



CAMEROON

Support to National Capacity for Disaster Management

Disaster Context

There is a constant threat of natural disasters in Cameroon, particularly in a chain of still active volcanos that stretches from Mount Cameroon in the southwest, to the Kapsiki massif in the northern region of the country. This threat ranges from volcanic eruption to seism, toxic gas emission from volcano lakes, landslides, and floods, mostly in the Centre Province of the country.

The root of the problem is the poor integration of natural threats into environmental protection and the low level of awareness or concern of the population to the existence of these threats. The lack of regulation governing natural threats, together with the irrational management of these threats, also contributes to the overall problem. Several ministerial departments are implicated in the management of disasters, namely the Ministries of Mines; Water and Energy; Scientific Research; Territorial Administration; Public Health; and the Secretary of State for Internal Security.

Project Title

Natural Disaster Management and Prevention

This project was initiated in the last cooperation framework (1997-2002). In the new cooperation framework (2003-2007), the environmental programme of UNDP Cameroon will continue the activities of this project.

Sectors

- Training
- Disaster prevention
- Capacity-building

Funding

Resource mobilisation activities are on going for the 2003-2004 period.

Partners

- UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
- Several government ministries
- Department of Civil Protection
- French Cooperation
- Various international and non-governmental organisations

Programme Activities

The overall project objective is to reinforce the managerial, material, and infrastructure capacities of the Government for the management and prevention of catastrophes. More specifically the project is aimed at:

- Setting up a national and sectoral plan for the management and prevention of catastrophes, and proposing the creation or the improvement of structures working in this sector
- Updating existing legislation governing the sector
- Reinforcing the managerial and coordination capacities of the Department of Civil Protection

Major achievements include:

- Development of successful training activities
- Increasing awareness and sensitisation of disaster reduction through seminars, validation studies, and general forums (i.e. General Forum on Mount Cameroon)
- Emergency relief for victims of floods and volcanos
- Elaboration of a UN Inter-agency contingency plan

Proposed activities for the new programme cycle 2003-2007 are:

- Organisation of the coordination and immediate response to emergency situations as indicated in the contingency plan prepared by the OCHA expert
- Preventive approach oriented towards the reinforcement of national capacities for the prevention of catastrophes and its integration into development processes
- Implementation of a sub-regional dimension of catastrophes and crisis management oriented towards the identification of ways and means to create a cooperation mechanism for Central African countries with the support of UNDP, other UN agencies, and development partners
- Creation of a fiduciary fund aimed at mobilising emergency humanitarian intervention funds from various development partners and those of the UN system
- Creation of a national observatory for risks, which integrates an early warning system