

# St. Ann Center: Joins relief effort for Cameroonian refugees

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More than a quarter ton of relief supplies have been collected by St. Ann Center for Intergenerational Care to assist Cameroonian refugees who have fled to neighboring Nigeria.

Over the past two years, tens of thousands have left the Central African nation as a result of the growing political crisis in Cameroon's English-speaking region.

The refugees, including a large percentage of women and children, are from the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon, home to an English-speaking minority population. The region's call to create an independent state in majority French-speaking Cameroon led to political tension, a military crackdown and violence that have driven people from English-speaking regions across the border into Nigeria.

"St. Ann Center has a strong heart connection with the people of Cameroon," said Chief Financial Officer Dayo Akande.

St. Ann Center provides health and educational services to children, the frail elderly and adults with disabilities at its two Milwaukee campuses. Fifteen years ago, Sr. Edna Lonergan, the center's president, founded the Cameroon Goat & Chicken Fund. Proceeds purchase small livestock that goes to the poorest residents of Cameroon.

Without urgent international support, the UN Refugee Agency warns, the refugees' struggle for survival will be increasingly desperate. In response, the staff, volunteers and supporters of St. Ann Center have collected 540 pounds of clothes, cleaning supplies, hygiene products, baby diapers, over-the-counter medications and nonperishable foods in collaboration with the West Cameroon Association of Wisconsin . WECAWI will arrange transportation of relief supplies to Nigeria.

Those interested in donating to the Cameroonian refugee relief effort can contact WECAWI at 414-544-3890.