

Bufi

Bufi is a village in Benakuma Council, that is located in Menchum Valley in Menchum Division. It is estimated that the current population is between 3577 to 10,607 people.¹ In 2012, the Benakuma Council estimated that the population of Bufi was around 3000 people.² Bufi is one of 30 villages and localities that compose Benakuma. The population is widely dispersed with 48 square kilometers per person given the natural features such as rivers, the valley's vastness, and also the hilly gorges on both sides of the valley. Bufi is located at 453 m of elevation.³ The location of Bufi is more difficult to access and it is only accessible by foot and motorbikes.⁴ There are reported to be 786 IDPs living in Bufi. 10% of the IDPs arrived in the years prior to 2020, 25% arrived in 2021, 24% arrived in January-February 2022, and 40% arriving between March and August 2022, showing an increase in IDPs arriving to the village as the conflict has protracted. The IDPs are reported to be from surrounding villages in Menchum Valley.⁵ Pendular movements were reported due to fear of attack, and IDPs flee to the nearby bush. There are no returnees reported to be living in Bufi. Security issues in Bufi were reported to be armed attacks, theft, and shooting. Protection issues were reported to be arbitrary detention and arrest and family separation.⁶ Various conflicts impacted the area prior to the ongoing crisis including territorial disputes and inter-ethnic conflict. The isolation and remoteness of the location is also exacerbated by the lack of development of proper infrastructure. Due to the fact that Nigeria is closer, the population often towards the country for access to goods and economic activity. In 2012, Bamunka Council predicted that investments by the Government of Cameroon could reduce conflict tensions and feelings of isolation and marginalization by the people.⁷

64% of IDPs are hosted by host families living in good condition and damaged mudbrick houses and good condition concrete houses. 37% are living in makeshift shelters made up of plastic materials, straw/thatch, and bamboo. Damaged homes were reportedly burnt intentionally due to conflict.⁸ No household assessments have been reported in Bufi Village or in Benakuma Council.⁹ For the Humanitarian Needs Overview 2023, the Shelter Cluster ranked Bufi as being in Shelter Severity Level 3, having moderate inadequacies.¹⁰

Natural resources of the area include tropical rainforest, agricultural land good for a production of a variety of crops, and a good climate for animal husbandry. As the location has a rainy season that lasts 8 months it makes the village more remote to markets where agricultural products can be sold and marketed. The extreme temperature variations and the drastic changes between the dry and rainy season has created intemperate weather which poses a threat to human life and livestock and has in the past destroyed agricultural productivity.¹¹ The soil is primarily Alkaline Intrusive Volcanic but includes a mixture of different types of soils. Fertile soils lead to the production of various crops and trees. Mudbrick construction and high-altitude crops such as Irish potatoes, yams, coffee, cocoa, and rice are also produced through the various soil types. Humus and sandy soils enable the production of rice, cocoa, bush mangoes, and groundnuts. Soil erosion, forest degradation, and weeds constantly threaten the productivity of these livelihood options.¹²

The Menchum River represents the closest river to Bufi village. Fishing is a common livelihood activity and the river provides a source of irrigation for agricultural activities.¹³ IDPs report using the

¹ Landsat Oakridge Laboratory 2021; Global Human Settlements Layer ECHO 2022

² http://www.pndp.org/documents/03_CDP_Benakuma1.pdf

³ http://www.pndp.org/documents/03_CDP_Benakuma1.pdf

⁴ OCHA MSNA

⁵ OCHA MSNA

⁶ OCHA MSNA

⁷ http://www.pndp.org/documents/03_CDP_Benakuma1.pdf

⁸ OCHA MSNA

⁹ Shelter Cluster

¹⁰ Shelter Cluster

¹¹ http://www.pndp.org/documents/03_CDP_Benakuma1.pdf

¹² http://www.pndp.org/documents/03_CDP_Benakuma1.pdf

¹³ http://www.pndp.org/documents/03_CDP_Benakuma1.pdf

surface water from this river source as their main source of drinking water, and treatment of the water prior to drinking it is not practiced. Key informants report that this water source is at 60 minutes or more from the locations where they are living. IDPs report that they lack water containers to transport water to the place they are living, that the water source is far, and that it has a bad taste.¹⁴ In terms of sanitation, the most common types of latrines are pit latrines without slabs, hanging toilets, and open holes. The challenges for IDPs are that there are not enough toilets, there is no privacy, and latrines are unhygienic.¹⁵ Waste management is also a challenge and exacerbated by the area's remoteness.

Electricity is said to be a challenge due to lack of infrastructure and the MSNA reports that there are not solar lamps sold in the market. Charcoal and wood are sold in the markets as a source of cooking fuel.¹⁶ According to key informants, market access challenges are related with high prices, the market being too far, and the market being damaged.¹⁷ Displaced people commonly engage in agriculture, daily labour, and petty trading to make ends meet. Food is produced from their own production, fishing for their own food, and gifted to them. Negative coping mechanisms include relying on cheaper food, reducing consumption and meals per day to feed small children, and spending savings.¹⁸

No humanitarian assistance was reported directly in Bufo village, but UNHCR reported delivering multipurpose cash to the town of Benakuma where 14 households spent the money on repairs, and 8 households spent it on rental assistance.¹⁹

¹⁴ OCHA MSNA

¹⁵ OCHA MSNA

¹⁶ OCHA MSNA

¹⁷ OCHA MSNA

¹⁸ OCHA MSNA

¹⁹ [Shelter Cluster 5W](#)