



Standing with African children and refugees



Monthly highlights

Edition June 2024

Plan International Cameroon



Editorial

MOHAMED BAH

Country Director
Plan International Cameroon

Dear colleagues and valued partners,

Welcome to the last edition of our **monthly highlights for FY24**. As we come to the end of our fiscal year, it is with immense pride and gratitude that I reflect on the incredible humanitarian impact Plan International Cameroon has achieved over the past year. The month of June is marked important events for us: The **Day of the African Child**, which is an opportunity to join forces to advocate for children's fundamental rights in the region, **World Refugee Day**, that calls our attention to the plight forcefully displaced persons...

Our engaged staff and community volunteers in our regions of intervention put in relentless efforts to fulfil our commitment in our main areas of global distinctiveness as you will discover in the Echos from the field. As we look ahead to the new fiscal year, I am filled with optimism and excitement for what lies ahead. We are on the brink of adopting **a new country strategy, which will build on our successes and address the lessons learned over the past year**. This new strategy is designed to scale up our impact even further, reaching more children and girls and ensuring that they have the opportunities they deserve to thrive.

I want to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you – our partners, donors, volunteers, and supporters. Your unwavering support and belief in our mission have been instrumental in our achievements. Together, we have made a tangible difference in the lives of many, and together, we will continue to strive for a world where every child has the opportunity to realize their full potential.

As we embark on this new chapter, I invite you to join us in our journey. Let us continue to work hand in hand to overcome challenges, celebrate successes, and create a brighter future for the children and girls of Cameroon.

World Refugee Day: standing in solidarity with refugees across Cameroon.

To mark the World Refugee Day 2024 at national level, Plan International Cameroon, Care International, Danish Refugee Council, Norwegian Refugee Council, Action Against Hunger, Catholic Relief Services joint forces to raise light on the situation of refugees in Cameroon.

We released a joint advocacy brief to draw the attention of stakeholders to the situation of the over 470 000 refugees in Cameroon in need of assistance. In solidarity with the refugees hosted in various regions in Cameroon, we equally shared their stories of resilience and tenacity through a picture exhibition and raised awareness of the need to create a world where refugees are protected and welcomed with open arms in a Live discussion.



Participants exploring refugee stories in images on display



Refugees exhibiting their products in Douala

In Bertoua, Cameroon's East Region, **World Refugee Day** was marked with sensitization sessions on peace, advocacy with local leaders, and activities celebrating refugee contributions. Children danced joyfully, underscoring unity amidst efforts to promote refugee rights and durable solutions by **UNHCR** and partners.

In Douala, Cameroon's economic capital, the population joined hands with the city's refugee community at a large fair organized by the UNHCR sub-delegation and its partners. **Plan International** and **refugee leaders**, including the refugee women's committee, celebrated the diversity of refugees in a culinary exhibition showcasing traditional flavors from across Africa.

In Maroua, a festive atmosphere prevailed as sports competitors, staff, humanitarian partners, state partners, and some refugees were honored with certificates of encouragement. To mark the day, refugees demonstrated their talents through exhibitions and traditional dances, showcasing their determination to work for a better tomorrow.

Day of the African Child: education for all children in Africa, the time is now!



Refugee kids at the official launch of the Day of the African Child



Children from Menchum, Babungo, and Bangoran standing for their rights



A refugee mother in Maroua happy to receive her child's birth certificate



Young children taking part to sporting activities to mark the DAC

The official ceremony marking the **34th** edition of the Day of the African Child took place on **June 19th** at the esplanade of Yaounde VII Council, under the auspices of **H.E. Pauline Irène Nguene, Minister of Social Affairs**. In its unwavering commitment to promoting children's rights, Plan International, represented by its **Head of Programmes, Yenji Mairou**, reiterated the necessity for *"a collaborative approach to mobilize resources and achieve significant results for African children."*

As it is customary for the Junior Parliamentary session to hold during this period, Plan International once more engaged with the 2024 cohort of child ambassadors emphasizing their role in the **promotion of inclusive quality education and protection for all children**.

In the **North West region**, children from **Menchum, Babungo, and Bangoran** enthusiastically participated in advocacy and awareness campaigns during the Day of the **African Child Celebrations**.

In **Maroua**, the celebration was a resounding success. This edition gave us a glimpse of the common commitment to children's primary rights. Each of the activities, from sensitisation to the mobile caravan, served to strengthen the awareness and responsibility of those involved in protecting children in the **Far North region**, often affected by conflict and climatic disasters. The government, in collaboration with Plan International and other partners, renewed their pledge to work together to transform education into a fundamental right accessible to all.

Jacqueline, an embodiment of female leadership in Winde, Ngong

Jacqueline, aged 18 and studying Management and Accounting at **Ngong Technical High School**, is the eldest of eight children in a family of farmers and traders. Coming from a community where women traditionally had limited roles beyond marriage and household chores, Jacqueline has defied norms through her active participation in various initiatives under the **Plan for Girls** project, supported by **Global Affairs Canada**. Her efforts have brought great improvements to her own life and the community at large.

She confidently leads two groups in her community: **The Champions of Change** (comprising about 50 members) and the **Youth Savings Group** (with 25 members).

Together with the Champions of Change, we regularly gather, exchange ideas, and support each other. Even in the absence of a facilitator, we can independently drive our initiatives forward. Everyone, including the young men, respects my leadership," acknowledges Jacqueline. She goes further to admit that "In the past, children in Winde Ngong did not attend school talk less of girls. Now, girls continue their education through high school and even obtain their certificates. Previously, even passing the BEPC was rare, but today things have really improved.



Jacqueline, female leader from Winde Ngong

Through the Youth Savings Group, she has learned financial management skills, such as buying and reselling groundnuts and maize. She succeeded to mobilise her peers to acquire goats and engaged in grain storage, benefiting from high market prices.

I strongly believed that if we could come together, buy and raise goats and sell, it would increase our source of income. Today, the interest generated by our youth savings group has enabled us to store cereals so that we can sell them when prices are high.

Jacqueline's initiatives have not only enhanced her standing in the community but have also revitalized **Winde Ngong's** sense of pride.

Despite facing personal and community challenges, Jacqueline remains undeterred in her quest for positive change. Her dedication has earned her respect including from community leaders who recognize her transformative impact. Thanks to their convincing power, the community men repaired the village borehole which now provides potable water for everyone.

Bamenda

ECHO assesses implementation of project in Bamenda

The **ECHO** team conducted a successful visit at the Plan International Bamenda Field office to evaluate the progress of their funded project. The team constituted by **Kerespars David**, Head of mission **ECHO Cameroon** and **Fidelis Erenje ECHO Nigeria**, had an opportunity to assess the level of implementation and engage in direct exchanges with the **ECHO** project team regarding project indicators and achievements.

During the visit, fruitful discussions took place, and knowledge was shared between both parties with recommendations to contribute to the ongoing improvement of the project in the region.



ECHO team exchanges with Plan International staff

Enhancing partnership and performance: WFP-TPM startup workshop



Plan International organized a three-day start-up workshop in collaboration with **WFP** and its cooperative partners aimed at orienting and enhancing the monitoring capacity of the **TPM** team and other partners. The workshop focused on strengthening partnerships and improving performance in implementing the **PULCCA** and food security programs in the **Northwest** region.

The event provided a platform for teams to gain insights from donors on monitoring processes and outcomes. It also facilitated the exchange of best practices among partners to foster greater collaboration. By the workshop's conclusion, **WFP** and its partners formulated robust recommendations to guide future implementations towards achieving **Zero Hunger** in the **Northwest**.

Bertoua

For every child, a birth certificate

In the **Eastern region of Cameroon**, many children work in the mines instead of attending school. Most of these children lack birth certificates and have never been registered. Adding to the problem, numerous fraudulent individuals pose as officials, promising these documents but ultimately leaving parents and children frustrated and deceived.

To address this issue, Plan International is issuing **2,000 birth certificates** to children in the **Eastern region**. An initial ceremony was held in **Batouri** as part of the **Day of the African Child** celebrations. This crucial initiative aims to provide these children with a better future, enabling them to access education and realize their full potential.



Biteng

Training workshop for community and health providers on sexual and reproductive health and rights

From June 24 to 26, 2024, Plan International organized a training workshop in the **Esse health district** to empower community and medical providers in **sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)**. Participants included chief medical officers from **Esse, Endom, and Dzeng** communes, alongside 27 other health providers.

L. Arlette, Chief Medical Officer of Dzeng, emphasized the workshop's timeliness in addressing issues like early pregnancy and sexual practices affecting which is still very prevalent in the local communities. At the end of the training, action plans were drawn up to disseminate the knowledge acquired in the localities, through educational talks and intergenerational dialogue with young people, parents and community leaders.

Garoua

Sustainability of achievements at the heart of the seventh year of the **#PlanforGirls** project

The event, chaired by the Minister of Women's Empowerment and the Family and attended by the Canadian High Commissioner and Plan International Cameroon officials, highlighted the **project's impact and the progress towards sustainability**. The session emphasized the importance of continued support as the project enters its final year.

Still within the framework of this project, startup kits were distributed to **60 girls** who completed vocational training in the **Lagdo** and **Tcheboa councils**, aimed at empowering them economically.



The seventh year of the **#PlanforGirls** project, supported by **Global Affairs Canada**, celebrated significant achievements in community initiatives led by young people. At a national steering committee session, young leaders from **Ouro Kessoum Lagdo, Karewa, and Ngong**, shared their success stories, such as learning and teaching sewing skills and organizing to support girls' education financially.

“

I learned to sew from the mentor in Karewa's safe space. Sewing has helped me meet my basic needs, and I've shared this skill by teaching seven other girls. Now, we work together, creating a supportive community of girls empowering each other.”- **Fadimatou, a young leader and Champion of Change.**



Fadimatou



Jean Lambert

“

We organized ourselves to pay the first installment of school fees for 25 girls over the last two school years to encourage them in their studies. Our goal is to scale up this support to 100 girls. Additionally, we engage in income-generating activities that enable us to sustain and expand our contributions to this cause.

- **Jean Lambert**

”

Maroua

Improving nutrition for children and women at the Mokio Health Centre.



As part of the **PULCCA** project, implemented by Plan International with financial support from the Cameroon government via the **World Food Programme**, efforts are being made to reduce moderate acute malnutrition among children aged between 6 and 59 months and pregnant and breastfeeding women.

Thanks to these interventions, beneficiaries such as **Dame Chueye Marie Thérèse** have witnessed significant improvements: her **18-month-old** child, initially suffering from malnutrition, received a food health card after a health center screening. This enabled regular access to **Super Cereals** and **vitamins**. Within just 2 months, his health progressed from malnutrition (**yellow PB**) to optimal health (**green PB**).

Additionally, awareness-raising activities on infant and **young child feeding (IYCF)**, **hygiene (WASH)**, **cooking demonstrations**, and **vaccinations** are underway to further support the beneficiaries. The **PULCCA** project, initiated in 2024 for a duration of 3 years, seeks to enhance nutritional health in the **Mayo Sava division**.

Maroua





Yaoundé

Mid-term results presentation ceremony of the Multi-Year Resilience Programme funded by Education Cannot Wait

On **June 13th** at **Star Land Hotel** in **Yaoundé**, we celebrated the significant progress of the Multi-Year Resilience Programme, which has reached **227,000 children** at mid-term in its **64 target municipalities** through the combined efforts of partners.

Presided over by the **Minister of Basic Education**, the ceremony brought together members of government (**MINEFOP, MINJEC, MINESEC...**), diplomatic representatives, international partners, local authorities, and implementation partners (**UNICEF, WFP, UNHCR, UNESCO, NRC, Plan International**) to spotlight this success and emphasize the urgency to further support vulnerable children. A strong plea for increased funding was made to donors as children living in crisis contexts will continue to face significant barriers to education if the funding gap is not filled. The



program aims to mobilize an additional **\$50 million** to reach a total of **454,000 displaced, refugee, repatriated, and host community children and adolescents** in the **North-West, South-West, Far North, East, and Adamawa regions**.



Global Fund Project:

Motorcycles for civil society organisations (CSOs) in the North region.

Five civil society organisations (CSOs) in the North region were provided with fully-equipped motorbikes to facilitate the efficient and rapid handling of health emergencies in the project communities. This will remedy the problem of accessibility in certain areas of the project and facilitate field supervision, especially during the rainy season, when roads are impassable. With this equipment for the CSOs, the 7th phase of the Global Fund project was definitively launched in the North region.



This donation follows the training of civil society organisations in programme and financial management, gender and the prevention of sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation. In the coming days, they will also receive all the equipment necessary to handle minor illnesses within the community and refer serious cases to health facilities.

Up-coming

- Launching of the Plan International Cameroon new country strategy.

Thanks to

Our partners and funders



Ministère des Relations Extérieures (MINREX)
Ministère de la Promotion de la Femme et de la Famille (MINPROFF)
Ministère des Affaires Sociales (MINAS)
Ministère des Postes et Télécommunications (MINPOSTEL)
Ministère des Enseignements Secondaires (MINESEC)
Ministère de l'Éducation de Base (MINEDUB)
Ministère de la Jeunesse et de l'Éducation Civique (MINJEC)
Ministère de la Santé Publique (MINSANTE)
Ministère de l'Administration Territoriale (MINATD)
Ministère de la Décentralisation et du développement local (MINDDEVEL)



- Plan International GLOBAL HUB
- Plan International CANADA
- Plan International ANGLETERRE
- Plan International SUEDE
- Plan International ALLEMAGNE
- Plan International IRELAND
- Plan International FRANCE
- Plan International JAPON
- Plan International FINLANDE
- Plan International PAYS-BAS

Editorial team

Editor in chief: Dr Eddy Patrick Donkeng

Coordination/ editing & publishing: Dr Eddy Patrick Donkeng

Layout and design: Balbine Ngwa - Communication and Media Officer/ Tankeu William - Graphic Designer

Contributors: Nfor Canicius, Ntangtang Bruce, Fombang Emile, Jeremiah Wunde, Apongpoh Gladys.

Derrière usine Bastos, opposite the Embassy of the Republic of Niger, Yaounde

Tel: 222 21 54 58 | P.O. Box 25236

Website: plan-international.org/Cameroon

Follow Us

Facebook: Plan International Cameroon

Twitter: @PlanCameroon

Instagram: plan_cameroon

About Plan International

Founded in 1937, Plan International is an independent global organization defending the rights of the child, committed to supporting vulnerable and marginalized children and their communities to lift themselves out of poverty. By actively connecting committed people with strong ideas, we work together to bring about positive, profound and lasting changes in the lives of children and young people.

For over 80 years, we have supported girls and boys and their communities in more than 70 countries around the world to gain the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to assert their rights, lift themselves out of poverty and live fulfilled and positive life.

We strive for lasting and large scale impact to ensure children, young people and their communities have access to protection, quality, inclusive education, health information and services and decent work and entrepreneurship opportunities.