CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Figure Analysis – Displacement Related to Conflict and Violence

CONTEXT

Violence continued to increase in the Central African Republic (CAR) in 2018, and clashes between armed groups and militia, as well as attacks against civilians spread to previously more peaceful towns and communities throughout the country.

A single attack on the village of Dembia in Mboumou prefecture triggered more than 18,000 new displacements in early January. That same month, clashes between the National Movement for the Liberation of the Central African Republic (MNLC) and the Revolution and Justice (RJ) group near the town of Paoua in the Ouham Pendé prefecture, displaced more than 62,000 people. Many villages in the area were looted and torched. The deployment of government forces and UN peacekeepers brought some calm to the area and allowed some people to return to their villages, but there is little information on the sustainability of these reported returns.

In the Ouaka prefecture, there were about 39,000 new displacements in Bambari, CAR's second largest city, as people fled clashes between armed groups between mid-May and mid-June and during renewed violence in October and November. The Haut-Kotto prefecture was also heavily affected by conflict, with more than 44,000 people displaced in the city of Bria in September due to intense fighting. In the Ouham prefecture, the city of Batangafo was attacked in November and several IDP settlements were set on fire. More than 20,000 people were pushed into secondary displacement during these events.

New displacements	Total number of IDPs	Partial or unverified solutions	
		Number of IDPs who have made partial progress towards a durable solution	Number of IDPs whose progress towards durable solutions cannot be verified
510,000	641,000 (Year figure was last updated: 2018)	No data available	175,000 (1 January – 31 December 2018)
This corresponds to new instances of internal displacement having occurred in 2018.	*This corresponds to the total number of individuals living in internal displacement as of 31 December 2018.*	*This corresponds to the number of IDPs whom our data providers have identified as having returned, resettled or locally integrated in 2018 and for whom the evidence obtained by IDMC suggests that progress toward durable solutions is only partial given their living conditions. In a few instances this number may refer to movements rather than people.*	*This corresponds to the number of IDPs whom our data providers have identified as having returned, resettled or locally integrated in 2018 but for whom there is no available evidence to corroborate progress toward durable solutions. In a few instances this number may refer to movements rather than people.*

NEW DISPLACEMENTS

This corresponds to new instances of internal displacement having occurred in 2018.

Sources and methodologies

IDMC's main source of information is OCHA, but the estimated number of anew displacements also draws upon data and reports from the Population Movements Commission (CMP) and the UN Security Council (UNSC) as well as broadcasts from Radio Ndeke Luka.

OCHA's partners including local and international NGOs, the Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) as well as its own sub-offices in-country, send alerts and updates about displacement movements across the country on a weekly basis. OCHA then collects and compiles this information at the national level and publishes it without further verification.

The Population Movement Commission (CMP), part of the UNHCR-led Protection Cluster, also sends its reports on new displacements. CMP reports are published on a monthly basis and cover the whole country. OCHA, the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster, Protection Cluster, Rapid Response Mechanisms, IOM, the Ministry of Humanitarian Aid and National Reconciliation, UNHCR and other NGOs feed into the CMP with their own data. It uses two types of sources - primary (registration data at sites hosting IDPs) and secondary (key informant interviews, mission reports, assessments or direct observations). OCHA and IOM also provide the CMP with data they collect independently, which the CMP then verifies through its validation mechanisms. The data collected by local CMPs and the partners is cross-checked and sent to the national CMP, which consolidates all the data.

The UN Security Council's periodic reports are primarily based on data from the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and its humanitarian partners.

The UN-funded Radio Ndeke Luka gathers information on the humanitarian situation in the country. Its main sources are local authorities.

Main caveats and monitoring challenges

The figures published by OCHA are not verified, which affects IDMC's confidence in them. IDMC also considers the figure to be an underestimate, for three reasons. First, levels of insecurity hamper access to IDPs, and thereby monitoring and data collection. Second, IDMC has not been able to obtain all the reports on displacement produced by the partners in country. Third, when IDMC has received reports with a range of displacement estimates, it has chosen to use the lower figures to avoid publishing higher figures that have not been verified. The real scale of displacement is therefore likely to be higher than the available data indicates.

IDMC figure and rationale

The figure is the sum of new displacements reported by the above-mentioned sources.

Significant changes from last year

The figure is almost as high as last year which shows the situation in CAR remains volatile and insecure.

TOTAL NUMBER OF IDPS

This corresponds to the total number of individuals living in internal displacement as of 31 December 2018.

Sources and methodologies

IDMC used the data compiled by the CMP, whose methodology is described in the previous section.

Main caveats and monitoring challenges

There is no actor or mechanism for registration of IDPs living in host families. It is also difficult to distinguish between IDPs and non-displaced people living with host families. IDMC's partners have also indicated that figures provided by local authorities also tend to be inflated.

Additionally, data on IDPs in certain locations is outdated, especially in areas where conflict decreased in 2018 and where very few or no assessments are consequently conducted. The lack of transparency within the CMP on its methodologies, particularly in relation to the validation, inclusion and exclusion of specific datasets also undermines IDMC's confidence in the accuracy of its estimates.

IDMC figure and rationale

IDMC used the CMP report at 31 December 2018 for its estimate, because it included the most comprehensive up-to-date information on IDPs in the country.

Significant changes from last year

The total number of IDPs remained similar to that in 2017 despite the high number of new displacements and reported returns. This highlights the volatile security situation and the volume of both new and repeated new displacements. Many displacements are short-term or repeated, and they do not therefore necessarily lead to an increase in the year-end figure.

NUMBER OF IDPS WHOSE PROGRESS TOWARDS DURABLE SOLUTIONS CANNOT BE VERIFIED

This corresponds to the number of IDPs whom our data providers have identified as having returned, resettled or locally integrated in 2018 but for whom there is no available evidence to corroborate progress toward durable solutions. In a few instances this number may refer to movements rather than people.

Sources and methodologies

IDMC used the IOM DTM and Action Against Hunger assessments to estimate the number of IDPs whose progress toward a durable solution could not be verified. IOM DTM is active in 9 out of 17 prefectures. Each assessment is conducted on four geographical levels: sub-prefecture, which indicates the IDP population of specific villages and towns, and the estimated total IDP population within the sub-prefecture; village, in which data is collected through key informant (KI) interviews; site, in which data is collected by KI interviews; and household, which is done through group discussions or demographic projections.

Action Against Hunger's assessment took place in Kambakota commune in order to assess attempted returns to Kambakota and IDPs from neighbouring villages displaced there. Qualitative tools were used to assess the situation, including focus group discussions and KI interviews. In total, seven interviews were conducted, and 80 people participated in the discussions. Action Against Hunger's Rapid Response Mechanism Teams used multi-sector evaluations to triangulate the information obtained from the key informants and focus group discussion participants.

Main caveats and monitoring challenges

IOM DTM covers only nine of CAR's 17 prefectures. From a national perspective, this figure is therefore an underestimate because of its incomplete geographical coverage. OCHA and other humanitarian organisations also published ad hoc reports on reported returns, but IDMC has not included them, as to do so would likely lead to double-counting people also assessed by IOM DTM. The CMP also reported information on returns in 2018, using IOM DTM data and reports from partners. It remains unclear, however, why the CMP's figure was significantly lower than the one reported by IOM DTM. IDMC has more confidence in the IOM DTM figures as there is more transparency with regards to methodology.

IDMC figure and rationale

IDMC used the third and last report published by IOM DTM in 2018 – Round 6 – which includes data as of 31 December. IDMC also accounted for 2,400 returns reported in Ouham, which is not covered by IOM DTM, and which were identified through event-based monitoring.

CAR's security situation remained volatile in 2018, and many people reported multi-sectorial needs upon their attempted return. Repeated displacement upon return is also common. As a result of a lack of detailed information on the conditions of the returns, IDMC accounts for these movements as unverified solutions.

Significant changes from last year

IDMC reported only on a caseload of anecdotal returns which led to the achievement of unverified solutions in 2017. This year's figure is more comprehensive which explains the increase in the total figure.

CONFIDENCE ASSESSMENT

The Confidence Assessment provides an at-a-glance overview of the comprehensiveness of the data available regarding displacement associated with conflict for each country. It describes the methodologies used, frequency of reporting, data disaggregation and geographical coverage. Here two key metrics are analysed: the new displacements and the total number of IDPs.

Displacement metric	New displacements	Total number of IDPs
Reporting units	People, households	People
Methodology	Media monitoring, unknown, other	Registration, key informants, other
Geographical disaggregation	Admin 2 or more	Subnational - admin 1
Geographical coverage	Partial coverage	All relevant areas covered
Frequency of reporting	Other	Every month
Disaggregation on sex	No	No
Disaggregation on age	No	No
Data triangulation	Some local triangulation	Some local triangulation
Data on settlement elsewhere	No	No
Data on returns	Partial	Partial
Data on local integration	No	No
Data on cross border movements	No	No
Data on deaths	No	No
Data on births	No	No

For any additional questions please email: data@idmc.ch

For the full country profile on Central African Republic please visit:
http://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/central-african-republic