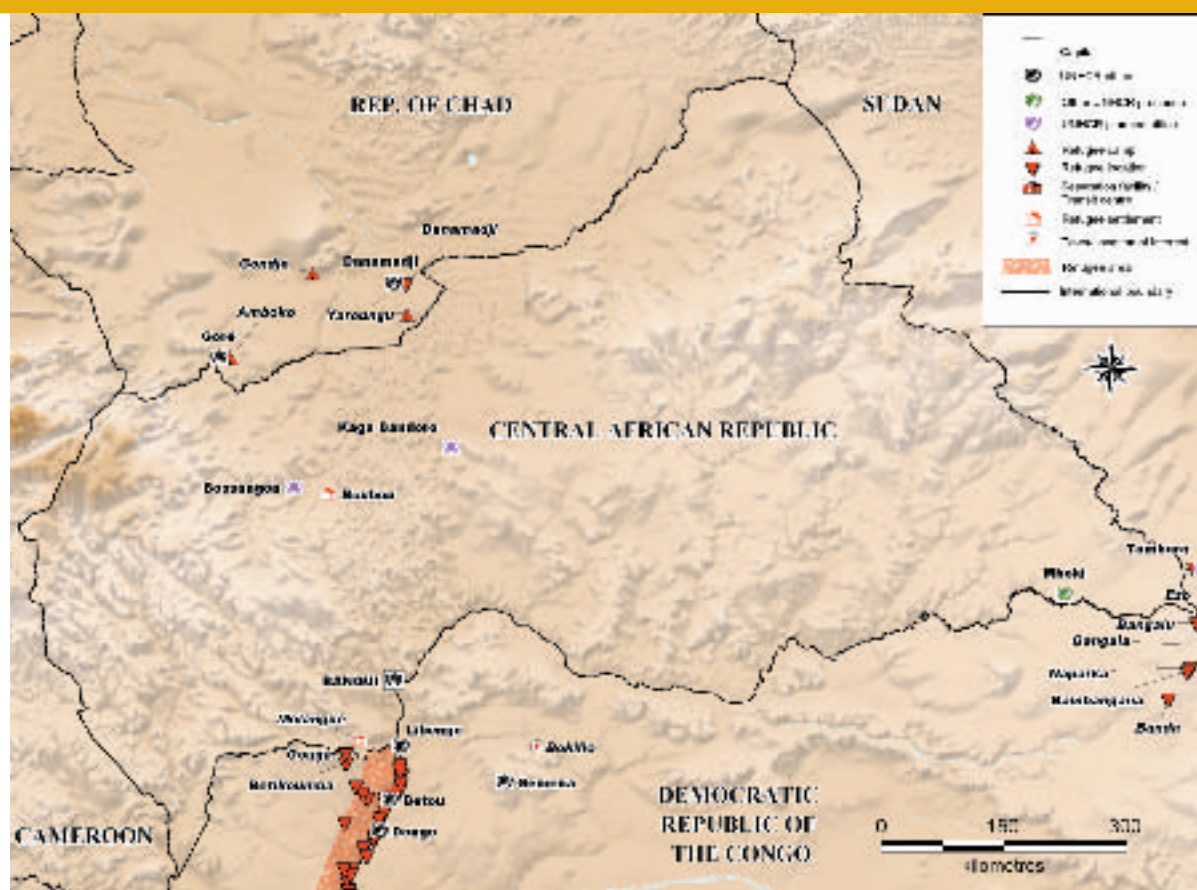


Central African Republic



Main objectives

- Complete the repatriation of those refugees from Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) who are willing to return to their country of origin.
- Provide legal protection and facilitate local integration for refugees who opt to remain in the Central African Republic (CAR), and pursue resettlement for refugees with specific protection needs and those unable to repatriate or locally integrate.
- Advocate for and support activities within the collaborative inter-agency framework aimed at gradually encouraging first spontaneous and later facilitated voluntary repatriation of 3,000 CAR refugees in Chad. This will include reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction assistance in areas of return.
- Strengthen the protection capacity of the Government of CAR, including institutions responsible for public order and the judiciary (in addition to those directly responsible for refugees and returnees).

Planning figures		
Population	Jan 2006	Dec 2006
Sudan (refugees)	17,500	9,470
DRC (refugees)	2,750	1,260
Chad (refugees)	410	410
Other (refugees)	-	240
Returnees	-	12,000
Total	20,660	23,380

Total requirements: USD 5,840,944

Working environment

Recent developments

Although the apparently fair and transparent parliamentary and presidential elections restored constitutional order, a general climate of insecurity persists in the northern part of the country. Following incidents in the prefectures of Ouham and Ouham Pende, some 12,000 Central Africans fled to Chad in three separate outflows in June, July and August 2005. This brought the total number of Central African (CAR) refugees in Chad to 42,000. These population movements prompted the Minister of Social Affairs to ask the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) to help assess and address the humanitarian situation in the areas of origin of the refugees. An inter-agency mission led by UNHCR visited these areas and confirmed that several villages were almost deserted, with cash crop production and commercial activity in abeyance. The remaining population was in dire need of assistance. The general climate of insecurity seems to be caused by attacks by *coupeurs de routes* (armed bandits) and other armed groups as well as conflicts arising from the non-respect of grazing routes by pastoralists, some of whom are apparently armed and cross into CAR from Chad during the dry season.

With a view to halting the population movements and creating conditions conducive to the return of refugees and internally displaced populations, the UN Country Team (UNCT) has proposed responses in the short term (humanitarian assistance); medium term (security); and long term (recovery activities). These recommendations were reviewed during the trilateral meeting on security between CAR, Chad and Cameroon, which was organized by the *Bureau de l'Organisation des Nations Unies en Centrafrique* (BONUCA) and the UN Peace-Building mission in CAR.

Despite the uncertainties of the peace process, most Sudanese refugees are determined and eager to return home. A tripartite agreement facilitating their voluntary return will be signed later in 2005 and repatriation movements by air are expected to start before the end of that year.

Some 1,300 Chadians living in Boubou in the region of Bossangoa were repatriated to Chad in September and October 2005, after hopes that they might integrate locally were dashed by insecurity and the collapse of the local cotton-based economy.

Further to the return of some 3,000 Congolese (DRC) in 2004, UNHCR has registered some 800 refugees who signed up for voluntary repatriation in 2005. Most of these refugees intend to return to relatively peaceful parts of DRC (although not to troubled Equateur Province). UNHCR will undertake family tracing for those candidates intending to return to Kinshasa or Lubumbashi.

Constraints

Insecurity continues to be a major constraint. Another serious constraint is the geographical isolation of some refugee camps and potential return areas, further aggravated by the poor state of road infrastructure. For example the Mboki area, where the majority of Sudanese refugees live, is accessed mainly by air and supplies that are transported by trucks take up to one month to arrive.

Strategy

Protection and solutions

UNHCR takes a flexible and empirical approach to the voluntary repatriation of Sudanese and Congolese (DRC) refugees. The operations are funded under separate supplementary budgets. UNHCR in CAR will ensure that Sudanese refugees receive adequate information and that they are familiar with the security and socio-economic conditions in areas of origin and the region as a whole, in order to take an informed decision on whether or not to repatriate. Mine-awareness campaigns will be organized prior to voluntary repatriation. In addition, refugees will receive all necessary documentation in terms of birth, marriage and death certificates and school diplomas. UNHCR will also organize safe transport to reception centres in countries of origin. Special measures

will be put in place to ensure the welfare of refugees with special needs such as disabled persons, separated children, female single-headed households and elderly refugees.

The office expects to complete the repatriation of Congolese refugees wishing to return to the DRC. At the same time, it will implement the second phase of the local integration programme for the 800 Congolese (DRC) refugees remaining in Molangue site, 150 kilometres south of Bangui, who wish to stay in CAR.

There are currently an estimated 44,000 CAR refugees living in Chad and Cameroon, including

12,000 who fled in 2005. The CAR Government is expected to re-establish security with the support of the peace-keeping forces of the Economic and Monetary Community in Central Africa (CEMAC) and France, while the UNCT is expected to help improve basic socio-economic conditions. The UNCT will also encourage dialogue between Chadian pastoralists and CAR farmers to ensure respect for grazing routes and implement a project for the reintegration of former combatants. These interventions are expected to further encourage spontaneous returns. UNHCR will also establish a field presence in Bossangoa and Kaga Bandoro. Detailed information about the situation in areas of origin will be collected and



Chadian refugee child at Boubou site. UNHCR / S. Beye

disseminated to CAR refugees in their countries of asylum. UNHCR field staff will help to assess the specific response required for their reintegration and start implementing activities to improve conditions for their return. The Office will also initiate the process of establishing a legal framework (tri-partite agreement) for the return of refugees. Conditions permitting, UNHCR envisages facilitating the return of 3,000 refugees in 2006 and expects 9,000 to return spontaneously.

The increased presence of UNHCR staff in Mboki, as well as the opening of offices in Bossangoa, Bozoum and Kaga Bandoro, will enable UNHCR to undertake sensitization campaigns on issues relating to SGBV, to monitor the situation on the ground and act accordingly.

Assistance

During the first phase of the local integration programme for Congolese refugees in Molangue, UNHCR focused on food security and income generating activities. In the second phase, it will focus on handing over the management of basic services to the Government of CAR and the returnees and on ensuring its operability, in particular the full integration of the health services provided by UNHCR into Ministry of Health activities in the Lobaye region. Similarly, since Sudanese refugees are economically self-reliant, support (especially in health and education) for the local integration of refugees who opt to remain will be devolved to the relevant authorities after the repatriation operation.

In the context of the Central African refugees' repatriation and reintegration, UNHCR activities are expected to focus specifically on shelter and other infrastructures while other agencies will support the re-establishment of government services. The Office will establish reception centres and provide transport to places of origin. Upon return, it will provide a non-food package while WFP will provide food rations.

Desired impact

All Central African returnees will benefit from the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the areas of return by the UNCT and other agencies, in support of the Government's activities. It is hoped that the massive return of refugees will also act as a stabilizing factor in the northern parts of the country.

Organization and implementation

Management structure

In 2006, UNHCR will operate with a total of 35 staff members (five international and 28 national staff), one JPO and one UNV working in Bangui and the three field offices (Bossangoa, Kaga Bandoro and Mboki).

Coordination

UNHCR works closely with the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Minister of the Interior is the President of the *Commission nationale pour les réfugiés* (CNR), which implements UNHCR legal protection and assistance programmes in Bangui and in the Field. UNHCR regularly receives support from WFP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO. The collaboration with other UN agencies within the UN Development Assistance Framework and the Consolidated Appeal process has further strengthened the response to the needs of refugees and other persons assisted by UNHCR.

Additional partners will be identified in the course of 2006 when detailed needs assessment is complete and responsibility sharing decided.

Offices
Bangui
Bossangoa
Kaga Bandoro
Mboki

Partners
Government agency <i>Commission nationale pour les réfugiés (CNR)</i>
NGOs CARITAS <i>Cooperazione Internazionale</i> <i>Médecins Sans Frontières (Spain)</i>
Others FAO OCHA UNAIDS UNDP UNFPA UNICEF WFP WHO

Budget (USD)			
Activities and services	Annual Programme Budget	Supplementary Programme Budget ¹	Total
Protection, monitoring and coordination	1,510,446	94,364	1,604,810
Community services	124,000	0	124,000
Crop production	64,000	0	64,000
Domestic needs	94,806	20,000	114,806
Education	240,000	0	240,000
Health	220,000	21,750	241,750
Income generation	350,000	0	350,000
Legal assistance	162,624	15,000	177,624
Operational support (to agencies)	229,000	0	229,000
Sanitation	10,000	0	10,000
Shelter/other infrastructure	500,000	5,000	505,000
Transport/logistics	765,000	255,890	1,020,890
Water	101,000	0	101,000
Total operations	4,370,876	412,004	4,782,880
Programme support	1,058,064	0	1,058,064
Total	5,428,940	412,004	5,840,944

¹ The figures refer to the supplementary programme for the repatriation and reintegration of Congolese (DRC) refugees.

Note: The Supplementary Programme Budget does not include a 7% support cost (USD 28,840) that is recovered from each contribution received to meet indirect costs in UNHCR (field and headquarters).