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Ensuring Continued Health Care During Displacement in CAR

Armed conflict has persisted across Central African Republic (CAR) since 2012, displacing populations and limiting access to basic needs, such as food, health care, and safe drinking water. While the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in CAR fluctuates amid new and recurring violence, more than 600,000 people were displaced as of April 2019. When IDPs flee their villages, they often leave behind personal belongings and sources of livelihoods, seeking refuge in rural locations or crowded IDP settlements where shelter and basic services are scarce or overstretched. Amid these conditions, IDPs are more vulnerable to common illnesses, particularly malaria—a leading cause of mortality in CAR.

In CAR's Ouham and Ouham-Pendé prefectures, USAID Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) partner MENTOR Initiative trains community members to serve as community health workers (CHWs), equipping them with the knowledge and tools necessary to provide first aid and treatment for common illnesses and to appropriately refer more serious conditions. In the event of displacement, CHWs move alongside their communities, ensuring the continuation of basic health care wherever they seek shelter.



MENTOR provides a monthly stipend and ongoing support to CHWs, including restocking of medicines and supervisory training, even while displaced.

Sylvestre, a MENTOR-supported CHW, fled early 2018 armed attacks on his village in Ouham. Seeking shelter in a nearby town with his family, Sylvestre continued to provide malaria treatment to his and other displaced communities. By the time he returned to his village in early 2019, Sylvestre had treated 370 cases of malaria, using USAID/OFDA-funded medicines provided by MENTOR during monthly supervision sessions. His monthly stipend from MENTOR was vital to supporting his family during their displacement and rebuilding their community once returned. “I have learned how to treat the people of my village, especially our children and pregnant women, when they suffer from malaria and diarrhea. I am also able to pass on valuable health messages to everyone,” notes Sylvestre.

Since 2018, MENTOR-supported CHWs have provided more than 62,000 consultations and treated nearly 55,000 malaria cases in Ouham and Ouham-Pendé.

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