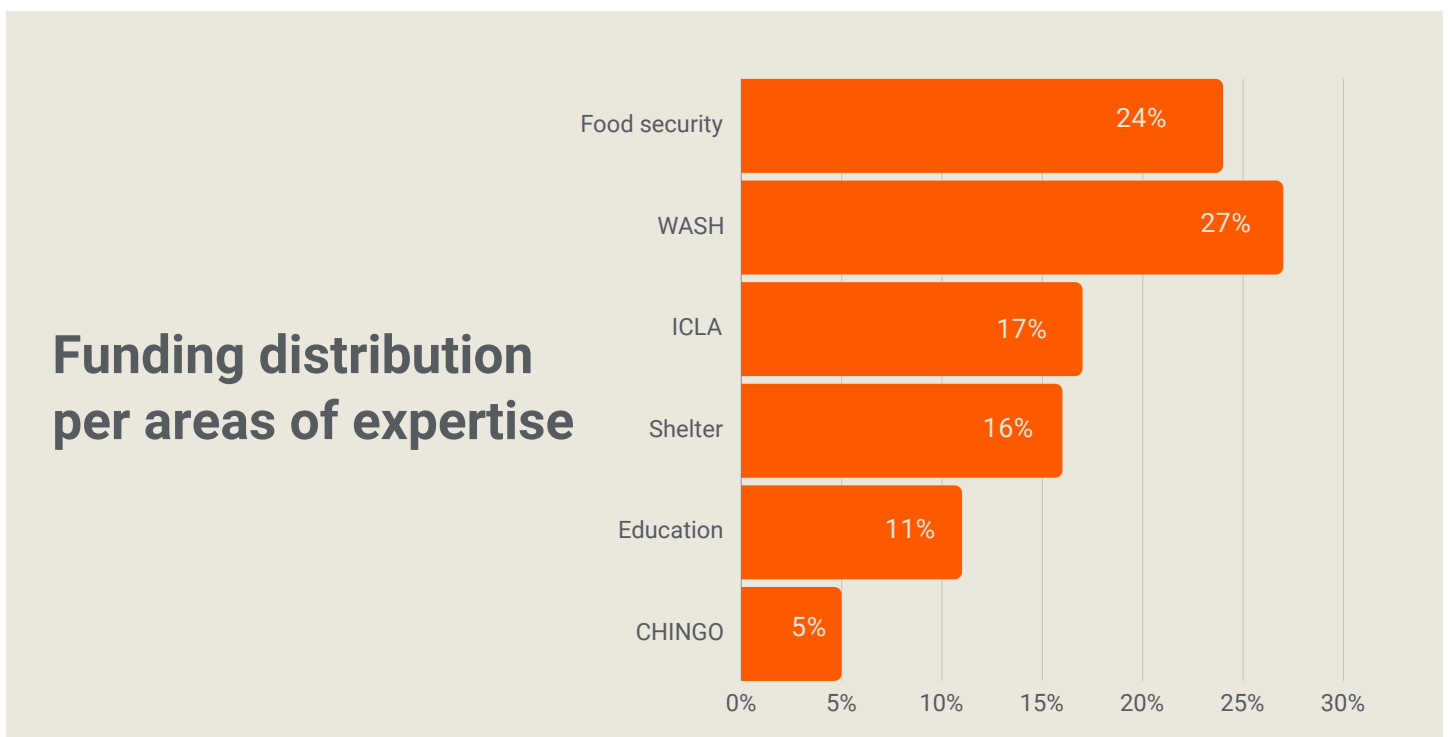
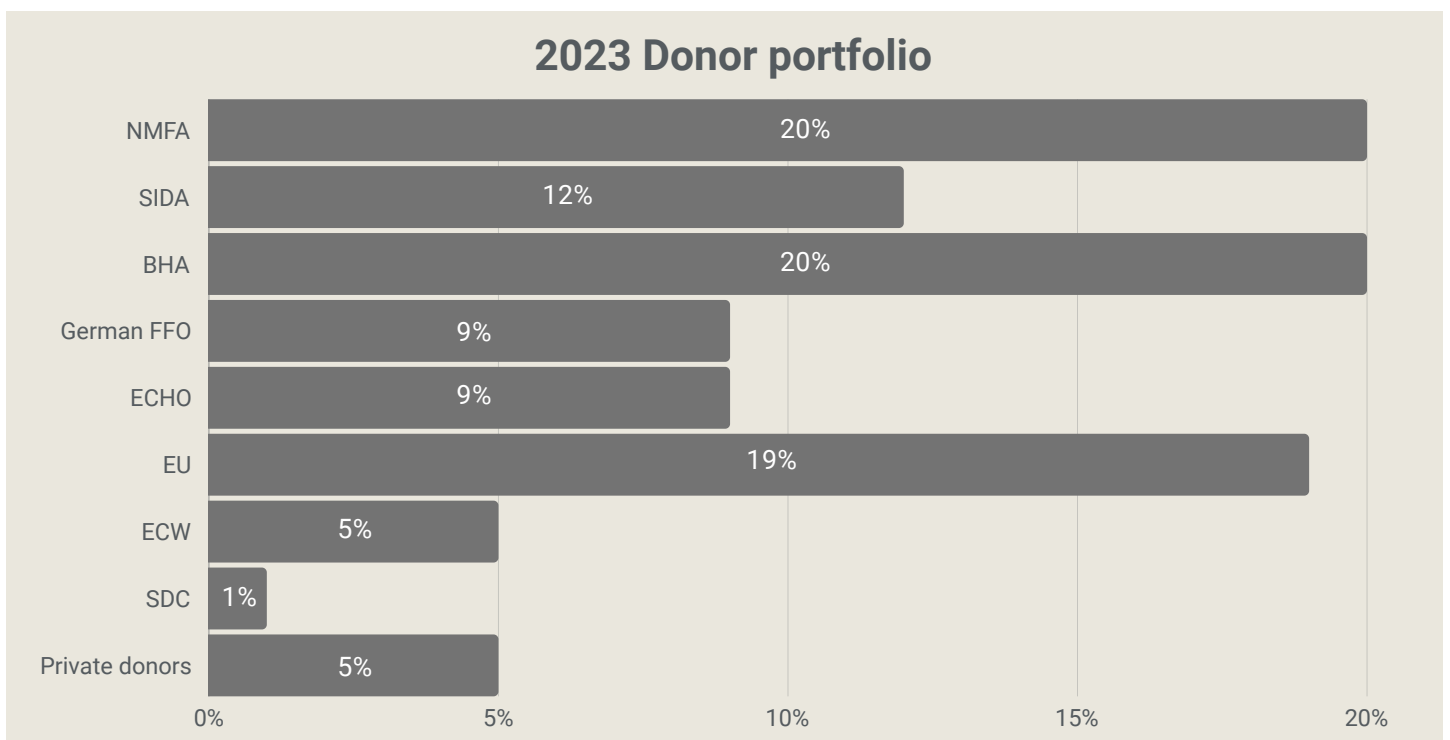
As of December 31, 2023, NRC Cameroon has a total of 153 staffs disaggregated as follows :



6. FINANCIAL NARRATIVE

In 2023, NRC Cameroon’s budget reached a total of 11,24 million USD.

The graphs below show an overview of allocations by donor and sector:



DEAR FUNDERS AND PARTNERS,

THANK YOU

FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND CONTRIBUTION TO PROTECT
DISPLACED PEOPLE IN CAMEROON SINCE 2017



- Ministry of External Relations - MINREX
- Ministry of Territorial Administration - MINAT
- Ministry of Decentralisation and Local Development - MINDDEVEL
- Ministry of Justice - MINJUSTICE
- Ministry of Social Affairs - MINAS
- Ministry of Basic Education - MINEDUB
- Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training - MINEFOP
- Ministry of Economy, Planning and Land Planning - MINEPAT
- Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development - MINADER
- Ministry of Youth and Civic Education - MINJEC
- Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family - MINPROFF
- Ministry of State Property and Land Tenure - MINDCAF
- Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industries - MINEPIA



AUTHENTIQUE MEMORIAL
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