

FAST FACTS

United Nations Development Programme



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Crisis in the Central African Republic

The Central African Republic has been mired in an escalating civil conflict since the breakdown of political stability in December 2012. Sectarian and political violence has killed thousands of people, displaced about 1 million people, including more than 416,000 who fled to neighbouring countries. There are now more than 65,000 displaced people in the capital, Bangui.

2.5 million of the country's population of 4.6 million are in urgent need of humanitarian aid.

The fighting has destroyed critical infrastructure and basic social services, and increased vulnerability in what was already one of the world's poorest countries. Before the crisis, 70 percent of the population lived below the poverty line and this number has now increased dramatically.

Between July and September 2014, the country achieved milestones that are hopeful signs following months of violence. These include a "cessation of hostilities" agreement between warring factions and the arrival of the new United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic.

UNDP's approach

The present situation still requires humanitarian action, alongside efforts to address some of the underlying issues that caused the current crisis. UNDP is working to restore peace, authority, livelihoods and reconciliation, re-establish a functioning state, and to put the country back on a more robust development path.

UNDP in action

Support to justice, security and the rule of law

In April 2014, UNDP launched an emergency programme to reactivate the systems required for citizens to access justice. This included granting temporary stipends to a limited number of police, the judiciary and gendarmes so they could resume rule of law functions.

UNDP also ensured that basic equipment, such as office furniture and vehicles were provided, so that selected courts and other justice institutions could function. Damaged police and gendarmerie stations in Bangui are being renovated and UNDP helped provide 11 vehicles so that security forces could resume patrols throughout the capital and restore confidence of the population.



People displaced by fighting, outside a mosque in Bouar, western CAR.
Photo: © Nicholas Long/IRIN

Because of this support, more than 520 police/gendarmes, magistrates, judicial personnel and prison staff stayed in Bangui and on the job between April and the end of June.

UNDP support also enabled the security of courts, allowing the First Instance Court, the Appeal Court and the Supreme Court to reopen and resume hearings for non-criminal cases. The Ministry of Security was able to deploy guards for protection of the courts, airport and surrounding areas of Bangui.

UNDP provided judicial staff, police and gendarmes with training in investigation procedures and prisons security. An assessment being carried out by joint committees of the UN, Ministry of Security, and a joint inspection unit of the gendarmerie/police, is underway to determine if security personnel were involved in any human rights violations during recent violence and to reinforce the national structures and their ability to treat such cases.

Re-establishment of core public services

UNDP, working in partnership with the UN Peacebuilding Fund and the World Bank, has taken steps ensure the salaries of civil servants continue to be paid - in order to safeguard the delivery of core government services in Bangui. Using money from the Peacebuilding Fund, UNDP

has already paid US\$ 4.6 million to cover the salaries of more than 3,400 police and gendarmerie between May and August 2014. At the same time, the World Bank has paid the salaries of the rest of the civil service. The payments were made through a UNDP-managed multi-partner trust fund, after a verification exercise undertaken in May 2014, which produced a vetted payroll of approximately 20,000 civil servants.

Support to stabilization, social cohesion and livelihoods

Emergency employment projects are providing at least 15,000 affected people with an income, quickly injecting cash into depressed areas. This will facilitate future return and the re-establishment of livelihoods, and help restore community infrastructure. Progress so far includes:

- Rehabilitation of 10 km of roads to access farms and markets in Bangui;
- Strengthening of the capacity of local government so they can better maintain public infrastructure;
- Formation of 39 Local Peace and Youth Committees, and the conflict management training of 790 members; and
- The development of three local security plans.

Each labour project includes a peace promotion component to establish local peace committees, conflict management and resolution mechanisms, radio messages, sports, plays and other events which aim to encourage messages of non-violence, mutual tolerance and respect.

In the short term, this programme, carried out by partner organizations, will benefit tens of thousands of people.

Reconciliation

UNDP will support the the implementation of the *National Strategies for Reconciliation and the Emergency Action Plan*, which was launched by the Ministry for Communication and Reconciliation in May. UNDP will promote community level mediation to reduce violence, mitigate tensions and kick-start dialogue for reconciliation and durable peace. A network of mediators and peace committees will be established, along with a national peace structure that includes leaders from different segments of society. This strategy will be supported through capacity building measures for the ministry and other national peacebuilding institutions.

Future support

A new project, which was signed in July by the government, MINUSCA, UNDP and UNWOMEN under the auspices of the DPKO-UNDP Global Focal Point arrangement, will:

- Support the Ministry of Justice to establish an investigation unit and an emergency plan to help vulnerable groups;

| Programme name | Total budget (US\$ millions) | Allocated funds (US\$ millions) | Shortfall (US\$ millions) |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Community security and resilience | 22.9 | 6.5 | 16.4 |
| Restoration of Police and Gendarmerie | 6.2 | 2.5 | 3.7 |
| Re-establishment of Local Governance | 5 | 0.2 | 4.8 |
| TOTAL: | 34.1 | 9.2 | 23.9 |

- Strengthen the protection of individuals and vulnerable groups and their access to justice through the better access to the justice system, through for example, the organization of criminal sessions, mobile courts, legal aid, and a special investigation cell;
- Support the redeployment of Police and Gendarmerie in sensitive areas, notably IDP camps;
- Monitor sexual and gender based violence cases and provide assistance to survivors; and
- Support local authorities to progressively manage conflicts and insecurity in sensitive areas through dispute resolution and other community-based mechanisms.

Once the situation allows for it, the United Nations will start planning for national elections. UNDP will support the newly sworn-in National Electoral Authority.

For further information contact:

United Nations Development Programme, Central African Republic,
Avenue Boganda
BP : 872 Bangui
République Centrafricaine
communication.cf@undp.org

www.cf.undp.org
www.africa.undp.org/rba/en/home.html

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