Real Time Evaluation (RTE)
UNHCR’s response to the refugee emergency in Cameroun and Chad

I. Introduction

1. The Real Time Evaluation (RTE) of UNHCR’s response to the refugee emergency in Cameroun and Chad follows from the declaration of the L3 emergency for the Central African Republic (CAR) in December 2013.¹ These Terms of Reference (ToR) have been prepared by the Policy Development and Evaluation Service (PDES) and provide the RTE with its overall purpose, focus and deliverables. They also set out the key evaluation questions to be answered and the methodology to be followed. The final ToR will be based on comments on this draft document. The RTE is scheduled to take place in October/November 2014.

II. Background

2. The current violence in the Central African Republic began in late 2012 with attacks against the former government by the Seleka, an alliance of rebel militia factions. It increased in intensity until the overthrow of the government in March 2013. Since August 2013 opposition to this change in power from anti belaka militia has led to a dramatic increase in sectarian and ethnic violence across the country, generated widespread internal displacement, and an acceleration of refugee movements across the borders to Cameroun, Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and the Republic of Congo. CAR remains in a precarious state. Despite the installation of Catherine Samba-Panza as a transitional President on 23 January 2014, governance has effectively collapsed and humanitarian conditions have deteriorated. Currently there are few indications of stabilization and an end to displacement.

3. The IASC principals declared an L3 emergency for CAR on 11 December, 2013. UNHCR had already declared an L1 refugee emergency for CAR and the neighbouring countries on 10 April 2013. As of 1st August 2014 there were 527,000 internally displaced persons, and 402,000 refugees from the CAR in neighbouring countries. The latter figure included 171,273 refugees, predominantly of Muslim faith, who fled since December 2013 to Cameroon (120,000), Chad (18,000), DRC (15,000) and Republic of Congo (9,000). Current projections indicate that the number of new arrivals will reach 300,000 by the end of 2014.

4. The refugee influx from CAR required UNHCR to increase its presence and activities in the region, particularly in Cameroon.² An initial regional response plan with a request for funding of US$ 274 million for UNHCR and fifteen other agencies was launched in April 2014. A revised plan was subsequently launched in July 2014 requesting funding of USD 210 million, a total that included US$ 111 million for Cameroon, US$ 38 million for Chad, US$ 41 million for DRC and US$ 20 million for Republic of Congo. To date the plan has received 31% of the requested funding (US$ 209 million), of which Cameroun has received US$ 17.8 million, Chad US$16.3 million, and DRC US$16.6 million.

² In 2013, the budget of UNHCR Cameroon was US$ 13,285,603 (Operating Level), whereas the Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CAN) was US$ 18,944,306, to protect and assist 117,380 refugees of whom 98,735 were CAR refugees. In 2014, the operating level budget was US$ 40,177,639 and the CNA was US$ 84,158 to protect and assist 221,486 refugees including 193,566 CAR refugees in the East and Adamou. In Chad, UNHCR’s 2013 budget was US$ 98,942, 267 (Operating Level) whereas the CAN was US$ 198,942,267 to protect and assist 434,733 refugees, including 193,566 CAR refugees in the East and Adamou. In Chad, UNHCR’s 2013 budget was US$ 98,942, 267 (Operating Level) whereas the CAN was US$ 198,942,267 to protect and assist 434,733 refugees, including 193,566 CAR refugees in the East and Adamou. In Chad, UNHCR’s 2013 budget was US$ 98,942, 267 (Operating Level) whereas the CAN was US$ 198,942,267 to protect and assist 434,733 refugees, including 193,566 CAR refugees in the East and Adamou. In Chad, UNHCR’s 2013 budget was US$ 98,942, 267 (Operating Level) whereas the CAN was US$ 198,942,267 to protect and assist 434,733 refugees, including 193,566 CAR refugees in the East and Adamou. In Chad, UNHCR’s 2013 budget was US$ 98,942, 267 (Operating Level) whereas the CAN was US$ 198,942,267 to protect and assist 434,733 refugees, including 193,566 CAR refugees in the East and Adamou. In Chad, UNHCR’s 2013 budget was US$ 98,942, 267 (Operating Level) whereas the CAN was US$ 198,942,267 to protect and assist 434,733 refugees, including 193,566 CAR refugees in the East and Adamou. In Chad, UNHCR’s 2013 budget was US$ 98,942, 267 (Operating Level) whereas the CAN was US$ 198,942,267 to protect and assist 434,733 refugees, including 193,566 CAR refugees in the East and Adamou. In Chad, UNHCR’s 2013 budget was US$ 98,942, 267 (Operating Level) whereas the CAN was US$ 198,942,267 to protect and assist 434,733 refugees, including 193,566 CAR refugees in the East and Adamou. In Chad, UNHCR’s 2013 budget was US$ 98,942, 267 (Operating Level) whereas the CAN was US$ 198,942,267 to protect and assist 434,733 refugees, including 193,566 CAR refugees in the East and Adamou. In Chad, UNHCR’s 2013 budget was US$ 98,942, 267 (Operating Level) whereas the CAN was US$ 198,942,267 to protect and assist 434,733 refugees, including 86,923 CAR refugees.
5. The main elements of the revised regional response plan are reception, registration and relocation of new arrivals, delivery of life-saving services including protection, food and nutrition, health, shelter and water and sanitation. Developing the capacity of partners is also a key objective as is initiating assistance to refugees outside formal sites. Critical protection needs are registration, child protection, including protection of unaccompanied minors, and SGBV.

III Operational Context

6. There are 31 main entry points identified by the Government along Cameroon’s 900 km border with CAR, which creates challenges for reception and registration of refugees. Some 60,000 refugees remain in transit sites and with host families close to the border. In addition, relocation of refugees from the border areas has also proved problematic with many preferring to stay close to the border. Seven sites for voluntarily relocated refugees, all in forest areas, have been established. Other sites may be needed to accommodate the projected new arrivals. A significant number of refugees have integrated into local villages including those where earlier CAR refugee populations have been living since 2003. There are plans for the initial local integration of a further 30,000 refugees. The security environment is a concern with the presence of armed elements and criminal activity, especially in northern Cameroon.

7. Out of the seven refugee sites, five are staffed by UNHCR and partners. Partners providing health care at entry points in Cameroon are WHO, UNICEF, IMC, AHA, MSF, the Red Cross and the Ministry of Health. Prior to crossing into Cameroun, the refugees have undertaken long treks through the forest without adequate food and water; up to 40% of new arrivals in April and May were reportedly malnourished. Children under five and pregnant and lactating women were particularly affected by malnutrition. A total of 60% of the refugees are women and children (20% under five). There are a significant number of unaccompanied minors.

8. The volume of new arrivals in Cameroon has overwhelmed local capacities, systems and services. Existing health centres face crucial shortages in infrastructure, basic health equipment, medical supplies and staff. WASH partners now include AIDER, ACEEN, CARE, DREE, IRD, MSF, Plan International and Premiere Urgence. Access to water and sanitation are also below standard, and funding is sought to remedy those gaps. The nutrition partners are AHA, IMC and MSF.

9. In addition to the refugees, 15,000 third country nationals (TCNs), mainly Chadians, Nigerians, Senegalese and Malians have fled the violence in CAR to Cameroon and are accommodated in transit centres run by IOM, pending repatriation.

10. Although the border between CAR and Chad has been officially closed since May 2014, CAR refugees, third country nationals and Chadians continue to arrive. As of mid-June 2014, Chad was host to 18,000 CAR refugees, with 45,000 projected to arrive by the end of 2014. Refugees are relocated from the border to five existing camps in Chad, mainly in Bosseye and Belom in Southern Chad, and a new site, Danamadjia. Partners operating in Chad include Association pour le Developpement Economique et Social de Kobe, Secours Catholique pour le Developpement, CARE International, Caritas and the Red Cross.

11. As in Cameroon, the refugee population includes a significant number of children (c. 60%), amongst which are unaccompanied and separated children. The malnutrition rate is above the emergency threshold of 15%; the limited, local health infrastructure is struggling to cope with the influx. As the newly arrived refugees are transferred to existing camps and host villages, there are existing WASH facilities, but the increased number of users affects the quality and quantity of water available. Existing logistics capacity is also stretched.

12. It is predicted that an additional 102,000 former Chadian refugees from CAR will return in 2014. Many of the Chadian returnees have no family links in Chad, having lived outside the country for years or generations. They are accommodated in transit camps. A profiling exercise carried out
from May and still ongoing reveals that up to half of the returnees are not in fact citizens of Chad, but are CAR refugees who posed as Chadians in order to avail of the evacuation by air that was offered.

13. The Democratic Republic of Congo is host to 63,000 CAR refugees, of whom 20,000 have been registered since December 2013. Most are in northern Equateur Province and in Oriental Province. More than 80% have been relocated to four camps, while the remainder lives in host communities. Infrastructure is weak in Equateur and Oriental provinces, which is challenge to the logistics of humanitarian operations. There is a lack of basic social services, including education. Malnutrition rates are within emergency standards, although the food and nutrition situation is described as precarious. Access to water is below standard. The arrival of the refugees, particularly those who remain outside the camps, has put a strain on local health services. Partners operating in DRC included, ADSSE, World Vision, Caritas and Diocesan Caritas agencies, ADRA, Oxfam GB, CADECOD, Peasit, Gaprof, Agis, LWF, AIRD, ADES, IEDS, TSF, UPPF, COOPEF, MEMISA, APEE and Aiglons.

III. Objectives, purpose, and scope of the evaluation

14. The broad objective of this real-time evaluation is an interim assessment of UNHCR’s response to the ongoing CAR refugee crisis in the neighbouring countries of Cameroun and Chad. It aims to evaluate the quality of interventions and to gauge the degree to which timely operational adjustments have been made since the beginning of the crisis to meet the emerging needs of the refugee populations.

15. The purpose of the RTE is to provide insights for the field operations and the Bureau on the status of the emergency response to date and to agree upon recommendations for future action. The evaluation will be participatory and collaborative in approach with an emphasis on learning opportunities to inform future programme design, management and implementation.

16. The scope of the RTE will focus on the response to the refugee crisis in Cameroon and Chad. It will cover the period since the declaration of the L3 emergency (December 2013 to the present) and include an assessment of contingency planning undertaken in 2013. It will cover emergency preparedness, coordination, operations management (all key technical sectors), protection, information, and capacity development.

17. The primary users of the evaluation will be the key stakeholders, particularly managers, involved in the field response to this refugee emergency. Other internal users will be the Regional Bureau for Africa, the Division of Emergency Services, Division of Programme Support and Management (DPSM), and the Division of International Protection (DIP). External stakeholders with an interest in the RTE include the refugees, national and local authorities, UN and NGO partners, and donors.

IV. Evaluation Criteria and Questions

18. Recognizing the evolving status of the operation, the RTE will seek to draw evidence based conclusions that will particularly emphasize the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, impact, sustainability, coverage, coordination and connectedness. Based on the objectives set out in the revised supplementary appeal for the emergency response to the Central Africa Republic (CAR) situation, and on a range of internal reports and documents, the RTE will examine the following key questions in Cameroun and Chad:

- To what extent have the objectives of the revised Regional Response plan been achieved?
- Were the objectives appropriate and relevant to meet the needs of refugees?
- What have been the outcomes for refugees?
- Has the design and delivery of the response plan been based on sound assessments of the context and circumstances?
- Were the needs of the most vulnerable among the refugee population identified and met?
- How effective was UNHCR in discharging its leadership and coordination role for the refugee response?
- Is the collective emergency response now organized and fit for purpose to meet anticipated needs?
- Were linkages between the emergency response and existing policies and programmes established?
- To what extent have implementing partners been identified and mobilised to assist the response effort?
- What measures were taken to involve national and local stakeholders and strengthen their capacities?

V. Methodology

19. The RTE will employ a mixed-method approach including qualitative (interviews and surveys) and quantitative methods (document review and data analysis, including monitoring data if available). It will include interviews and focus group discussions with key stakeholders including relevant UNHCR staff at HQs and country level, national authorities, NGOs, donors and affected populations. Consultations will ensure that diverse groups of refugees are included, including men, women, boys, girls, and persons with vulnerabilities. Data from the different sources will be triangulated and cross validated so as to determine the robustness of the findings.

20. The evaluation will use the Regional Response Plans and the RTE Terms of Reference (ToR) key questions as the analytical reference points against which to draw conclusions about the performance and achievements of the response plan to date. Prior to departure the RTE team will further refine the methodology and evaluation questions following the desk review and preliminary interviews with key stakeholders. The RTE will thereby assess and confirm the evaluability of the questions set out in Section IV, paragraph 17 above. For each key evaluation question, the information/data source, method and associated criteria will be clearly defined so as to constitute a solid evidence base for any findings.

21. The initial preparatory phase will include a desk review, finalization of the terms of reference, and recruitment of the evaluation team. The mission itinerary will include Cameroon and Chad with visits to the capitals and the main field sites. It is expected to spend approximately 2.5 weeks in the field as of early October.

VI. Process and deliverables

22. PDES will take responsibility for steering the RTE process and ensuring that good practices are observed and maintained throughout the conduct of the evaluation. The evaluation task manager will oversee the completion of the report and ensure its conformity with required quality measures.
23. The main deliverable will be a concise report with clear recommendations linked to the key findings and conclusions. A summary of the main findings and recommendations will be available in French. In line with PDES policy on evaluations, the final report will be placed in the public domain on the PDES website.

24. As the main focus of the evaluation is learning, the field mission will present preliminary findings, impressions and opportunities for improvement during exit debriefs in Yaounde, in Bertoua, and in N’Djamena for principal stakeholders in order to share preliminary findings and to solicit early feedback from operation managers. There will also be de-briefings at HQs and to interested stakeholders.

VII. Follow up

25. The prioritized RTE recommendations (5-10) in the mission report will require a formal management response from the concerned Branch Offices and the Bureau for Africa within 2 months of the receipt of the final report. The attached matrix sets out the procedures and requirements.