In Central African Republic, a sharp deterioration of the situation necessitated a revision of the Humanitarian Response Plan

Bangui, 17 August 2017 – The deterioration of the security situation in the Central African Republic this year and the sharp increase in needs forced the humanitarian community to revise the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). Launched in January 2017, it no longer covers the needs initially identified and planned for. It sought 399.5 million dollars to respond to the urgent needs of 2.2 million Central Africans.

At the launch of the revised humanitarian response plan, the Humanitarian Coordinator for the Central African Republic, Najat Rochdi, explained « between January and July 2017, the resurgence of violence and irruption of new hot spots has increased the number of internally displaced people from 402,240 to 600,000. This nearly matches the number of people displaced at the peak of the crisis in 2013. In the meantime, the population in need of humanitarian assistance has increased to 2.4 million people. »

The revised Humanitarian Response Plan, seeking 497 million dollars, has only received 24% or 119 million. « This is well below the global average of 34% funding, while the needs continue to grow. It means that humanitarian actors cannot assist all those who are in need » highlighted Najat Rochdi. There is still a worrying deficit in humanitarian funding in the Central African Republic despite sustained efforts to advocate and raise awareness on the part of national authorities. In this regard, the Humanitarian Coordinator called « for donors to continue their support and redouble their efforts so the worst can be avoided. »

This revision comes at a time when the humanitarian situation is deteriorating. Over the past three months, clashes between armed groups have shifted towards an ethnic and religious conflict in which civilians are held hostage. « The spread of violence in multiple locations nearly simultaneously challenges the operational capacity of the humanitarian community as much as it undermines the mechanisms for the protection of civilians » indicated Ms. Rochdi before reminding parties to the conflict of their indivisible obligations to respect international law. « When insecurity reaches a level that constrains humanitarian actors to strictly life-saving activities, it is the lives of thousands of people that are in danger » she said. During the first half of 2017, humanitarian workers suffered more than 200 attacks. This makes the Central African Republic amongst the most dangerous countries for humanitarian actors. This detrimental security situation has not dampened the determination of humanitarians to stay and support the most vulnerable. Wherever crisis has struck civilians, the humanitarian community has mobilized to respond to the most critical and urgent needs.

Virginie Baïkoua, Minister of Social Affairs and National Reconciliation, reiterated the determination of « the government to increase its efforts to guarantee a more secure environment to ensure assistance to the people. »
The launch of the revised Humanitarian Response Plan took place as part of activities organized to commemorate World Humanitarian Day on August 19th. On this occasion, the United Nations system as a whole, representatives of the government, the diplomatic corps, representatives of the humanitarian country team, national and international NGOs and the media all gathered to remind the world that civilians are not a target. A unanimous call was made to sign the petition for the protection of civilians.

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