

Central African refugee situation

Democratic Republic of the Congo

July 2017

Highlights

- Asylum seekers from Central African Republic continued to arrive in Bas-Uele and Nord Ubangi provinces. This new influx started mid-May and was triggered by violence, tensions and fear about imminent attacks in border areas, namely in the city of Bangassou, Bema and Mobayi.
- Pre-registration of asylum-seekers was ongoing in Nord Ubangi province carried out by National Commission for Refugees (CNR). As of 25th July, 26,916 asylum seekers were identified and interviewed in the territories of Yakoma (8,468) and Mobayi – Mbongo (18,448). Among the most recent arrivals, a lot of children and pregnant women.
- New clashes between “Seleka” and “Anti Balaka” militia in the town of Bangassou (CAR) on 21st July pushed again civilians to flee into DRC, in the area of Ndu (Bondo territory). Due to inaccessibility of most of the places where asylum-seekers gathered, it was impossible to estimate the number of new arrivals. General Direction of Migrations (DGM) estimated more than 37,000 asylum-seekers already present in Bondo territory since mid-May. At the time of reporting, pre-registration was being carried by CNR.
- Following attacks in the town of Zemio (CAR) in June, around 4,000 asylum seekers were reported having arrived in Zapay (Ango territory, Bas-Uele province). Some Congolese returnees could be among these arrivals. Pre-registration as not yet begun at the time of reporting as required material was on its way to Ango.

KEY INDICATORS

102,503

Central African Refugees registered in DRC (as of 31st July 2017)

58,724

Of them **living in five camps** (as of 31st July 2017)

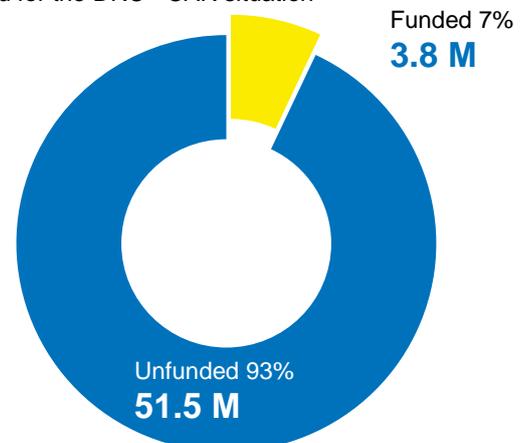
64,000

New arrivals identified by local authorities, General Direction of Migration (DGM) and National Commission for Refugees (CNR) starting from mid- May 2017. Figure to be verified.

FUNDING (AS OF 31 JULY 2017)

USD 55.3 M

requested for the DRC - CAR situation



Operational Context

Presence of elements belonging to armed militias “Seleka” and “Anti Balaka” from Central African Republic was reported in Zapay (Ango territory, Bas-Uele province). This area is already affected by the presence of LRA (Lord Resistance Army) militiamen. Therefore, Congolese military authorities called the population to evacuate the area. CNR is exploring the possibilities of supporting relocation of the most vulnerable. Around 4,000 asylum-seekers are in the area.



Makeshift bridge between Yakoma and Ndu. Only motorbike can cross. ©UNHCR/T. Kishala



New arrivals from CAR hosted in a school in the town of Ndu ©UNHCR/ T. Kishala

Achievements



PROTECTION

Achievements and Impact

- From 27th July to 1st of August, UNHCR and CNR conducted a mission to Ndu to assess security situation, road accessibility, protection issues and living conditions of asylum-seekers. The mission reported security situation was generally calm. Severe difficulties were encountered to attain Ndu by road from Gbadolite (315 km in total), as the first 195 km were feasible with vehicles but it took one entire day and the other 120 km were only accessible on motorbike in two days because of absence of bridges and inexistence of a path in the dense forest. No serious protection incidents were reported, but asylum-seekers denounced extortions by public forces and local authorities. Also the risk of sexual and gender-based violence is high. Living conditions are extremely precarious (lack of food, shelter, water and sanitation, health care) and existing infrastructures are outstripped because villages grow up to 15 times their population size. Only MSF Belgium is present with limited interventions in health and WASH sectors. Asylum-seekers stay on the river shores and are unwilling to move further inland, and they are also prevented to do so by local authorities as the latter hope to benefit from humanitarian assistance.
- In Bas-Uele province, during the first half of 2017, around 17,000 CAR refugees and hosting families were sensitized on prevention and response against sexual and gender-based violence by social partner AIDES.
- In Boyabu camp (Libenge), AIDES organized three awareness sessions on the theme “responsibilities of parents and children for holidays without violence”. 556 refugees (322 women and 234 men) took part in the sessions.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The mid-year report on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) reported a lack of Post-Exposure Prophylaxes Kits (PEP Kits) in Bondo territory (Bas-Uele province). Survivors did not received appropriate medical treatments, neither adequate psychological support. Moreover, in the area of Baye, women are highly exposed to SGBV risks due to the distance they need to cover to collect water.



EDUCATION

Achievements and Impact

- In Bosobolo territory, local NGO “La Colombe” started works for construction of three schools in Bili with DRC Humanitarian Fund. They are also planning distribution of school uniforms to out-of-camp refugees.

**HEALTH****Achievements and Impact**

- From 20th to 31st July, a campaign on prevention of uterine cancer was carried by ADES in Boyabu camp (Libenge). Awareness sessions, focus group discussion and prevention activities have seen the participation of several hundreds of refugees, most of which women but also men.
- Distribution of 48,550 treated mosquito nets was under preparation in the four camps of North and South Ubangi provinces. 22,922 refugee households will benefit from this distribution.
- Ministry of health approved the change of status for the three Health Centres of Inke, Mole and Boyabu camps, upgrading them to Health Centres of Reference. This decision will allow the centres to offer a broader range of treatments, including blood transfusions and emergencies, improving life-saving performances and reducing cost of referral to general hospitals.

**FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION****Achievements and Impact**

- 18 tons of nutritional supplements were provided by WFP for nutritional units in Bili and Inke camps.

**SHELTER AND NFIS****Achievements and Impact**

- In Bili camp, works for construction of the Instant Network Classroom (project funded by Vodafone Foundation to give access to digital education) were completed and construction of the multi-purpose hall were underway.
- In the first week of July, non-food items for 20,000 new arrivals sent from Kampala arrived in Dungu. From there, it is extremely difficult to reach areas where asylum-seekers are located. At least 15 bridges are missing.
- In Boyabu camp, 3,225 women in reproductive age received hygienic kits composed by sanitary napkins, soaps and panties. Soaps were provided by NGO ACTED.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- In Mole camp, sanitary napkins were insufficient, therefore they were distributed only to women that have just given birth.



COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND SELF RELIANCE

Achievements and Impact

- Harvesting of peanuts started around the camps of North and South Ubangi. The activities involved hosting communities. In Inke camp, more than 36 tons of peanuts are expected to be harvested out of 41 hectares of fields, benefiting 260 households of refugees and locals. Such activity supports promotion of peaceful coexistence and fight against malnutrition. Moreover, a part of the harvest will be sold and another will be used as seeds for the next season, thus helping refugees on their way to self-reliance.
- In Libenge territory, the national day of fish was celebrated the 22nd of July at Batanga transit center. This celebration aimed at promoting fishing as a self-reliance activity and as a peaceful coexistence tool. UNHCR and its partner ADES supported 36 refugee households with fishing tools and a local NGO with equipment for local population.



LOGISTICS

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- In North Ubangi, the road between Gbadolite and Bili is again deteriorating in several places. Rehabilitation is urgently needed as this is the only way to access refugees of Bili camp while the airstrip is not yet operational.



Peanuts harvesting in Inke camp © UNHCR/G. Nentobo

Working in partnership

- UNHCR coordinates its assistance with a variety of humanitarian actors, working together to ensure refugees benefit from dignified and efficient protection mechanisms.
- For this operation, UNHCR partners are: AIRD, CNR, ADES, ADSSE and AIDES. Other partners include CARITAS, COOPI, MSF, WFP and WORLD VISION.

External / Donors Relations

Donors for CAR refugee response in DRC in 2017

Japan (2.5 M) | UNIQLO Co. Ltd (0.9 M) | U.N. Foundation (0.2 M) | Vodafone Foundation (0.05 M)

Other donors for UNHCR operations in DRC in 2017

United States of America (28.4 M) | Belgium (1.5 M) | European Union (1.1 M) | Sweden (1.1 M) | DRC Humanitarian Fund (0.8 M) | Canada (0.7 M) | Private Donors Germany (0.5 M) | France (0.5 M) | Church of Jesus Christ of Latter day Saints (0.2 M) | Private Donors Spain (0.07 M) | Private Donors Republic of Korea (0.05 M)

CONTACTS

Chiara Cavalcanti, Associate Reporting Officer, DR Congo - RR Kinshasa, cavalkan@unhcr.org, Tel: +243 996 041 000, Cell +243 810 403 901

Ghislaine Nentobo, Public Information Associate, DR Congo - SO Gbadolite nentobo@unhcr.org, Cell +243 818 996 412

LINKS

[Regional portal for CAR situation](#) - [DRC page for CAR situation](#) – [DRC Facebook page](#)