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HIGHLIGHTS

- The 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan anticipates providing humanitarian assistance to 2,2 million people.
- The United Nations is staying mobilized to prevent Central Africa from becoming a forgotten crisis
- Renewed violence in Central Africa has led to further displacement of more than 70,000 people

KEY FIGURES

# displaced persons	434,174
# Central African refugees	466,000
Population needing humanitarian aid.	2.3 M
Population affected by food insecurity	2.5 M

FUNDING

531.5 million

Funds needed (USD) for the Humanitarian Response Plan 2016

36.2%

already mobilized in December 2016

A Message from the Humanitarian Coordinator

Fabrizio Hochschild

“Making the Central African Dream come True”

The year 2016 represents a new chapter in the history of the Central African Republic. The democratically elected government and the establishment of institutions in the Central African Republic (CAR), and putting an end to the transition period, is reason for much hope. For all of us, it is a sign that we have turned our backs on the military and political conflict that caused all the turmoil in our country between 2013 and 2015, and which led to the acute humanitarian crisis of 2.7 million people in need, out of an estimated population of 4.6 million.

With the return to constitutional legality, the Central African Republic regained its confidence and the humanitarian situation showed some improvement during the first part of the year. In fact, the number of displaced persons decreased from 435,165 in January to 384,884 in September because of improved security. The number of displaced persons increased again in the latter part of the year due to the degrading security situation in several prefectures. However, wherever possible, efforts were made to facilitate a return to security, and with dignity. For instance, the involvement of national authorities and the support of humanitarian partners enabled the first phase of the process of resettling the displaced persons from the M'Poko site located on the outskirts of the Bangui International Airport. Today, 28,000 people remain there, as compared to the more than 100,000 at the beginning of the crisis in January 2014.

The year 2016 is coming to an end and the report of the humanitarian action is a source of hope even if funding has never been so low for the Central African Republic. Only 36% of the Humanitarian Response Plan of 531.5 million dollars funding has been secured. I would like to acknowledge the contribution of humanitarian actors which enabled us to assist more than 385,750 displaced people in spite of the logistical setbacks and security challenges. Thanks to their commitment to save lives, more than 1.5 million Central Africans have received medical aid. The strong partnership established with the Central African Republic health authorities was also decisive in containing the cholera epidemic which seriously threatened to spread to Bangui. No cases have been detected since November.

Aware that the future depends on a well-educated younger generation, the humanitarian family spared no effort to ensure that 75% of Central African schools are operative, compared to the 35% in 2014. With the two standard allocations of 9.2 and 12.7 million dollars of Humanitarian Funds, we were able to finance several emergency response projects in the areas of health and protection, and to provide support for the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene project, as well as food security.

It is with the same dedication that an appropriate response was brought to bear to the new

humanitarian crises resulting from the upsurge of violence in several towns, namely in Kaga Bandoro, Bria, Bambari and even Kouï. In spite of the deteriorating security which increased the number of vulnerable areas, the humanitarians succeeded in providing the necessary help to vulnerable populations even with their reduced presence in some areas. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the donors whose contributions enabled us to accomplish our mandate.

Although donors continue to be involved in the CAR, the needs remain under-financed while the number of priorities remains high. The 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan of 400 million dollars is intended to address the humanitarian needs of 1.6 million people. As we enter 2017, I call on donors to make the Central African Republic one of their top priorities. Forgetting or ignoring the CAR humanitarian situation runs the risk of losing what has been so hard to accomplish, and of sinking into a more severe humanitarian crisis. Following the successful meeting at the Brussels Conference with a promise of 2.28 billion dollars, it is crucial to ensure that these contributions materialize and that they have a positive impact on the lives of Central Africans in 2017. This new dawn that we are all dreaming about will only become a reality with everyone participating. We can change what is wishful thinking into what is possible and make Central African dreams come true. This is the challenge at hand.

The 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan in key numbers



3 STRATEGIC GOALS

Affected populations receive integrated emergency assistance to ensure their security and dignity

Protection for affected populations whose human rights may be violated is increased

Affected and at-risk populations can access basic social services and their self-supporting mechanisms are re-established

2.2 M persons in need; 1.6 M persons targeted; 399M funding required

New waves of displacements in Central Africa

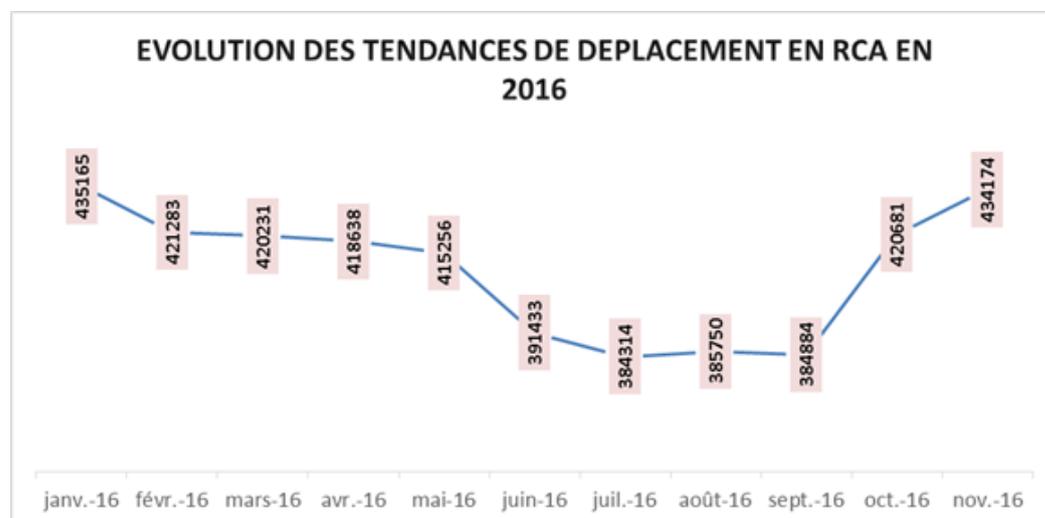
More than 70,000 new displaced persons in the CAR

Between September and December 2016, more than 70,000 newly displaced persons were registered in the Central African Republic. This setback from the decreasing trend reported earlier in the year is a result of the renewed violence in several prefectures. In November 2016, the CAR had 434,174 displaced persons on the sites and in host families compared to 391,433 in June 2016.

The clashes among armed groups lead to new waves of forced displacements and consequently, in new humanitarian crises. The hinterland chaos occurred at the end of the year, just when financial resources are at their lowest. All the needs were assessed, and

some were addressed, but they are still unmet in several areas, the situation is worrisome as it is becoming more difficult to deal with both the needs that already exist and those that are new. Bria was the most impressive case after the displacements caused by clashes among armed rival groups on 21 November 2016.

(THE DISPLACEMENT TREND IN THE CAR IN 2016)



Source: CMP – Novembre 2016

Emergency aid to displaced persons in Bria

The 21 November crisis in Bria forced 12,884 people to seek refuge on the outskirts of the International Forces Base and in host families throughout the town. The response from the humanitarian community was immediate. On 2 December, the WFP distributed food to the displaced persons in partnership with the NGO *Espérance*. Two days later, displaced people on the PK3 site and in the Quartier Mandé received aid in the form of non-food items (NFI).



©OCHA. Boris Matous. The EHA installations permit displaced people at the PK3 site to have access to clean drinking water, Bria (15 December 2016)

On 10 December, the UNHCR had already started organizing a new site, with a better set-up to receive the displaced persons who gathered spontaneously near the International Forces Base. Shelters were erected for those most vulnerable. In addition to this effort, UNICEF (through the NGO *Espérance*) distributed 585 tarps to provide individual shelters.

OXFAM also provided a water supply on the site with a storage capacity of 35m³. During the emergency, some sixty toilets and 32 showers were installed. The response is ongoing in order to

address all the hygiene and drinking water needs.

The problems with accessing health care centres was resolved with the contribution of mobile clinics deployed by Doctors Without Borders and the International Medical Corps (IMC) on the PK3 displacement site and throughout the town. The insecurity caused by the 21 November fighting prevents some residents of Bria from freely moving around town.

To reduce the risk of disruptions in schooling, UNICEF and its operational partners are planning to establish 27 Temporary Learning and Child Protection Spaces (*ETAPES*) for 3,970 children over several sites. In the meantime, the NGO *Espérance*, in partnership with UNICEF, has set-up special spaces for children to socialize on the PK3 site and in sections of Bria to ensure their psychosocial needs are met.

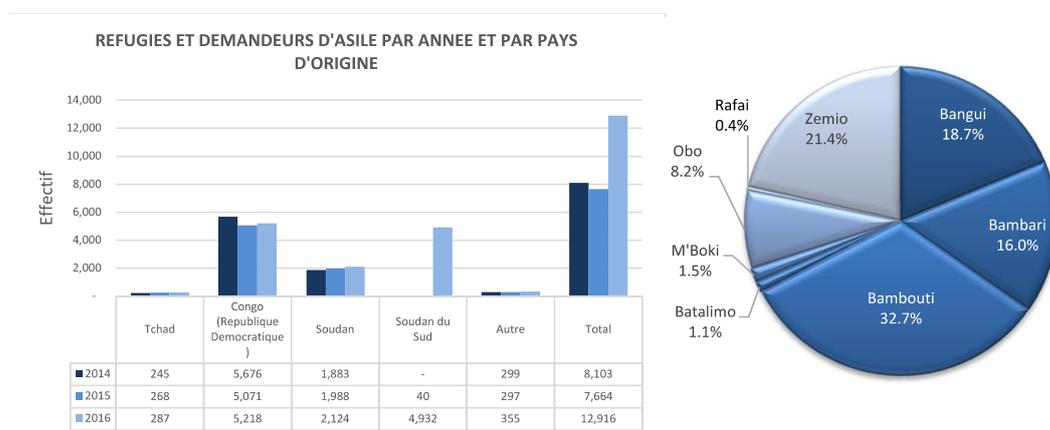
Of course, the humanitarian response managed to save lives, however, many needs still must be urgently addressed, especially food aid. Food rations are still needed and non-food items are still in short supply. Moreover, resources dedicated to this emergency have been diverted to regular programmes which still must be tackled. The ongoing conflicts between armed groups around Ippy-Bria already prevent humanitarian actors from doing their crucial work. The disruption of traffic on this important supply route to Bria added to the increased insecurity around Bria since the 21 November fighting, and is causing fear of a shortage of basic supplies for local shopkeepers. This will have serious consequences on the already precarious living conditions of the people of Bria and surrounding villages.

The challenges of protecting civilians

With regards to safeguarding CAR civilians, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) drafted a response in 2016, consisting of 3 areas of activity: protection and aid for refugees; monitoring protection activities; responding to the needs of displaced persons and providing support for the re-settlement of returnees and repatriates.

Protection and aid for refugees

One of the main HCR activities is to provide protection and aid for refugees and asylum seekers living in the CAR. This population has almost doubled since the beginning of the year, from 7,661 individuals to 12,918 due to the increase of South Sudanese refugees registered in the extreme eastern part of the country. Initially received in Bambouti, these refugees, who were deprived of any type of aid because the inaccessibility of the camp, have started relocating to the Obo site where standard assistance is more likely to be provided. For the other categories of refugees, the HCR is committed to finding the most sustainable solutions suited to them. Lastly, all refugees, whether long term ones or new arrivals, are being registered in a biometric data base and receive an ID card which is valid for 5 years. In conjunction with that, the HCR also developed a protection monitoring program throughout most of the territory. This monitoring also permitted the collection of multi-sectorial information in the areas of the spontaneous return of displaced and repatriated people, which was then relayed to the humanitarians to help them coordinate their activities. This information was also useful in identifying the end-users of the HCR Re-Settlement Project intended to provide rehabilitation for individuals and community infrastructures. In addition, there are initiatives to restore social cohesion, including dealing with the prosecutions related to the illegal occupation of lands-goods-properties. Lastly, in accordance with its emergency response plan, the HCR also provided shelter and NFI assistance to victims of displacements and also to those hoping to re-settle in their former homes. In Bangui, more than 6,000 people on 14 sites have been helped.



REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS BY YEAR AND COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

The reduction of humanitarian spaces and program implementation

The main limits to HCR activities have been concentrated around the problems of security and isolation of some parts of the territory. The eruption of conflicts in the CAR reduces the amount of intervention coverage and access to affected populations. Still partial deployment of the State authority in the country, the insecurity has translated into attacks on the Organization's belongings, offices and personnel. Lastly, the presence of armed individuals and weapons on the sites also present a threat for conducting humanitarian activities.

Looking ahead to 2017

The HCR does not foresee any major disruptions of its programmes in the CAR in 2017. Displaced people will still be the priority group in terms of intervention planning. The number of refugees could increase if the conflict in Southern Sudan and the political turmoil in the DRC persist. The process of re-settling refugees and displaced persons could continue to grow. From an operational point of view, the HCR will therefore continue its monitoring and emergency response activities during the sporadic crises and develop even more initiatives in its sustainable solutions strategy.

"Education is our future, schooling for every child"

The school system: current situation

The 2016-2017 school entry on 19 September was held in conjunction with the national "Education is our Future, Schooling for every Child" campaign, intended to encourage the return of children to school. Their return is happening progressively, but it is still being hampered by a number of factors: the ongoing insecurity in some regions which prevents, delays and interrupts the classes; the slow process of re-deploying the teachers to their assigned positions.

In some dozen towns and villages, armed groups have either occupied school buildings, or installed barriers near them, constituting a violation of international law and preventing children from attending class. Some of the schools have been cleared and negotiations are underway to free up the others.

The Central African school system, which had already lacked resources before the crisis, has especially suffered during the past three years. One-third of school age children do not attend school.

More than one-third (36%) of the schools in the Central African Republic are temporary structures, such as straw huts or plain huts. On average, there is one teacher for 91 students, and 42% of teachers are "teacher assistants", who are not qualified and who are paid by the community. In some regions, the proportion of "teacher assistants" is almost 90%.

40,000 students schooled in 2016

Thanks to funding from the European Union and the Global Partnership for Education, UNICEF is providing support to the Ministry of National Education to restore basic education. The programmes are implemented by national and international NGO partners throughout most of the country. The main activities of 2016 include teacher training 1,312 teachers and 1,518 teacher assistants; construction and restoration of 144 schools; distribution of school furniture and school books for nearly 390,000 children and 6,000 teachers; enhancing the Ministry of Education's capacity in the areas of planning, management and coordination.

Because of its Education during Emergencies programmes, UNICEF supported ETAPes (*Espaces Temporaires d'Apprentissage et de Protection de l'Enfance*) which



© UNICEF. Le Du. Une école bénéficiant du programme ETAPes dans le quartier de PK5 à Bangui

allowed some 40,000 children in 2016 to receive an education while living on sites for displaced persons and in areas affected by insecurity.

In order to continue to support the policies and planning process, UNICEF will assist in the implementation of the Report on the State of the National Education System in 2017 and will conduct a study on non-schooled children. Activities such as teacher training, school building and restoration, as well as the enhancement of capacities will continue, thanks to funding from the European Union and the Global Partnership for Education. Lastly, UNICEF will be helping to ensure the successful transition of the children from the ETAPes program to schools in areas which are becoming more stable. In areas of ongoing insecurity, UNICEF will continue to ensure that children receive schooling through ETAPes.

Repairing the social fabric in Central Africa

Mediation and facilitating dialogue in conflict areas

The last political and military crisis in the Central African Republic involved religious and intercommunity violence of such intensity that it has seriously torn the social fabric apart by creating divisions in communities where harmony once existed in spite of their ethnic and religious differences. Mutual distrust and stigmatization are now replacing the values which allowed for togetherness and cohesion.

In order to repair the social fabric after the crisis, and to bring communities back to their values of unity, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) was approached to help mediate and facilitate community dialogue. The goal is to try to reduce inter- and extra-community tensions and to establish a permanent instrument for dialogue between communities in order to return to an environment that is peaceful and more secure. With these new conditions in place, it would be possible to provide basic human rights for people, and the resettlement of refugees and displaced persons in a secure and dignified fashion.

Up to now, mediation and dialogue facilitation activities have been conducted in Boda, Dékoa, Berberati, Carnot, Boulata (3rd Arrondissement in Bangui) and in Boeing (Bimbo commune). They will soon be held in Kaga Bandoro, Bambari, Kouango and in Bouar where there has been a resurgence of violence since September 2016. Topics to be addressed will be housing, land and property, the regular migration of people and livestock over longer distances and intercommunity dialogue.

Concrete results in several towns

The intercommunity dialogue facilitation actions have had a positive impact in several towns where the rapprochement between populations is palpable, such as in Boda, one of the towns in the Lobaye prefecture that was most affected by the 2014 crisis. After many losses of human life and belongings, and the drawing of the "red line" between Muslim and mainly Christian neighbourhoods, the mediation and dialogue facilitation sessions have led to the restoration of the free movement of goods and people. The Muslim people who have lived in their isolated community since January 2014, now have access to the sub-prefectoral hospital. Business has started again between the communities. This new found confidence has led to a noticeable decrease in armed fighting and is contributing to a more peaceful co-existence.

Dékoa, in Nana Gribizi, has become a model of peaceful coexistence between communities. After several dialogue facilitation sessions, both Muslim and Christian children now attend the same schools. Christian and Muslim women work side by side at *Cash for Work*, a humanitarian organizations initiative. People in the Muslim community can again access the health care centre and shops in the Christian sections. To top it off, community representatives have put a mechanism in place to prevent further crises.

In Berberati, displaced Muslims on the archdiocesan site have regained their original sector of Potopoto. The Muslim community can now have access to the health centre and businesses. The dialogue sessions also helped in the progressive resettlement of refugees from Cameroun and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

16 days of activism on violence against women. What you should know.

What is violence against women? Violence against women is defined in the 1993 United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women as, «any act of gender-based violence that results in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering».

What is gender? Gender refers to the roles of women and men that are attributed to them based on their sex. Male and female roles vary according to socio-economic, cultural and political contexts. These roles are learned. They are also influenced by other factors such as social class, race, ethnicity and age.

What are the consequences of the social differences erected between women and men? One of the grave consequences is discrimination against women. The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEFDW), adopted on 18 December 1979 by the UN General Assembly acknowledges in its preamble that widespread discrimination against women still exists. It points out that such discrimination violates the principles of equal rights and of respect for human dignity. The first article defines discrimination as being "any distinction, exclusion or restriction based on sex in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field" (WORDING IS FROM THEIR WEB SITE). In its Article 7, it asks State Parties to take appropriate action to eliminate discrimination against women in public and political life, and ensure they are on equal basis with men.

Examples of discrimination against women. Salaries for women may be less than men's for equal work. In many countries, widows and/or single women cannot hold land titles. Many women and girls are sexually harassed at school, university, in the workplace, and in public and private administration.

What is OCHA doing to promote gender equality? OCHA was involved in seven projects in 2012 on the topic of gender equality, including: the integration of gender in humanitarian programming and response, the fight against sexual abuse and exploitation, support given to the use of gender classification; for humanitarian projects and the integration of gender in advocacy and communication tools. Gender classification is a tool used for classification in a humanitarian project using a scale from 0, 1, 2a and/or 2b, in order to ensure equal benefits for women, girls, boys and men, or to promote gender equality. (THIS IS A NEW CONCEPT FOR ME- SO IT MAY NEED CLARIFICATION1)

Santa Claus also watches over displaced children

Children are the ones who have suffered the most in the Central African crisis. Living on sites for displaced persons with their families, they have lost all sense of what it is to be a child. To provide them with a bit of comfort, Sidney Elvis Hervé Gosse-Bouzo has started singing songs that he has composed. To show that he shares their sufferings, he sometimes sleeps at the M'Poko site. He knows what it is like for children to be deprived of education and play time. In 2014, with the help of fellow countrymen living in France, the artist ended up establishing the non-governmental organization (NGO), "We are All Human and in Solidarity" ("*Tous humains et solidaires*").

"The CAR is a forgotten crisis. Our role is ensure that there is sufficient mobilization of international and regional support given to the humanitarian crisis and for development" stated John Ging, OCHA Director of Operations

The NGO helps in the area of education and schooling of vulnerable children on the Bangui site for the displaced. Its very first activity was the distribution of Christmas gifts to 300 identified orphans on the M'Poko site in 2014, and providing food and financial aid for children placed in host families. "Tous humains et solidaires" had been moved by the fate of isolated children who do whatever they can to survive. In order to eat, some turn to the streets seeking any kind of meal, and because of this, many have been sexually abused. The NGO responded by conducting a campaign to make the children aware of their rights. Once they realized that their situation was not a normal one, some of the children have decided to return to their studies with financial help from the NGO.



CAR, Bangui December 2015, NGO "Tous Humains et solidaires" celebrate Christmas with displaced children in M'Poko. Source: NGO "Tous Humains et solidaires".

In order to provide them with quality schooling and to help them maintain a decent level of learning, "Tous Humain et Solidaire" opened a cultural resource centre for children. With books covering a variety of disciplines, the centre provides an incentive for children to take up reading again.

There is a child psychiatrist at the centre to help children deal with traumas they have experienced, as well as a medical practitioner to address their health issues. Children who are HIV positive or suffer from other chronic diseases are referred to partner NGOs who provide health care.

"In 2017, we plan to increase our activities in the country's interior. We also hope to open *antennes* in the 8th, 7th and 3rd *Arrondissements* of Bangui. These are the resettlement areas where the children also need to be followed up after being in displacement sites for several years", confided the NGO coordinator Sidney Elvis Hervé Gosse-Bouzo. For the Christmas 2016 celebrations, some 200 children have already been identified on the M'Poko site. One-hundred more will be identified from the ones whose parents have already left the site. These children will receive Christmas gifts and food on 24 December 2016.

Contact : "Tous humains et solidaires" at : sid_bouz@hotmail.fr. Tel : +236 75 55 58 36

In summary

Central Africa should not be a forgotten crisis

While visiting the Central African Republic on 4 and 6 December 2016, the Emergency Relief Directors of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and the United Nations Development Group for the West and Central African Regions reiterated their intent to support the country. After the CAR Donor Conference held in Brussels last 17 November, the main objective of the joint mission was to come up with a new way of responding to a humanitarian crisis that is repeatedly forgotten. The new approach should include a more combined effort to deal with the humanitarian response and the demands of rehabilitating Central Africa. The reality is that more than two million Central Africans still need humanitarian assistance. Moreover, the country is still faced with a multitude of complex and correlated challenges which require an increased involvement and a concerted effort on the part of the international community.



©: PNUD. Alpha S. Ba. Site for displaced people at M'Poko, Bangui (5 December 2016) - John Ging, OCHA Director of Operations visits the site with a representative of the displaced, Bertin Botto

A more holistic approach to humanitarian action and development is needed



©OCHA. Yaye N. SENE. Batangafo site, (16 December 2016) – Humanitarian coordinator visits displaced Fulani families.

After an onsite visit to Bangui, namely to the sites for displaced persons at M'Poko, the Central Mosque, the Boeing resettlement quarters, and Kaga Bando, the mission concluded that humanitarian efforts should not only be maintained but also sustained. They should also support long term development by deploying basic social services to the country's interior and create conditions to kick-start the economy. Humanitarian action should also be part of national capacity building and a widespread movement that respects human rights and justice. This movement should also take into

account the fight against impunity, the promotion of justice, including social justice in accessing basic services, training, and employment.

Visit to Batangafo by the humanitarian coordinator

The humanitarian coordinator, Fabrizio Hochschild, visited Batangafo in the Ouham Prefecture on 16 December where 24,122 displaced persons still remain since the crisis hit the CAR in 2013. The goal of the visit was to learn about the conditions of life displaced people experience, to assess the extent of their needs and the impact of the humanitarian response. It was also conducted several weeks after the return of humanitarians to the sub-prefecture following a temporary halt to their activities because of attacks aimed particularly at their installations. A more recent attack occurred just last week.



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