CAMEROON FLOODING IMPACT FACTSHEET
Far North Region, September-October 2022
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WFP World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

Crops destroyed by floods in the Logone et Chari division (Date: October 24, 2022)
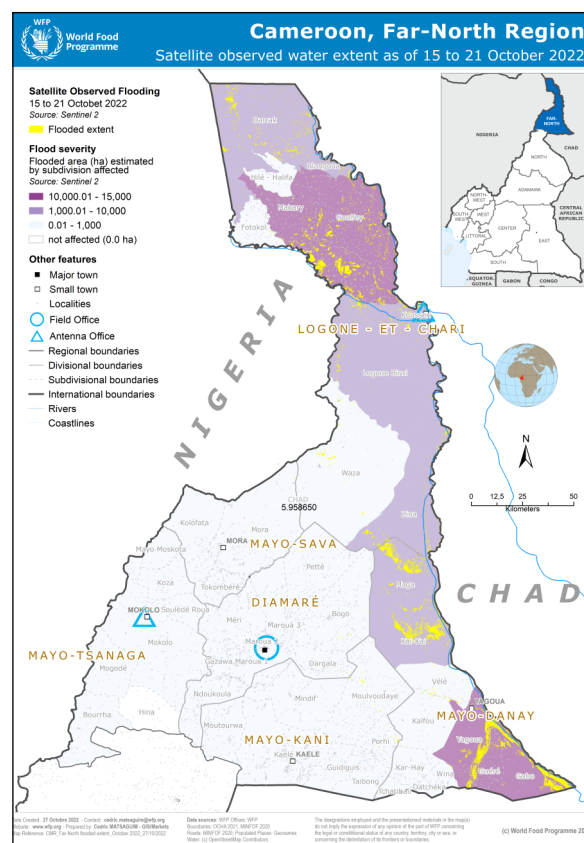Photo credit: MINADER Logone et Chari

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Nearly 42,000 households (around 250,000 people) were affected by flooding in the divisions of Mayo-Danay, Logone et Chari and Mayo-Tsanaga of the Far North region between September to October 2022**

- **At least 10 deaths by drowning were reported by the authorities, 5,886 livestock were lost, approximately 18,276 houses and 27,400 hectares of crops were destroyed**

- **About 126 schools were flooded and closed, preventing around 38,813 students from receiving a continuous education during that period**

- **More than 294 water points and 1,194 latrines were submerged**

Background

Cameroon's Far North region has been experiencing recurrent flooding in recent years, with dire socio-economic and environmental consequences. This flooding in seriously affects the lives and livelihoods of the Far North population, causing displacement, destroying infrastructures, damaging farms and crops. Its impacts, combined with insecurity due to attacks by Boko Haram armed groups in the region, as well as inter-community conflicts and poverty, aggravate food insecurity at the regional level, with nearly 1 million of people affected by acute food insecurity (CH, March 2022).

Geographically, the western part of the region is mainly made up of mountainous massifs and inselbergs, while the eastern part is occupied by a large alluvial plain that extends from the foot of the Mandara Mountains to the southern limits of Lake Chad. Hydrologically, the region belongs mainly to the Lake Chad basin. The Logone River is the main river, with a permanent flow that drains it. The alluvial plain receives its water mainly from direct rainfall (60%), from the Mayos of the Mandara Mountains (5%), but also from the flooding of the Logone (35%). Rain and overflows of the Logone River transform the alluvial plains to the east into vast swamps, the Yaérés.

These natural dynamics of surface water flow in the Logone River basin have been disrupted by human interventions, which impact the dynamics of flooding in the region. Indeed, the developments undertaken in the region during the 1970s significantly disrupted the filling and emptying mechanism of the plain. As a result, from May on, the first rains saturate the clay soils that, by swelling, close the drying cracks. The herbaceous stratum starts to develop and the pools begin to fill up. From August onwards, the inflow from the Mayos causes the first runoff, in the form of thin trickles, following the fine depressions in the plain. In September and October, the Logone River more or less covers the plain with its flood waters. Due to the clayey nature of the soils, the infiltration areas are reduced, limited to the main flow axes. This situation has led to recurrent floodings, as observed since September 2022.

Agricultural area flloded in the Logone et Chari division (Date: October 24, 2022)
Photo credit: MINADER Logone et Chari

Situation overview

Since August 2022, several localities in the subdivisions of Yagoua, Gobo, Vélé, Guéré, Wina, Kaï-Kaï and Maga (Mayo-Danay division), Kousséri, Goulfey, Zina, Waza, Hilé-Alifa, Darrack, Fotokol, Makary, Logone Birni, and Blangoua (Logone et Chari division), and Mokolo (Mayo Tsanaga division), have been experiencing major flooding. The flooding is the result of heavy rainfall in August and September, overflowing rivers, and/or the collapse of dikes.
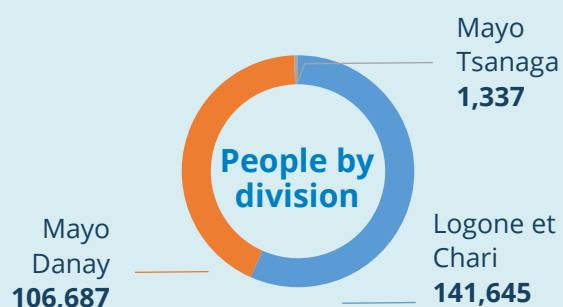
The heavy rains recorded in September 2022 in the region caused a significant rise in the water level of the Logone and Chari rivers, as well as the Maga and Wina lakes. This led to the collapse of protective dams such as those at Gaya and Dougoui in the Maga subdivision, and those between Tékélé and Alvakay in the Zina subdivision, as well as the overflow of water in several localities.

The divisions of Mayo-Danay and Logone et Chari were the most affected. Many localities were flooded, resulting in the collapse of homes, destruction of crops and storage facilities, and loss of livestock and other property. The floods also disrupted basic social services, including schools, health facilities and markets. The towns of Yagoua and Kousseri, the respective capitals of the two divisions, are also affected, with neighborhoods completely flooded. Some populations were forced to abandon their homes to regroup in safer areas, often in precarious conditions (difficult access to drinking water, lack of latrines, food, etc.). However, some households have not moved from their homes, and are living despite the inadequate conditions. Most displaced households are in spontaneous sites but make commuting movements to conduct their daily activities.

Impact

According to OCHA's assessment of the flooding situation in the Far North from October 2022, over 31,000 households, or approximately 150,000 people, have been affected to varying degrees by the flooding (OCHA, October 2022). The Mayo-Danay is the most affected division, with more than 20,000 households (HH) affected, followed by the Logone et Chari (10,000 HH), and the Mayo-Tsanaga, where the situation remains fairly stable with 68 HH affected. The situation seems to have worsened during the month of October, compared to September 2022 when over 15,330 HH (88,537 people) were affected by flooding in the region. The Logone et Chari recorded the largest number of affected households (10,230 HH), followed by the Mayo-Danay (5,033 HH) and the Mayo-Tsanaga (division 68 HH) (OCHA a, September 2022).

KEY NUMBERS: AFFECTED POPULATION

249,869 people

41,801 households

People by division

Mayo Tsanaga **1,337**

Logone et Chari **141,645**

Mayo Danay **106,687**

Subdivision	Household	People	Crops (ha)
Logone et Chari			
Kousseri	6,810	47,710	549
Goulfey	3,500	17,500	13,614
Zina	6,137	49,768	145
Waza	2,215	11,075	1,354
Hilé Alifa	360	1,800	175
Darrack	341	1,705	249.5
Fotokol	552	2,758	25
Makary	284	1,420	1,230
Logone Birni	199	1,234	916.5
Blangoua	1,335	6,675	6,453
Sub-total	21,733	141,645	24,711
Mayo-Danay			
Sub-total	20,000	106,887	5,183
Mayo Tsanaga			
Sub-total	68	1,337	
Total	41,801	249,869	29,894

Source: Government, OCHA, WFP FO (Kousseri)

In complement, the latest update from the administrative authorities of the Logone et Chari division, resulting of an evaluation meeting held on November 3, 2022, indicate that some 21,733 households (141,645 people) were affected more or less severely by the floods in this division. Cross-referencing data from the Logone et Chari department with that provided by OCHA allows us to estimate that an additional 20,000 households (106,887 people) were affected in the Mayo Danay, as well as 68 households (1,337 people) in the Mayo Tsanaga. This corresponds to an estimated total of **41,801 households** (248,869 people) currently affected by floods throughout the Far North. region.

Physical damage was considerable, with the submergence or collapse of **18,276 houses**, the destruction of more than **27,400 hectares of crops**, the destruction of **1,194 latrines**, the sinking of **294 water points**, and the loss of livestock (**5,886 animals**). Nearly **126 schools** were affected by the floods and closed, depriving approximately 38,813 students (15,826 girls) of education.

Concerning the agricultural season, the main crops affected by the floods are corn, rice, sorghum, okra, cowpeas, cassava, onions, cucumbers, tomatoes, and chili peppers, mainly in the subdivisions of Makary, Kousséri, and Goulfey (Logone et Chari division), and Sorghum, Rice, Cowpea, Maize, Millet and Cotton, mainly in the subdivisions of Kaï-Kaï, Yagoua and Vélé (Mayo Danay division). The Logone et Chari division was particularly affected, with approximately 16,382 hectares of crops flooded and/or destroyed.

Approximately 9.1% of the total area of cereals cultivated in this division during the year was destroyed by flooding (OCHA a, September 2022). This could contribute to increased food insecurity in the division in the coming months.

Other impacts were noted in terms of accessibility, with numerous flooded roads in the arrondissements of Yagoua (Mayo-Danay division) and Kousséri (Logone et Chari division). Health facilities were also flooded and rendered inoperable in the arrondissements of Kai-Kai, Mage, and Logone Birni in the Logone et Chari division (OCHA b, September 2022). In addition, cholera cases were reported in the Logone et Chari division, with deaths recorded in the health districts of Mada and Fotokol.

Authorities in the division also reported the presence of Chadian refugees who fled the rising water levels in their country and settled in ten sites in the division, including six sites in the Logone Birni and three others in the Kousseri subdivisions.

Response

In order to respond to the needs of flood-affected populations in the Far North of Cameroon, responses have been provided by both the government and humanitarian actors. These responses concerned the following clusters: education, health and nutrition, food security, protection (child protection, gender-based violence), shelter (housing, land and property; essential household items) and camp coordination and camp management. Some of these responses have included rehabilitation and recovery activities, through the development or construction of dikes or drainage channels, and/or the strengthening of existing dikes.

Concerning the prevention and treatment of all forms of malnutrition in children aged 0-59 months, 3,720 severely malnourished children under 5 years of age have been treated in cooperation between health authorities and humanitarian partners (OCHA a, September 2022)

Food security outlook

In terms of food security, the situation might deteriorate during the 2023 lean season due to the flooding that has ravaged over 27,400 hectares of crops in the Logone et Chari, Mayo-Danay, and Mayo-Tsanaga divisions. The Logone et Chari division is the most affected, with more than 24,000 hectares and nearly 11% of the division's cropped area flooded (cereals), according to data provided by the division's administrative and agricultural authorities (FEWSNET, November 2022).
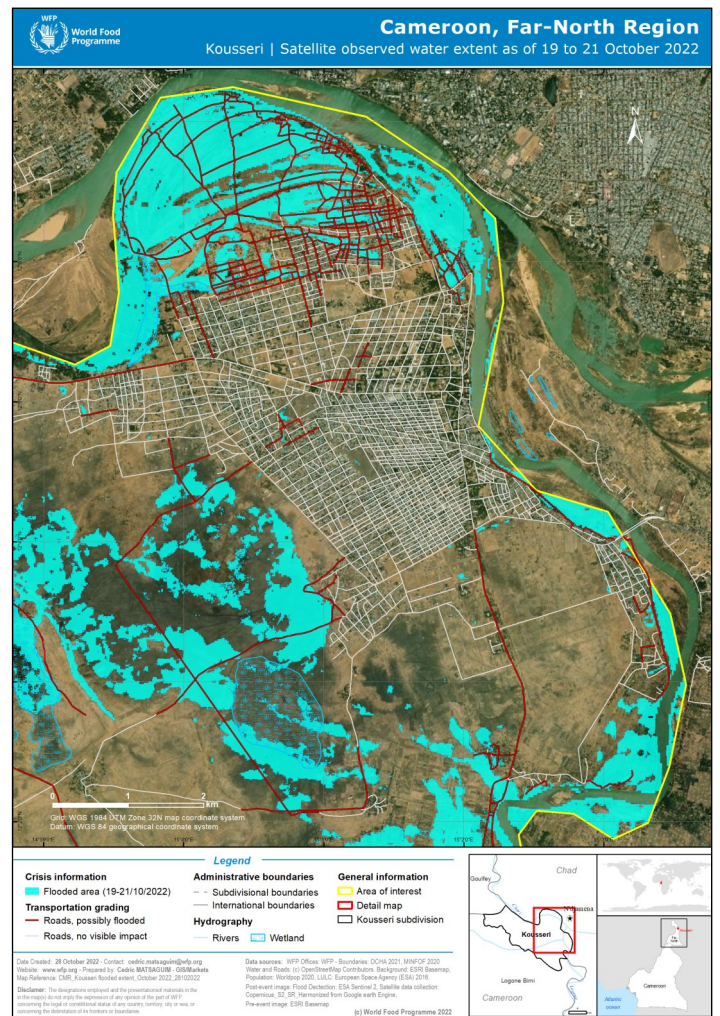
Farmer harvesting crops destroyed by flooding in the Logone et Chari divisionillustrating the loss in agricultural production caused by floods
Date: October 24, 2022

The recent floods occurred during the harvest period of the main agricultural season in the northern part of the country. In addition, the very high prices (+45% on average) of agricultural fertilizers recorded since March 2022, following the onset of the Russian-Ukrainian crisis, have caused some farmers to reduce the area cultivated during this agricultural season, especially for cereals (WFP, September 2022). These combined shocks partly explain the below-average harvest levels recorded in the Mayo-Tsanaga, Logone et Chari, and Mayo Sava divisions

This is likely to hamper the ability of households to build up food stocks, which is particularly concerning for poor households that are more dependent on their harvest for food and income through the marketing of a part of their harvest. There is also concern over the increasing prices of key staple food observed since the beginning of the year, which reduces the purchasing power of poor households and therefore their ability to access food. The loss of part of the harvest due to the floods poses a risk of higher cereal prices on local markets due to the drop in supply and high demand, including from neighboring countries such as Nigeria, Chad, and CAR. This is despite the ban on exports of cereals to neighboring countries that has been in effect in the region since December 2021 and is intended to control prices. However, it is possible that the situation will improve somewhat if the off-season harvests are good. Indeed, off-season agricultural production activities are underway, with the transplanting of dry season sorghum fields, which has begun in the flood plains of the Logone river and can benefit from the flood waters (FEWSNET, November 2022). According to ONACC forecasts, there is still a risk of a heat wave in December 2022 and January 2023, which would have a negative impact on harvests.

In anticipation to the 2023 lean season, it is important to closely monitor the situation over the next few months, especially in the Far North region, focusing on the Logone et Chari and Mayo Danay divisions which have been the most affected by flooding this season. Indeed, it is feared that many flood-affected households will be particularly dependent on food assistance to access food due to a limited access to their own production and high food prices over the coming months.

Cameroon, Far-North Region
Kousseri | Satellite observed water extent as of 19 to 21 October 2022

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