

HIGHLIGHTS

- Food Insecurity in the north-east
- The DDR process resumes in the north-west
- The 2012 CAR CAP Mid-Year Review

Background and security

The APRD dissolution

The former rebel group, the Armée Populaire pour la Restauration de la Démocratie (APRD) has been dissolved, following an announcement made by Jean-Jacques Demafouth, leader of the group on 17 May. The APRD was active in the north-western region of the CAR. This APRD dissolution follows the disarmament and demobilization of its elements. "These disarmed former combatants are now available and can be used by the CAR Government to assist in ensuring security in the country," said Jean-Jacques Demafouth.

Humanitarian / Development activities

Food Insecurity in the western region of the Vakaga



Les frontières et les noms indiqués et les désignations employées sur cette carte n'impliquent pas reconnaissance ou acceptation officielle par l'Organisation des Nations Unies. La frontière définitive entre la République du Soudan et la République du Soudan du Sud n'a pas encore été déterminée. Le statut final de la région d'Abyei n'est pas encore déterminé.

The humanitarian community received information regarding a food crisis in the western region of the Vakaga prefecture (north-east) in early May. About 45,000 people are at risk of a food crisis in the towns of Gordil, Mélé, Ndiffa, Tiringoulou and Sikikédé. Humanitarian actors working in the region including the International Medical Corps (IMC), Triangle Génération Humanitaire (TGH) and Nda are very concerned about the situation. The lean season is expected to be

challenging particularly due to the rainy season which will soon render the region inaccessible. In addition to the increasing cases of malaria during the rainy season, there is already a high rate of malnutrition among children under 5 years and some cases of measles. These three factors combined are universally known to be the cause of a significant increase in infant mortality if immediate assistance is not provided.

The Nutrition Screening (MUAC) carried out by IMC on 1,332 children in Sikikédé (30% of the children in the village) indicates that: 7% suffer from severe acute malnutrition, 13% of moderate acute malnutrition, and 21% of global acute malnutrition (three times over the standard emergency threshold of 2%). IMC also identified nine suspected cases of measles in Sikikédé including 6 confirmed cases after analysis and one death. An immediate humanitarian response is being prepared in order to respond to the urgent needs of the population, while also taking into consideration the security and logistical constraints in the region. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) is facilitating consultations and discussions with humanitarian partners, including NGOs and UN agencies in view of finding logistical and financial solutions to assist the affected population. They aim to provide medical and nutritional assistance before the region becomes inaccessible due to heavy rains. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is preparing to provide non-food items to 350 families among the most vulnerable people, rehabilitate six water points and to chlorinate 15 wells in Sikikédé.

Contact Magali Carpy Botoulou: carpy@un.org for more information.

A lasting solution to the conflict between farmers and Chadian cattle breeders?

From 13 to 17 May, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) organised a meeting between officials from Chad and the CAR in Batangafo (north-west). The main objective was to find sustainable solutions to recurrent conflicts between farmers and Chadian cattle-breeders in the Batangafo region. This situation led to the displacement of some 4,000 people, the destruction of many villages and significant loss of life.

In the village of Ngapalé, 17 kilometers from Batangafo, on the Batangafo- Ouandago road, the CAR and Chadian delegations noticed that about 80 houses had been completely destroyed. Following this meeting, an agreement titled the «Batangafo Declaration» commits both countries to take measures to ensure peace and security in the region.

The CAR is commits to:

- Disintegrate armed self-defense groups;
- Encourage the return of civilians with dignity to their villages or origin;
- Reactivate the conflict resolution mechanism between farmers and Chadian cattle-breeders;
- Ensure the security of persons and property in the CAR;

- Ensure the implementation and monitoring of these recommendations through the National Permanent Consultation Committee for the Coordination and Management of the Rights of internally displaced persons (IDPs)

Chad commits to:

- Disarm armed cattle-breeders;
- Prevent the retaliation of cattle-breeders on civilians by encouraging meetings and dialogue;
- Encourage farmers to respect areas used for grazing;
- Communicate the identity of transhumant groups to the CAR local authorities to ensure that adequate guidance is provided.

Furthermore, the "Batangafo Declaration" urges the international community to support the National Permanent Consultation Committee for the Coordination and Management of the Rights of internally displaced persons (IDPs), in their return and reintegration into their villages of origin.

The UNHCR Representative in the CAR, Annette Nyekan, stated that this initial consultation is an important step in finding solutions to displacement in the country. "At UNHCR, we hope that both States will respect the commitments made and we are also willing to support them," she said. Nonetheless, after these commitments were made, 2 villages got attacked by cattle breeders. Consequently, IDPs situated in the 3 major IDP sites in the region moved towards Batangafo to seek refuge. These new movements interrupted the response process for humanitarian actors who were planning Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) activities to improve the living conditions of IDPs on the sites where they had initially settled.

Contact Djerasse Mbaïorem: mbaïorem@unhcr.org for more information.

The DDR process resumes in the north-west

From 5 to 9 May, the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) process was re-launched in Bouca (north-west), Kaga-Bandoro (north-central) and Kabo (north-west). It was supported by the Ministry of Defense, leaders of politico-military groups, France, the European Union, the World Bank and the Peace building Mission in the CAR (MICOPAX). The DDR process is being implemented by the Ministry of Defense with the operational support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). A total of 1,551 former combatants, including 86 women were demobilized. They consisted of the APRD, the Union des Forces Démocratiques pour le Rassemblement (UFDR) and the Front Démocratique du Peuple Centrafricain (FDPC). About 1,587 weapons were collected and the National Coordination for the Reintegration of newly demobilized former combatants is preparing reintegration activities, mainly agricultural.

The DDR Steering Committee, chaired by the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary General, Margaret Vogt, congratulated the stakeholders concerned for their efforts which enabled the process go through the final stages of verification, disarmament and

demobilization of APRD, UFDR and FDPC former combatants. The Steering Committee reiterates its commitment to ensure that in collaboration with international partners, all necessary effort is made to restore lasting peace in the CAR and also to engage in resource mobilization in order to complete the DDR process in the country.

Quality health services in rural areas

On 17 May, the World Bank Board of Directors approved the funding amount of US\$ 28.2 million for a project to Strengthen Basic Health Services in the CAR. The main objective of this project is to improve the quality of health services in rural areas, particularly maternal and infant health. This 4 year project will enable about 2.5 million people living in rural areas, half of the country's overall population, to benefit from health services. Physical and financial access to quality health services remains a major challenge for the country. Maternal and infant health indicators are alarmingly high particularly in rural areas. An estimated 176 of every 1,000 newborn dies before the age of five.

The project strategy is based on two main areas: performance-based financing (PBF) and strengthening the monitoring and evaluation capacity. The PBF component will finance the purchase of key maternal and child health services from public health facilities, religious and nongovernmental organizations operating in the rural sector through a Performance Purchasing Agency (PPA). This agency will sign contracts with health posts, health centers and hospitals at the regional level to provide preventive and curative maternal and child health services.

The second component of the project will strengthen the capacity for monitoring and evaluation of the health information system, rendering it more likely to produce reliable and timely data. The PBF is a strategic approach that could increase the coverage and quality of essential health services in rural areas in the CAR.

Contact Edmond Dingamhoudou: edingamhoudou@worldbank.org for more information.

The 2012 CAR CAP Mid-Year Review

On 18 May, the 2012 Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) mid-year review workshop was held in Bangui. It was attended by over eighty participants from Government ministries, donor representatives such as the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid (ECHO), international and national NGOs and UN agencies. The 2012 humanitarian strategy and cluster response plans were discussed. Some cluster response plans will be revised accordingly.

The 2012 CAR CAP is 40% funded as of 7 June.

For more information or to contribute to this bulletin, please contact:
OCHA Bangui, CAR

Laura Fultang, Information & Donor Liaison Officer fultangl@un.org
+236 70 18 80 64

Gisèle Willybiro-Maidou, Information Assistant
willybiro@un.org
+236 70 18 80 61