

HIGHLIGHTS

- Security access to affected areas remains a challenge in a volatile security environment
- Over 166 000 children are denied access to education as schools are closed in the affected areas.
- Some 80,538 at risk of severe food shortages during the lean season.

FIGURES

# of IDPs	173 000
# of Refugees in Chad & DRC	29 000
Affected population	1.1 million

FUNDING

129 million

requested (in US\$)

1%

received



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The security climate remains uncertain

The quartering of the Seleka coalition is slow to get off the ground

The political and security environment in Central African Republic is dominated by the implementation of the Libreville Agreements of 11 January 2013. After the nominations of the Unity government including members of the political opposition and the Seleka remains reoccupied by the conditions tied to the quartering of armed forces.

The Coalition rejected unilaterally the three locations proposed for the quartering of their troops, namely: Kaga-Bandoro, Bria and N'délé, and have threatened to take up arms plunging the population into a state of fear. Recent occupation by the Coalition in Mobaye, violate the conditions of the Peace Agreements and indicate a division within the Seleka. These recent events strike a blow to humanitarian actors seeking to provide vital services to affected populations.

The presence of Seleka along the major roads between towns limits the circulation of population who remain in the forest due to fear as well as for aid workers seeking to re-establish a presence in coalition controlled areas. The Humanitarian community expresses concern of the lack of security for the population and aid workers and calls on all parties to adhere to international humanitarian law and principle whereby actors have free unhindered access to all affected by the current crisis. The quartering of armed troops in towns raises concerns for the safety of the civilian population and fears of increased incidents of violence against the civilian populations.

The absence of a permanent return of humanitarian aid workers increases the vulnerability of the affected populations. The re-establishment of a permanent presence is critical to the protection of civilians.

In the southeast of the country there has been an increase in the LRA attacks against communities and hostages being taken. Overall there is a worsening humanitarian situation for the populations affected by the presence of armed forces perpetrating acts of violence in over 2/3 of the country's surface.

Worrisome trends in the stability of the peace process

Scheduled to begin 24 February, the quartering of Seleka troops was delayed to an undetermined date. Meanwhile Seleka have re-grouped their troops in Sibut and 1,600 elements have been registered by MICOPAX, the multinational military force mandated to undertake this exercise. The exercise should continue in The coalition calls for all agreements reached in the Libreville accords to be carried out, namely the release of political prisoners and the departure of foreign troops in CAR. The quartering of troops is a first step that requires immediate follow-up of disarmament, demilitarisation and reintegration (DDR) programming as well as deployment of international security forces for civilian population.

Two months after the Libreville Agreement, the Seleka coalition remain in control of seven major towns and areas in the north, central and east of the CAR; Alindao, Bambari, Bria, Kaga-Bandoro, Ndélé, et Sam- Ouandja et Sibut.

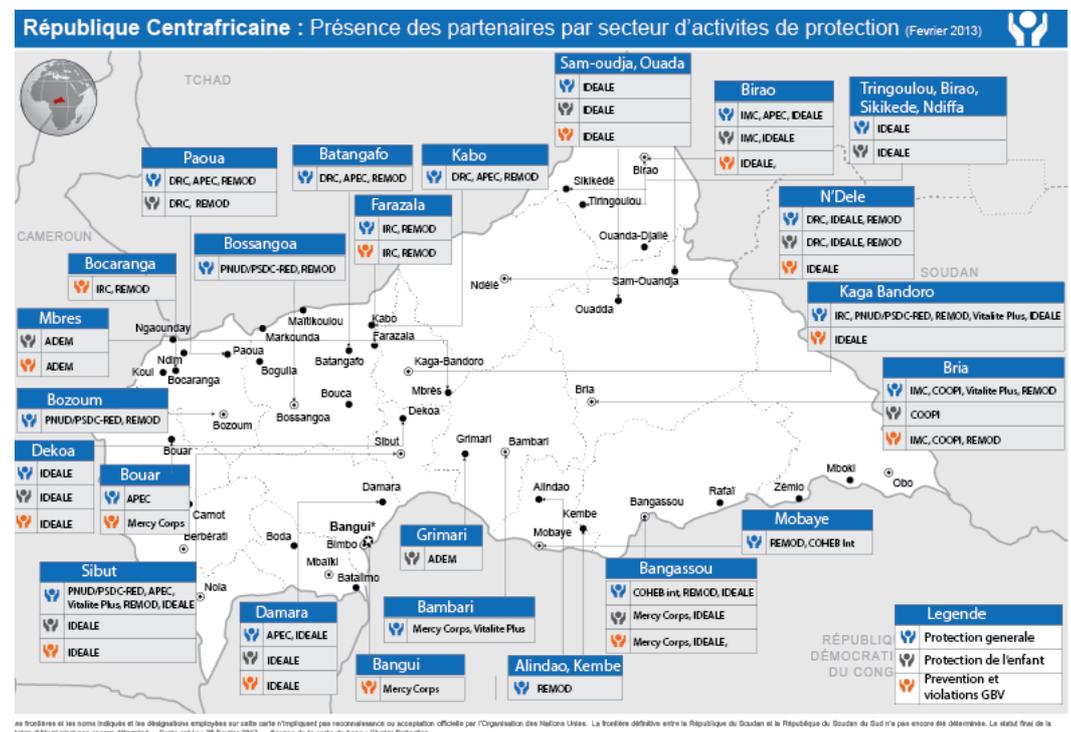
The stability of this process remains in doubt given the threats and inaction by all actors to adhere to the agreements of the Libreville Accords.

Humanitarian Access, there is more to do

While the movement of humanitarian actors has improved there has also been an increase in the number of incidents involving aid workers. This has affected their ability to deliver lifesaving programmes outside of major towns, altered their approach to delivering services, and limits overall services available to the people in need.

The perspective on humanitarian access remains linked to the volatile security environment, fragile peace agreements, and under threat of renewed hostilities. The cooperation between the government and the Seleka coalition has not materialised and thus far has not translated into an improved quality of life for Central Africans.

Protection of Civilians: an humanitarian priority



Tens of thousands take refuge in the forest

Since 10 December, the beginning of the armed opposition, communities have lived in fear and remain displaced into the bush. Roughly 175,000 people are displaced into their farms and in the forest. Systematic looting and destruction of humanitarian offices and warehouses, NGO offices and stores, and local administration offices as well as acts of violence against aid workers has resulted in suspension of programming and reduced agency presence in the field.

Evaluations conducted 14-20 February 2013 by the protection cluster in nine crisis affected towns: Bria, Damara, Ndélé, Kaga-Bandoro, Kembé, Batangafo, Bambari, Alindao and Kabo, reveal a heightened level of suspicion amongst the community members raising concerns for intercommunity conflict.

Cases of sexual violence were reported to the evaluation teams. In response to the general questions on types of violence the table below captures the responses recorded:

Types of violence	% of Responses
Physical aggression	23, 7%
Psychological and emotional mistreatment	23,3%
Rape	19,1%
Sexual violence	17,8%
Forced marriage	8,5%
Denied access to resources, opportunities or services	7,6%

The evaluation results reflect the general trends as they were expressed by the respondents at the community level. The results do not permit an analysis of protection monitoring in the localities where the evaluations were conducted.

Over 166 000 children are denied access to education as schools are closed in the affected areas

Children hard hit by the current crisis

Since the beginning of this crisis, children remain out of school, educators fled to Bangui, limited access to health care and exposed to risks associated with recruitment into armed groups as well as other forms of violence and violation of their rights as children. Rape and sexual violence against children has been reported as well as recruitment into armed groups. Additionally, more than 166,000 children are denied education due to the occupation and closure of schools.

Kabo residents haunted by fear

Rumors that the Central African Armed forces (FACA) would seek to take control over Kabo, a town in the far north of the country, provoked a general panic in the community who fled in the direction of Kaga-Bandoro (centre-nord) and Batangafo (nord-ouest) on 17 February.

During a rapid food security evaluation mission in Kabo the residents announced their intentions to fleeing to Chad if necessary. To date roughly 4,000 Central African refugees are in Chad due to hostilities in Kabo area.

FACA has reinforced their troops in area of Bantangafo/Boassangoa with an additional contingent in response to the rumors of unidentified armed elements in the area of Bossangoa.

Potential food insecurity in crisis affected areas

More than 80,000 at risk for severe food insecurity this lean season

A recent joint evaluation conducted in the crisis affected areas raise the alarm that food security is threatened this cropping season if farmers do not have access to seed and agricultural inputs. The World Food Programme estimates that some 80,538 will be affected by severe food shortages during the lean season. Since the outbreak of the crisis commerce between Bangui and the north has been halted paralysing the movement of cereals resulting in an increase in the price of food basket of 40% in government controlled areas. In the crisis affected areas the price of some cereals increased as much as 122%.

The food security, already fragile from past crises, results in higher vulnerability to food insecurity for many in the north and northeast. More precisely the areas at high risk for severe food shortages this year are: Ouaka, Kemo, Nana-gribizi, Ouham, Haute-Kotto, Basse-Kotto, Bamingui-Bangoran, Vakaga, Ombella Mpoko, and Mbomou. These prefectures normally contribute over 53 per cent of the national agricultural production.

If no action is taken now, the risk of food insecurity before the agricultural season is very real. It exacerbates already very difficult conditions for the most vulnerable households.

The looting of food stocks, seed, and livestock have further reduced the production capacity at the household level. The security situation has hindered people's ability to return to fields to begin cultivation activities and with the rainy season fast approaching the preparation of land should already have begun. Harvest of cash crops such as cotton has not taken place and fields have been abandoned by farmers. Without income the household's ability to purchase food or seed is further reduced.

Increased cases of malnutrition in the crisis affected areas and in Bangui

In the crisis affected zones many nutritional centres are closed or not functioning normally. Compounded by uncertain food security raises the alarm for an anticipated increase in the number of malnutrition cases. UNICEF estimates close to 13,500 children under five will suffer from severe acute malnutrition in the crisis affected areas between March and December 2013. Another 44,000 children under five will suffer from moderate acute malnutrition. Central African relies on manioc as their staple source of food and represents 40% of the cultivated land. Children are especially susceptible to this monoculture diet.

In 2012, more than 16,000 children were treated for malnutrition in Bangui in ACF supported programmes. More than 5,700 were provided for an in-patient hospital treatment programme. Given the precarious situation in 2013, ACF will maintain its nutrition programmes where already more than 500 children have received care.

Cases are reported of severe acute malnutrition amongst some children under five.

More than 29 000 Central African refugees are in need of assistance

Results of the joint evaluation mission conducted 15-22 February in the Democratic Republic of Congo (RDC) found nearly 22,000 newly arrived Central Africans who fled Mobaye. The refugees have settled in Equateur province of DRC.

The refugees are without access to clean water, using Ubangi River as their source exposing them to water borne health risks. The refugees are in need of food, NFI, and shelter. Cases of malnutrition amongst the children have been reported.

The humanitarian community led by HCR in the DRC is mounting a response to support this new caseload. .

Funding

The 2013 CAP for CAR has received approximately 1%

Despite the current weak funding position of 1% of the 2013 CAP new needs will be articulated in response to the recent crisis that began in December after the release of the CAP.

Clusters are actively working to evaluate the situation as access is permitted to redefine their strategies and define new needs. .

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