

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

April-May 2015

KEY FIGURES

426,238

Internally Displaced Persons in sites in CAR of which

36,927

In 34 sites in Bangui

8,103

Refugees in CAR mostly from DRC, Chad and Sudan in need of protection and durable solutions

91

Central African Peuhl released by armed groups in Gadzi, Yaloke and Bossembele sous prefectures thanks to joint protection missions since 5 April

FUNDING IN USD

Funds Requested for the operation: **51,415,889**

Funded: **18,620,463**

Equivalent to **36%**

PRIORITIES

- Close monitoring of the situation of communities at risk in Yaloke, Carnot and other groups of Peuhl trapped in villages around Yaloke and Carnot.
- Inclusion of CAR refugees in the presidential elections and referendum
- Close monitoring of protection situation at Chadian border and particularly in Ngaoundaye, Moyen-Sido and Markounda.



UNHCR colleagues accompanying families who were allowed to enjoy freedom of movement under MINUSCA escort on 8 May/©UNHCR

- **Update on entrapped Peuhl minorities in Ombella Mpoko:** A joint protection team composed of UNHCR and MINUSCA Protection of Civilians sections among others have secured freedom of movement for 43 Peuhl minorities trapped in Lambi, in Bossembele sous prefecture from 5 to 9 May. 5 men of the community were tasked to convey the rest of the group's cattle to Yaloke under MINUSCA escort. Since 5 April, 91 Central African Peuhl have been released in more than 7 localities located in Yaloke and Bossembele sous prefectures and some of them were found in dire humanitarian conditions. All 91 Peuhl arrived safely in Yaloke and are taken care of by the interagency response team put in place in Yaloke.
- **CAR refugees' vote:** On 6 May 2015, the National Authority for Elections (ANE) has officially requested UNHCR's assistance in the voter education and sensitization of CAR refugees in asylum countries ahead of the upcoming presidential elections and the referendum on the Constitution. This official request has allowed for the setup of a working group focused on practical modalities for the inclusion of refugees in the electoral process including the review of several articles of the electoral code impeding refugees' vote.
- **UNHCR's NFIs distribution from January to April to 2015:** The Shelter/NFIs/CCCM first quarterly report against the 2015 Strategic Response Plan shows that UNHCR offices in the field have distributed through various partners 3,814 NFIs kits to the same number of households reaching out to 19,070 persons.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **UNHCR welcomes the bill on the Special Criminal Court within CAR justice system:** The legislation on the creation of a special criminal court within the CAR justice system for 5 years renewable has been enacted by the National Transitional Council on 22 April. The criminal court will be investigating on the most serious crimes and prosecute the perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in CAR since 2003. UNHCR considers a major step has been reached in the fight against impunity, which has been identified as one of the main causes of insecurity in CAR.

Update on Achievements

Protection for internally displaced people

CAR Protection Cluster

- The Protection Cluster is led by UNHCR and co-led by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and the Danish Refugee Council (DRC)
- The *Commission Mouvement de Populations* (CMP) endorsed the following figures as of 5 May:
 - **426,238 IDPs** in CAR of which 36,927 IDPs in 34 sites in Bangui.
 - **130,904 IDPs** in 80 sites identified outside of Bangui.
 - **228,074 IDPs** are in host families and 33,033 live in the bush.
- There are 7 **communities at risk** as of 5 May 2015 with over 36,000 persons:

Communities at risk location	Bangui (PK5)	Boda	Bouar	Yaloke	Carnot	Berberati	Dekoa
Number of IDPs	24,000	9,000	1,600	316 ¹	553 ²	456 ³	70

IDPs in Yaloke enclave as of 14 May: there were 288 of the 474 IDPs who remained in Yaloke after the various spontaneous movements that occurred since 4 March. With the 91 new comers and the 7 who reportedly departed spontaneously on board of commercial trucks on 13 May, there is an estimated 372 IDPs in Yaloke (281 from the “old IDP caseload” and 91 newly arrived). A UNHCR team on mission in Gadzi area will return with a comprehensive analysis of the situation in Yaloke.

Return in PK5 neighborhood of Bangui: Return waves in PK5 neighborhood have been noted in April and May 2015, the figure in the table is therefore likely to have increased. The partnership between UNHCR-*Commission Nationale pour les Refugies*, UNHCR’s governmental partner for the identification of returned refugees will surely help determine the scope of refugees in this neighborhood.

Boda: A Protection cluster team will be carrying out an assessment mission to Boda enclave as the situation of the community at risk has reportedly evolved.

- **Result of Advocacy in Mbrès and Markounda sous prefectures:** two MINUSCA peacekeepers’ teams have settled in Markounda since 24 April and Mbrès since 22 April following several advocacy notes of the Protection Cluster. In

¹ Figures in Yaloke as of 28 May following a Protection Cluster verification mission. .

² 36 departures noted by the time of the report were deducted from initial figure

³ Of which 378 Muslim and 78 Congolese migrants

Markounda, roving teams will ensure populations' security in the area where armed groups and bandits remained active.

- On 2nd May, the Protection Cluster and MINUSCA presented during a special Senior Management Group for Protection (SMGP) a draft Action points and a plan for joint missions in areas in Yaloke and surrounding villages, Gadzi, Carnot, Berberati, Bambari, Boda, Moyen Sido and Batangafo for the monitoring of Protection of Civilians (PoC) situation in general and communities at risk in particular. Key recommendations of the SMGP meeting include (i) the establishment of a joint protection office in Yaloke led by UNHCR and MINUSCA for frequent Joint Protection Team (JPT) missions to monitor the right to freedom of movement (ii) PoC working group to engage in discussions with the Prosecutor in Bangui to ensure the criminal prosecution of perpetrators of crimes and human rights violations (iii) PoC working group to progressively establish coordination mechanisms with CAR Government and (iv) continued identification of populations at risk who might be trapped or held hostage in various localities.
- The Protection Cluster has initiated a collaborative work with FAO/Food Security Cluster, and in coordination with MINUSCA/PoC, aimed at integrating protection of civilians dimension linked to pastoralism and related violence. Under the leadership of UNHCR, the Protection Cluster and FAO/Food Security Cluster have been proposing within the "Transhumance Working Group" an early warning/alert matrix aimed at identifying areas at risk of violence, combining both protection and pastoralism related criteria.

Achievements and Impact by UNHCR and Partners

Population movements

- Displacement in Ouaka prefecture:** Bambari town and its surroundings currently count 31,430 IDPs hosted in sites as follows: site "S" counts 9,839 IDPs in 2659 families, site "M" counts 2641 IDPs in 624 households, site NDV counts 10,028 IDPs in 2264 households, site "aviation" and spontaneous settlements located at the airport neighborhood count 8,922 IDPs in 1879 households. In addition to these IDPs in and around Bambari town, there are 35,924 IDPs in sites and host families in Ngakobo, Grimari, Bornou, Ippy and Kouango, localities of Ouaka prefecture totaling 67,354 IDPs/15,146 in Ouaka prefecture. Considering the 2013 statistics of Ouaka prefecture estimated at 335,000 people, more than 1/3 of the Ouaka prefecture are currently displaced⁴. 1/3 represents figures of internal displacement added to approximately 50,000 refugees who fled to the Bosobolo territory in the Democratic Republic of Congo since the outburst of the CAR conflict in December 2012.
- Return in Bambari neighborhoods:** 1,638 persons in 403 households have returned to Akpe and 48 households to Mbela neighborhoods of Bambari as of 7 May. This return movement has been triggered by the presence of MINUSCA base and frequent patrols in these neighborhoods building gradual confidence with some IDP households.
- Return in Moyen Sido, Ouham prefecture:** In Moyen Sido, following discussions between UNHCR Kaga Bandoro and IOM in Moyen Sido, IOM started registering spontaneous returnees from Chad meanwhile the *Commission Nationale pour les Refugies* sends a team in the area. 850 spontaneous returnees have been identified as of 7 May with the support of the *Chefs de quartiers*.
- Quarterly border monitoring findings:** IEDA Relief shared the first 2015 quarterly report which shows the return trends in CAR identified at 16 official and non-official border points in Ouham Pende, Ouham, Nana Mambere, Mambere Kadei and Sangha Mbaere by 22 monitors. It is worth to note that these figures represent trends and cross border commuting is a pattern at border areas. IEDA reported that the high number of spontaneous returns in Ouham Pende in January was due to the preparations for the farming



⁴ Not mentioning areas with limited to no humanitarian access like Kouango town a few months ago.

season. UNHCR CAR has partnered with the *Commission Nationale pour les Réfugiés* to verify these figures in major return areas namely Kouï, Bocaranga and Ngaoundaye in Ouham Pende prefecture, Berberati in Mambere Kadeï prefecture, PK5 in Bangui, and Kouango in Ouaka prefecture.

Protection monitoring: (see more on attached UNHCR protection monitoring reports in CAR from Feb to April 2015)

- **Nana Mambere:** the protection situation in the prefecture remains critical with a high number of incidents notably exploitation of entrapped Peuhl minorities, exploitation of children in mining fields, sexual exploitation, torture, accusations of witchcraft, lootings etc. These protection incidents are mainly due to the activism of armed groups and militia heightened by the state vacuum in many areas. The security situation remains tense on the Baboua-Garoua Boulai, Baboua-Besson and Zawa-Gaga axes due to the activism of armed groups and to banditry.
- **Ouham and Ouham Pende:** the overall situation in the 2 prefectures remain very tense along border areas with Chad namely Ngaoundaye, Bemal, Markounda, Moyon Sido localities due mainly to (i) reported exactions by alleged armed men from Chad who reportedly shoot at people who attempt to cross the closed Chadian border in both directions (ii) and reported exactions (lootings, burning houses) on CAR populations in these localities in retaliation of cattle lootings by armed groups in Chadian territory. Furthermore, conflicts between cattle herders and farmers (and or armed elements) are a major source of displacement along Transhumance corridors
- **Ouaka and Basse Kotto:** Population displacement especially in Ouaka prefecture is persisting due to armed groups' activism, state vacuum especially outside capitals of prefectures, and accessibility challenges. It has been noted by UNHCR protection team that the transhumance corridors have been disrupted in these prefectures where some herders have been found in unusual settlements for fear of clashes with armed groups which resulted in a frustration of some farmers who reported not to be able to farm in their fields "invaded" by herders in Kouango for instance. Moreover, the absence of custom authorities has favored the activism of armed groups on sand banks along the Ubangi River who request illegal taxes to the traders navigating towards Bangui.

Housing, Land and Property rights:

- **Information and Counseling listening centers in Bangui, Begoua and Bimbo:** 874 persons were received in the ICLA centers which are mobile listening centers in charge of providing information, counseling, and assistance in the resolution of land disputes.
- **Protection of HLP rights in a former Muslim district of Bossangoa by UNHCR Team:** concerns had been raised about illegal secondary occupations of houses in the abandoned Muslim neighbourhood of Boro in Bossangoa. The regional Protection Cluster consequently met with the President of the Bossangoa Tribunal to discuss the issue. The President requested UNHCR and UNOCHA's support to organize sensitization sessions in Boro along with representatives of the police, Mayor and Prefect offices, and gendarmerie and community leaders in order to raise awareness on and prevent these illegal occupations. This is a first step towards securing people's housing rights, UNHCR and partner Norwegian Refugee Council are exploring possibilities to extend the Bangui based project to Ouham, Mambere Kadeï, Nana Mambere prefectures where monitoring reports show that returned IDPs/refugees do experience restitution of their properties.

SGBV prevention and response:

- **The first trimestral report of GBV Information System (GBVIMS)** was presented to the protection actors. The report, with data from 4 NGOs providing medical and psychosocial services to survivors of GBV in 8 sub-prefectures, documented 127 cases of rape, 120 cases of sexual violence, 258 of physical aggression, 63 of forced marriage, 50 cases of denial of resources, and 51 cases of psychological violence⁵. To respond to the need of increasing the number of GBVIMS users and the data quality, training will take place between 2-4th of June.
- **Listening centers in Yaloke, Baoro, Baboua (Nana Mambere and Ombella Mpoko):** 186 cases were received through 12 listening sessions of Yaloke, Baoro and Baboua sous prefectures of which 23 cases of rape, 6 cases of sexual abuse, 33 cases of torture, 3 cases of forced marriage and the rest are non GBV related cases. All survivors received the psychological support needed while 4 cases were referred to the justice system, 1 case to public forces,

⁵ Comment: The results are only cases documented through service providers, and they cannot be extrapolated to the country level.

10 cases to health centers, 30 cases were identified as the future beneficiaries of the income generating activities. 8 family mediations were performed and proved successful and 63 dignity kits composed of nonfood items were distributed as well. It is worth to note that group counseling sessions targeted 100 women and these sessions aimed to reinforce these women's capacity to handle GBV cases.

- **Nana Gribizi and Kemo prefectures:** In April, 104 GBV cases have been identified by UNHCR's partner Intersos in Kaga Bandoro, Ouandago, Mbrès and Dekoa in Nana Gribizi and Kemo prefectures of which 62 cases of rape and 4 cases of children associated with armed groups and cases of torture. Armed groups and cattle herders were identified as the main perpetrators of these incidents. 24 cases out of the 104 are minors (9 boys and 15 girls), 7 men and 73 are women. UNHCR advocated towards local authorities and MINUSCA for the prosecution of the perpetrators and the sensitization of armed elements on their responsibilities before the law for the crimes committed.



Shelter and NFIs for internally displaced people

- The Shelter/NFI/CCCM cluster is led by UNHCR and co-led by ACTED for the Shelter/NFI and IOM for the CCCM
- Return process of IDPs in Mpoko airport site in Bangui:
 - How should it work:** 4,319 households/18,363 persons were registered in the Mpoko database. Households willing to return requests deactivation from the database in one of the 4 areas in Mpoko site set by IOM for this matter. After deactivation, the returnee household registered at the Mayor's office of its return district and normally gets the food and NFIs allocations while his shelter in Mpoko is dismantled to prevent reoccupation. The returnee family will eventually receive a cash allocation equivalent of 150 USD. A monitoring team in the neighborhoods will then follow the return process. It's worth to note that the return package is standardized for all family sizes.
 - Composition of the return package:** 90,000 XAF (150 USD) + mosquito nets + Plastic sheeting + dignity kits

Achievements and Impact by UNHCR and partners

NFI distribution in Ouham:

Bouca: UNHCR distributed NFIs kits to 112 IDPs households out of the 163 households identified in the town. 70 households were in the IDP site and the 42 from host families.

Kouki: Following a multi sectoral assessment in Kouki by *Action Contre la Faim*, a partner of the Rapid Response Mechanism in Ouham prefecture and considering the shortfalls in their stockpile, UNHCR Bossangoa donated 829 plastic mats, 1512 buckets, 718 blankets and 930 plastic sheeting to respond to the identified needs of 930 IDP households.

Markounda: IEDA Relief distributed NFI kits to 1,160 returning IDPs and 134 IDPs hosted at the Catholic Church composed of 1960 blankets, 1975 mats, 1294 buckets, 134 kitchen sets, 130 plastic mats, 2000 jerry cans, and sanitary kits for IDPs and returning women.

CCCM in Ouaka and Ouham prefecture

Alternative Site in Bambari: Thanks to UNHCR's partnership with the *Cooperazione Internazionale* (COOPI) and to the expertise of UNHCR's Site Planner, the site has been fenced and set up. 729 IDP households including 104 sheltering in administrative buildings and the rest from site "M"⁶ were given plots in the alternative site. The UNHCR funded project in partnership with COOPI also include (i) a provision of 300 emergency shelters for vulnerable IDP families (people with handicap and without family support, women heading households, elderly etc.) of which 178 have been completed and 96 are occupied as of 7 May (ii) the distribution of 429 shelter kits to IDP households able to construct. The kits are composed of poles, reeds, nails, creepers, thatch and 2 pieces of plastic sheeting. There will be a need to ensure a

⁶ "M" stands for site near MISCA. The S stands for the site close to Sangaris. It's worth to note that the Sangaris base moved from the town to the Bambari airport.

return oriented camp management and camp coordination in the new site focusing on “go and see” visits in return neighbourhoods to build confidence within IDP populations.

CCCM/Local integration prospects for IDPs at Petit Séminaire site in Bossangoa: the site currently hosts 33 IDP households (128 persons) from villages around Bossangoa who eventually choose to stay in Bossangoa as they have found work in the city. The Mayor’s office manages the site with the support of the CCCM working group and is exploring ways to support these families to locally integrate in Bossangoa neighbourhoods.


Support to reconstruction in Ouham Pende:



Ouham Pende prefecture is witnessing two different dynamics, on the one hand populations are returning mainly in Kouï and Bocaranga sous prefecture while displacement continue in Ngaoundaye sous prefectures, north of Paoua, at border areas with Chad. During a mission in Letele, Doko and Bocaranga centre mid-May, UNHCR’s office in Paoua reported the need to support reconstruction for the returning refugees and IDPs identified Bocaranga sous-prefecture.

On another hand, populations of Mbinaye village (Ngaoundaye sub-prefecture) attacked on 5 May by armed men resulting in the burning of 35 houses are also in need of support to reconstruction. UNHCR’s project to support the reconstruction of 840 shelters implemented by the *Agence d’aide a la Cooperation Technique et Developpement* (ACTED) for over 5,000 people in Kouï and Bocaranga sous prefectures would not be sufficient to tackle the needs of the many returning IDPs and some returning refugees estimated at over 5,000 households in the two sous prefecture only.



 **Multi-Sectoral assistance to Refugees**

- Congolese refugees in Zemio camp, Haut Mbomou prefecture**
- Sudanese Refugees in Pladama Ouaka camp in Bambari, Ouaka prefecture**
- Urban refugees and 409 asylum seekers in Bangui**

Food voucher by WFP: Following UNHCR and WFP meeting in Bangui on vouchers for the Congolese refugees in Zemio in lieu of general food distribution, WFP carried out a mission in Zemio during the first week of May aiming at assessing

the feasibility of the voucher approach. WFP and UNHCR met with refugees in order to assess their food preferences. The new system is planned to kick off by end of May and COOPI, UNHCR's partner in Zemio, will implement the voucher programme.

Justice in haut Mbomou: a court hearing operation was held by the President of the Obo tribunal. A total of 12 persons have been sentenced and transferred to Obo prison including 2 refugees, a murder and a rape case. UNHCR attended the hearings in order to monitor the trial.

Birth certificates:

Zemio: There are 54 new born refugees in Zemio since January 2015 of whom 26 birth certificates have been issued by the civil status office and 28 are still pending. UNHCR and CNR are following up on these pending cases.

Bambari: On the 249 Sudanese children born in Sam Ouandja for whom, birth certificates should be issued: UNHCR Bangui has met with the Prosecutor of Bria who covers Haute Kotto prefecture where Sam Ouandja is located to discuss the need to obtain remedial orders for birth certificates for the 249 refugee children born in Sam Ouandja before relocation to the camp in 2010. The Prosecutor confirmed the possibility to carry out such an exercise but requested UNHCR to fund the process. Programme section has been following up on this request.

Supplementary feeding in Zemio: 30 children (15 refugees and 15 from the host community) and 13 pregnant women (11 refugees and 2 from the host community) have started the supplementary feeding programme put in place in Zemio by the International Medical Corps, UNHCR's partner for health in the camp.

Immunization campaigns in Bambari: From 27 to 29 April, the International Medical Corps carry out poliomyelitis vaccination campaign targeting children aged 0-10 years and vitamin A supplementation targeting children aged 0-59 months in Bambari town and in the refugee camp.

Education in Bambari town: UNHCR CAR provides kinder garden, primary and secondary education to rural and urban refugees in CAR. In Bambari Sudanese refugee camp, kinder garden and primary schooling are provided in conformity with both Sudanese (Arab) and Central Africa (French) curriculum while in Zemio, the Congolese refugees follow the Congolese curriculum. During the reporting period, 36 Sudanese refugee adolescents (14 girls and 22 men) in Pladama Ouaka camp were conveyed to Bambari town to continue with secondary education. A compartmented house was rented by UNHCR's partner COOPI in order to host refugee adolescents and 2 adult refugees were chosen to stay with the adolescents in Bambari. The convoy was under MINUSCA escort as the 12km separating the camp to Bambari town is still unsecure with armed elements looting and threatening refugees' life.



People with special needs in Bangui: In a bid to find tailored solutions to challenges faced by refugees and asylum seekers with specific needs (vulnerable families) in Bangui, UNHCR carried out joint door to door monitoring missions jointly with the Danish Refugee Council, UNHCR's partner for education, socio economical and health activities in the capital city. The visit targets 118 households identified as the most vulnerable among the 648 households in Bangui. 95 were visited during the reporting period.

Refugee Status Determination: A working session was held on 21 April with the Commission Nationale pour les Refugies (CNR) on the 82 RSD files on hold. The CNR invited members of the Eligibility Sub-Committee (ESC) in a bid to reinforce their capacity and to prepare for the next ESC session planned in May 2015.

Repatriation in Bangui: 2 Central African families of 6 persons have returned during the reporting period from Mauritania.

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Links

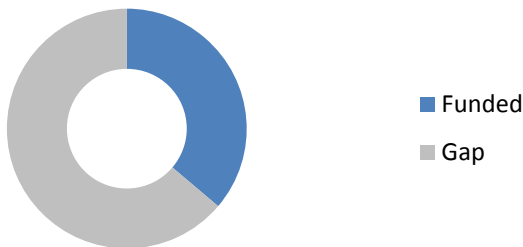
CAR regional web portal: <http://data.unhcr.org/car/regional.php>

UNHCR is grateful for the support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked and broadly earmarked funds:

Funding in USD

Donors

A total of 18.6 million has been funded



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UNHCR Presence and Staff in CAR

UNHCR Offices in CAR: 07 offices in Bangui, Bossangoa, Zemio, Bambari, Bouar, Paoua and Kaga Bandoro

UNHCR Staff in CAR: 92 national staff, 24 international staff, 4 IUNV, 1 Consultant