

# CAMEROON

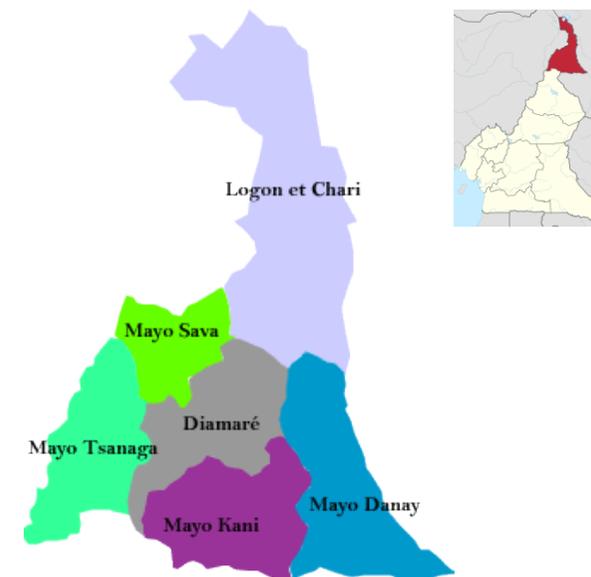
## Floods in Far North region

On 1 October, the Logone River overflowed, flooding a valley in Zina district, located within Logone-et-Chari department of Far North region. According to one source, flooding restricted access to several villages within the valley, although the exact name or number of villages is not confirmed. Populations within the commune of Zina have been forced to leave villages, although the scale of displacement from the floods is not clear (Cameroon-Info 05/10/2019). The flooding impacts will likely be aggravated by the ongoing conflict in the region, high levels of food insecurity, and the degree of poverty in Far North, one of the poorest regions of Cameroon. The floods are expected to have the greatest impact on poor households and people who have been displaced, both by the current floods and from previous displacements; Far North region has over 480,000 IDPs, returnees, and refugees (UNHCR 30/09/2019).

### IMPACT



### NEED FOR INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE



Departments of Far North Cameroon  
Source: Bureau National Cameroun 2014

### Anticipated scope and scale

The 2019 rainy season in Far North has caused flooding in the department of Logone-et-Chari. As the inundation of the Logone river has been reported, it is possible that flooding has occurred in other departments. **Heavy rains are expected to continue** in Logone-et-Chari until the end of October. This could lead to both short-term and long-term consequences, such as **further displacements and impacts on livelihoods.**

### Key priorities



**WASH**  
provision of clean drinking water



**Shelter**  
homes have been damaged



**Livelihoods**  
agricultural activities impacted

### Humanitarian constraints



Flooding has restricted access to villages within the Zina commune of Logone-et-Chari, where boats are being used to reach communities. Roads have also been made impassable. The presence of Boko Haram in the region poses security threats.

#### Limitations

Significant information gaps remain regarding the extent and impact of the current flooding in the Far North.

## Crisis impact

The rainy season in Far North region of Cameroon - which shares a border with Chad, Nigeria, and Niger - has impacted households in Logone-et-Chari department, particularly in Zina commune (Cameroon-Info 05/10/2019). The total population living within Logone-et-Chari is 486,997, of which 25,500 live within Zina commune (BUCREP 2010). As the extent of the flooding is not clear, the entire population could be exposed. In Zina, roads have been washed out, some infrastructure has collapsed, and families have been forced to relocate, (Cameroon-Info 05/10/2019). It is unclear the number of households who have been displaced by the floods or where they have relocated. There is no information regarding deaths or injuries caused by the flooding.

**WASH:** Access to clean drinking water is a concern in Far North, particularly for previously internally displaced populations (DTM #19 20/09/2019). There is a risk that drinking water sources could be contaminated with floodwaters, which have higher levels of bacteria. Contaminated floodwaters increase the risk of waterborne diseases, such as cholera. Since the end of June 2019, a cholera outbreak has been occurring in the departments of Mayo-Kani and Diamare, where 243 cases were confirmed as of 18 September (MoH 18/09/2019). Standing water from floods may also heighten the spread of vector-borne diseases, such as malaria, due to increased numbers of mosquitoes (WHO 2017).

**Shelter:** Houses have been destroyed in Logone-et-Chari. However, the number of affected structures is unclear. Further information regarding the status of shelter needs is required, although the construction materials typically used, such as straw roofs and clay floors, may increase the number of affected houses. Additionally, a high number of IDPs are located within the Logone-et-Chari, primarily with host families, but also within informal structures (DTM #18 12/06/19). Further information is required to determine whether the floods have impacted IDP shelters.

**Livelihoods:** The Logone floodplains, adjacent to the Logone River, are used for agricultural activities such as fishing, rice production, and pasture (FAO 2008). As the river has overflowed, there is a risk that agricultural activities and livelihoods may be impacted in Far North, where over 70% of the population in are farmers (WFP 2017). The effects on agriculture in the region may further exacerbate food insecurity in the region, where IDPs and poor households are expected to continue facing Stressed (IPC Phase 2) levels of food insecurity until January 2020 (FEWS NET 06/2019).

Vulnerable groups affected

**Poor households:** Far North is the poorest region of Cameroon. Some 75% of people in the region live in poverty, and may be disproportionately affected by the floods (International Crisis Group 2017). Most poor households in the region live in dwellings constructed out of non-durable materials, such as straw roofs, which are likely to be more impacted by large-

scale flooding (WFP 2017). Additionally, the potential lack of household assets may further their vulnerability to sudden onset shocks.

**Displaced population:** The displaced population in Far North may be more vulnerable to the effects of large-scale flooding. Altogether there are over 487,800 IDPs, returnees, and refugees currently living within the region (UNHCR 30/09/2019). The presence of Boko Haram and the ensuing conflict has been identified as the main reason for initial displacement within all the districts of Logone-et-Chari department, except for Zina, where people have been displaced by natural hazards (DTM #18 12/06/19). The highest concentration of IDPs and returnees in the Far North are within Logone-et-Chari department, with more than 159,500 people. Mayo-Sava also has a significant proportion, with over 110,350 IDPs and returnees. Displaced populations often face challenges in accessing basic services, which may be required to mitigate vulnerability to floods (UN OCHA 2019). Furthermore, within the displaced population, vulnerable groups, such as unaccompanied children, elderly, pregnant women, and those with disabilities may face additional challenges.

## Humanitarian and operational constraints

**Access:** Flooding has restricted access to several villages within Logone-et-Chari. The exact name or number of villages is not confirmed. According to one source, canoes are being used to reach certain areas in the department (Cameroon-Info 05/10/2019). On 26 August, it was reported that the route between Maltam and Afade within the Logone-et-Chari district had been restricted by water (Journal du Cameroun 28/08/2019). It is not clear whether this is still the case. Overall, access may be impeded due to the impact floods have had on the construction materials used for roads. Many roads have been reported impassable as they have washed away (Cameroon-Info 05/10/2019).

**Insecurity** in the region due to Boko Haram insurgency in the wider Lake Chad Basin can challenge humanitarian operations. Logone-et-Chari is particularly affected by the conflict; earlier this year, humanitarian aid operations were temporarily suspended in the department due to the resurgence of attacks (OCHA 05/08/2019). This insecurity has the potential to hamper the larger humanitarian response in throughout the Far North, by limiting wider access to the region and forcing large population movements to safer locations. The high degree of displacement occurring may pose compounding constraints, as moving may disrupt the provision of humanitarian aid and programming.

## Aggravating factors

### Weather

Officially, the rainy season in Far North lasts from May until September. However, sources indicate that heavy rains could continue through to October, particularly in Logone-et-Chari (Cameroon-Info 05/10/2019). The continuation of flooding may complicate the response, by resulting in further displacements and restrictions of access to affected communities.

### Type of Housing

The majority of houses in Far North are constructed with straw walls and non-durable floors, such as those constructed with clay or sand (WFP 2017). These materials are typically more vulnerable to flooding. As of August 2019, 27% of displaced households were living in spontaneous shelters, which may be more susceptible to damages (DTM #19 20/09/2019; UNHCR 2015).

### Boko Haram Insurgency

The presence of Boko Haram in Far North poses security challenges for both the Cameroonian population and humanitarian operations. Except for the Zina commune, the ongoing conflict has been identified as the primary driver for displacement within all the districts of Logone-et-Chari department (DTM #18 12/06/19). Attacks are frequent across the region, causing deaths and security incidents. There have been 380 fatalities stemming from the Far North conflict since January 2019, 256 of which occurred in the departments of Logone-et-Chari and Mayo Sava (ACLEDD 09/10/2019).

Boko Haram disrupts agricultural and commercial activities through violence, destruction of property, and looting (FEWS NET 06/2019). The kidnapping of fishermen and farmers who are then forced to work for Boko Haram has also occurred in the region, including within Logone-et-Chari and Mayo Sava (International Crisis Group 2017). The presence of the group further aggravates economic instability and food insecurity in the Far North.

### Food Security

Food insecurity is an ongoing concern. Up to 41% of children under the age of 5 in Far North region are suffering from chronic malnutrition (stunting) (WFP 05/2018). The region, including Logone-et-Chari, is currently experiencing Stressed (IPC Phase 2) levels of food insecurity (FEWS NET 06/2019). Climate-related events such as droughts have weakened harvests in recent years (FAO 2019). The recent floods may further increase food insecurity in Logone-et-Chari, by reducing availability of crops that have been damaged or destroyed.

## Key characteristics

**Demographic profile:** 3,111,792 population (Far North) (MoH 17/08/2019); 23.3 million (country-level) (WFP 2018)

- ❖ 39% living under the poverty level (country-level) (UNDP 2018)

**Food security figures:** 34% families food insecure (Far North); 16% households insecure (country level) (WFP 2017).

**Health statistics:** infant mortality rate 52.8/1,000, under-5 mortality rate 79.7/1,000, maternal mortality ratio 596/100,000 (country-level) (UNDP 2018)

**WASH statistics:** >85% of population using inadequate sanitation facilities (Far North), >36% lack of access to clean water (Far North) (UNICEF 2018)

**Literacy Rate:** 75.8% illiterate (Far North), 32.2% (country-level) (WFP 2017)

**Lighting source:** 92.6% wood (Far North), 70.3% wood (country-level) (WFP 2017)

## Response capacity

### Local and national response capacity

It is unclear if national disaster management mechanisms are responding to the current floods. The Mayor of Zina has been working to reach the affected population, by facilitating the deployment of boats (Cameroon-Info 05/10/2019). The Ministry of Health is actively monitoring the cholera outbreak in the departments of Mayo-Kani and Diamare (MoH 18/09/2019).

### International response capacity

There are several international organisations present in the region. The wider humanitarian response in Far North is coordinated by OCHA, which has a sub-office located in the region's capital, Maroua (OCHA 09/2019). WFP is active in Far North in response to the current food insecurity (WFP 30/06/2019). It appears that a number of international organisations are monitoring and assessing the impact of the floods in the region. However, more information is needed regarding the humanitarian activities in relation to the recent floods, in order to understand response gaps.

## Information gaps and needs

There are significant information gaps regarding the extent and impact of the flooding on the populations affected. More specifically, the numbers of affected households and their needs and coping capacities remain unclear. Further information is required in order to better understand the short-term and long-term consequences the flooding events may have.