

HIGHLIGHTS

- The UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team and UN Department of Disarmament experts arrive in Bata to support with coordination, assessments, and other aspects of the response.
- The death toll from the Bata explosions stands at 107. At least 119 people, mainly children, remain hospitalized.
- A state funeral for victims of the Bata explosions was held on 12 March.
- According to UNICEF, about 150 families are displaced and staying in temporary shelters. Children account for nearly one-third of the displaced.
- Updated analysis from UNITAR shows that 243 structures are heavily damaged or destroyed. 300,000 people live within a 10km distance from the epicenter of the blast.
- The explosion site remains accessible to civilians who collect scrap metal from damaged ammunition, which poses safety and security concerns.



Map Sources: UNCS, ESRI.
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Map created in March 2021.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

A state funeral for victims of the 7 March explosions was held in Bata on 12 March. In attendance was the President, Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, who was accompanied by the Vice President, the President of the Senate, members of the parliament and government, members of the diplomatic corps, families of the deceased and victims, and representatives of the army and the clergy. The United Nations Resident Coordinator and several heads of UN agencies also attended the funeral ceremony. The Government will cover all of the funeral expenses. The President of the Republic applauded and thanked health workers for their role in the response and acknowledged the support received from the international community and the private sector.

On 12 March, the first United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team members arrived in-country, joining WHO, UNICEF and FAO teams already on the ground. Six of the team members have arrived in Bata, where a series of meetings with operational partners took place. Two members will be stationed in Malabo for liaison and coordination with partners and authorities. As of 13 March, the team has initiated the set up of the On-Site Operation Coordination Center (OSSOC) in Bata. The team will prioritize coordination, assessments, environment management, humanitarian financing, and information management. The team will also be joined by experts from other UN agencies including UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA and the RCO.

Furthermore, at the request of the Government, a group of technical experts from the Ammunition Management Advisory Team (AMAT) within the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), working under the umbrella of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), arrived on 12 March. Composed of five members, the team will join members of the French Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD), US Embassy and Golden West experts to support demining efforts and the investigation into the causes of the explosions. The mission will also work on identifying potential risks for the population and the environment, addressing ammunition storage and handling concerns and provide risk-reduction and mitigation recommendations to national authorities, as well as help prevent future explosions.

One week after the explosions at the Nkuantoma military barracks, 107 deaths have been recorded and 119 people remain hospitalized, a majority of whom are children. Initial assessments indicate that shelter and protection are the most significant challenges. Several children have lost family members and remain unaccompanied. Efforts to locate other

family members are ongoing. UNICEF's rapid assessment estimates that approximately 150 families (on average 5-6 members per family) are currently staying in temporary shelters across Bata. These families consist of 648 adults and 252 children (28%) under 15 years of age. Among the children, it is estimated that 99 (11%) are under five years old. These numbers exclude families who have self-evacuated to stay with relatives in Bata or other districts. Schools and religious residences are being used as temporary shelters. The government has also reported that ten schools were badly damaged in the blast.

Priority sectors include Health, Shelter, WASH, Protection, Food Security and Livelihoods, Nutrition, and Education. Economists working with UNDP, IMF and the United Nations Resident Coordinator Office will work on economic quantifications of damages. There is also an urgent need to strengthen COVID-19 prevention and testing.

RESPONSE

Following the Government's appeal and release of an initial fund of ten billion CFA Francs, several governments have responded with both financial donations and in-kind assistance.

The Government of Qatar has sent a mobile hospital with a bed capacity for 1,000 patients and deployed 100 medical staff.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is providing US \$150,000 in humanitarian assistance to respond to the explosions in Bata. This funding will provide cash support to help meet the most immediate needs of affected households. USAID is also supporting the deployment of a UNDAC Team to work with USAID disaster experts on the ground in Bata. The teams will conduct assessments of the humanitarian situation and work closely with the humanitarian community to coordinate aid.

On 12 March, a mobile medical unit from France arrived in Bata together with a team of ten demining specialists from the civil protection forces through the Operational Center for Inter-ministerial Crisis Management (COGIC) of the Ministry of Interior. Additional support from France will arrive on 14 March, consisting of medical equipment and some non-food items.

Venezuela has provided non-food items including tarpaulins, kitchen sets and soap.

The Government of Gabon has pledged a contribution of 500 million CFA francs equivalent to US \$908,000.

The private sector has also made contributions to the Bata explosion response, both in-kind and with medical material. On 12 March, Chevron oil company provided two helicopters to transport UN emergency teams from Malabo to Bata. Shell oil company has provided an office space with a capacity of up to 20 people to the UNDAC team in Bata. An Emergency Operation Center (EOC) is currently being set up.

UNICEF is coordinating with several partners including SOS Children's Villages and the association *Mujer Levantate* (part of a group of ten associations that are managing housing for the homeless) to provide support to the affected families. UNICEF is also working with the NGO ASAMA to support families affected by the catastrophe in finding shelter in the community. The local media is collaborating through reporting on the cases that have been identified.

UNICEF, in collaboration with WHO, continues to provide technical assistance to the Ministry of Health in the organization and storage of humanitarian aid received for the hospitals where the wounded of the 7 March catastrophe are hospitalized.

In addition to medical contributions made earlier in the week, WHO provided trauma kits that have been distributed to the two hospitals handling severe cases. WHO is also following the evolution of the hospital data. To reinforce COVID-19 surveillance and response, the agency has provided at least 1,000 antigen rapid tests to the Ministry of Health.

UNDP has sent two experts, an Economist and a logistician, and UNESCO has deployed two education experts to Bata.

The Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) Rapid Response team has developed some key messages on how to identify and prevent populations from becoming victims of mine explosions

Meanwhile, UN humanitarian aid mechanisms have been activated. WHO, UNICEF and FAO teams based in Bata were at the frontline after the explosions occurred. Additional technical staff from WHO and UNICEF joined them on 10 March and have been joined on 13 March by UNESCO staff. They are providing social protection and health support, identifying children who have lost their parents and people in a vulnerable situation. This team has also reinforced and facilitated logistical support to all arriving in-kind assistance.

The United Nations Resident Coordinator and WHO Representative visited Bata from 10 to 13 March to assess the situation. Apart from visiting the affected site, they visited three hospitals where blast victims are receiving treatment and spoke with both doctors and patients. They also held discussions with the authorities.

The Resident Coordinator continues to keep Member States informed of the UN coordinated response.



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