



Participants of the ACER project attend a training on business skills in Bamenda, Northwest Region of Cameroon. Photo by Emmanuel Joko for CRS

## CRS empowers internally displaced persons with business skills

MORE THAN 450 PARTICIPANTS HAVE ACQUIRED SKILLS TO START SMALL BUSINESSES

Since September 2024, with funding from USAID/BHA, the fifth phase of the Anglophone Crisis Emergency Response (ACER) project has been organizing trainings on business skills to empower participants with skills and resources needed to create small businesses, and generate a steady income.

The fourth phase of the Anglophone Crisis Emergency Response (ACER) project supported 110 families with trainings in poultry-raising and chicks to improve their ability to earn income and meet their basic needs sustainably.

In the fifth phase, the project is expanding the livelihood component to empower women and young people with the skills and resources needed to enable them to restart and manage diversified small businesses and generate steady income. The project team is training 558 participants on CRS' business skills for emergency and recovery contexts. At the end of the trainings the participants will develop business plans and receive initial funds to launch their businesses.



Tani Aumtu shares her impression about the training on business skills with Blessing Beri an ACER staff. © Eugene Ringnyuy/CRS

*"I learnt the secret of calculating my actual profit. I used to sell and spend all the profit on whatever I needed, never thinking about saving up for bad days. I dream of running a big business tomorrow."*

*Tani Aumtu, an internally displaced person in Bamenda*

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# CARO Regional Director visits project realisations

The Regional Director for CRS' Central African Region visited Cameroon from October 2 – 11, 2024.

The purpose of Mr. Jude Marie Banatte's visit was to assess the implementation of projects and show solidarity to the staff especially the team in Bamenda, which has faced significant security challenges in recent months.

Mr. Banatte visited project realizations and exchanged with project participants in Maroua, Bamenda and Yaoundé. He also held meetings with church authorities, government officials, and CRS partners to reinforce collaboration ties.

The Regional Director praised the staff for their dedication in delivering the most needed support and services to participants living in very vulnerable conditions and in high-risk areas.



The Regional Director, Country Representative and UNHCR officials visit the Minawao Refugee Camp. © Veronique Nguizaye/CRS



Mr. Banatte visits a borehole constructed by the STaR II project in Gorai, Far North © CRS staff



The Regional Director exchanges with ACER participants at a business skills training © Eugene Ringnyuy/CRS



CRS officials meet with the Governor of the Northwest Region © Eugene Ringnyuy/CRS



The Regional Director and the Country Representative exchange with the Chief of Gorai and project participants. © CRS staff



CRS officials exchange with the UNHCR team at the Minawao Refugee Camp in Maroua. © CRS Staff



The delegation with the Vicar General of the Bamenda Archdiocese. © Vitalis Sahnwe/CRS

## CRS begins a two-year project in the Minawao Refugee Camp



**Project** - Juriya (Building Self-Reliance Among Refugees in the Far North of Cameroon)

**Donor** - USAID Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance

**Target** - 8,100 refugees (4,374 women and 3,726 men)

**Partner** - Caritas Maroua-Mokolo

**Goal** - To improve the livelihoods of conflict-affected people and support them to transition away from food assistance in the Minawao refugee camp. The aim is to equip families with skills, resources, and opportunities to increase their agricultural income, diversify their assets, and lessen reliance on humanitarian aid.

### Objectives



To support conflict-affected families living in vulnerable conditions to improve their agricultural production.



To support conflict-affected families living in vulnerable conditions to increase their income and diversify their livelihoods.

### Activities

Advocacy for increased access to land, agricultural production, increased access to financial services, restoration of livelihoods and development of new livelihoods.





An operational borehole constructed by the STaR II project in Mozogo village in the Far North of Cameroon. © CRS

## Improved access to potable water for families in Mokolo

Since 2019, CRS has supported 10 communities where lives have been threatened by food insecurity, conflict, displacement, and climate change in the Far North of Cameroon. Funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) via KfW (German Development Bank), the Stabilization and Reconciliation in the Lake Chad Region project (STaR) has greatly improved access to potable water in five of the target communities.

The project constructed five human-powered boreholes in Mazi/oulad, Mozogo, Mavoumaï, Gorai and Magoumaz and a mini-water supply system at an Integrated Health Centre in Kossehonne which are all operational.

To ensure sustainability of the water facilities, CRS created management committees. These committees have been trained in self-management, safety, hygiene and sanitation.



The Head of the Kossehonne Health Center, washing his hands with running water from the mini-water supply system. ©CRS Staff

*"We have plenty of water on site. All the departments have water at all times, even at the night: the maternity ward, the treatment room, the laboratory and even our modern internal latrines."*

Mr. Kampele, Head of the Kossehonne Integrated Health Center



Discussions with the committee in Kossehonne village to ensure a sustainable management of the mini-water supply system constructed at the Integrated Health Center. ©CRS Staff

The population in the five communities no longer need to trek for long distances to fetch water from unreliable sources.

## Fostering social cohesion within communities



*"When our SILC group started in 2022 our savings totaled 28.000FCFA but after these two years we have saved a little over 800.000FCFA. We live as a family in the group. We help to advice each other and we resolve our disputes amicably."*

Ines Doukoya, President of the N'heshedva SILC group which means We are striving



*"The peace facilitators have contributed greatly to foster social cohesion in the village of Sirak, but as the population is growing and refugees keep coming, the peace facilitators become indispensable for the community. It will be good for CRS to expand the zone covered by the peace facilitators."*

His Majesty Wouyak. Bizha, Traditional Ruler Sirak-Gorai



Pascal Deli is learning electricity at the Mokolo Vocational training centre in the Far North of Cameroon. © Mabel Chenjoh/CRS

## Creating job opportunities for young people

The Stabilization and Reconciliation in the Lake Chad region project (STaR) has continued improving the economic situation of families living in vulnerable conditions in the Mayo-Tsanaga division. The project offered vocational training opportunities and start-up kits to 250 young people who learnt tailoring, carpentry, masonry, electricity, welding etc. Vocational training instructors accompanied the 250 trainees in the 10 project villages where many have been able to set up small businesses and are generating income.



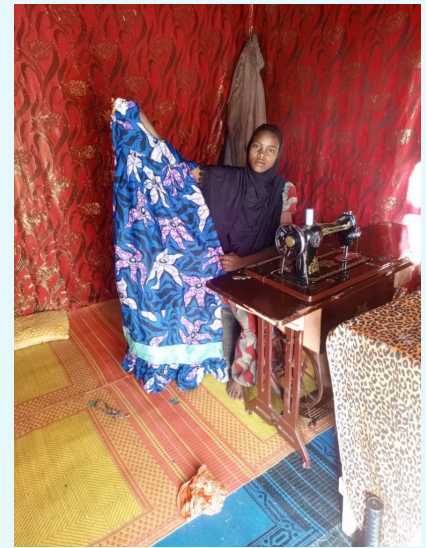
Pascal Deli and his mate Daniel Komha have created a small business where they do electrical installations and repairs in their village Kossehohone. © CRS



Four project participants who learned mechanics received tool boxes from the project. They were offered space by their trainer to start a little garage in which they have begun repairing motor bikes in the village to earn a living. © CRS



Martin Yokoma learnt masonry for six months after which the STaR project provided essential tools. Martin now produces and sells cement bricks in his village Makandai. He also constructs houses to earn a living. © CRS



Mariyam Djougoudoum is one of the 250 project participants who learnt tailoring. At the end of her training, she received a sewing machine which she has been using to generate income for herself and her family in Mozogo village in the Far North of Cameroon.

Mariyam sews between three to five outfits every week and with the money she makes, she's able to support her husband to provide for their basic needs. Mariyam is now able to pay for her daughter's school fees. She saves 2000 FCFA every week after taking care of the needs of her family.



*"I want to be a trainer in the future. My dream is to have a big tailoring workshop and to train other young women in my village Magoumaz."*

Zaina Weleme, a tailor in Magoumaz village  
©Mabel Chenjoh/CRS



# CRS supports the Cameroon Episcopal conference to improve its functionality

Since May 2022, CRS has been supporting the National Episcopal Conference of Cameroon (NECC) to improve its organizational systems, increase resource mobilization and develop strong MEAL systems. This initiative was under the umbrella of the ALLRight project (Advancing Local Leadership in the Right Way) which ended in September 2024.



*“The Projects Unit has worked on the internal working and functionality of the conference and on the relationship between the conference and its partners.”*

Archbishop Andrew Nkea,  
President of the National Episcopal  
Conference © Mabel Chenjoh/CRS

A final evaluation workshop was organized in Yaoundé from September 10 to 12, 2024 to evaluate the progress made by the project and devise strategies for sustainability. The three-day workshop was attended by the Secretary General of NECC Monsignor Paul Nyaga, the Country Representative, Christophe Droeven, personnel of CRS, NECC, the Projects unit, Heads of Service and the Chief of Party for the ALLRight Fund, Sarah Cashore. The workshop was facilitated by CARO RTA for Partnership and Capacity Strengthening and Local Leadership, Cyrille Seke.

Participants revisited the lifeline of the project and reviewed its key achievements portrayed through 13 most significant change stories. Through multiple group discussions and plenary sessions, the ALLRight team evaluated the efficiency, efficacy, pertinence, and impact of the various activities carried out by the project over its two-year implementation. Participants proposed strategies to help NECC sustain the project changes and achievements. Both NECC and CRS staff shared key evidence-based recommendations to improve the

project's implementation in other countries' programs.

As the ALLRight project concludes, it leaves a lasting impact on NECC, fostering innovation and revamping systems.



*“With the support of CRS, we have developed the feedback, complaints and response mechanism for the conference which had never existed before. The conference now has an approved safeguarding policy.”*

Boris Eloundou Mbia  
MEAL Manager of the Projects Unit  
© Mabel Chenjoh/CRS

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