

## CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC SITUATION

### UNHCR REGIONAL UPDATE 64

1 January – 31 January 2016

#### KEY FIGURES

**465,145**

Central African refugees in Cameroon, Chad, DRC and Congo

**7,664**

Refugees and asylum seekers in CAR mainly from Chad, DRC and Sudan

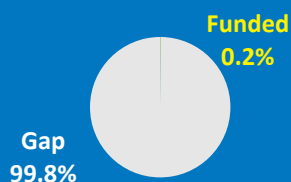
**25%**

IDPs located in the capital Bangui

#### FUNDING

**USD 243.8 million**

required for the situation in 2016



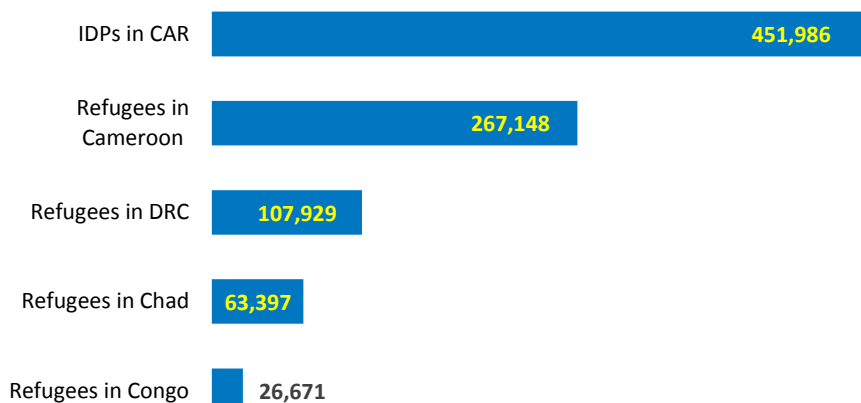
#### PRIORITIES

- **CAR:** Finalize registration of IDPs in Bangui; assess and respond to the populations' needs of those affected by LRA attacks in the east and south.
- **Cameroon:** Continue biometric registration; strengthen the WASH response in all refugee sites.
- **Chad:** Strengthen advocacy to improve refugees' access to arable land; continue search for durable solutions.
- **DRC:** Increase shelter construction; provide anti-malaria drugs in all camps
- **RoC:** Ensure registration and documentation of all CAR refugees.

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- UNHCR and partners respond to new internal displacement in the Central African Republic (CAR) following attacks from armed groups in the east.
- An early-warning system is being envisaged in southern Chad to anticipate future population movements from CAR.
- In light of the critical funding situation, reduction in CAR refugees' food assistance continues in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) despite several cases of malnutrition in camps.
- In Cameroon, biometric registration of urban refugees is completed in the capital Yaoundé and ongoing in the city of Douala.
- Central Africans continue to cross into the Republic of Congo, with an average of 30 new arrivals being reported every week.

#### 917,131 persons of concern



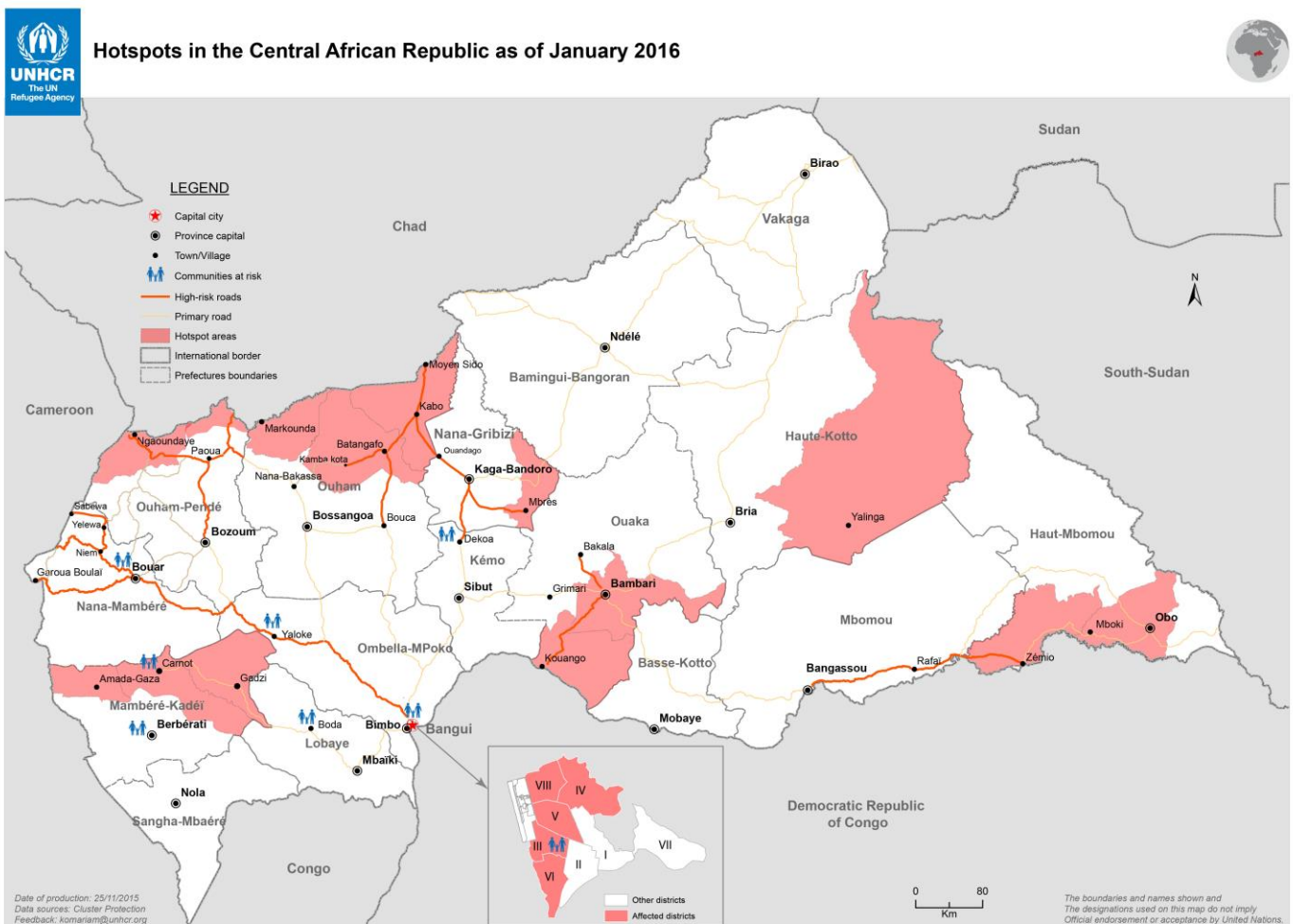
*New asylum seekers are interviewed at the Boyabu refugee camp of Libenge, DRC. Photo © C. del Fosse*

## RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

### Operational Context

In the Central African Republic (CAR), following the 30 December 2015 presidential vote, the National Election Authority announced early January that former Prime Ministers Anicet Georges Dologuélé and Faustin-Archange Touadéra came first and second, respectively. With no absolute majority, both were scheduled to run in the second round on 14 February. The electoral period and the increasing patrolling of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and the Central African Armed Forces (FACA), in Bangui and inside the country, have led to a significant improvement in the overall security situation.

However, insecurity in hotspots, fueled by armed groups' activities, transhumance-related tensions and intercommunal violence, continues to put local communities at risk (see map) and to challenge the delivery of humanitarian services. The proximity of operating areas to the hotspots means that UNHCR has to operate in an environment where violence and associated security risks are a regular occurrence. Parts of the working areas are subject to UN-security restrictions, which allows for critical missions only. Tensions and clashes in and around these areas often disrupt UNHCR operations.



In the east of the country, outbreaks of violence and mounting insecurity have forced thousands of civilians to flee from their homes. A surge in attacks from the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) active in Haute-Kotto Prefecture have forced over 1,700 people to seek refuge in relatively safer areas. This LRA faction has an area of influence that is gaining in scope and scale and as a result, further population movements are expected. In the western Prefecture of Ouham-Pendé, two villages close to Paoua town have been attacked by armed groups resulting in the displacement of over 700 people to Paoua and an unknown number have sought refuge in surrounding rural areas, according to registration conducted by partners. In addition, armed groups have recently taken over several checkpoints in roads located south of the town of Paoua, disrupting the delivery of

supplies and humanitarian assistance towards the town and neighboring areas. UNHCR and partners continue to closely monitor the situation on the ground and assess needs.

Security concerns related to the transhumance – the seasonal movement of people with their livestock between summer and winter pastures – have led to postponement of a monitoring mission along the road Bambari-Kouango. According to information gathered by the Protection Cluster, over 50 per cent of protection incidents currently reported are related to clashes between farmers and herders, as well as attacks on civilian populations by the herders. Attacks have recently been reported in Kouango (Ouaka Prefecture) and Birao (Vakaga Prefecture), preventing farmers from accessing their fields and crops or the river.

**In the region**, the ongoing closure of the border between Chad and CAR, since May 2014, remains a major challenge, limiting cross-border movements of people and goods. In DRC, the situation remains volatile in the area of Mongalo, located on the northern border with CAR, where the DRC's Armed Forces intervened to stop a group of attackers setting houses on fire and forcing inhabitants to seek shelter in the nearby villages.

## Protection

### CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

#### Achievements and Impact

- In response to the displacement triggered by attacks from armed groups, UNHCR, OCHA and UNICEF deployed an interagency team to Bria (Haute-Kotto Prefecture) to assess the humanitarian situation of the newly displaced populations, identify priority needs and provide emergency assistance in the form of food, non-food items and shelter. International NGOs including Medecins sans Frontières and Oxfam started providing health assistance and conducting protection monitoring, whilst MINUSCA reportedly began patrolling in some of the LRA-affected areas in Haut-Mbomou and Haute-Kotto.
- To mitigate transhumance-related conflicts and facilitate information-sharing, the UNHCR-led Protection Cluster proposed to the Transhumance Working Group – consisting of FAO, MINUSCA's Protection of Civilian Unit, Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED) and members of the Protection Cluster – to develop an early-warning and surveillance systems and communication lines in affected areas.
- UNHCR started carrying out a verification and registration exercise of IDPs hosted in sites in Bangui. The aim is to provide disaggregated data for proper protection and assistance response and to prepare the ground for return provided that the



Registration of IDPs in Mpoko site ©UNHCR/I. Muhammed

situation improves following the election period. Preliminary results show that in 28 out of 30 IDP sites, the number of IDPs decreased by an average of 24 per cent compared to the figures of December 2015. Uncontrolled return movements are cited as one of the reasons explaining this sharp reduction.

■ **Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps.** A protection monitoring visit conducted by UNHCR found that 128 IDPs belonging to the Fulani ethnic group had left Boda IDP site (Lobaye Prefecture) to the capital Bangui. The crisis in CAR has caused deep divisions in Boda's population and led to the creation of an enclave hosting pre-dominantly

Muslims. The population living in the enclave has been prevented from pursuing their livelihoods, seeking medical assistance or accessing the town's market for extended periods since 2013. As such, this population has been identified as one of the many "communities at risk" in the country (see above map). According to reports from UNHCR's partner *Afrique Secours et Assistance*, people are leaving the enclave due to severe food insecurity and because they want to relocate to Cameroon to reunite with family. Blankets and plastic sheeting are urgently needed and further assistance is being envisaged.

## CHAD

- **Achievements and Impact.** Early this month, UNHCR organized a joint mission to the Chad/CAR bordering villages in Barh Sara Department with the *Commission nationale d'accueil et de réinsertion des réfugiés et des rapatriés* (CNARR) and the *Association pour la promotion des libertés fondamentales au Tchad* (APLFT) to monitor the security situation and meet with administrative authorities, traditional leaders and security forces. The objective is to encourage and establish an early-warning mechanism for the collection and sharing of information given the current electoral context in the Central African Republic.

## CAMEROON

- **Achievements and Impact.** The biometric verification exercise, launched in December 2015, was completed in Yaoundé, with 11,610 urban refugees registered, whilst the operation is ongoing in Douala, with 6,636 refugees registered thus far in the city. The use of biometrics provides an accurate way to verify refugees' identities using unique physiological characteristics, such as fingerprints, iris and facial features. Biometrics are used as a routine part of identity management to ensure that refugees' personal identities are safely registered and exempt of subject to fraud or identity theft. It also allows UNHCR and humanitarian partners at large to better address the needs of the most vulnerable refugees.

## Education

### CAMEROON

- **Achievements and Impact.** Through its partner Africa Humanitarian Action (AHA), UNHCR completed the construction of four classrooms and two offices in the Gado Badzere public school. In Lolo, the construction of classroom blocks at the public school of the village is ongoing to accommodate refugee students and members of the host communities. In Djohong (Adamawa region), UNHCR provided school uniforms to 228 refugee pupils at the secondary school (58 girls and 170 boys).



## Health

### CAMEROON

- **Achievements and Impact.** As part of primary health care, 10,638 curative consultations were carried out by UNHCR's medical partners (AHA, *Action contre la faim*, *Solidarité Internationale*, French Red Cross, and International Medical Corps) in all sites in the east region and in Adamawa. The main diseases affecting Central African refugees remain malaria, respiratory infections and gastro-enteritis.
- **Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps.** Challenges in the health response include inadequate health personnel in health centers and lack of technical equipment in health facilities.

### DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

- **Achievements and Impact.** Several HIV sensitization campaigns were conducted in January in Boyabu camp, organized by the *Agence de développement économique et social* (ADES), reaching out to more than 800 refugees. On these occasions, some 300 female condoms and more than 5,500 male condoms were distributed to the participants.
- **Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps.** Malaria continued to be the most frequent disease affecting refugees in all five camps, especially in Boyabu camp where the highest rates were recorded during the reporting period. In this regard, critical shortfalls of anti-malarial drugs continue to be experienced, especially in Inke camp. A serious lack of essential drugs is also experienced in Mboti camp, including preventive medicine to protect individuals exposed to the HIV virus – these are essential to treat SGBV cases. In both Bili and Inke camps, a persistent lack of communication equipment prevents effective coordination of the health response.

## Food Security and Nutrition

### CHAD

- **Achievements and Impact.** UNHCR, in partnership with WFP and the Lutheran World Federation ensured the distribution of food assistance to 12,896 refugee households in the five camps in Gore, representing 90 per cent of the planned target. A tiered approach is implemented whereby refugees are targeted according to their level of vulnerability to food insecurity.

### DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

- **Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps.** At a time when resources are evermore stretched due to competing humanitarian crises, refugees in DRC are receiving less support in food than in previous months, leading to heightened vulnerability and greater food insecurity. The 20 per cent reduction in the provision of WFP's food assistance, which started in December 2015, continued throughout January in all camps hosting CAR refugees. This reduction will be implemented until additional donor contributions are secured to procure the required food items. Coupled with this are partners' reports indicating an increase in the number of cases of malnutrition in the five camps, especially among children and pregnant women, due to lack of cereal stocks, which is likely to have a detrimental, long-term effect on the nutritional status of refugees.

## Water and Sanitation

### CAMEROON

- **Achievements and Impact.** By the end of 2015, 116 boreholes, 3,524 latrines and 2,605 showers were built in all refugee sites, including 88 drills, 2,646 latrines and 2012 showers, 19 boreholes, 850 latrines and 465 showers by UNICEF, 4 wells, 28 latrines and 28 showers by Plan Cameroon and 5 boreholes by *Solidarité Internationale*. These facilities have contributed to achieve an average ratio of 19 liters of water per person per day, 21 people per latrine and 26 people per shower – all above emergency standards.
- **Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps.** 12 boreholes, 1,692 latrines and 2,739 additional showers remain to be built to meet the needs in all sites. The construction of 305 boreholes and 828 latrines in host villages remain also uncovered.

### CHAD

- **Achievements and Impact.** UNHCR constructed a water-well in Kondoro village which has offered 100 hectares of arable land to Central African refugees settled in Doholo camp, currently home to 1,971 refugees. This activity is meant to contribute to peaceful coexistence between refugees and the local population.

### DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

- **Achievements and Impact.** In Mole camp, the setting up of a tank for water storage and further extension works for water distribution is almost finalised. The installation of additional water sources in Boyabu camp are being carried out by ADES. Furthermore, latrine construction continued in January in Mboti and Mole camps, where African Initiatives for Relief and Development (AIRD) coordinated the construction.



*Two women have just fetched potable water from the new drilling, Chad @UNHCR/S. Ndabazerutse*



## Shelter, Non-Food Items and Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM)

### CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

- Achievements and Impact.** Two IDP sites in Bambari and Kaga Bandoro were hit by a wave of fires caused by the inappropriate use of cooking stoves by refugee households. Two people died, including a three-year old boy and several people were severely injured. The fires destroyed up to 70 per cent of the affected sites while some 2,300 households lost all their belongings. UNHCR provided core relief items (buckets, plastic mats, plastic sheeting, blankets, and soap) to 900 households in Bambari (out of the 1,075 affected) and blankets to the 1,245 affected households in Kaga Bandoro. In the meantime, a needs assessment is being conducted and UNHCR is working with partners from the CCCM/NFI/Shelter Cluster to assess fire mitigation measures in IDP sites, including the distribution of improved cooking stoves.



*Fire at Eveche Site in Bambari, CAR @UNHCR/J. S. Ngalikombo*

### CAMEROON

- Achievements and Impact.** In order to improve the living conditions of refugees, UNHCR and its partners continued the construction of durable and semi-durable shelters in refugee sites. During the month, 919 durable shelter were constructed in Borgop Ngam, Gado, Lolo, Mbile and Timangolo, representing 78 per cent of the target. Additional durable shelters are being constructed. Furthermore, NFI distributions started at the end of the month in Mbile. Thus far, the activity has allowed to assist more than 3,000 refugees with blankets, tooth brushes, and jerry cans.

### REPUBLIC OF CONGO

- Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps.** Some CAR refugees are still hosted in community shelters and other type of mass shelters that remained in a state of advanced disrepair. Considering the arrival of new families, the number of wells at the *15 Avril* site is insufficient to respond to the demand of populations of concern. Half of the streetlights are not functional at Ikpengbele and *15 Avril* sites.

### DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

- Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps.** Additional shelters are required to accommodate all refugees arriving in the camps, especially in Boyabu camp where 20,261 refugees are hosted as at the end of January. The situation is of particular concern in Bili and Inke camps where emergency shelters are in poor conditions and can no longer be used to accommodate the refugees. Shelters in Bili camp have been infested with termites or vandalized. UNHCR and its partner AIRD are addressing these issues.



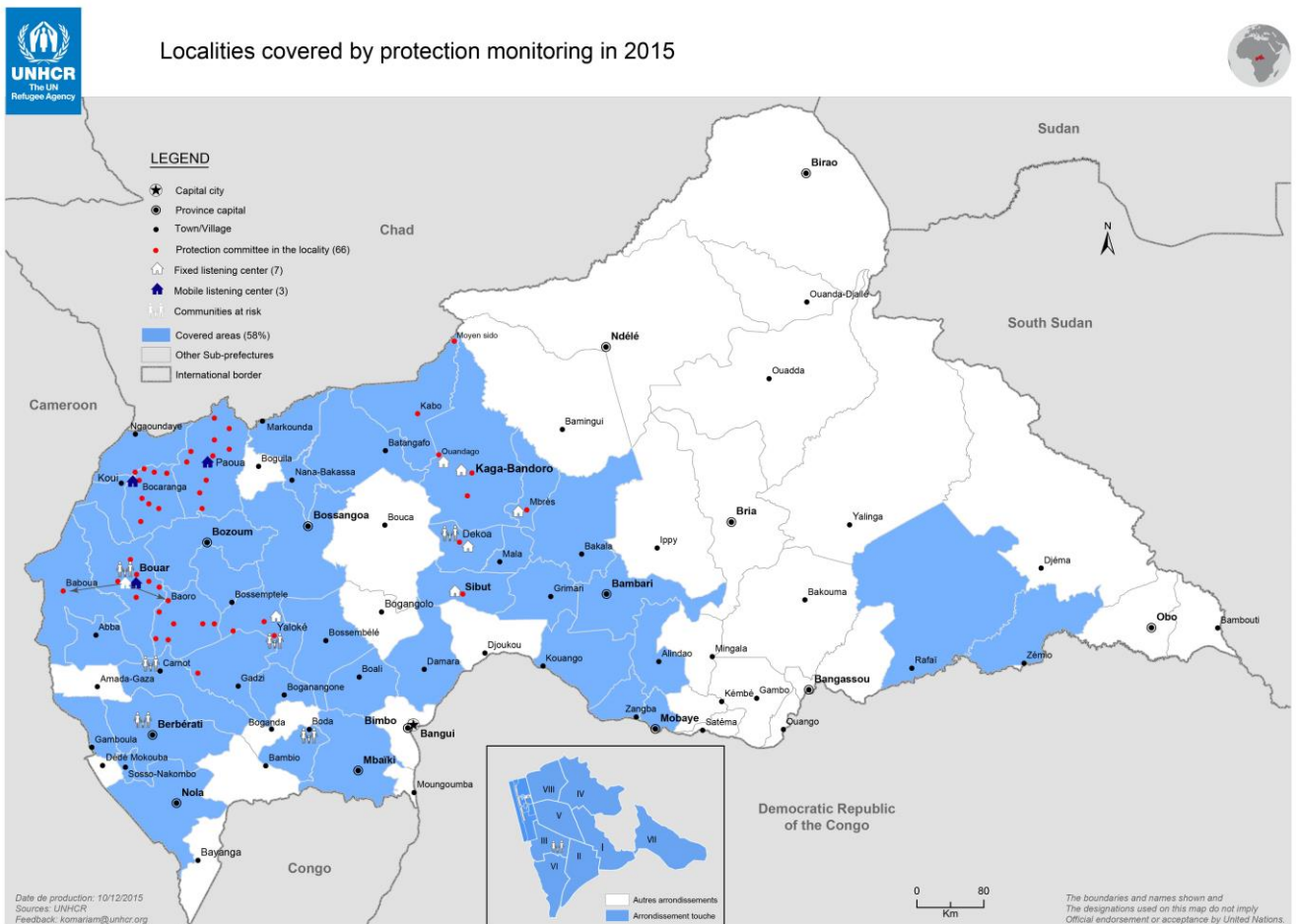
## Durable Solutions

### CHAD

- Achievements and Impact.** Since July 2015, UNHCR has been conducting a profiling exercise of refugee households in Gore and Maro in search for durable solutions. Out of 2,376 individuals (523 households) profiled, 52 per cent indicated a preference for voluntary repatriation, 44 per cent for resettlement and 4 per cent expressed their preference for local integration or remained undecided. During the reporting period, 140 individuals were interviewed and their cases submitted to the United States' Citizenship and Immigration Services whose team is scheduled to arrive in Gore early February to finalise the selection process.

## WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

- In the Central African Republic**, UNHCR implements its activities in collaboration with 13 partners, including one government entity (*Commission nationale pour les réfugiés*) and 12 international NGOs. As part of the IDP response, UNHCR leads the Protection and Camp Coordination Camp Management/Non Food Items/Shelter Clusters. The below map shows the work carried out by Protection Cluster actors in protection monitoring across the country. In addition, following several discussions within the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) on the presence of armed elements in IDP sites, the Protection Cluster, in collaboration with OCHA's Civil and Military Coordination Unit and MINUSCA's Protection of Civilian Working Group, started developing a guidance note to preserve the civilian and humanitarian character of these sites. Emphasizing the humanitarian and legal principles and possible roles of the HCT and security actors, the document presents the various actions and responsibilities related to all stakeholders and identifies high risks IDP sites. The Protection Cluster also coordinates with MINUSCA Protection of Civilian (PoC) Working Group to reflect on the new protection of civilian strategy, reviewing challenges and achievements, and draw on lessons learned from past experience to improve collaboration, information-sharing and analysis.



- In the region**, the refugee response is led by UNHCR in the four countries of asylum (Cameroon, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Republic of the Congo), building on the Refugee Coordination Model (RCM) which provides a framework for leading, coordinating and delivering assistance in refugee situations. Within this context, the [Central African Republic Refugee Response Plan \(RRRP\)](#) was launched on 25 January in Yaoundé, Cameroon which is envisioned as a regional partnership strategy and coordinated refugee response plan of UN agencies and NGO partners, and serves as a joint fundraising and advocacy platform.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

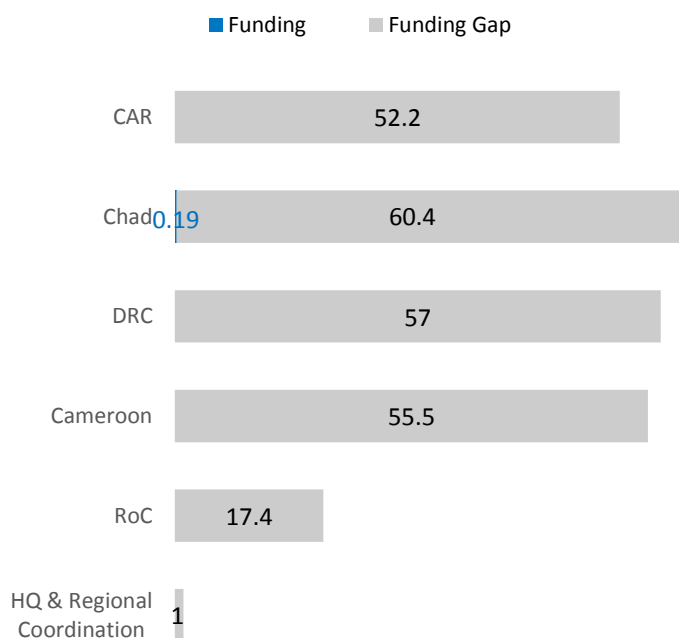
UNHCR is very grateful for the financial support provided by donors, particularly those who have contributed to UNHCR's activities with unearmarked funds, as well as for those who have contributed to the CAR situation in 2015. UNHCR's total financial requirements for the CAR Situation, involving operations in the Central African Republic and neighbouring countries, amount to **USD 243.8 million from January to December 2016**, including USD 191.5 million for the response in asylum countries. **The overall funding gap is USD 243.4 million.**

### Donors who have contributed to the situation in 2016 include:

European Union  
UN Development Programme

### Funding (USD million):

A total of **USD 0.3 million<sup>1</sup>** has been funded



<sup>1</sup> Includes USD 0.19 million received for Chad and USD 0.12 received for the Situation overall

#### Contacts:

Alan Mouton, Associate External Relations Officer, [mouton@unhcr.org](mailto:mouton@unhcr.org), +41 (0)22 739 8830  
Wendy Rappeport, Senior External Relations Officer, [rappepor@unhcr.org](mailto:rappepor@unhcr.org), +41 (0)22 739 8993  
Annette Rehr, Senior External Relations Officer (Dakar), [rehr@unhcr.org](mailto:rehr@unhcr.org), +221 33 867 2150

Links: [Webportal](#) | [UNHCR Tracks](#) | [UNHCR Kora](#) | [A Forgotten Crisis](#)