

Central African Republic (CAR) Situation

19 March 2021

Secure legislative elections

On March 16, the African Union Election Observation Mission released preliminary findings on the March 14 elections. The AU mission welcomed the smooth conduct of the vote and its progress since the first round. The National Election Authority (ANE) will announce the consolidate results by Monday 22nd, followed by the constitutional court's validation afterwards.

Inter-agency refugee response plan launched in the DRC

An inter-agency response plan for the new influx from CAR has been launched in the DRC. The plan brings together 16 UN and NGO partners to assist a projected 92,000 refugees from March to December 2021. Partners are appealing for US\$69 million to provide critical protection and basic services.

One in two new Central Africans seeking refuge is a child

Children have been affected the most by the crisis in CAR. In Cameroon, Chad, Congo, and Democratic Republic of the Congo, more than half of new Central African refugees and asylum-seekers are children. UNHCR's priority is to increase capacity to ensure access to, and continuity of education for children in camps and host villages early in the response.

KEY INDICATORS

132,810*

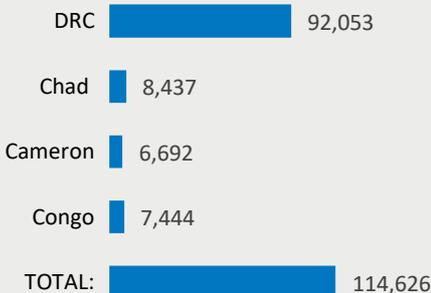
Total number of new Internally displaced persons in CAR since the beginning of the electoral crisis.

114,626 **

People that have fled CAR to Cameroon, RoC, Chad and DRC until 12 March 2021, since the beginning of the electoral crisis.

DISPLACEMENT TRENDS BY COUNTRY

New arrivals



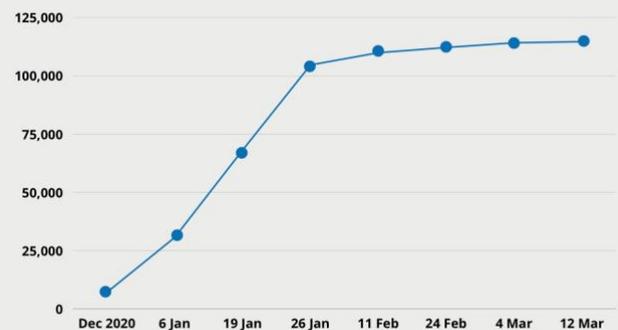
* [Foot note] Announced by la Commission de Mouvement de population of 28 February 2021.

** [Foot note] Data as reported by local authorities of 04 March 2021.

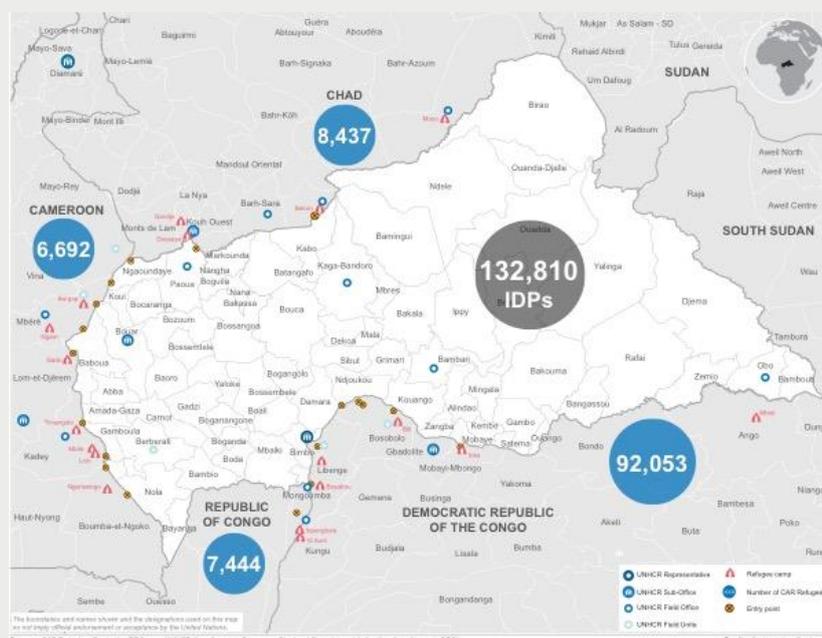
** In Cameroon, movements suggest that the actual figures are higher than the statistics.

** DRC displacement figure is a government estimate. UNHCR is conducting biometric registration jointly with government to confirm.

REGIONAL DISPLACEMENT TREND



CAR SITUATION MAP



Operational Context

Political and security situation in Central African Republic (CAR)



The security situation remains relatively calm in the District of Bangui and most prefectures. However, CPC's presence (La Coalition des Patriotes pour le Changement) perturbs Bouar, Baboua and Abba's communities.



The Security Council decided to increase by 3,700 military and police officer the authorized size of the MINUSCA to enhance its ability to perform its mandated tasks "in the current evolving context". The resolution extended MINUSCA's mandate to 15 November 2021, involving 11,650 military personnel, 2,080 police personnel and 108 corrections officers.



FACA continued patrolling along the national route MSR1, where joint checkpoints MINUSCA/FACA are established. Following the security council's approval to increase MINUSCA troops, it is expected that the security situation will continue improving, especially along the MSR1.



A year has passed since the Minister of Health of the Central African Republic announced the first case of COVID-19 on 14 March 2020. Since, 5,075 people have tested positive and 64 passed away due to the virus, according to the Ministry of Health [report](#). The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases should be interpreted with caution, only 38,422 people have been tested for COVID-19 as of 15 March 2021.



In the CAR, "this year, at least 62,000 children under five are expected to suffer from severe acute malnutrition, a 25 per cent increase from 2020." UNICEF and WFP [reported](#). The two UN agencies also noted that violence and insecurity are exacerbating population displacement, hindering humanitarian access and causing food prices to rise.



On March 16, the first testimony in the trial opened in mid-February against Anti-Balaka leaders Patrice Edouard Ngaïssona and Alfred Yekatom before the International Criminal Court (ICC). The two Central Africans armed leaders are being prosecuted for crimes against humanity and war crimes committed in 2013 and 2014. The prosecution called a victim of the attack on December 5, 2013, in Bangui to stand.



Population movements and border monitoring

- On 08 March 2021, DRC local authorities and security services reported a new influx of about 2,166 Central African asylum-seekers into the localities of Gbagiri and Gbangi, Bosobolo Territory, North Ubangi Province. Republic of Congo have reported no new arrivals in the last two weeks. Following a spike in new arrivals at the end of February and early March there have been no new arrivals from CAR reported since 2 March. Cameroon and Chad have not reported new arrivals during the last month.
- In recent weeks, there have been reports of pendular movements from Bas Uele Province, DRC. According to local authorities, several of the CAR asylum-seekers camped by the riverside in Ndu make a daily trip to Bangassou in pursuit of food and livelihoods and return to Ndu in the evening to sleep.
- New asylum-seekers in the DRC are settled in more than 40 sites along a border spanning thousands of kilometers. Roads are in very poor condition or absent. Canoe rafts and makeshift bridges are often used to transport critical supplies and humanitarian staff.
- Most new arrivals from CAR are being hosted in areas where the needs of the populations continue to be unmet, and resources are stretched thin. Newly arrived refugees require humanitarian assistance and support for sexual and gender-based violence, child protection and documentation.
- As 28 of February 2021, la Commission de Mouvement de Populations [reported](#) that at least 35,178 new IDPs. The total number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in CAR was estimated to be 741,879, consisting of 235,498 persons in sites and 506,381 persons in host families.
- Throughout the response, UNHCR continues to prioritize support to persons with specific needs, including unaccompanied children, pregnant women, and survivors of gender-based violence.
- The new displacement of more than 245,000 people adds to the 1.3 million Central Africans already uprooted in the region, bringing the overall number of displaced Central Africans (IDPs and refugees) to over 1.5 million – almost a third of the country's total population.

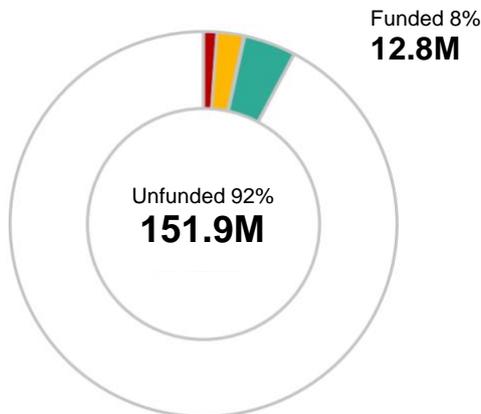


CAR Situation Funding Update

FUNDING (AS OF 19 MARCH 2021)

USD 164.7 M

requested for the Central African Republic situation



- Tightly earmarked
- Earmarked
- Softly earmarked (indicative allocation)
- Unearmarked (indicative allocation)
- Funding gap (indicative)

- As of 19 March 2021, the **Central African Republic situation** has received only 8% of the \$164.7 million required. In light of the unfolding emergency, softly earmarked funding for the CAR situation is the most valuable financial support donors can provide and will allow UNHCR to respond to the most urgent needs in the most timely and efficient manner.
- On 25 February UNHCR launched an **emergency appeal** to address the Central African Republic crisis. Read the full appeal [here](#).

UNHCR Emergency Response L1 and L2 Emergency Declaration

Contributions earmarked to the CAR Situation 2021

UN Programme on HIV / AIDS 260,890 | Other private donors 76,858

Softly earmarked contributions

Sweden 7.6 million | Japan 6.2 million

Unearmarked contributions 2021

Norway 80 million | Sweden 66.9 million | Netherlands 36.1 million
 Denmark 34.6 million | Germany 22.1 million | Switzerland 16.4 million
 Private donors Spain 13.3 million | Ireland 12.5 million | Belgium 11.9 million

- UNHCR declared on 21 January 2021 a Level 2 emergency for its operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and a Level 1 emergency for its Operations in the Central African Republic, Cameroon, Chad, and the Republic of the Congo.

Stories

UNHCR to relocate thousands of Central African refugees to safer locations

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is working to relocate thousands of Central African refugees away from dangerous conditions in remote border areas of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) into safer sites further into the interior.

UNHCR and DRC's National Refugee Commission (CNR) have signed agreements and started to develop a site for 10,000 refugees in Modale village, near Yakoma in North Ubangi province.

UNHCR and CNR will prepare four relocation sites for some 35,000 refugees to live alongside local communities and grow their own crops, attend local schools, and benefit from other services that serve their Congolese hosts.



Refugees from the Central Africa Republic collect relief items at a UNHCR distribution center in Yakoma, northern Democratic Republic of the Congo. © UNHCR/Hélène Caux

- Read the full article [here](#).



Country Operation Central African Republic

Operational Environment

- The situation around Bouar, Baboua and Abba remains volatile. Abuses linked to certain armed elements assimilated to the 3Rs and cases of illegal taxes were reported.
- In Paoua, the population of Mbipourou and the neighbouring villages leave their town to find refuge in the other villages. During the displacement, cases of rape were reported and referred to the local hospital.
- In Mongoumba, internally displaced people and refugees from Democratic Republic of the Congo return spontaneously; the trend reflects that the protection environment is gradually improving in the region.
- With the UNHCR advanced team's support deployed to Bangassou, COOPI successfully concluded the profiling of Internally displaced people living in four sites. The report concluded that at least 12,000 individuals have left the IDP sites to return to their habitual residence. The return trend was confirmed through a survey conducted earlier.
- In Bossangoa, according to local sources, most of 14,000 IDPs settled at the Cathedral have returned to the bush by fear of armed group possible attack. UNHCR advanced team arrived to support the emergency response and conduct an in-depth protection assessment revealed numerous protection challenges.



IDP participatory assessment in CAR @UNHCR 2021 @UNHCR CAR

Assistance provided

- This week the community relays have conducted 137 sensitization sessions to raise awareness about preventing the spread of COVID-19. A total of 2,067 individuals, including 203 women, 423 men, 695 girls, and 746 boys, participated. Besides, 48 hand-washing devices have been distributed on the IDP sites.
- Following the confirmation of seven COVID-19 cases in Batangafo – including cases among the IDP population. UNHCR, in partnership with INTERSOS have strengthened COVID-19 awareness-raising and prevention measures in the 7 IDP sites, where 100 handwashing devices were provided, benefitting a total of 23,986 IDPs and 6,150 households
- On 17 March, UNHCR finalized the distribution of NFI kits to the newly displaced persons which arrived in Berbérati. In total, 393 households (1,625 individuals) have been assisted.
- On 15 March, UNHCR provided NFI/shelter kits to 327 individuals to respond to severe floods which have impacted several households on the 7 IDP sites in Batangafo. Assistance was also delivered to extremely vulnerable households including people with disabilities.

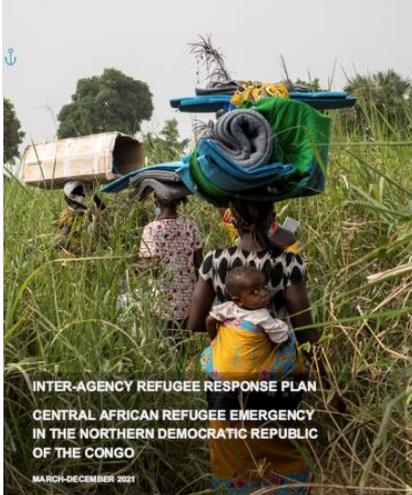
Regional support

The regional protection team facilitates the formulation and implementation of a project to strengthen the CAR operation response package to gender-based violence cases and ensure a holistic response is provided through a victim-centered approach.



Country Operation

Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)



The 2021 Inter-Agency Refugee Response Plan (RRP) for the Central African refugees (CAR) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was launched on 19 March 2021 [online](#).

The plan outlines the multi-agency response strategy and financial requirements of 16 partners supporting host government to provide protection and assistance to the newly arrived refugees from CAR.

The RRP is expected to cater for some 92,000 refugees in the DRC, and to support some 100,000 members of impacted host communities. Inter-agency partners are appealing for some US\$ 69 million for the implementation of the multi-sectoral response activities.

Operational Environment

- 8 March local authorities in the DRC reported about 2,166 new Central African asylum-seekers had arrived into the localities of Gbagiri and Gbangi, North Ubangi Province. UNHCR and the government National Commission for Refugees (CNR) undertook a joint monitoring mission to the area on 13 March. A majority of the new arrivals are being hosted by the local community leaders or staying in makeshift tents where living conditions are poor. Some among the new arrivals had reportedly temporarily returned to CAR to participate in the second round of voting in legislative elections.
- The operation continues to face logistical challenges, as new asylum-seekers in the DRC are settled in more than 40 sites along a border spanning thousands of kilometres. Roads are in very poor condition or absent. Canoe rafts and makeshift bridges are often used to transport critical supplies and humanitarian staff. UNHCR has initiated planning for cash-based assistance to be provided in hard-to-reach areas, particularly where conditions are difficult for transporting relief items.

Assistance provided

- As of 14 March, UNHCR and CNR have biometrically registered 49,326 Central African asylum-seekers in northern DRC and in the capital Kinshasa. This includes 21,097 people in 11 villages in Bas Uele Province, 17,332 people in six locations in North Ubangi Province, 10,794 people in 11 localities in South Ubangi Province and 103 people in Kinshasa. Registration is continuing in other localities.
- UNHCR partner AIDES has completed seven latrine blocks in Ngzamba and Ndayo, North Ubangi Province, to improve sanitation conditions for newly arrived refugees. Construction continues with a plan for 11 latrine blocks in total.
- Construction work has begun on a transit centre at the Modale site for the relocation of Central African refugees in Yakoma, North Ubangi Province. UNHCR is also laying the groundwork for construction and rehabilitation of schools, health centres, potable water and sanitation facilities. These services will benefit both refugees and host communities. UNHCR and CNR continue to undertake joint missions to identify additional relocation sites for refugees currently situated close to the border in Bili and Zongo in North and South Ubangi Provinces.

Regional Support

- UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Southern Africa (RBSA) and UNHCR HQ have supported the DRC operation to develop and finalize the inter-agency refugee response plan for the new influx from CAR.
- UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Southern Africa is supporting the DRC operation to step-up prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA). A technical support mission in the second week of March engaged with a variety of stakeholders including women-led organizations, health service providers and humanitarian staff, with the aim of strengthening networks and mechanisms for preventing, reporting and responding to PSEA across the operation.



Country Operation Cameroon



Central African new arrivals having COVID19 test in Garoua Boulai
 @UNHCR -Xavier Bourgois. 2021.

Operational Environment

- As of 17 March, 6,692 individuals within 2,082 households have crossed the border. No new asylum seekers have been recorded during the last month.
- On Monday, 15 March, registration operations for new refugees restarted in Garoua-Boulai. Two border monitoring missions took place in Batouri.
- Civilian activities have resumed at the border between Cameroon and CAR. The military disposition set up in Garoua-Boulai in the aftermath of the events of December 2020 has been dismantled.
- At the Garoua Boulai border, 99 per cent of the trucks blocked since December 2020 reached Bangui by road without incident.
- From 31 January to 17 March, 72 COVID-19 cases have been reported among CAR refugees, 20 cases are still active - 9 asymptomatic, 11 symptomatic.
- Work to improve basic infrastructure in the village of Nadoungue began on 16 March, in anticipation of the transfer of 2,000 refugees.

Assistance provided

- COVID-19 prevention activities involved 71 households and 313 people, including 262 adults (201 women and 61 men) and 51 children (31 girls and 20 boys).
- 74 vulnerable women have been referred to partners for further assistance, including two elderly women, two chronically ill women, three GBV survivors, three women with severe disability, 64 single women with children. Partners IMC-GBV and AIRD-CCCM are providing support and distributing dignity kits offered by UNFP.
- Eight cases of GBV were identified and managed (including seven cases of rape) within a 72-hour period. Survivors received additional medical assistance, psychosocial support, and medical certificates.
- In Gado camp, 300 emergency shelters were built, and 85 transitional shelters were opened. As a result, 1,227 new refugees (404 households) who were transferred to the camp, have family houses.
- The 1,227 refugees (404 households) transferred to Gado received the second general monthly distribution of food on 24 and 25 February 2021. The food basket consisted of a 60-day ration covering 50 per cent of food needs for cereals, vegetables, oil and salt.
- Meanwhile, 276 refugee school children were identified for inclusion in the first six convoys in schools in Gado. There are 230 primary school pupils (132 girls and 98 boys) and 46 secondary school students (19 girls and 27 boys).

Regional support

The Regional Bureau for West and Central Africa (RBWCA) is providing technical support to strengthen coordination and put together an inter-agency refugee response plan (RRP) for Central African refugees in eastern Cameroon.

**Country Operations**
Chad**Operational Environment**

- In the last four weeks, there have been no reports of new arrivals at the border. However, CNARR informed UNHCR of 600 asylum-seekers had arrived in Bekan since February. An assessment of their status is ongoing before deciding whether to transfer them to the Doholo site in Bekan.
- The situation on the borders between the two countries remains relatively calm.
- One positive COVID-19 case has been reported among new arrivals in the site of Doholo. UNHCR continues raising awareness about COVID-19 prevention in the camps, sites and health structures. Around 1,307 people (270 households) have been processed through the quarantine center.
- A needs and cost assessment was conducted with education partners (Departmental Inspector of Education, Unicef, Acra and UNHCR) as part of Education Cannot Wait (ECW) funding.
- In Doholo, 18 separated children and 16 unaccompanied children were identified, and six new cases of mental disorders were recorded during the week.
- The six previous cases of rape among asylum seekers are still being followed up for medical and psychosocial response at the health center. No new cases of rape were recorded during the week.

Assistance provided

- UNHCR is strengthening a coordination strategy with NGOs, UN Agencies and local institutions to respond to immediate needs, include hygiene kits, food assistance, medical attention and school kits.
- The awareness campaign on GBV continues in both, the Doholo and the Gondje camps.
- School inclusion activities for new arrivals continue in the Doholo and Gondje camps, where 847 children, including 682 in Doholo and 165 in Gondje, have been enrolled in the Chadian education system the last two weeks. Enrollment is continuing due to the high number of children.
- During the last week, 79 people in the Dossey quarantine centre were transferred to the Gondje site.
- From March 15 to 19, 2021, MSF conducted 203 curative and preventive consultations in the three sites (Koumba, Ndoubah soh, Bekoninga), including 45 new asylum seekers.
- As of March 19, 1,700 family shelters have already been built, including 1,400 in Doholo and 300 in Gondje.
- The N'djamena office sent 839 kitchen sets that were received in the Gore warehouse.
- Unicef has sent to Gore WASH and NFI products to meet the needs of the new refugees. The batch comprises 50 chlorine packets, 40 protective masks (goggles), 1,000 tarpaulins of 4x5m, 17 boxes of laundry soap of 200g, 20 sprayers, 1000 packets of water purify, and 1,000 blankets from UNICEF. The distribution of these NFIs is planned for 23 and 24 March in Doholo and Gondje.

Regional Support

- The Regional Bureau for West and Central Africa (RBWCA) and its protection team is providing technical support to ensure civilian and humanitarian character of asylum.



Country Operation Republic of the Congo

Operational Environment

- Following a spike in new arrivals at the end of February and early March there have been no new arrivals from CAR reported since 2 March. Among those who arrived prior to 2 March, 7,444 individuals have been registered through emergency registration, as of 17 March.
- Community outreach workers in Mongoumba, CAR, have informed UNHCR that some Central Africans have returned to CAR from RoC over the past week. Number of returnees and their reason for return have not been confirmed. UNHCR, along with government partners, is planning a monitoring mission to assess this reported return movement.



Registration of newly arrived Central African asylum-seekers in Betou, Republic of the Congo ©UNHCR / Marc Foukou.

Assistance Provided

- UNHCR continues to provide drinking water at a rate of 9,000 litres per week for newly arrived refugees and host community in Kpakaya, in order to help reduce pressure on the local supply. Support to service provision in refugee-hosting areas is critical in order to avoid tensions and promote peaceful coexistence between refugee and host communities.
- Approximately 1,200 new refugee arrivals have been provided with essential household items since the distribution exercise began on 28 January. 220 women and girls of childbearing age have also received items to support their personal hygiene. Distribution continues in localities such as Moualé, Thanry, Lombo, Lopola and Tingama.
- UNHCR and the government National Commission for Refugee Affairs (CNAR) continued biometric registration of new arrivals over the past week, a process which began on 6 March.

Regional Support

The Regional Bureau for Southern Africa (RBSA) is helping to step-up the health response in RoC, and strengthen coordination. A key element of this support includes procuring COVID-19 test kits, as well as of health kits and essential medicines.

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