Cameroon

DIEM – Data in Emergencies Monitoring brief, round 2

Results and recommendations
August 2022

Data collection 12 April to 16 May 2022
Methodology

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) launched a household survey in Cameroon through the Data in Emergencies Monitoring (DIEM-Monitoring) System to monitor agricultural livelihoods and food security.

Data were collected between 12 April and 16 May through computer-assisted telephone interviews in seven of the country’s ten regions (Adamaoua, East, Far-North, North, North-West, West, South-West). Between 111 and 244 households were sampled in each region, with a total of 1,300 households surveyed. According to the agricultural calendar, data collection took place during the sowing and crop maintenance phases in the East, West, North-West and South-West regions, and during the soil preparation and sowing phases in the Far-North, North and Adamaoua regions.

Figure 1. Countries with established DIEM-Monitoring Systems


Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties. Final boundary between the Sudan and South Sudan has not yet been determined. Final status of the Abyei area is not yet determined.

About DIEM-Monitoring

FAO established the DIEM-Monitoring System to collect, analyse and disseminate data on shocks and livelihoods in countries prone to multiple shocks. DIEM-Monitoring aims to inform decision making by providing regularly updated information on how different shocks are affecting the livelihoods and food security of agricultural populations.

At the core of the DIEM-Monitoring System are country-level dashboards. Readers are encouraged to explore these dashboards to gain more insight into the context of Cameroon and other countries.

Learn more at https://data-in-emergencies.fao.org/pages/monitoring

1 Weights were applied on the basis of population size, percentage of agricultural population and access to electricity as a proxy for wealth.
Income and shocks

Half of the households surveyed are involved in agricultural or agriculture-related activities. In the three months preceding the survey, 47 percent of all households surveyed reported a drop in their main income. The region most affected by this phenomenon is the North-West (67 percent), followed by Adamaoua (56 percent) and the Far-North (48 percent) (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Percentage of households reporting a fall in their main source of income


In terms of income trends, there was a decline for households whose main source was agriculture or natural resources (Figure 3). In particular, on-farm wages and income from cash crops show the greatest reduction. This was followed by livestock, agricultural trade and food crops. Non-agricultural income remained broadly stable during the three months prior to the survey.

Figure 3. Changes in income in the three months preceding the survey, by main source (percentage of households surveyed)

Almost half of the households interviewed (46 percent) experienced at least one shock in the three months preceding the interview. Illness and death of a household member were reported by 23 percent of households, particularly in the Far-North (30 percent) and North-West (24 percent). Six percent of households reported violence and insecurity/conflict, a rate that reached 25 percent in the North-West region. Restrictions on movement affected 9 percent of households surveyed overall (33 percent in the North-West region).


2 Since 2013, the Far-North has been shaken by Boko Haram related violence. In the Anglophone regions of the North-West and South-West, the socio-political crisis has been ongoing since 2016.
Of the households interviewed, 41 percent were identified as farmers. The majority of which (62 percent) reported production difficulties. Lack of access to irrigation water was a significant problem reported in all regions (38 percent) (Figure 5). Other difficulties included plant diseases (37 percent) – especially in the Far-North (50 percent), crop damage during the growing season (37 percent) – especially in the Far-North (50 percent) and Adamaoua (47 percent) as well as the lack of access to inputs, especially fertilizer (25 percent).

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3 Armyworms, granivorous birds and pachyderms caused significant damage to cereal crops.
Difficulties in marketing crop production affected 44 percent of households, who cited rising transport or marketing costs (51 percent), falling sales prices (42 percent), reduced demand from regular traders or local customers (33 percent) and difficulties in accessing markets (28 percent).

**Livestock**

Seventeen percent of households surveyed were engaged in livestock production (11 percent in combination with land cultivation and 6 percent in livestock production only). Of these, 59 percent reported the following difficulties in the three months preceding the survey: illness or death of animals (59 percent)\(^4\) – particularly in the North (70 percent) and Far-North (69 percent) – as well as difficulties in obtaining feed (44 percent) and accessing veterinary services and inputs (23 and 18 percent respectively). Additionally, access to pasture was a challenge for 22 percent of livestock keepers, and 12 percent reported animal theft (Figure 6).

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\(^4\) Pigs are affected by African swine fever (ASF) and poultry by Newcastle disease, typhoid and infectious bronchitis.
Figure 6. Main difficulties affecting livestock producers (percentage of respondents)

Regarding the marketing of livestock products, 45 percent of farmers reported difficulties, including declining selling prices (57 percent), sharply rising transport costs (45 percent), difficulties in accessing markets (31 percent) and declining demand from regular traders and local customers (23 percent).

Food security

According to the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES), 48 percent of surveyed households were moderately or severely food insecure in the month prior to the survey, with severe insecurity affecting 19 percent of households. The highest levels of recent food insecurity (RFI) were found in the North-West (47 percent), South-West (20 percent) and Far-North (17 percent) (Figure 7).


5 FIES results are subject to change. The country scale will continue to evolve over additional rounds of data collection allowing for more consistent comparability across rounds.
Analysis of the household hunger scale reveals that 7 percent of households experienced severe hunger, 33 percent moderate hunger and 61 percent little or no hunger in the month preceding the survey.

According to the Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS), only 21 percent of the households surveyed had an acceptable score, 50 percent a borderline score and 29 percent a poor score.

The coping strategies used were 12 percent stress strategies, 24 percent crisis strategies and 31 percent emergency strategies. Emergency coping strategies have been implemented in all surveyed areas but reach 46 and 36 percent in the North-West and South-West regions respectively (Figure 8).
Figure 8. Livelihoods coping strategies implemented (percentage of households surveyed)


Needs

Support for agricultural production in the six months following the interview was requested by 89 percent of the households interviewed. Most (75 percent) said they needed financial or food assistance, followed by access to agricultural inputs, including fertilizer (43 percent), seeds (33 percent), pesticides and tools (28 percent) (Figure 9). In the three months preceding the survey, almost all surveyed households (92 percent) had not received any type of assistance.

Figure 9. Agricultural households reporting a need for assistance

Recommendations

Short-term recommendations (next three months)

> Overall, food assistance and cash transfers should be organized, but livelihoods-based assistance is also urgently needed in all surveyed regions.

> Emergency assistance must be provided to households reporting recent moderate or severe food insecurity to enable food production and livelihood recovery. This applies to households in the Far-North, North-West and South-West regions in particular.

Long-term recommendations (three months and beyond)

> Promote the diversification of activities to mitigate consequences of declining incomes.

> In the context of crop pest management:
  
  o Systematically adopt the Farmer Field Schools (FFS) approach to armyworm control, with a focus on integrated pest management. Through a participatory, hands-on learning process, the FFS will identify good practices in the field.
  
  o Identify and disseminate natural methods of armyworm control.
  
  o Implement and disseminate the Strategy for the Control of Pest Birds currently being developed by the Government of Cameroon.

> Concerning the provision of inputs for crop production:
  
  o Revise the fertilizer sector development plan by integrating the development of alternative sources like manure and supporting their use through extension services.

  o Provide support for the purchase of inputs via subsidies, in the most vulnerable areas.

> As part of the support to animal production:
  
  o Encourage the vaccination of poultry in villages practicing extensive farming, particularly against Newcastle disease, typhoid and infectious bronchitis.

  o Support the training of pig industry actors on ASF prevention and control measures throughout the production chain.

  o Propose a Technical Cooperation Programme on the manufacture of pig feed based on local raw materials to enable the confinement of animals in the North and Far-North Regions particularly affected by animal diseases.
Support community-based surveillance of animal diseases and encourage the development of Cameroon's *Réseau d'épidémio-surveillance des maladies animales* (RESCAM).

- Develop the mapping and protection of pastures and cattle tracks.

As part of the fight against food insecurity and malnutrition:

- Intensify food and nutrition campaigns, promote nutrition education in areas where dietary diversity is still linked to habits, and encourage the cultivation of crops with high nutritional value by emphasizing the role of women.

- Strengthen the implementation of activities aimed at protecting people's livelihoods and resilience.

- Develop cash transfers complemented by productive inputs, assets and/or technical trainings (cash+) and cash-for-work projects oriented towards agriculture by developing production areas and providing inputs to enhance the value of the land, for example.

- Systematize surveys to better target beneficiaries before any interventions.

- Facilitate access to agricultural inputs by putting in place sustainable policies that pay particular attention to host population groups hosting internally displaced persons.
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