EDUCATION CLUSTER ASSESSMENT ON THE STATE OF EDUCATION IN CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

END OF THE FIRST SEMESTER - APRIL 2015

Teacher at his classroom door in Wantiguera school in Bouar, Nana-Mambéré. Credits: Ville Asikainen, Finn Church Aid, 2015.
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Synthesis

At the time of this assessment in April 2015 the Central African Republic (CAR) was slowly recovering from two years of insecurity and political instability. Large areas of the country were still suffering from occupation by and in-fighting between various armed groups. This assessment was initiated by the CAR Education Cluster to provide an overview of the situation and to contribute to greater informed planning and decision making related to education. The assessment methodology was chosen to ensure that the results are adequately representative at national scale to provide a reliable statistical basis. Data was collected through structured interviews that were conducted with key informants at the school or administrative level where school level interviews with school directors of District Education Officers were unattainable. The data collection was done to a maximum extent possible through field visits conducted by Cluster partners (49.6% of questionnaires were filled in schools).

Key findings

Functioning of the schools

- The percentage of open schools at national level is 83%. With the margin of error at 4.88%, this sets the percentage of open schools between 78% and 88% in April 2015.
- There are however large differences between prefectures, with Nana-Grébizi (25% schools functioning), Ouaka (50% schools functioning), Sangha-Mbaéré (63% schools functioning), Vakaga and Ouham being the most affected prefectures due to ongoing insecurity.
- The start of the school year has been delayed with only 53% schools being open around the official date of 20th November 2014. As a result of the delayed reopening of schools, approximately one third of the first semester has been lost (average at national level).
- Schools have functioned on average for 11 weeks on national level, with large differences between prefectures. The most disrupted prefectures are Haute-Kotto (seven weeks), Ouaka (six weeks), Ouham (six weeks) and Nana-Grébizi (four weeks).

Enrolment of students

- Enrolment has improved at national level compared to the 2013-2014 school year. The national average has increased 31% from last school year (primary and secondary, 46% for primary only). The large increase in percentage should not be interpreted as a full return to normalcy, as it is explained by very low rates of enrolment during 2013-2014 (due to insecurity and displacement).
- The enrolment is -6.5% below the pre-crisis enrolment level of 2011-2012 (primary and secondary, -3.1% for primary only), but some prefectures had surpassed their pre-crisis level of enrolment. This may be explained by a set of factors; interventions by education partners and population movements being the two most plausible explanations.

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1 The definition of functioning school does not imply that classes are taking place in a regular manner. Cluster members have reported that school functioning is frequently irregular and dependent mainly on security and the presence/absence of teachers. Schools with temporary suspension are considered as functional.
Teaching staff

- On national level, the ratio between registered teaching staff is 45% of tenured teachers (titulaires), 13% of contract teachers (maîtres d'enseignement) and 42% of community teachers (maîtres-parents).
- Excluding Bangui, community teachers are dominant teaching staff in schools. In Haut-Mbomou, Vakaga and Basse-Kotto, over 80% of teachers are community teachers and in eight other prefectures they consist the largest body of teaching staff.
- The average teacher-to-student ratio is 1:80 for primary education, i.e., 80 students for every teacher, and 1:42 for secondary education at national level\(^2\).

Textbooks

- At national level, the average ratio for school textbooks is 3.6:1. There are however large differences between the regions with Ouham having clearly the poorest ratio (18 students per textbook).
- 40 per cent of schools in CAR have no textbooks, with the majority being situated on secondary axis.

Water and sanitation

- The national average for functioning water points in schools is 18%, with schools in Bangui at 55%. For latrines, only 41% of schools have at least one functional latrine.
- The average latrine-to-student ratio is 1:191 for girls and 1:293 boys, which is well above SPHERE standards of one latrine per 30 girls/one latrine per 60 boys.

School canteens

- There are functioning school canteens in six prefectures in CAR; Kémo, Nana-Grébizi, Bangui, Ombella-Mpoko, Lobaye and Nana-Mambéré.
- Comparing the statistics on increase in enrolment (both from 2013-2014 and to pre-crisis level) there may exists a correlation between increase in school enrolment and presence of a functional school canteen.

\(^2\) Total number of enrolled students divided by total number of enrolled teachers.
Key recommendations

To Members of the Education Cluster

- The crisis has resulted in loss of access to education, limiting the learning and development opportunities of children. Members of the Education Cluster are encouraged to respond to these needs through catch-up classes, life skills and social cohesion programmes, training of teachers in positive coping mechanisms and psychosocial support.
- The lack of textbooks severely affects the quality of teaching and limits the learning possibilities of children. Priority should be given to schools with no textbooks and schools which have a ratio of over three students per textbook.
- Continue and reinforce the school feeding programmes. The priority areas for school feeding programme should be the prefectures with the lowest enrolment rates.
- Support community teachers through training and provision of teaching materials. Interventions that support partially the payment of school fees need to take sustainability into account.
- Prioritize schools outside the main towns and on secondary roads. Particular attention in these schools should be directed towards supporting and training community teachers, providing textbooks, learning and teaching materials.
- Ensure continuing access to education for displaced children through temporary learning spaces.
- Improve the safety and hygiene of schools through rehabilitation and installation of water points and latrines.

To the Ministry of Education

- Address the issue of number of school weeks lost since the beginning of the year by adapting the 2015-2016 school calendar.
- Reduce the teacher-to-student ratio and increase the quality of teaching by facilitating the return of tenured and contract teachers.
- Reinforce the monitoring of teacher-presence in schools.
- Due to the inter-community grievances that imply children, consolidate the existing peace education and social cohesion programmes.

To Education Cluster Coordination

- Provide an effective coordination service for humanitarian response.
- Continue to monitor, verify and report the cases of attacks against schools.
- Develop an advocacy paper that is adapted to the needs highlighted in this assessment.
Introduction

Context and background

At the time of this assessment in April 2015 the Central African Republic (CAR) was slowly recovering from two years of insecurity and political instability. Large areas of the country are still suffering from occupation by and in-fighting between various armed groups. The crisis has undergone several phases since its beginning in the end of 2012 with a coup d’état by the Séléka and a subsequent shift in power. A loose militia called anti-balaka, composed of self-defense militias and remnants of the armed forces loyal to the former president, emerged to oppose Séléka. Under international pressure and facing internal turmoil due to emergence of armed resistance, the rebel coalition Séléka relinquished power to a transitional government in January 2014. The shift of power from Séléka to the transitional government led to a period of high instability and outbreak of violence perpetuated by the anti-balaka and Séléka groups.

Towards the end of 2014 the situation has somewhat improved from the height of the crisis, but remains volatile. In Bangui, there has been improvement reflected in declining internal displacement figures, but other areas continue to be affected by outbreaks of violence. The country has been divided into two; officers and soldiers from the former Séléka still have the upper hand in the eastern and northern parts, while the anti-balaka prevail in the western and southern parts with a particularly volatile zone that cuts through the country where the two groups and armed cattle herders overlap. Armed groups have continued to clash in areas of Mambéré Kadéï, Nana-Grébizi, Nana-Mambéré, Ouaka, Ouham, Ouham-Pendé, and Sangha-Mbaéré.

The level of social services, particularly education, were already low before the crisis that started in December 2012. The ongoing conflict has further deteriorated the already fragile education system. Before the current crisis, the primary school net enrolment ratio was 67% (73% for boys, 60% for girls) while it was at 13% for secondary education, placing CAR in the bottom tier of sub-Saharan countries. According to the Education Cluster, in the end of the 2012-2013 school year a total of 49 per cent of schools had ceased functioning. The figure was at 65 per cent in February 2014. In addition, most of the schools that remained open had severe interruptions during the school year with an average of only four weeks by February 2014.

This assessment was carried out by the end of the first semester of the 2014-2015 school year (mid-March - mid-April 2015) with the support of members of the CAR Education Cluster, in particular the Ministry of Education (Department of Statistics and District Education Officers) and the following national and international non-governmental organizations and agencies, which helped design and review the methodology and questionnaire, and conduct the on-site part of the assessment: ARND, COHEB, Coopi, Danish Refugee Council, Enfants Sans Frontières, Finn Church Aid, JUPEDEC, Norwegian Refugee Council, Plan International, Save the Children, REMOD, UNICEF, WFP and YAMACUIR. The distance assessment was conducted by Masters’ students from the Laboratoire d’économie rurale et de sécurité alimentaire (LERSA) of the
University of Bangui and JUPEDEC. UNICEF and Plan International took charge of the financial and administrative components of the assessment.

Objectives of the assessment

This assessment was initiated by the CAR Education Cluster to get an overview of the situation of the sector by the end of the first semester of the 2014-2015 school year, and to be able to prioritize both programmatic and geographic needs for partners, especially in view of the upcoming GPE and UE funding. The key objectives set for the assessment were as follows:

- The percentage of schools open/closed and the number of weeks open schools have received students during the first term of the 2014-2015 school year.
- Changes in enrolment compared to 2013-2014 and with the pre-emergency baseline (2011-2012 levels).
- Presence and type of education staff in schools.
- Attacks against schools during the crisis period (2012-2015).
- Overview of water and sanitation in schools and school canteens.

The last comprehensive assessments in education were done in 2014; in February by the Education Cluster, in July by the Ministry of Education. Both assessments were conducted as distance assessments, which has certain limitations that are discussed in more detail below.

Methodology

The assessment methodology was chosen to ensure that the results are adequately representative at national scale to provide a reliable statistical basis describing the state of education in April 2015. The survey questionnaire was designed to be light and simple to ensure that a large number of schools may be covered in a relatively short period of time (April 2015), and to ensure that the information collected would be used to the maximum extent.

Based on lessons learnt from the previous assessments in CAR, the actual data collection took place using mixed methodology combining field visits and distance assessment.

The field visits were conducted by members of the Education Cluster in their areas of intervention based on the list of schools provided by the Assessment Coordinator and IM Specialist. The distance assessment was conducted together with the University of Bangui, who provided a team of Master’s students to conduct calls to school directors that Cluster members were unable to visit. Both phases were completed in a timeframe of three weeks.

After data collection, the verification and cleaning phase was done by the Coordinator of the Assessment, IM Specialist, together with the Department of Statistics of the Ministry of Education, JUPEDEC, and presented to the CAR Education Cluster for initial validation of findings. Based on the feedback, data was further triangulated with findings/reports of Education Cluster members. The data regarding attacks against schools was further verified with District Education Officers and organizations that had in-depth knowledge of the areas under question.
Data sampling

The data was collected using a random sample of 335 schools from the pre-crisis MoE database of 2,179 schools. In total 335 schools were assessed, setting the margin of error at 4.93% with an interval of confidence of 95% for national level\(^8\). The sample was stratified to ensure adequate representation of different types of schools and to ensure prefectures were represented according to the total number of schools in them compared to national level. The sample was stratified using the following factors:

i) number of schools by prefecture,
ii) number of schools by sub-prefecture,
iii) type of school (pre-school, primary, secondary),
iv) public/non-public schools,
v) The schools are selected randomly between the above stratification criteria from the sampling frame.

In cases where it was established that the randomly selected school did not exist or the school had already been closed before December 2012, the school was replaced from the sample. For this, a replacement list was created where every school was nominated one to three possible replacements that respected the above mentioned criteria.

Data collection

Data was collected between 2.3 and 2.4.2015 through structured interviews that were conducted with key informants at the school level or administrative level where the school level was unattainable (school directors or District Education Officers). The data collection was done to a maximum extent possible through field visits conducted by Cluster partners. A total of 169 schools were assessed through interviews at the school and 166 schools were assessed from distance by phone.

A survey questionnaire was elaborated by the coordination and validated by the Education Cluster\(^10\). The questionnaire was uploaded online using the open source mobile data collection programme \textit{KoBo}\(^11\) where the data could be uploaded either by Android mobile devices or by a computer. Field assessments were mostly conducted using paper forms, but the system made possible for the organizations in question to upload the data, thus avoiding a phase of data entry. The distance assessments were directly inserted in \textit{KoBo}.

The distance assessment was conducted in 166 schools by phone. The interviewers were last year Masters’ students from the University of Bangui, who received a training to conduct interviews prior to the assessment. Schools were contacted using the telephone contact list of the Ministry of Education which was updated by the Education Cluster in 2014-2015.

\(^8\) \url{http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html}
\(^9\) While the sample provides a margin of error is at 5% for the whole country, data presentation at prefectural level have wider margins. Larger prefectures have 14%-17% while the smallest ones are between 25%-40%.
\(^10\) Survey questionnaire may be found as annex A of this report.
\(^11\) \url{http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/applications/kobotoolbox}
Limitations and challenges

As a lesson learnt from the previous assessments, assessments were carried out in the field to the maximum extent possible to ensure reliability of the data. Distance assessments have two major shortcomings: the surveyor is not able to verify the information through observation and due to limited telephone coverage, the school directors are not always reachable. The data collection took longer than foreseen, since many of the schools selected in the random sample were in zones, where even these authorities were challenging to contact.

The second set of challenges was linked to the information available at schools. The survey intended to assess the absenteeism of students and teachers, which proved to be challenging. One of the results of the assessment was that school reopening has been gradual and only limited number of schools could provide reliable information on the number of students and teachers present due to the fact that schools had been functioning only for a brief period of time when the assessment was conducted.

During data triangulation and validation, it was established that one of the 17 assessed prefectures had data inconsistencies. The prefecture is Bamingui-Bangoran, for which the assessment results and subsequent data triangulation and verification did not align. As a result, the data of this prefecture was withdrawn from the assessment.

Secondary Data Review

A secondary data review was conducted prior to the assessment to support and validate the findings of the actual assessment. The review focused on three key indicators: percentage of functioning schools, presence of different categories of teachers and number of enrolled children compared to the pre-crisis baseline of 2011-2012.

The data was based on 47 field assessments conducted by CAR Education Cluster members and the Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM). The selection of the assessed zones has been entirely dependent of the needs of the Cluster member, however project evaluations have not been taken into account due to possible positive bias in the results. In total the secondary data review covered 657 primary schools in 15 prefectures. The assessed schools had 758 teachers present during the visits. The timeline of the assessments stretches from October 2014 until March 2015.

According to the secondary data review, schools have been opening progressively from October-December 2014 (35% schools functioning) to January-March 2015 (64% schools functioning). This finding supports the tendency found in this assessment that shows a slow but gradual progression of schools reopening in the country with two main peaks in November and January (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Functioning schools during Oct.-Dec. 2014 and Jan.-March 2015; secondary data review
Comparing the results of the secondary data review with the two assessments done by the Cluster in 2013 and 2014 and the assessment conducted by the Ministry of Education in 2014, the secondary data review and the results of this assessment show an increase in the percentage of functioning schools (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Percentage of functioning schools between 2013 and 2015; secondary data review

According to this review, out of 758 teachers 20% were tenured teachers, 13% were contract teachers and 67% of teachers in assessed schools were community teachers or similar without official qualifications (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Teachers present by category; secondary data review

The results of secondary data review provide only a partial overview of the situation of education, and should be interpreted only as describing the general trends due to several constraints: firstly, the assessed schools have not been selected using a strict methodology\(^\text{12}\); secondly, logistical and security constraints guide the zones selected for assessments; thirdly the window of time stretching from October 2014 to February 2015\(^\text{13}\). Even with the limitations, the secondary data review provides a useful source to compare and validate the findings of the assessment.

\(^{12}\) Cluster members conduct needs assessments frequently in zones, where there is low or no presence of education actors, thus creating a bias of assessing schools that have lower level of functioning as a result.

\(^{13}\) The results of the assessment conducted in March 2015 show that schools have opened progressively. The main challenge is that the situation of assessed schools changes, while the long timeline does not take this into account.
Results of the assessment

Functioning of schools during the first semester of 2014-2015

The percentage of functioning schools at national level is 83% according to the findings of the assessment. With the margin of error at 4.88%, this sets the percentage of open schools between 78% and 88% in April 2015. There are however large differences between prefectures, with Nana-Grébizi (25%), Ouaka (50%), Sangha-Mbaéré (63%), and Vakaga (67%) being the most affected prefectures, while the situation in Nana-Mambéré, Mbomou and Haut-Mbomou is relatively good (Figure 4). These last two prefectures were already doing well in the last two years as Haut-Mbomou stood at 80%, Mbomou 65% a few weeks after the peak of the crisis (February 2014). Similarly, 100% of Haut-Mbomou and 92% of Nana-Mambéré schools were functioning by the end of the 2012-2013 school year, a few months after the Séléka had seized power in Bangui.

Figure 4: Percentage of functioning schools by prefecture in April 2015

The prefectures with the highest rates of functioning schools are concentrated in the western part of the country, with corridor Bangui - Ombella-Mpoko - Nana-Mambéré that corresponds with the main road from Bangui to Cameroon and which were secured early on by international forces. The prefectures with lowest rates of functioning schools are Nana-Grébizi (25%), Ouaka (50%), Sangha-Mbaéré (63%), Vakaga (67%), Ouham (71%) and Haute-Kotto (75%) (Figure 6).

It is useful to note however, that the definition of functioning school does not imply that classes are taking place in a regular manner. Cluster members have reported that school functioning is frequently irregular and dependent mainly on security and the presence/absence of teachers. Schools with temporary suspension are considered as functional for the purpose of this assessment. Furthermore, the quality of education in otherwise functional schools is frequently limited by lack of materials and furniture (Figure 5: pictures 2 and 3).

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14 The criteria to define a functioning schools are the presence of director and/or at least one teacher, and that classes are taking place at the time the school is assessed.

15 It has to be noted that with the margin of error at prefectural level, these provinces are likely to have cases of schools that are not functioning.
The prefectures with most closed schools correspond to areas where the conflict has had the most impact: Nana-Grébizi, Ouaka, Haute-Kotto and Oumou. The principal reason given for non-functioning of schools is insecurity (71%) followed by absence of teachers (45%) and students (29%), which are in most cases directly caused by insecurity. Teacher absenteeism may however be due to other reasons, such as collection of salaries in Bangui, which together with Berberati is the only city where banks are functioning. Insecurity is also partly behind school closure in Sangha-Mbaéré, but the conflict dynamic in the area is different from other provinces affected by insecurity. Isolation of this prefecture from the rest of the country has a significant impact also on education.
When analyzed on the sub-prefecture level, the difference within prefectures becomes clear (Figure 7): In Ouham, schools around and south of Bossangoa are functional, while Batangafo and Markounda in the North are heavily affected. Kaga Bandoro (Nana-Grébizi) and sub prefectures of Kouango and Bambari in Ouaka are equally affected zones. This analysis on sub-prefecture level correspond with the so-called “red line” (the zone where the anti-balaka, ex-Séléka and armed cattle herders overlap) stretching from northern part of Ouham through Nana-Grébizi and Ouaka.

Figure 7: Map of closed schools by 1st of April on sub-prefectural level

Even with a relatively high percentage of functioning schools in prefectures less affected by the insecurity, education has been severely affected. The start of the school year has been delayed with only 53% schools being open around the official date of 20th November 2014. Schools have been opening gradually since November with a 10% increase in December and 18% in January. From February onwards, there has been an increase of only 4.5% in functioning schools. 3% of schools that reported having functioned had suspended classes indefinitely since. An interesting finding was that 14% of schools reported having opened already before the official date set by the government, of which 49 per cent were public schools, 30 per cent were schools run by religious structures and 19 per cent were private non-religious schools. Of all schools run by Catholic structures, 48% were functional already before November.

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17 As the sample size was under the necessary size to establish percentages at sub-prefecture level, the map is based on the number of cases identified per sub-prefecture.

18 The sample had one school for which the type (public/private/confessional) was not possible to define explaining the total amounting to 98%.
As a result of the delayed reopening of schools, approximately one third of the first semester has been lost. Schools have functioned on average for 11 weeks on national level, with large differences between prefectures (Figure 10). According to the national school calendar, schools should have functioned during 18 weeks by 1st of April. On average, schools have lost 7 weeks of functioning during the first semester of 2014 - 2015. The steadiest functioning has been in Nana-Mambéré, followed by other prefectures in the western and southeastern parts of CAR. The most disrupted prefectures are Nana-Grébizi, Ouaka, Ouham and Haute-Kotto (Figure 9).

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19. Schools that have opened, but ceased to function are not taken into account.

20. The graphic takes into account both functioning and non-functioning schools.
When functioning schools were compared against the Education Cluster 5Ws database, it was found that 94% of schools that benefited from the assistance were functioning compared to 79% of schools that had not received any assistance. The impact was also visible on the number of weeks schools had functioned: the schools that had been targeted had an average of 13 weeks of functioning, where the schools without partners had functioned only 10 weeks.

**Student enrolment**

In line with increase in functioning schools, enrolment has improved at national level from the school year 2013-2014, during which the peak of the crisis unfolded (March 2013 - May 2014) resulting in a drop of enrolments (-37% students enrolled in February 2014 compared to the 2012-2013 school year). The national average has increased by 31% from the last school year, but is still -6% below the pre-crisis enrolment level of 2011-2012 (Figures 11 and 12).
Two prefectures, Ouham and Kémo, stand out with increase in enrolment far above the national average. In Ouham, where the Northern part of the prefecture is still largely affected by conflict, this is explained by the low enrolment rate during 2013-2014: very low number of students were enrolled in Ouham and Kémo during that year, thus the starting level has been very low and increases in percentage are high\textsuperscript{21}. In addition, for both Kémo and Ouham, the increase in enrolment may be explained by the combination of education interventions (interventions funded by the Global Partnership for Education and Cluster members) and school canteens\textsuperscript{22}, as Kémo has been one of the intervention areas of WFP’s school feeding program.

The enrolment of 2014-2015 compared to the situation before the crisis (2011-2012) shows that 6.5 per cent of the children from pre-crisis levels are still absent from school (Figure 12). The prefectures where enrolment is most affected since the beginning of the crisis are Nana-Grébizi (-66%), Sangha-Mbaéré (-57%), Basse-Kotto (-50%), and Ouaka (-33%). Among the prefectures that are most affected, insecurity is the main underlying factor, with the exception of Sangha-Mbaéré, which has a different dynamic from the prefectures that are directly affected by the conflict\textsuperscript{23}.

For Kémo, Lobaye, Haut-Mbomou and Ouham-Pendé, slight increases in enrolment have been recorded compared to the pre-crisis levels (Figure 12). For the prefectures that have experienced slight increases in enrolment with a high percentage of schools being open, there are many causal factors such as the increase in the number of organizations intervening in education and the steep rise of international funding levels as compared to pre-crisis conditions.

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\textsuperscript{21} Ouham was one of the prefectures most affected by conflict during 2013 heavily affecting the enrollment levels.

\textsuperscript{22} School canteens in Kémo only.

\textsuperscript{23} The main reasons for poor educational attainments in Sangha-Mbaéré are due to the isolation of the prefecture and economical activities, particularly children working in artisanal mining according to the Ministry of Education and partner reports.
Similar increases have been recorded in other conflict contexts, where education indicators have actually improved after the onset of conflict. According to Human Security Report in 2012, the impact of the destruction and displacement caused by warfare on aggregate educational outcomes may be more than offset by the positive effect of other factors, e.g., infusion of international assistance has been highlighted as one of the key factors to offset the positive effects of education\textsuperscript{24}.

A second factor explaining changes in enrolment are the underlying demographic changes since the beginning of the crisis. Population movement (internal displacement, cross-border refugees and migration) affects the enrolment rates in each prefecture. Lack of reliable data does not allow in-depth analysis on the impact beyond identifying population movements as an influencing factor. This may have both positive and negative impacts on the percentage, since the data available measures absolute figures instead of relative figures.

When looking at enrolment for primary level disaggregated by sex, 60% of students are boys and 40% girls. The enrolment ratio in primary schools has gone in favor of boys after the crisis. Before the crisis, 57% of children going to primary school were boys and only 43% girls. This indicates that the crisis has had a clear negative effect on girls schooling. Already before the crisis, the primary school net enrolment ratio was 67% (73% for boys and 60% for girls) and for 100 boys who completed primary education, there were only 64 girls\textsuperscript{25}. For secondary school, the situation has remained around pre-crisis levels.

Teaching staff

In CAR, teachers are commonly divided in three categories: tenured teachers (*titulaires*) who are qualified teachers recognized by the state holding a permanent contract, contract teachers (*maîtres d’enseignement*) who are qualified teachers who have temporary contracts and community teachers (*maîtres-parents*) who are parents taking the role of teachers where the state is not able to guarantee presence of qualified teachers. *Maîtres-parents* have a broad category of backgrounds, most often without formal qualifications.

The ratio in primary education between the three categories of teachers was calculated based on the number of teaching staff registered in schools\(^\text{26}\). On national level the ratio between registered teaching staff is 45% of tenured, 13% of contract teachers and 42% of community teachers (Figure 14). The ratio is strongly influenced by Bangui, which has by far most tenured teachers and contract teachers present. Excluding Bangui, the ratio of community teachers increases to 55% with 34% tenured teachers and 11% community teachers respectively (Figure 15.)

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\(^{26}\) According to Cluster members, the numbers of registered tenured teachers is systematically higher than presence.
Excluding Bangui, community teachers are dominant teaching staff in schools. In Haut-Mbomou, Vakaga and Basse-Kotto over 80% of teachers are community teachers and in seven other prefectures they consist the largest body of teaching staff (Figures 16 and 17)\textsuperscript{27}. In the outskirts of the country and on secondary roads, the percentage of community teachers is typically higher than 90\%\textsuperscript{28}.

\textsuperscript{27} The Rapport d'Etat du Système Educatif National done by the World Bank in 2008 showed similar ratios.
\textsuperscript{28} According to Education Cluster member reports.
Teachers in primary education are most frequently males: of all teachers 78% are men and 22% women. 70% of tenured and 63% of contract teachers are male. For community teachers the bias is even larger with 91% being male (Figure 18).
The teacher-to-student ratio is 1:80 for primary education and 1:42 for secondary education at national level\textsuperscript{29}. The ratio for Bangui stands at 1:71, which is under the national average. The relatively good ratio in Basse-Kotto, Haut-Mbomou and Sangha-Mbaéré is explained by high percentage of community teachers who are not inclined to leave their post, because they belong to and are paid by the communities they are working in\textsuperscript{30}.

\textbf{Figure 19: Teacher-to-student ratio by prefecture}

\textsuperscript{29} Total number of enrolled students divided by total number of teachers.

\textsuperscript{30} One of the main reasons for teacher absenteeism is the absence of open banks outside the capital as salaries are paid by bank transfers: to date, banks are open only in Bangui and Berbérali.
School textbooks

At national level, the average ratio for school textbooks stands at 3.6:1. There are however large differences between the regions. The poorest ratio is in Ouham with 17.9:1 followed by Ombella-Mpoko (8.2:1), Ouham-Pendé (7.9:1), Lobaye (5.7:1) and Kémo (5.2:1). The best ratio is found in Mambéré-Kadéï (1.5:1) followed by Basse-Kotto (2.5:1), Haut-Mbomou (2.8:1) and Bangui (3.6:1).

Figure 20: Average ratio of school textbooks by prefecture

All of these prefectures have had high increases in enrolment during the school year 2014-2015. Furthermore, Ouham has had a high caseload of attacks against schools, which frequently results in loss of learning material, such as textbooks. For Kémo, Ouham-Pendé and Lobaye, the enrolment has surpassed the pre-crisis level, which contributes further to the lack of textbooks. For Vakaga, there were no textbooks in any of the assessed schools.

The average ratios do not however give the full picture, since schools that are relatively well equipped compensate in the average ratio for the schools with no textbooks. 40% of schools were completely missing school textbooks in either mathematics or French. For schools that do not have textbooks, 55% are situated along the secondary roads of the country, 39% along the main roads and 20% in towns.

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31 The data regarding school textbooks in Sangha-Mbaéré was excluded due to incoherencies, Vakaga has no textbooks (this information was confirmed by the Ministry of Education).

32 Plan International confirmed that schools in Mambéré-Kadéï are relatively well equipped with textbooks.

33 The bars represent the ratio separately for French and mathematics textbooks. The number in the end of each graph represents the average of combined textbooks per prefecture. Vakaga has been excluded from the graph, since none of the assessed schools had textbooks.
Figure 21: Schools with no textbooks by prefecture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefecture</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basse Kotto</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oulam</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haut-Mbomou</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mbohou</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangui</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kemo</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mambéré-Kadié</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nana-Grèbizi</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Average</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lobaye</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ouham-Pendé</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oumbe, Mpozo</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haute-Kotto</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ouham</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vakaga</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The percentage represents the number of schools that are missing at least one type of textbook. In two cases out of the 335 sample cases, a school had one type of textbook, but not the other. Only functioning schools have been taken into account.

Figure 22: Classrooms in Vakaga and Nana-Grèbizi

Classroom in Makine, Vakaga, showcasing overcrowding. Teaching materials and textbooks are almost completely lacking in this prefecture. Credits: Isaac-Wadbrind Madress, MAHDED, 2015.


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34 The percentage represents the number of schools that are missing at least one type of textbook. In two cases out of the 335 sample cases, a school had one type of textbook, but not the other. Only functioning schools have been taken into account.
Attacks against schools

In line with the previous two assessments, the percentage of schools attacked is high: 38% of the schools assessed report having suffered from at least one type of attack, as defined by guidance note on Security Council Resolution 1998; 45% of these schools suffered from two or more types of attacks (that is 17% of the total number of assessed schools)\(^\text{35}\).

What is even more worrying is that the percentage of schools attacked got higher since the last survey (February 2014, 33% schools attacked) which was already higher than the previous one (August 2013, 17.5% schools attacked). This confirms reports shared by Cluster members that armed groups specifically targeted education during the September-November 2014 period, in order to impede the return to school, which is a symbol of the return to normality and stabilization.

![Figure 23: Most common type of attacks (% of attacks that occurred in schools)](image)

While attacks against schools in CAR tend to be rather “light”, they are extremely widespread. The most common type of attacks are looting (70% of the schools attacked suffered from looting by armed groups) threats against school personnel (31%) and occupation (22%). These three types of attacks often happen together as armed groups are used to threaten local population and authorities, including school directors, then use the school buildings for accommodation and/or military purposes (most often as guard posts). The survey and verification done in Ouham, Nana-Grébizi and Kémo prefectures show that the prevalence of different types of attacks varies from one geographical area to another, depending on the nature of the groups which were predominant in that area. Burning of schools for example is more prevalent in Ouham (39% of attacks are burning) and Ouham-Pendé (36%), while looting is most common in Ombella-Mpoko (100% of the schools attacked suffered from looting), and damage done by bullets is more prevalent in Bangui (56%).

\(^\text{35}\) These findings have been verified in the three most affected prefectures, namely Ouham, Nana-Grébizi and partially in Kémo, by one Education Cluster staff and one researcher from the Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, with the support of District Education Officers and NGOs working in these prefectures.

Figure 25: Looted buildings in Nana-Grébizi. Looting did not limit to schools only, but also administrative buildings (Inspection d’Académie in Kaga Bandoro, Nana-Grébizi). Credits: Nicolas Servas, UNICEF, 2015.

The prefecture most affected by attacks against schools is Kémo, where 73% of schools assessed have been attacked. This is most likely due to the location of this prefecture, as it is located in the central part of the country where Séléka and government forces fought in 2012-2013, then ex-Séléka and anti-Balaka in 2014, and where armed forces are still stationing. Kémo is followed by Nana-Grébizi (67% of the schools assessed have been attacked) where ex-Séléka, anti-balaka and armed cattle herders are still fighting for domination. The third most affected prefecture is Ouham (56%) where the anti-balaka started their fight against Séléka in 2013, followed by heavy retaliation of the Séléka against the civilian population, and is still marked by incursions of armed groups from Southern Chad.

Figure 25: Attacks against schools by prefecture
Water and sanitation in schools

Water and sanitation was evaluated as part of the assessment. The national average for water points in primary schools is at 18%, with schools in Bangui at 57%. For latrines, only 41% of primary schools have at least one functional latrine. The ratio per latrine is well above SPHERE standards across prefectures, with Nana-Grébizi having the poorest facilities.

Figure 26: Percentage of primary schools with functioning water point by prefecture

Figure 27: Percentage of primary schools with at least one functioning latrine

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36 Ouaka has been excluded due to inconsistencies found during data verification.
School canteens

School canteens are functioning in seven prefectures in CAR at the moment: Kémo, Nana-Grébizi, Bangui, Ombella-Mpoko, Lobaye, Nana-Mambéré and Ouham-Pendé. Comparing the statistics on increase in enrolment (with 2013-2014 and pre-crisis levels) there exists a correlation between increase in school enrolment and presence of a functional school canteen. The increase is most pronounced in Kémo, with an increase of 174% in school enrolment compared to previous year and a 36% increase to pre-crisis enrolment (2011-2012). Similarly, for Lobaye, school enrolment was up 69.2% and 24% to pre-crisis level. For Nana-Grébizi, enrolment was down from 2013-2014, and the high percentage is explained by the low number of schools open. However, it is worth noting that all schools that functioned also had a school canteen.
School canteens alone do not explain alone the increases in enrolment rates, since there are several variables including population movement and other interventions in education, but there seems to be a clear correlation between the two.
Recommendations

To Members of the Education Cluster

- The current crisis has had a most severe impact in prefectures affected by instability and internal displacement, particularly the northern part of Ouham, Nana-Grébizi and Ouaka. The crisis has resulted in loss of access to education, limiting the learning and development opportunities of children. The Education Cluster members are encouraged to respond to these needs through catch-up classes, training of teachers in positive coping mechanisms, psychosocial support and with training in life skills and social cohesion.

- At national level, the ratio of textbooks per student is at 3.6 and 40% of schools have no textbooks. The lack of textbooks in schools severely affects the quality of teaching and limits the learning possibilities of children. In collaboration with donors and UNICEF, priority should be given to schools with no textbooks and schools which have a ratio of over 3 students per textbook.

- For WFP and other actors, continue and reinforce the school feeding program. School feeding encourages families to send their children to school, and has a positive impact on the attention span and cognitive abilities of children. The priority areas for school feeding programme should be the prefectures with the lowest enrolment rates, while taking into account the possibility of underlying demographic changes that may have resulted in increases or decreases in the number of children.

- Prioritize schools outside the main towns and on secondary roads. These schools are in the most vulnerable position, often having teaching staff composed of community teachers. The activities may include rehabilitation of infrastructure in areas with high density of children; support to teachers with particular attention directed to community teachers and equipping schools with materials; providing teaching material and equipment, furniture and textbooks.

- Support community teachers through trainings and providing teaching material. The interventions should target primarily the prefectures where community teachers form the main body of teaching staff and the most remote parts of the country. Interventions that support partially the payment of school fees (financial and in-kind support) need to take sustainability into account: financial support should be limited to ensure that it is complementary to local contribution, establish a development plan for schools and to mobilize the parents of the students (through teacher parent associations) to ensure the sustainability of the action.

- Ensure continuing access to education for displaced children through temporary learning spaces (ETAPE) and by providing support to schools that have displaced or returnee student. Provide light rehabilitation, school furniture and teacher training.

- Improve the safety and hygiene of schools through rehabilitation and installation of water points and latrines. Interventions of this type have also an impact on the overall sanitary situation of the communities benefitting from the action as the schools are often points of transmission for contagious diseases.
To the Ministry of Education

- Address the number of school weeks lost since the beginning of the year by adapting the school calendar of 2015-2016. The number of weeks varies between prefectures (7 weeks on average and up to 14 weeks in most affected prefectures) and the response needs to be adapted to the particular situation of each prefecture and more particular each school. Where Cluster members are implementing catch-up classes, the authorities are encouraged to support them by adapting school hours and by supporting the movement of administrative and teaching staff.

- Reduce the student-teacher ratio and increase the quality of teaching by facilitating the return of tenured and contract teachers who are currently not present in their assigned school.

- Reinforce the monitoring of teacher-presence in schools by the heads of school sectors through training, communication and through established administrative mechanisms at national level to control the physical presence of teachers.

- Facilitate the regular payment of salaries of teachers, including support for alternative solutions, such as improving the banking coverage and payment of salaries using mobile technology.

- Due to the inter-community grievances that imply children, consolidate the existing peace education and social cohesion programmes. These programmes may strongly contribute towards the end of cycle of violence and support the recovery of the country.

To Education Cluster Coordination

- Provide an effective coordination service for humanitarian response to national and international organizations. Ensure that the response aligns with the strategy of the Ministry of Education while respecting the INEE minimum standards and the guiding principles of INEE on peace education.

- Continue to monitor, verify and report the cases of attacks against schools in partnership with Cluster members, the Monitoring Reporting Mechanism (MINUSCA and UNICEF), with the civilian-military coordination (OCHA) and the child protection sub-cluster.

- Support the harmonization of approaches and modalities for community teacher support together with the Ministry of Education and Education Cluster members.

- Based on the results of this assessment, formulate an advocacy paper adapted to the new needs of education sector and with particular attention given to displaced and returnee children.
Annex A: Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFORMATIONS GENERALES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Préfecture / commune : Nom de l’enquêteur :</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nom de l’école : Numéro de tel d’enquêteur :</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code d’établissement : Organisation :</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLEAU D’OBSERVATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Quelle est votre fonction?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Chef de secteur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Directeur de l’école</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Président de l’association de Parents d’élèves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Enseignant à l’école</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Autre (svp à préciser) : _________________________________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 2. Numéro de téléphone de répondant : |

| 3. Quelle a été la date de réouverture des classes en 2014 – 2015 dans votre école (réouverture = les cours ont eu lieu) ? |
| Date: |

| 4. L’école, est-elle située ? |
| a) Dans un chef-lieu |
| b) Sur un axe principal |
| c) Sur un axe secondaire |

| 5. Parmi les élèves de l’école, est-ce qu’il y a des élèves de familles déplacées (plus de 25 élèves de familles déplacées)? |
| a) Oui |
| b) Non |

| 6. L’école, était-elle fonctionnelle pendant l’année scolaire 2011-2012 ? |
| a) Oui |
| b) Non |

| 7. L’école, était-elle fonctionnelle pendant l’année scolaire 2012-2013 ? (école fonctionnelle = les cours ont lieu) |
| a) Oui |
| b) Non |

| 8. L’école, était-elle fonctionnelle pendant l’année scolaire 2013-2014 ? (école fonctionnelle = les cours ont lieu) |
| a) Oui |
| b) Non |

| 9. Pour l’année scolaire 2014 – 2015, pendant combien de semaines l’école a fonctionné jusqu’ici (hors vacances) ? |
| Nombre de semaines : |

| 10. L’école est-elle fonctionnelle actuellement ? (école fonctionnelle = les cours ont lieu) |
| a) Oui |
| b) Non |

| 10.1. Si l’école ne fonctionne pas, quelles sont les raisons principales de la fermeture de l’école ? (ATTENTION, ne pas partager les options avec les directeurs, attendre qu’ils donnent leur réponse. Choisir max. trois réponses !) |
| a) Absence des enseignants |
| b) Absence des élèves |
| c) Occupation de l’école par une force ou groupe armé |
| d) Occupation de l’école par les civils |
| e) L’école a été pillée par les civils |
| f) L’école a été pillée par une force ou un groupe armé |
| g) Insécurité dans la zone |
| h) Forces ou groupes armés à proximité de l’école |
| i) Autres raisons, a spécifier : _________________________________________________ |

| 11. Quel était le nombre d’élèves inscrits à la rentrée scolaire 2012-2013 ? (nombre total pour l’école) |
| N. de garçons : ________ | N. de filles : ________ |

| 12. Quel était le nombre d’élèves inscrits à la rentrée scolaire 2013-2014 ? (nombre total pour l’école) |
| N. de garçons : ________ | N. de filles : ________ |

| N. de garçons : ________ | N. de filles : ________ |

| 14. Quel est le nombre total d’élèves présents à l’école actuellement (hors maladies et absences temporaires) |
| N. de garçons : ________ | N. de filles : ________ |
15. Est-ce que l’APE (Association des Parents d’Élevés) est fonctionnel ?
   a) Oui  
   b) Non

   
   | Nombre de titulaires | Hommes : | Femmes : |
   | Nombre de maitres d’enseignement | Hommes : | Femmes : |
   | Nombre de maitres parents | Hommes : | Femmes : |

17. Quel était le nombre d’enseignants présents à la fin de l’année scolaire 2013 – 2014 (Hors maladie et absences)
   
   | Nombre de titulaires | Hommes : | Femmes : |
   | Nombre de maitres d’enseignement | Hommes : | Femmes : |
   | Nombre de maitres parents | Hommes : | Femmes : |

18. Quel est le nombre d’enseignants enregistrés à la rentrée scolaire 2014 – 2015
   
   | Nombre de titulaires | Hommes : | Femmes : |
   | Nombre de maitres d’enseignement | Hommes : | Femmes : |
   | Nombre de maitres parents | Hommes : | Femmes : |

19. Quel est le nombre d’enseignants présents à l’école actuellement (hors maladies et absences temporaires)
   
   | Nombre de titulaires | Hommes : | Femmes : |
   | Nombre de maitres d’enseignement | Hommes : | Femmes : |
   | Nombre de maitres parents | Hommes : | Femmes : |

20. L’école a-t-elle été attaquée par une force armée ou un groupe armé
   
   a) Oui  
   b) Non

20.1. Si la réponse est Oui, est-ce que :
   a) L’école a été pillonnée (l’école était ciblée)
   b) L’école a été bombardée (l’école était ciblée)
   c) L’école a été touchée par des obus
   d) L’école a été touchée par des balles
   e) L’école a été incendiée volontairement
   f) L’école a été volée / pillée par une force armée ou un groupe armé
   g) L’école a été occupée par une force armée ou un groupe armée
   h) Des explosifs (balles, grenades, autres) se trouvent dans l’école
   i) Il y a eu des intimidations et / ou attaques ciblées contre les élèves, enseignants, ou le directeur
   j) Le bâtiment a été utilisé pour de la propagande

21. Dans votre école, quel est le nombre moyen d’élèves par manuel de français ? (diviser le nombre total d’élèves inscrits par le nombre total de manuels de français)
   Nombre moyen :

22. Dans votre école, quel est le nombre moyen d’élèves par manuel de mathématiques ? (diviser le nombre total d’élèves inscrits par le nombre total de manuels de mathématiques)
   Nombre moyen :

23. L’école a-t-elle une cantine scolaire ?
   
   a) Oui  
   b) Non

24. Si Oui, est-ce que la cantine est fonctionnelle ?
   
   a) Oui  
   b) Non

25. L’école a combien de latrines existantes ?
   
   | Nombre de latrine garçons | Nombre de latrine filles |

26. Combien de ces latrines sont fonctionnelles ?
   
   | Nombre de latrine garçons | Nombre de latrine filles |

27. Est que l’école a un point d’eau disponible ?
   
   a) Oui  
   b) Non

28. Est-ce que le point d’eau est fonctionnel ?
   
   a) Oui  
   b) Non

SIGNATURE CHEF DE SECTEUR :