



Protection Update for the North-West and South-West Regions

March 2022



Figure 1 Community sensitization on IWD Limbe, Feb 2022 @CAMHELP 2022

I. Protection Environment

The protection environment in February was influenced by the lightening of restrictions on the access of protection monitors in the aftermath of the African Football Cup (AFCON) on one hand, and the tensions around the celebrations of the National Day of Youth and the 2022 Mont Cameroon Raise of Hope, on the other hand. Celebration of the National Day of Youth was boycotted by the non-state armed groups and saw the heavy deployment of security and defense forces, especially in the North West. Arising tension around the celebration as well as armed clashes caused the forced displacement of some 752 civilians (IRC, Protection Monitoring report, February 2022).

On 7th February, the government school of Bokwai (Buea/SW) was burnt down by non-state armed groups. The incident took place over night and no casualties were recorded. On 6th February in Banga (SW), monitors reported a mass arrest of 125 men and young men by the security and defense forces. The forces accused the community of hiding non-state armed groups. They all paid a sum ranging from 10.000 to 50.000 francs in order to be released. (DRC, Protection Monitoring report, February 2022).

In February 2022, a total of **279 priority protection incidents** were reported by protection monitors and like in previous months they mainly related to **arbitrary or unlawful arrest/detention and torture or inhuman, cruel or degrading treatment** (DRC & IRC Protection Monitoring report, February 2022). Due to changes in funding and



partnerships, protection actors carrying the protection monitoring activities are revising the allocation of geographical coverage and thus some geographical areas may not be covered in this report.

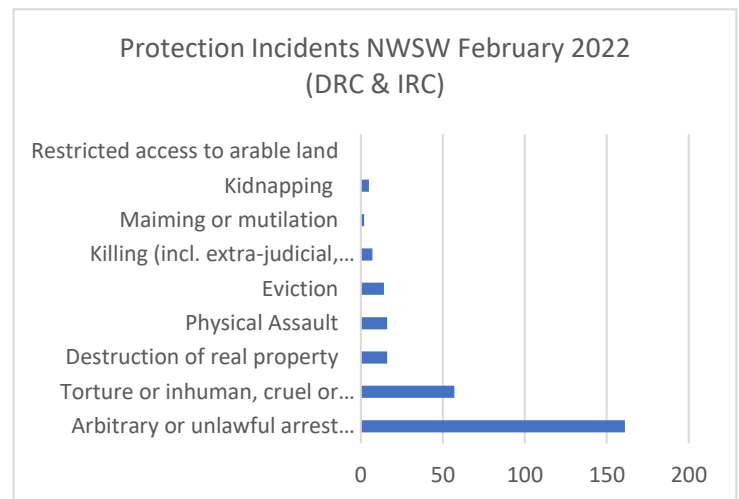
In addition, **GBVIMS recorded 832 GBV incidents** in the month of February, mainly emotional abuse and physical violence. The roll out of the GBVIMS in the NWSW regions brought an increase in the number of cases reported by the partners. The GBV AoR has however put in place the necessary capacity-building and monitoring mechanisms to ensure constant quality of the data reported by GBV organizations, and alignment with the GBV case classification. That also explains the 50% decrease compared to figures collected in the past three reporting periods.

II. Protection Incidents

In February 2022, protection incidents recorded through protection monitoring activities amounted to **279** mainly arbitrary arrests or unlawful detentions (58%); torture or inhuman treatment (20%); destruction of real property (6%); physical assault or abuse (6%); eviction (5%) (Source: DRC & IRC, February 2022). Protection monitors also recorded the **killing of 7 civilians** (6 men and 1 woman) during the reporting period.

The high number of arbitrary arrests or unlawful detentions in February continued to be linked with the organization of the African Football Cup (AFCON) that led to a massive crackdown by the security forces on the non-state armed groups and their (perceived) supporters. Yet protection cluster advocates for an increase of capacity and presence in order to conduct meaningful detention monitoring.

The perpetrators vary depending on the type of violation. If overall 50 to 75% of the incidents were perpetrated by security and defense forces this month, it is mainly due to the high number of arbitrary arrests and unlawful detentions. Incidents of physical abuse on the other hand are rather attributed to the non-state armed groups during attacks on communities and civilians.



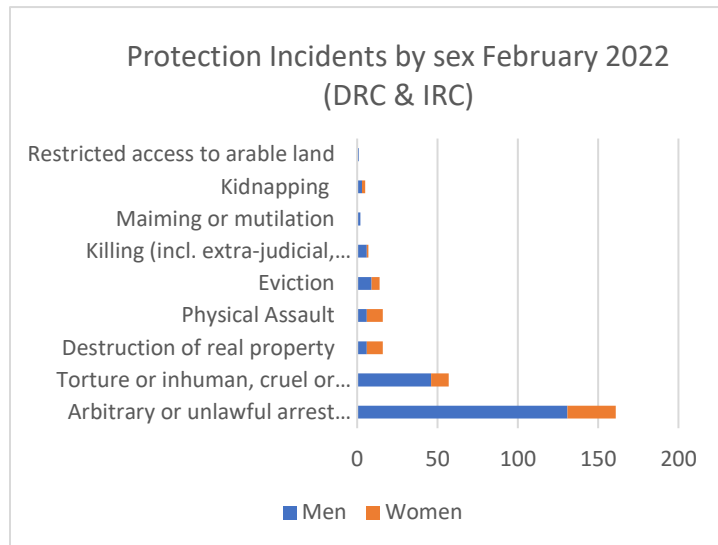


In terms of sex, men and young men are again the main victims of the incidents recorded in February as they are the primary targets of arbitrary or unlawful arrest and/or detention either due to lack of civil documentation or based on the suspicion to support non-state armed groups.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) actors reported a total of 832 GBV-related incidents. 45% of these cases were recorded in Mezam Division, 19% in Ngo-Kentunja and 12% in Momo, all locations being in the North West region. In February, GBV partners recorded only 90 incidents in the South West mainly in Fako, Manyu and Kupe-Manenguba.

Vast majority of survivors are IDPs (45%) followed by the host community (44%), returnees (10%) and refugees (1%). Survivors were mostly female (81%) but partners recorded 19% of incidents that have affected men survivors, especially emotional abuse and physical violence. 5% of the survivors live with disability and 37% are children (including 5% of unaccompanied and separated children). The most recurrent forms of GBV recorded in February were emotional abuse (30%); physical violence (21%); denial of resources, services and opportunities (19%); sexual assault (12%); rape (12%) and forced marriages (5%).

This month, around 72% of IDPs in NWSW divisions of Nkwen and Mankon (NW), Bomaka and Bueka (SW), have reported HLP rights violations including the lack of access to adequate housing and the risk of forced eviction due to insecure land tenure. Lack of access to arable land has also been reported by 80% of IDPs within urban areas of Bamenda 1 and 3 in the NW, and Nkwen and Mankon in the SW. This situation has led to the interruption of IDPs agricultural activities, their inability to pay rental fees for farmland and food insecurity (Source NRC, March 2022).





Key Messages:

➤ **To the Humanitarian Country Team:**

- Advocacy with administrative authorities (SDO and MINDCAF) to allocate farmlands to IDP or provide temporal grants of National Lands to the displaced persons in the NW and SW regions

➤ **To the donors:**

- NWSW crisis requires dedicated funding for the HLP coordination and response. Currently very few partners have expertise and activities on HLP while urban IDPs have difficulty to access arable lands and need legal assistance to secure tenure and prevent forced eviction.

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