Weather extremes

In the Mayo Danay department in the Far North region, crops were destroyed by floods, birds and fall armyworm (CILSS-CH, 2019) leading to reduced income for farmers and reduced food availability locally (FEWS NET, November 2019). Localized floods affected over 40 000 people in Logone-et-Chary and Mayo-Danay in September–October, destroying crops and depleting stocks at the end of the lean season (OCHA, October 2019). The floods further limited humanitarian access to vulnerable populations, led to new displacements, and aggravated the already serious humanitarian situation.

Economic shocks

In the North-West and South-West regions the closure of land borders curbed trade and added additional upward pressure on prices in border markets (FEWS NET, 2019).

NUTRITION OVERVIEW

Although nationally the prevalence of acute malnutrition among children aged 6–59 months was classified as ‘low’ (4.3 percent), it was ‘high’ in the Far North (10.1 percent) and Adamaoua (10.0 percent) regions (DHS 2018).

Nationally, stunting in children under 5 was considered ‘high’ (28.9 percent), reaching ‘very high’ levels in North (41.3 percent), Far North (37.3 percent), East (37.3 percent) and Adamaoua (34.6 percent) regions. Children in rural areas were far more likely to be chronically malnourished than in urban (36.2 percent vs. 19.8 percent). (DHS 2018).

At 40 percent, exclusive breastfeeding rates of children under 6 months were better than those of neighbouring Chad, the Niger and Nigeria, but only 1 in 10 children aged 6–23 months received the minimum acceptable diet. Child anaemia rates (57.4 percent) were a ‘severe’ public health issue (DHS 2018). Just 39 percent of rural Cameroonian households had access to at least basic drinking water services (UNICEF/WHO, 2017).

Households in many areas have limited access to health services (WHO, December 2019). In the North-East and North-West, attacks on medical staff and infrastructure were frequent and more than 80 percent of Government-run health facilities were closed (OCHA December 2019). By December, 1 071 cases of cholera and 1 170 suspected cases of measles had been reported (WHO, December 2019).

Nutrition status of refugees

The wasting prevalence was ‘very high’ in two out of eight Central African refugee camps in the eastern regions. In the Far North, wasting was 4.2 percent among Nigerian refugees in Minawao camp and 8.2 percent among out-of-camp refugees. Stunting was particularly concerning among children under 5 in camps (40.2 percent–54.9 percent) as were anaemia levels (50 percent in most camps, peaking at 68 percent in Mpile camp) (SENS 2015/2016).