

Central African Republic – Child Protection Sub Cluster

Snapshot on Child Protection Needs – August 2013



- Since the coup, **3,500 children** are estimated to have been recruited into armed forces or groups
- Following the conflict, it is estimated that more than **132,000 children** have been separated from their families or are now **unaccompanied**
- The numbers of **girls (aged 12 to 14 years)** forced to marry has increased since the coup of March 24th, 2013
- Many children are now showing **signs of psychosocial distress** as a result of the conflict

Children associated with armed forces and groups

Since the coup, 3,500 children are estimated to have been recruited into armed forces or groups. The Child Protection Sub Cluster has targeted 1,500 children for reintegration. According to several assessments, children were seen associated with armed groups in Kabo, Kaga-Bandoro, Mbres, Bangui, Damara, Gambo and Grimari.

More than 2,000 boys and girls were already associated with armed groups before the outbreak of fighting in December 2012. An assessment completed in January 2011 revealed that **militia groups created by communities often recruited children as young as 12 years old.**

Unaccompanied and separated children

Children have been abducted from their families: boys and girls have been kidnapped for ransom and abducted to work as porters, slaves or scouts following the coup.

55 per cent of children surveyed in an assessment of 9 Districts in February 2013 stated they had been **separated from their communities during the conflict.**

As of August 2013, over 280,000 people have been displaced by the conflict. **Approximately 50% of them are children;** some 140,000. Many are unaccompanied or separated from their families.

Physical violence and threats against children

Insecurity and lawlessness across the country has led to children being injured, maimed, raped and killed.

Weapons proliferation due to the presence of armed groups is an additional danger for children and increases the risks of accidents due to fire guns.

40% of those interviewed in a recent assessment stated that an inability to access essential services (especially healthcare) is the primary factor affecting children's protection in the Central African Republic.

Sexual violence

Women and children are the most vulnerable in time of conflict. **Many have been the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse.**

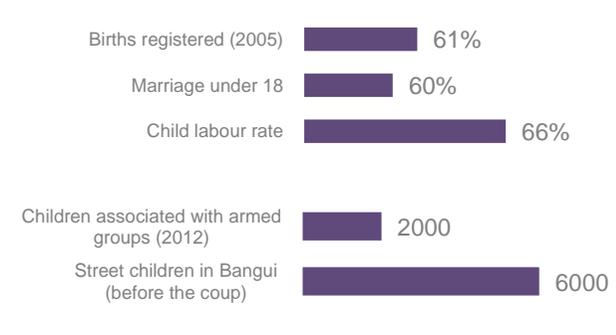
Forced marriage of girls by members of armed groups is reportedly increasing after the coup d'état. According to a multi-sectoral assessment conducted in May 2013, the number of girls marrying between the ages of 12 and 14 has risen following the coup. The assessment also found that there have been numerous incidents of rape and sexual abuse of both women and girls.

Psychosocial distress

Children have both experienced and witnessed acts of extreme violence and continue to live in an environment of fear and uncertainty. Many children now show signs of psychosocial distress. In February 2013, an assessment covering 9 districts reported that **99 per cent of children displaced by the conflict are not attending school.**

The current situation has contributed to the deterioration of community structures that are often best placed to support those suffering from psychosocial distress.

Baseline Data



Sources: Desk Review of the Child Protection Sub Cluster, August 2013. Alert – Child Protection Sub Cluster, August 2013. Rapid protection assessments conducted by members of the Protection Cluster, February 2013. MICS 2010.