

HIGHLIGHTS

- The number of people suffering from hunger doubled in one year
- Protection telephone hotline provides support to victims of abuses and provides overview of violation of human rights.
- Conflict between pastoralists and local communities intensifies because of worsening insecurity
- Serious underfunding undermines humanitarian operations: only 52 per cent received in 2015

FIGURES

# of IDPs	452,000
# of refugees outside the country	451,100
Population in need of aid	2,3 M
Population affected by food insecurity	2,5 M

FUNDING

613 million

Requested for 2015 (US\$)

52% HRP 2015 funded

For more information, please visit www.unocha.org/car or www.humanitarianresponse.info/fr/operations/central-african-republic/ or www.twitter.com/OCHA_CAR



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Half of the population faces hunger

An emergency food security assessment by the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and its partners has revealed that half the population of CAR – nearly 2.5 million people – faces hunger.

This marks a doubling in the number of hungry people in a one-year period, as conflict and insecurity have led to limited access to and availability of food.

“Three years of crisis have taken a huge toll on the people of CAR,” said Guy Adoua, WFP Deputy Country Director in the country.

“Families have been forced so often to sell what they own, pull their kids out of school, even resort to begging, that they have reached the end of their rope. This is not the usual run-of-the-mill emergency. People are left with nothing,” he added.

According to the assessment, one in six women, men and children struggles with severe or extreme food insecurity, while more than one in three are moderately food insecure, not knowing where their next meal is coming from.



January 2016. Gordil, CAR. Woman pounding manioc. Source: OCHA/Gemma Cortes

“WFP is extremely concerned by this alarming level of hunger. People not only lack enough food but are also forced to consume low-cost, low-nutrient food that does not meet their nutritional needs,” added Mr. Adoua.

The report shows that the 2014-2015 harvest was poor and that food prices remain high as farmers have not tended their fields due to insecurity, and hundreds of thousands have been forced to flee their homes and abandon their land and livelihoods.

Further clashes erupted in late September as much of the food security data for the assessment was being collected. That violence fuelled more displacement as people were slowly returning home. Nearly 1 million people are still displaced inside CAR or seeking refuge in neighbouring countries.

The report recommends continued emergency food assistance to displaced families and returnees; food and technical assistance to farmers to recover; creating safety nets

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through programmes such as the school meals programme; and providing support to rehabilitate the infrastructure through food-for-assets activities.

Meanwhile, WFP is providing emergency food and nutritional support to those most vulnerable and plays a crucial role in supporting recovery efforts. The agency's programmes focused on cash-based transfers and local food purchases going into school meals for thousands of children boost the local economy and people's livelihoods.

"We must help the most vulnerable, who need emergency food assistance to survive, yet we also need to focus on people across CAR so they can recover and rebuild," stressed Mr. Adoua.

In December 2015, WFP provided food for nearly 400,000 people through general food distributions, cash-based transfers, nutrition support and school meals, as well as food-for-assets activities, but \$41 million is required so that it can respond to urgent needs through to the end of June. To date, WFP's operation is only 45 per cent funded.

The 4040 Hotline: A humanitarian initiative to save the lives of Central Africans

At the onset of the CAR crisis in 2013, the number of serious human rights violations including gender based violence and killings increased drastically. Due to inadequate support structures or the lack of knowledge by the population about existing facilities; most survivors of violence did not always receive the assistance they desperately needed.

To remedy this situation, the humanitarian community decided to establish a Hotline in August 2013. "The main aim of this project is to facilitate the local population's access to life saving rapid response" said Léa, the Team Supervisor of the Hotline.

Accessible by dialing 4040, the Hotline's services provide "effective assistance in response to the needs of callers. Some people call for advice and guidance following a serious violation of their rights while others seek help after an incident or threat.



Bangui, CAR, Green Line Counsellors. Source : Green Line

Needs vary from one call to another and mostly concern cases of physical violence, gender based violence (GBV), assault, arson, insecurity and reports of shootings. Every call is unique, and each receives a personalized response" added Léa.

Diane a 40 year old business woman was a victim of GBV while travelling from Bangui to her village in the interior. Fortunately for Diane, she had already been sensitized on the Hotline's free services through a short message received on her phone. So she dialed 4040 for advice on what to do and access to medical services. With the response given by the Hotline team, Diane was able to receive appropriate emergency care. The Hotline was crucial in orienting her to obtain the assistance she required after the gruesome attack.

Rapid Response to people in need

The role of the Green Line is to receive calls from victims or witnesses of serious human rights violations, and to refer the callers to the appropriate and closest functional support structures. Among others, these structures consist of: medical, psychosocial and legal

facilities which operate in collaboration with the Hotline team to provide effective support to victims.

Upon return to Bangui after her dreadful ordeal, Diane was abandoned by her husband with her five-month old baby. Feeling rejected and confused, she called the Hotline once more and was referred to a center where she was trained on income generating activities. This equipped her with skills, enabling her to work and to take care of herself and her family.

The Hotline receives an average of 80 to 100 calls per day, of which about 51 per cent are from Bangui. Alongside calls pertaining to violence and human rights violations, the Hotline also receives calls concerning safety, the security situation in the provinces, explosive devices and voluntary disarmament.

Despite the smooth functioning of the service, a major challenge is encountered when calls are received requiring security extractions or emergency medical evacuations. The lack of functional national services such as ambulances hinders effective response to the people in need of such services. However, in most cases the Hotline refers callers to the MINUSCA intervention team, the only service that can attempt to provide assistance. The Hotline is consequently appealing for the restoration of basic services including ambulances.

Way forward in 2016

In 2016, the Hotline project plans to prioritize direct sensitization of the population in order to maximize the use of this service. A pilot activity was successfully carried out in Bangui's Marie Jeanne Caron school in December 2015. Based on this model, outreach activities will be replicated in Bangui and particularly in the provinces where residents are not very familiar with the service.

"In a nutshell, the Hotline's team offers legal advice and referrals to about 2,000 callers per month addressing a variety of issues varying from human rights abuses such as GBV, the dangers of explosive remnants of war to child protection. The team also responds to the specific needs of men, women, and children. In 2016, the Hotline will continue to expand countrywide; while providing effective assistance to people in need, in collaboration with its partners" said Léa.

Transhumance, a major regional challenge



November 2015. Bangui, CAR. Herder with livestock passing by PK5 neighborhood. Source: OCHA/Francois Goemans.

Transhumance, the seasonal movement of people with their livestock between fixed summer and winter pastures, is a traditional practice that cannot be ignored in a country where the farming system remains largely dominated by traditional extensive ways. This phenomenon represents a major challenge, given its socio-economic importance and can cause serious consequences for social cohesion, the economy, public health and food security of the populations.

Over the past few years, conflicts between pastoralists and local communities have intensified because of a combination of factors: worsening security; climate change, which drives herdsmen further south; the multiplication of migration roads, especially transnational routes; the expansion of cultivated areas and an increase in cattle herds, which have deepened the competition for natural resources. Pastoralism generates wealth and economic interdependence between farmers and cattle herders in some

"Ligne Verte" 4040, a protection telephone hotline that provides support countrywide to the population experiencing abuses and offers overview of violation of human rights

African countries, but it also causes tension and conflicts. Most of these result from competition for vital resources such as water or pasturelands.

Nationally, livestock and related activities contribute about 15% to total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 45% of agricultural GDP, constituting a fundamental component to the country's economy.

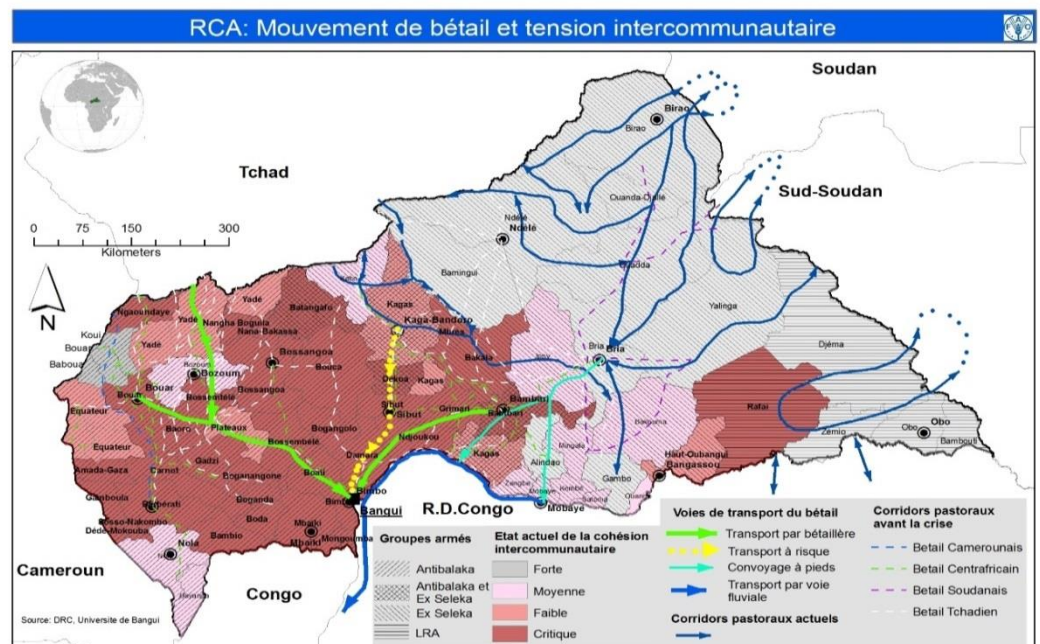
However, pastoral communities generally live in remote areas, marginalized, underdeveloped and often exposed to food insecurity and conflict. The provision of basic services in these remote pastoral areas is generally less well developed than in other areas, with low health and education indicators compared to national averages. This inequitable distribution of assistance and development level generates envy and jealousy, and contributes to fuel tensions between communities.

Transhumance: cause and consequence of conflict

The CAR crisis further undermines the respect of defined corridors or areas provided for this purpose, and results in a disruption of pastoral geography increasing tensions between herders and farmers. One of the main factors of conflict is linked to the influx of livestock farmers from neighboring countries, including armed men. The actions have become increasingly violent.

The influence of armed groups and the escalation of violence are overlaid by recurrent traditional conflicts between farmers and herders. The conflict resolution traditional mechanisms of trading arrangements passage and access to pasture and water, is severely disrupted, further contributing to the breakdown of confidence and social capital that existed between communities of breeders and farmers at community level.

The inability of some herds to perform transhumance and the disruption of normal channels because of insecurity, also lead to high livestock concentration in certain areas (particularly in the northwest and southeast), increasing competition for access to farm land, grazing and water. This increased pressure on resources causes damage to the fields where some herders graze their animals and tensions between pastoralists and farmers that can trigger at any time violent conflicts.



Thus transhumance is both a cause and a consequence of conflicts countrywide, opposing farmers and pastoralists, transhumant and sedentary farmers, ranchers and

Transhumance is both cause and consequence of conflicts countrywide, opposing farmers and pastoralists, causing great loss and damage to the livestock sector and impacting negatively on social cohesion.

armed groups. These factors of conflict and the disorders observed for the past two years cause great loss and damage to the livestock sector and negatively impact social cohesion.

The factors mentioned disrupt not only the transhumance but also constitute a real handicap for livestock marketing. With insecurity and insecure communication channels that prevent cattle traders to access to breeding areas for supplies, farmers no longer have as clients' small local butchers who often take the bullock credit. This plays on the price of steers which have fallen all over the country. The lack of access to animal protein is now one of the main causes of the deterioration of the food security of the people affected compared to 2014.

Key solutions to reduce conflicts over livestock mobility

- Improving governance, regulation of cross-border transhumance and concerted, equitable and sustainable rural space: demarcation of transhumance corridors with local mechanisms and strengthening the partnership with neighboring countries.
- Re-establish dialogue and social cohesion between transhumant herders and farmers and strengthening intra-Community trade: community capacity building & prevention conflict management; promoting dialogue and inter-community economic exchange through the integration of agriculture and livestock.
- Improving the livelihoods and enhance economic resilience of farmers through the development of livestock systems: conflict and poverty are closely linked and mutually reinforcing, so it is crucial to act on the factors vulnerability of farmers to have a positive impact on security and conflict reduction.

Funding situation overview

Humanitarian Fund releases US\$9 Million to respond to the crisis

The first standard 2016 country-based Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF) allocation will be launched on 1 February, for a total of US\$9 million. The eligible clusters, priority thematic and geographic areas are defined in the CHF allocation strategy document available on the <http://www.unocha.org/car/application-process-allocations>. This allocation will aim at funding projects responding to critical and urgent humanitarian needs to improve access of affected populations to basic services and contribute to reducing violence in and among communities. Projects including in their project design a knowledge transfer component for national NGOs will be considered favorably.

The multi donor funding mechanism CHF was established in 2008. Managed by OCHA, it aims to provide rapid and flexible financing to the most critical humanitarian needs. As of end of January 2016, the Fund has received US\$ 2.9 million in contributions from Belgium and Sweden. In 2015, a total amount of US\$24.9 million was contributed from the governments of Belgium, Denmark, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom making the CHF the HRP fifth largest source of funding.

Serious underfunding undermines humanitarian operations: only 52 per cent of the requested funding received in 2015

As of 31 December, the 2015 humanitarian appeal has received only US\$321,6 million in funding. This represents a shortcoming of 48 per cent of the total funding requirements outlined in the 2015 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). Despite a steady increase in contributions over the last few months, this low funding rate jeopardizes the implementation of critical humanitarian activities. The top three HRP donors are the United States of America (24,9 per cent), the European Union (13,5 per cent) and the United Kingdom (8.8 per cent).

Portrait of a local organization

“Children Without Borders” (ESF) is a national NGO, established in 2008. This humanitarian organization operates within the child protection, education and social cohesion sectors.



Bangui, CAR. Displaced children at Carmel IDP site.. Source: ESF

Over the past seven years, ESF has implemented projects within these domains: child protection during emergencies in Bangui and Bimbo and Begoua; provision of care services for children associated with armed forces and groups in the Mbaïki and Mongoumba regions (Lobaye province); education for children during emergencies through temporary learning spaces at the Carmel IDP site in Bimbo; psychosocial support for children affected by conflict in Bangui and Bimbo; rehabilitation of schools

affected by conflict within the Global Partnership for Education project in Bangui and in Mbomou province.

During the latest crisis in September and October 2015, ESF implemented a support and psychosocial project for around 45,000 displaced children in IDP sites located south of Bangui and Bimbo.

ESF's main financial and technical partners: War Child UK, Save the Children, WFP and UNICEF. ESF has recruited experienced staff to ensure effective implementation of its activities. ESF has 18 employees working in the Bangui office and 146 staff in the regions.

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In brief

Monkey Pox epidemic declared in Mbomou Province

On 11 January, eleven cases of Monkey Pox, an extremely contagious viral disease, were confirmed in Bangassou. Health authorities and partners have put in place control measures, including the confinement of suspected victims, activation of regional outbreak taskforce and sensitization of the population on preventive measures. The National Health Authority declared an epidemic by 28 December 2015. The World Health Organization has sent additional surveillance officers, a senior epidemiologist, protective equipment and medicines. The first cases were diagnosed on 4 December 2015, when two children with the symptoms were admitted to the Bakouma Health Centre (125 Km from Bangassou). The 11 new cases reported were in contact with the initial cases.

Lord Resistance Army attacks escalate

In recent weeks, a surge in larger-scale attacks by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) is reported. The most recent incidents include:

An attack along the Bria-Nzako axis, Haute-Kotto Province on 18 January and another attack at a mining site at Kpokpo village (117km from Bria) along the Yalinga axis on 19 January, led to population displacement. As a result, 1,217 IDPs have been registered on

the Boungou-Bria-Irabanda axis, where they are currently being assisted by OXFAM, MSF and IMC. Some basic water and sanitation installations have been set up at the arrival site, and food and non-food items have been provided.

On 22 January the LRA attacked Bagawa village and its surroundings, and reportedly killed 30 people there. This new attack could cause increase in the number of IDPs in the region. Humanitarian organizations continue to monitor the situation.

Second fire within one month in Bambari "S" IDP site

On 10 January, a fire broke out at "S" site for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Bambari, Ouaka Province. The fire gutted down more than a thousand huts and caused one death and 21 people injured. The injured were treated at the Bambari province hospital. Displaced families lost all their belongings - beddings, kitchen utensils, food and clothes. Humanitarian partners mobilized to provide emergency assistance. On 22 December, over 200 huts in the same camp were completely ravaged by fire.

Inter-communal violence in Ouham-Pende, houses burnt, and displacement of population

On January 4, the villages of Ndjoret, Bederee Elevages and Bederee Centre in the South-East of Paoua in Ouham-Pende prefecture, were attacked by approximately 30 armed individuals. About 87 houses and scores of granaries were set ablaze as a result of which the majority of the populations has fled to Paoua and in the nearby bushes. Allegedly, the attacks were the result of inter-ethnic violence erupting following the murder of a commercial motorcyclist. The details on possible casualties remain unknown.

Full results of Presidential elections published

On 25 January, the Constitutional Court announced the full results of the first round presidential elections held on 30 December. According to the Court's statement, Anicet Georges Dologuélé tops with 23.78% of the votes. Second Faustin Touadéra with 19.42% of votes. Since none of the candidates obtained the absolute majority in the first round, a second round is expected to be held by 10 of February. At the same time, the Court cancelled the first round of legislative vote held in December over "irregularities". A second round of presidential elections alongside a new legislative vote is expected to be held by February 14.

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