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Conflict Analysis: Central African Republic

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COVER

Beneficiaries of a CRS and Caritas food voucher program talk to Julien Bakolo (left) of Caritas in the town of Boda, Lobaye District, Central African Republic. This assessment focused on locations where CRS is conducting ongoing response, early recovery, and social cohesion programming in the northwest of the country, in the prefectures of Nana-Mambéré, Ouham, and Ouham-Pendé, as well as the southwest's Lobaye prefecture.

Photo by Sam Phelps for CRS

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Acronyms

CACF	Action Contre la Faim
AU	African Union
BINUCA	Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic
CA	Conflict analysis
CAF	Conflict Assessment Framework
CAR	Central African Republic
CCCS	Comités Communautaires pour la Cohésion Sociale
CDJP	Commission Diocésaine Justice et Paix
CEJP	Commission Episcopal Justice et Paix
CIPP	CAR Interfaith Peacebuilding Partnership
CNT	Conseil National de Transition
CPJP	Convention des Patriotes pour la Justice et la Paix
COOPI	Cooperazione Internazionale
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DDR	Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
DDRR	Disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, and rehabilitation
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FACA	Forces Armées Centrafricaines
FDPC	Front Démocratique du Peuple Centrafricain
FGM/C	Female genital mutilation/cutting
FPR	Front Populaire pour le Redressement
FPRC	Front Populaire pour la Renaissance de Centrafrique
GBV	Gender-based violence
HR	Human rights
HROC	Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities
ICG	International Crisis Group
IDP	Internally displaced persons
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Networks
JICA	Jeunesse Islamique Centrafricaine
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
MINUSCA	Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic
MISCA	International Support Mission to the CAR
MPC	Mouvement Patriotique pour la Centrafrique
MSF	Medecins Sans Frontières
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
NTC	National Transitional Council
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OFCA	l'Organisation des Femmes Centrafricaine
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PCRC	Plateforme des Confessions Religieuses en Centrafrique
PTSD	Post-traumatic stress disorder
PM	Prime Minister
RJ	Révolution et Justice
RJDP	Réseau des journalistes pour les Droits de l'homme
SECC	Secure, Empowered, Connected Communities
SFCG	Search for Common Ground
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
SSR	Security sector reform
UFDR	Union des Forces Démocratiques pour le Rassemblement
UNOCHA	UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNSC	UN Security Council
UNSG	United Nations Secretary General
US	United States
USAID	US Agency for International Development
USIP	United States Institute of Peace
WFP	World Food Programme

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Introduction

This conflict analysis (CA) was commissioned by Catholic Relief Services in CAR, and is based on USAID's Conflict Assessment Framework (CAF 2.0). The CA was conducted from March 5 to April 4, 2016, by teams recruited from among CRS' partners, along with a consultant and CRS staff. The objectives were threefold: 1) Analyze conflict dynamics at national and regional/sub-national levels; 2) Identify key factors to inform more effective implementation of social cohesion programming; and 3) Identify opportunities for strategic interventions in the promotion and integration of justice and peacebuilding, and social cohesion.

This report follows the lines of the CAF 2.0, first with a review of the context, then conflict dynamics (including key issues, actors, grievances, institutional performance, social patterns), followed by trajectories (trends and triggers), conclusions, and response options. This analysis identified the following key conflict dynamics: fragmented security and conflict between armed groups; state services failure; competition over resources; agro-pastoral conflict; and refugee and IDP return.

Since 1960, the Central African Republic, or CAR, has been politically unstable, with eight different presidents, and characterized by exclusion and corruption punctuated by coups, counter-coups and rebellions. It is one of the poorest countries in the world, in spite of ample natural resources including diamonds, gold, land, water, and forests. In 2012, the political situation worsened, with a surge in violence, resulting in approximately 20 percent of the population of 4.8 million (especially Muslims) being displaced from their homes and over half requiring humanitarian aid.¹ Thousands have died, more than 400,000 are displaced, and more than 400,000 have fled to neighboring Cameroon, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Republic of Congo.²

Following this humanitarian crisis, the situation in CAR has gradually begun to improve, with a vibrant interreligious platform, the Plateforme des Confessions Religieuses en Centrafrique (PCRC), and a Ministry of Reconciliation promoting dialogue and reconciliation. While the international community (UN, donors, and NGOs) has been focused on the mainstream peace process and peace negotiations, security sector reform, and elections, several organizations have incorporated social cohesion into programming across other sectors such as shelter, food security, etc.

In 2012, CRS began implementing the USAID-funded Secure, Empowered, Connected Communities (SECC) project, which operates

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¹ This violence has often been labeled religious and ethnic violence, but this CA will explain the political and resource issues that are at the root of the conflict. See MINUSCA (2015) Background. Available at: <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/minusca/background.shtml>

² UNSC (2016) Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic. United Nations S/2016/305: 1 April 2016. Available at: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/305

in the southeast and northwest of CAR and aims to “enable cohesive, self-directed, and connected communities to avoid or reduce their exposure to threats associated with the presence of armed groups and ongoing conflict in areas most vulnerable to attack. The project also addresses ongoing interreligious/inter-communal tensions in CAR.”³ Throughout the crisis CRS has provided assistance to the IRP through the SECC program and private funds. In January 2016, CRS, in an interfaith partnership with the IRP, World Vision, Aegis Trust, and Islamic Relief, began a new project entitled the Central African Republic Interfaith Peacebuilding Partnership (CIPP). This USAID-funded program is designed to build the capacity of the IRP to support Central African institutions to promote social cohesion, increase scale and scope of ongoing trauma-healing programming, and support early economic recovery efforts.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this CA was based on the CAF 2.0 and its application process document, as well as elements of the CRS *Peacebuilding, Governance, and Gender Assessments: A Basic Guide for Busy Practitioners*, which also incorporates elements of the “3-Ps” methodology.⁴ CRS chose the USAID CAF because it provides a “rigorous framework for collecting and analyzing data in an objective manner that can be applied uniformly across conflict settings” in order to evaluate the risks of violent conflict and simultaneously assist development and humanitarian actors to support local efforts to manage conflict and build peace.⁵ Prior to undertaking the fieldwork, an extensive literature review was completed (the desk study) which was used to assist the team in identifying key issues to explore (though additional issues could be added or subtracted based on the fieldwork. The CAF 2.0 structure starts with the context, and then an analysis of conflict dynamics (grievance, identities, institutional performance, social patterns, resilience, and key actors) and finally examines the trajectories involved (trends and triggers). Based on these conflict dynamics, response options were developed. Key actors were identified who mobilized people and resources to engage in violence, based on grievances. Institutions may perform in legitimate and effective ways that identity groups perceive as positive social patterns that serve to mitigate conflict, or, they may perform in illegitimate, ineffective ways that drive conflict. Resilience refers to the ability of the institutions or other factors to respond to potential conflict in non-violent ways.

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3. “Initially conceived as a counter-LRA and community-based protection program in southeastern CAR, SECC responded to the current crisis by adding an objective in February 2014 to support communities’ ability to maintain and promote social cohesion and address inter-religious and intra-community conflicts. The program expanded to cover western parts of the country, including Bangui, where intercommunal violence had become widespread.... Working in close collaboration with the PCRC, CRS/SECC has trained more than 1,300 religious and community leaders as ambassadors of social cohesion. In Bangui, more than 600 religious, civil society, and government leaders have been trained in social cohesion principles, many of whom have proceeded to lead neighborhood-level mobilization activities...” See <http://www.crs.org/our-work-overseas/program-areas/justice-and-peacebuilding/secure-empowered-connected-communities>

4. USAID (2012) Conflict Analysis Framework (CAF) Version 2.0. June 2012. Washington D.C.: USAID, and USAID (2012). Conflict Assessment Framework Application Guide. June 2012. Washington D.C.: USAID. Available at: <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/working-crises-and-conflict/technical-publications> Also see CRS (2015) Peacebuilding, Governance and Gender Assessments: A Basic Guide for Busy Practitioners. CRS: March 2015. The “3-P’s” referenced here stand for: Problem, People, and Process. Available at: <http://www.crs.org/our-work-overseas/research-publications/peacebuilding-governance-and-gender-assessments>

5. USAID (2012) Conflict Analysis Framework (CAF) Version 2.0. June 2012. Washington D.C.: USAID. Available at: <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/working-crises-and-conflict/technical-publications> Page 3.

The CRS Peacebuilding Project Manager, focal points from the CRS Africa Justice and Peace Working Group, and the consultant also chose the CAF 2.0 as the methodology for this CA because some of CRS' social cohesion activities have been funded through US Government sources, and the common 'language' of the CAF 2.0 will assist CRS in discussions with donors. Another reason for selecting the CAF 2.0 was the availability of a handbook operationalizing the CAF 1.0, which could be adapted for this CAF 2.0, and which had a secondary purpose - a strong emphasis on capacity-building of local partners.

Research locations

This CA is based on qualitative research and uses convenience samples of populations in the areas in which CRS is working. This qualitative approach of the methodology used in the CAF 2.0 is not meant to be a quantitative process nor does it include a representative sample of the entire country. Instead, this CA provides perceptions, opinions, and considerations of key informants living and working in certain areas severely affected by conflict in CAR. The CRS decision to work with local partners (with supervision from CRS peacebuilding staff members) furthermore provided information that could not have been obtained by outside researchers.

Two phases of the analysis were performed: a social cohesion analysis in Cameroon and a conflict analysis in CAR. A report for each phase was produced; for more information about the process for Cameroon, please see the sister report *Social Cohesion Analysis - Cameroon*. This Central African assessment focused on locations where CRS is conducting ongoing response, early recovery, and social cohesion programming in the northwest of the country in the prefectures of Nana-Mambéré, Ouham, and Ouham-Pendé, as well as the southwest's Lobaye prefecture. The cities of Boda, Bossangoa, and Bouar also each house a CRS sub-office, from which CRS conducts its programs in the surrounding prefectures and which served as field operating points for the analysis. These areas have been heavily affected by the conflict, with tens of thousands of people from various ethnic and religious groups targeted by armed groups, forcing them to become internally displaced persons or refugees. Maps of each prefecture with the research locations can be found in Figures 3 through 5 of the first Appendix. There were three teams covering the areas surrounding Boda, Bossangoa, and Bouar, and then a team in Bangui for national-level interviews.⁶ Although the SECC project operates in the southeast, due to security and logistical reasons, we were unable to send teams to the northeast and southeast, though the Bangui teams conducted some interviews with people working and living in those regions.

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Research teams

CRS cooperated with a group of interfaith partners through a network that had been built up over several years of existing programming to obtain four research teams. The Commission Episcopale Justice et Paix (CEJP) and the Commission Diocésaine Justice et Paix (CDJP) in Boda, Bossangoa and Bouar contributed the largest number of team members

6. Due to its partnership with local Catholic institutions including Caritas and the CEJP, CRS often defines geographic zones in CAR by dioceses. For the purposes of this study, the Bossangoa portion of the study refers to the Bossangoa diocese, which covers the prefecture of Ouham and the eastern half of Ouham-Pendé prefecture. Similarly, the Bouar portion of the study refers to the Bouar diocese, which covers Nana-Mambéré and the western half of Ouham-Pendé. Lastly, Boda used here covers the Boda diocese, which encompasses the Lobaye prefecture. Throughout the report, the city names Boda, Bossangoa and Bouar also refer to the surrounding areas.

due to their decentralized structure and local expertise in the areas in which CRS works. Several other researchers who had participated in previous social cohesion trainings (four of whom were trainers of training) came from other partner organizations including: Alliance Evangélique Centrafricaine (AEC), Dorcas Espérance pour le Développement Durable (DEDD), Groupe d'Action de Paix et de Formation pour la Transformation (GAPAFOT), Jeunesse Islamique Centrafricaine (JICA), and Union des Jeunes Musulmans Centrafricain (UJMCA). These participants brought important local knowledge as well as some expertise in social cohesion that deepened the analysis. At the same time they benefited from the capacity building provided by the training and could be called upon to assist in future updates of the conflict analysis both for their own organizations and for CRS (See Appendix 2 for list of CA team members). There were 22 participant researchers: 4 from CRS including this consultant (3 expatriates and 1 local staff member) and 18 from the local partners (4 of whom were Muslim and 5 of whom were women).

Interviewees

During the desk study, and in the process of training the participant researchers, key issues that could potentially cause conflict, as well as key actors for both peace and for conflict, were identified. Interviewees involved in these key issues or key actors were then targeted. Other interviewees were identified based upon CRS' local networks at each research location. Interviewees included government officials, traditional chiefs, teachers, members of the security forces, international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, women's and youth groups, agro-pastoralists, refugees, internally displaced persons and host communities (See Appendix 3 for the list of interviewees). The teams conducted a total of 137 interviews with 179 people (the majority of the interviews were single-person interviews but some were with small groups), as follows:

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Interviewees included government officials, traditional chiefs, teachers, members of the security forces, international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, women's and youth groups, agro-pastoralists, refugees, internally displaced persons and host communities.

Location	Interviews	No. of people interviewed
Boda	33	59
Bossangoa	37	43
Bouar	23	23
Bangui	44	58
Total	137	179

The following statistics were collected to ensure that there was a range of characteristics of the various interviewees. These included gender, age, ethnicity, religion, occupation and political party. These characteristics are all important in determining individuals' roles as possible conflict or peace actors (among other characteristics) and thus the statistics assisted the researchers to ensure that interviews were held with potential peace or conflict actors, as well as ensure the sample of the communities in the area of study was as representative as possible. Of these interviewees, 119 were male and 60 were female. The average age was 45 and the age ranged between 14 and 97 years old. Religious affiliations included 22 identified as Muslim, 47 Christian (non-Catholic), 79 Catholic, and 31 unknown. Only 4 interviewees identified their political party, 1 from the Party for Democracy in Central Africa (PDCA) and 3 from the Union for Central African Renewal (URCA). In total, 23 internationals were interviewed, while the Central Africans included ethnic groups as follows:

59 Gbaya,⁷ 9 Boffi, 8 Banda, 5 Yakoma, 4 Kaba, 4 Peuhl, and 4 Mbatl.⁸ Other ethnic groups had 3 or fewer interviewees, while ethnicity was unknown for 25 people. The group of interviewees was made up of 26 government officials at the local and national levels; 12 people from the security sector (police, gendarmes, MINUSCA, and local groups); 19 representatives of international or national NGOs; 33 representatives of women's associations; 17 youth association representatives; 19 members of local civil society organizations; 9 Christian clergy and other religious representatives; 6 Muslim religious leaders and other representatives; 7 farmers; 5 members of the displaced community; 4 journalists and members of the radio broadcast media; 4 political party members; 4 traditional chiefs; and 2 people who worked in the mining sector.

Research team preparation and interview questions

Three teams of four to five members in the field sites, and seven in Bangui, underwent 3 days of training, then each team spent 9 days in the field, including travel time. Interviews were 30 to 90 minutes in length and conducted with two to five interviewers – at least one to ask questions and one to take notes. Initial interviews with local authorities and traditional chiefs were usually held with the entire team. Each team then discussed the interview and filled out an “interview summary sheet” for each interview with categories based on the CAF (key mobilizers, institutional performance, etc.).⁹

Questions for key categories of interviewees (religious leaders, local authorities, women's groups, etc.) were based on questions asked in the previous Cameroon Social Cohesion Analysis, and were further developed during the training and the first few days of interviews. These questions were used as a guideline during interviews. Interviews were semi-structured and data collected was qualitative except for demographic information on each interviewee. At the end of the data collection period, each team finalized all their data during a 1-day field debrief session and prepared a presentation which was then discussed in a 2-day debrief session with all the teams. During the debrief, response options were developed by each field team based on their analysis of the interviewees' responses, and were then discussed in the larger group. Based on the team presentations, the consultant developed a PowerPoint presentation that was reviewed by the CRS team participants. It was then presented to a large group of 18 program and field staff from CRS in a validation meeting for discussion and revision. About half of these staff members then participated in response planning sessions to further develop responses and recommendations. These detailed responses are found in Appendix 7. Summaries of the situation in each field research site are found in Appendices 4 to 6. Further validation sessions are planned with various other stakeholders for the near future.

Limitations

Although the many advantages (in-depth, locally based, capacity-building, and standardized structure) of this time- and labor-intensive qualitative research are mentioned above, there were also limitations. Firstly, due to

7. The large number of Gbaya interviewees is due to the fact that the majority of the interviews took place in the northwest of the country, where the Gbaya comprise a large proportion of the population.

8. As there were 22 Muslim interviewees, several of the 25 interviewees with unknown ethnicity were undoubtedly Peuhl. These interviewees did not self-identify their ethnicity, so only 4 Peuhl were directly identifiable based on volunteered information.

9. As this conflict analysis is based on the CAF, this report follows that structure: context, conflict dynamics (key actors, grievances, identities, institutional performance, social patterns, resilience), conclusions, and response options.

the selection criteria of key actors such as religious leaders and security force members who are primarily men, and the necessity to first meet with local authorities and traditional leaders in each research site, many more men than women were interviewed. Secondly, the ongoing conflict in CAR severely limited the ability of the teams to travel on insecure roads, and especially to meet with certain communities (particularly the Peuhl). The recent violent conflict, and transitioning government in this time of extended elections also created challenges (yet these fluid times are also times when a conflict analysis is all the more necessary). Finally, due to the emphasis on local capacity-building of the CA process, the locally-recruited field team members often came with little or no background in this type of field and analysis work. Therefore, the team experienced some challenges in ensuring that all members understood all the elements of the CA. As a result, during the collection and interpretation phases of the analysis, some of the information collected in the field was either not fully understood, or lost in translation. In spite of all these limitations, this CA has created a capable pool of local NGO workers who will now be able to follow up on the analysis. They are now able to provide more detailed information about peace and conflict in CAR, both internal to their own organizations as well as to CRS and other regional and international partners, than would have been available before the CA.



Context

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

Several authors have written about the influence of previous centuries of CAR's history on the contemporary situation. Smith writes about "the devastating impact of sustained slave trade" creating an "archipelago of scattered ethnic groups".¹⁰ He goes on to conclude that these ethnic groups (Gbaya in the west, Madja in the center, and Gbanda in east) thus historically had poor relationships ranging from distrust to outright war.¹¹ He also noted the devastating effects of the "colonial 'microbial' encounter" as between 1890 and 1940 half the population of 750,000 died; the population then grew to 4.5 million by 2010.¹²

The French ruled the region by dividing the territory of CAR (then called Ubangi-Shari) into concessions, from which the French owners extracted payments from the population, as the French Government provided no assistance for social and administrative services. Thus almost no infrastructure was developed outside of Bangui except to the diamond and gold mining areas – the northeast was particularly bereft of roads and services. CAR's colonial history left weak institutions; health care was minimal with few hospitals, and only one university existed before 1960.¹³

The history of the Peuhl nomadic pastoral groups has also played an important role in the history of CAR. Variations in the origins of the Peuhl groups and sub-groups, the dates they first arrived in CAR, and if they came from Cameroon, Chad, Sudan or elsewhere are important factors to consider in the history of the localized conflicts. In particular, the "foreign" or "Arab" Peuhl, who have arrived more recently from Chad and Sudan, are perceived by the local communities – as reported by our interviewees, as well as CRS staff working with these communities – as being more heavily armed, more violent, and less respectful of local norms and culture.

Although violent government takeovers were the predominant mode of government change since CAR's independence in 1960, the post-coup governments were relatively stable, though each new regime was stocked with supporters from the leaders' ethnic and clan groups and their internal and external allies, and the power shifts caused frissons in the relative stability. However, this stability was threatened in 1996 when a small locus of armed groups began to increase their weapon stockpiles from foreign suppliers. Between 1996 and 2003, the security situation deteriorated and the civilian population increasingly began to suffer from violence.¹⁴ From 2003 however, the political situation began to stabilize under President François Bozizé who was then able to maintain relative peace for a decade, except for struggles between him and opponents

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10. Smith, S.W. (2015) CAR's History: The past of a tense present. In *Making sense of the Central African Republic*. Carayannis, T. & Lombard, L. (Eds.). London: Zed Books.

11. Note that in the socio-cultural section below, Gbaya are identified as Baya, Madja as Madjia, and Gbanda as Banda.

12. Smith, S.W. (2015) CAR's history: The past of a tense present. In *Making sense of the Central African Republic*. Carayannis, T. & Lombard, L. (Eds.). London: Zed Books.

13. Carayannis, T. & Lombard, L. Editors. (2015) *Making sense of the Central African Republic*. London: Zed Books.

14. Fuior, T. & Law, D. Security sector reform in the Central African Republic: Chronicle of a death foretold. Available at: <http://www.ssrresourcecentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/SSR-2.0-Brief-1-Teodora-and-Law.pdf>

in the north between 2003 and 2006. During these periods of coups and counter-coups, weapons gradually proliferated. In 2012 however, armed groups began to coalesce and expand and the predominantly Muslim Seleka alliance was created under Michel Djotodia in opposition to Bozizé.¹⁵ By March 2013, the Seleka had advanced through the country seizing towns and military bases, culminating in a coup d'état that overthrew Bozizé.

In response to the Seleka's human rights abuses, community self-defense groups developed (including former soldiers of Bozizé) which were predominantly Christian, and eventually came to be called "anti-balaka" forces. The "anti-balaka" then committed reprisals, targeting all Muslims in the country whether they were connected to the Seleka or not. In response to the violence, in December 2013 an AU International Support Mission to the CAR (MISCA) and French peacekeeping force (Operation Sangaris) were deployed, and in February 2014 the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) was launched.¹⁶ Both the Seleka and anti-balaka groups have been characterized by a multitude of factions, leadership conflict, poor control of members, and unclear command structures; they have both also routinely targeted civilians they perceived as supporting their opponents, and both have attacked the UN.¹⁷ Although Seleka forces had been cantoned in July 2013, and dissolved by Djotodia in September 2013, this did not end the conflict. In December 2013, the rival armed groups fought in the capital resulting in at least 1,000 deaths. Due to international pressure, Djotodia resigned in January 2014, when most Seleka forces had been driven out of the city, and a new National Transitional Government (or Authority) was created, which included a National Transitional Council (NTC) with 135 members and a 20-person government headed by Interim President Catherine Samba-Panza.

Finally, a Cessation of Hostilities Agreement was signed by the warring factions on July 23, 2014, and then following a series of local consultations throughout the country, the Bangui Forum on National Reconciliation was convened in May 2015, where agreements were achieved on disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation (DDRR); reconciliation; and a ban on the use of child soldiers. Central Africans identified as priorities: DDRR and security sector reform; justice and reconciliation; and decentralized state authority and economic development (including elections).¹⁸ U.N. Security Council Resolution 2134 (2014) instigated an arms embargo and sanctions. Elections were held in 2015 and 2016, and a democratically elected president and national assembly have been holding a fragile peace.

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15. The Seleka was a coalition of predominantly pre-existing armed groups. The three largest of those were the Convention of Patriots for Justice and Peace (CPJP), the Union of Democratic Forces for Unity (UFDR), and the Democratic Front of the Central African People (FDPC), along with two newer groups: the Patriotic Convention for the Salvation of Kodro and the Alliance for Renaissance and Reorganization. Many of these began to refer to themselves as ex-Seleka, or by their original names after the disbanding of the Seleka. Many armed groups that were part of the Seleka have now gone back to their original names and are acting independently in localized areas.

16. MINUSCA (2015) Background. Available at: <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/minusca/background.shtml>

17. Interstad, G. (2014) Violence in the Central African Republic: Causes, actors and conflict dynamics. Studies in African Security, Swedish Ministry of Defense: FOI Memo 4976, July 2014.

18. UN Development Programme, UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Government of the Central African Republic. (2015) Advocacy Document: Immediate priorities for stabilization, peacebuilding and reconciliation in the Central African Republic. 5 October 2015. <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/advocacy-document-immediate-priorities-stabilization-peacebuilding>

The country had essentially been divided into two by the most recent conflict: with Seleka and Muslim majorities in the north and east, while anti-balaka forces predominated in the south and west. The central government in Bangui had, and still has, very weak control of and reach to the periphery. This has contributed to the extent of the communal violence and makes the conflict difficult to resolve (especially by national initiatives).

POLITICAL/SECURITY

The Government

CAR is often labeled a “failed state” or a “fragile state”. State services are almost completely lacking outside of the capitol, and roads and communication infrastructure are essentially non-existent in some areas. Many villages remain empty, or at least missing certain population groups (in particular Muslims in the northwest, such as in Bossangoa due to their forced exodus). The lack of roads and the insecurity have resulted in a lack of commercial opportunities and a rise in the cost of goods, especially in rural areas. Between March 2013 and July 2014, no birth certificates were issued so at that time approximately 30,000 children thus lacked documentation to enable them to enroll in school and receive other state services.¹⁹

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In 2013 and 2014, schools and universities were closed, civil servants rarely received salaries, police and local authorities were often absent, and hospitals were unable to adequately treat patients. Although some services are now restarting, progress is minimal and NGOs are providing many essential services usually provided by the state. As an example of the pervasive state service failure, UNDP in 2014 conducted a verification exercise and determined that 20,000 civil servants were on the payroll: The World Bank and UNDP had to pay these salaries in order to keep services running.²⁰

Several members of the government, as well as candidates for the legislative elections, have been accused of major human rights abuses. For example, in 2014 the UN Special Panel on CAR reported its concerns that political representatives of armed groups were vying for ministerial positions, and that the leader of the armed group Révolution et Justice had been appointed as Minister of Youth and Sports.²¹

Justice and security

Crime is widespread throughout the country, including theft, destruction of property and homes, illegal weapon possession, abduction, murder, torture, and sexual violence. MINUSCA reported the creation of an awareness and data collection system but crime data was not yet available.²² In 2014 and 2015 more than 2,400 security incidents were reported, including approximately 350 attacks against relief

19. UNICEF (2014). Central African Republic - Why birth certificates matter to children caught in conflict: UNICEF launches 10-day campaign to register 30,000 children in the Central African Republic. UNICEF: 17 July 2014. Available at: <https://www.unicefusa.org/stories/why-birth-certificates-matter-children-caught-conflict/17781>

20. UNDP (2014) Fast Facts: Crisis in Central African Republic. UNDP: September 2014.

21. UNSC (2014) Letter dated 28 October 2014 from the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic established pursuant to Security Council resolution 2127 (2013) addressed to the President of the Security Council. UNSC: S/2014/762: 29 October 2014. Available at: <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/N1453897.pdf>

22. UNSC (2016) Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic. United Nations S/2016/305: 1 April 2016. Page 4. Available at: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/305

organizations.²³ The literature, our interviews, and this relatively large number of attacks illustrate a wide “local-foreigner” divide and mistrust of foreigners that is quite strong in CAR.²⁴

The judiciary and security institutions are very weak, are not reaching many areas of the country and have historically been ethnically unbalanced. The international community has been taking up the slack. In 2013, there were only 200 police functioning in the entire country,²⁵ though by 2014 the UNDP was paying the salaries of 3,400 police and gendarmes. In addition, as part of an emergency justice and security program, the UNDP paid 520 judicial and security personnel in Bangui, and provided basic equipment and vehicles so that the sector could undertake its duties.²⁶

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The national armies in CAR have never been strong, but rather have been tools used by competing political figures. The **national army, FACA** (Forces Armées Centrafricaines) was a target of the Seleka attacks in 2013. It has been officially disarmed by the UN and the Sangaris (though some elements have rearmed themselves) and remains weak and undisciplined. The lack of armed forces is a matter affecting national pride; in September 2015 there was a demonstration in Bangui calling for the rearming of FACA.²⁷ There had been 7,000 to 8,000 soldiers in FACA.²⁸

In 2006 only 2 percent of the countryside had governmental administrative services. The judicial system is based on the French system of civil law with a supreme court, a constitutional court, high courts and magistrates' courts. As of 2010, there were only 150 judges and 40 lawyers in the entire country, many of whom were in Bangui. The majority are underpaid or unpaid, leaving them susceptible to corruption. The majority of criminal cases are dealt with extrajudicially.²⁹ Judges have been threatened or assassinated in relation to judicial decisions.³⁰

The enormous lack of security has been in evidence for years. For example, in 2013, when the Seleka came into Bangui, there was almost no resistance along the route nor in Bangui; most of the FACA forces fled for their lives. These gaps continue today. On September 28, 2015, approximately 600 prisoners escaped from the central prison in Bangui, assisted by some FACA forces and some of the prison guards (allegedly to allow release of former army personnel inside).³¹ In March 2016, there

23. <https://www.usaid.gov/crisis/central-african-republic>

24. See Carayannis, T. & Lombard, L. Editors. (2015) *Making sense of the Central African Republic*. London: Zed Books.

25. Townsend, M. (2013) Raped, plundered, ignored: Central Africa state where only killers thrive. *The Guardian*: 27 July 2013. Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jul/27/central-african-republic-rebels-seleka>

26. UNDP (2014) Fast Facts: Crisis in Central African Republic. UNDP: September 2014.

27. Reuters/Vice News (2015) Hundreds break out of prison as violence continues in Central African Republic. Reuters and VICE News: 29 September 2015. Available at: <https://news.vice.com/article/hundreds-break-out-of-prison-as-violence-continues-in-central-african-republic>

28. IRIN (2014) Armed groups in CAR. IRIN: 17 September 2014. Available at: <http://www.irinnews.org/report/100623/armed-groups-car>

29. Nalla, M.K. & Newman, G.R. (2010) Crime and punishment around the world: Volume 1 – Africa and the Middle East. ABC-CLIO: Santa Barbara. Page 39.

30. See Al Jazeera (2013) CAR judge shot dead by ex-rebels. Al Jazeera: 18 November 2013. Available at: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2013/11/car-judge-shot-dead-ex-rebels-20131117155524955807.html> and Smith, D. (2013) Unspeakable horrors in a country on the verge of genocide. *The Guardian*: 22 November 2013. Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/22/central-african-republic-verge-of-genocide>

31. Human Rights Watch (2015) Central African Republic: New spate of senseless deaths: Government, peacekeepers should increase protection. HRW: 22 October 2015. Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/10/22/central-african-republic-new-spate-senseless-deaths>

were two incidents when high-level armed group leaders were arrested and detained in Bangui, but then released by their supporters. Former Seleka leader of the Front Populaire pour la Renaissance de Centrafrique (FPRC), Abdoulaye Hissène, was detained in Bangui on March 15 but was broken out of detention by armed men that day. In a similar case, while the arrest of former FACA and anti-balaka leader “Bawa” (also known as Samy Urbain) was announced with much fanfare,³² he was also apparently broken out of prison within days.³³ These incidents indicate the lack of power of the judicial and security systems, and their vulnerability to corruption and threats. In interviews around Bossangoa, interviewees reported that week after week on market day, traders were being attacked and their goods stolen—yet the security forces had been unable (or unwilling) to reduce these attacks. Many such episodes of impunity occur daily in CAR; a long-time observer from Human Rights Watch, Lewis Mudge suggests that impunity is CAR’s biggest challenge.³⁴

Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration, security sector reform, and child soldiers

Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) – or disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and rehabilitation (DDRR) – has long been problematic in CAR. DDRR is closely linked to security sector reform (SSR) and both are sorely needed in CAR. As early as 2008, an innovative and holistic SSR program was undertaken, but it failed due to insufficient coordination, unrealistic expectations, and unsteady support from the international community.³⁵ In May 2015, at the Bangui Forum, most of the major armed groups signed a comprehensive DDRR agreement, but as of May 2016 the agreement had not been implemented, awaiting the establishment of the new government.

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Throughout the long history of CAR’s series of coups and counter-coups, the military has rarely been under state control, rather more a personal army of whoever was in power. In addition, regional influences on armed groups have not been adequately addressed. These factors (among others) have been a key stumbling block to the DDRR and SSR processes. In fact, some observers suggest that DDRR processes in the past actually fueled recruitment to armed groups and illegitimate ex-combatants benefited from the schemes.³⁶

MINUSCA is the main actor in the field of DDRR, and has subcontracted to other organizations such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to carry out various activities. However, the UN DDRR program lacks funding and has only 1,180 Seleka members in three cantonment sites, but so far none from anti-balaka or other armed groups.³⁷ Some NGOs and IOs are undertaking pre-DDRR, or

32. RFI (2016) Centrafrique: un chef anti-balaka du nord de Bangui arrêté. RFI : 16 March 2016. Available at : <http://www.rfi.fr/afrique/20160316-centrafrique-chef-anti-balaka-bawa-nord-bangui-arrete>

33. Anonymous Security Organization.

34. Mudge, L. (2015) Central African Republic elections: Five key challenges. *Newsweek*: 25 December 2015. Available at: <http://europe.newsweek.com/central-african-republic-elections-five-key-challenges-country-turmoil-408254>

35. Fuior, T. & Law, D. Security sector reform in the Central African Republic: Chronicle of a death foretold. Available at: <http://www.ssrresourcecentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/SSR-2.0-Brief-1-Teodora-and-Law.pdf>

36. Herbert, S., Dukham, N. & Debos, M. (2013) *State fragility in the Central African Republic: What prompted the 2013 coup? Rapid literature review*. Birmingham, UK: GSDRC, University of Birmingham. Available at: http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/car_gsdrc2013.pdf

37. Human Rights Watch (2015) Central African Republic: New spate of senseless deaths: Government, peacekeepers should increase protection. HRW: 22 October 2015. Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/10/22/central-african-republic-new-spate-senseless-deaths>

DDRR-related projects such as community violence reduction. But many organizations hesitate to get involved due to the sensitivity of being associated with the armed forces, as well as the high possible risk of failure as has been the case in the past. The United States Institute of Peace (USIP) has begun an innovative dialogue project to increase public participation in government DDRR programs. A report from the Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN) in February 2015 indicated that the UNDP was conducting a US\$5 million program to train former combatants in technical fields such as auto repair, carpentry, and plumbing. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) trained 300 agricultural advisors who then trained others.³⁸ UN Women has received US\$1.5 million towards DDRR from the Japanese government.³⁹

For this analysis, it was difficult to obtain clear numbers of combatants, or the current state of the field, probably because the DDRR and SSR programs had not yet been implemented. The numbers of combatants eligible for DDRR programs was reported to be small according to a February 2015 story from IRIN: only 2,000 Seleka (plus the 1,000 plus fighters cantoned in Bangui); and 1,500 to 3,000 anti-balaka (though their leaders claim 20,000 around Bangui and 50,000 elsewhere).⁴⁰ These higher numbers could be predicted as posturing by armed groups to receive additional aid – or could actually reflect the greater numbers of community-based armed elements who actually do need assistance (economic and social) to turn away from using arms to maintain their livelihoods.

All the armed groups have been accused of recruiting child soldiers: the UN estimated as many as 10,000 children had been recruited or abducted.⁴¹ As of May 2015, numbers were estimated to be between 6,000 and 10,000, with those children working as soldiers, cooks, messengers, or sex slaves.⁴² At the Bangui Forum in May 2015, the armed group leaders agreed to release all child soldiers, and although progress has been made, many children remain in the hands of armed groups. The LRA in particular continues to abduct new victims.

Human rights

Widespread and serious human rights violations occur in CAR, many caused or exacerbated by the conflict. These include extra-judicial killings; torture; use of child soldiers; sexual violence; arbitrary arrest and detention; lack of fair trials; human trafficking; forced labor; child labor; forced displacement; lack of freedom of movement, speech, and association; and other violations. All parties to the conflict commit abuses. These violations have been suffered by all sectors of the population including various ethnic, religious, and political groups: mainly committed against Christians when Seleka came to power, and then primarily against Muslims when the anti-balaka groups took over.

10,000

children have been recruited
as soldiers or abducted,
according to the UN

38. IRIN (2015) Central African Republic: Life after combat in CAR. IRIN: 17 February 2015.

Available at: <https://www.irinnews.org/report/101134/life-after-combat-car>

39. UNDP (2016) Le Japon finance 15,55 millions de dollars Américains pour des programmes d'appui à la population de la République Centrafricaine. 24 mars 2016. Available at:

<http://www.cf.undp.org/content/car/fr/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2016/03/24/le-japon-finance-15-55-millions-de-dollars-am-ricains-pour-des-programmes-d-appui-la-population-de-la-r-publique-centrafricaine/#>

40. IRIN (2015) Central African Republic: Life after combat in CAR. IRIN: 17 February 2015.

Available at: <https://www.irinnews.org/report/101134/life-after-combat-car>

41. Laccino, L. (2015). Central African Republic conflict: UN to apply new sanctions following latest violence. International Business Times: 21 October 2015. Available at: <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/central-african-republic-conflict-un-apply-new-sanctions-following-latest-violence-1524972>

42. UNICEF (2015) Central African Republic: We are children, not soldiers. UNICEF: 5 May 2015. Available at: <https://www.unicefusa.org/stories/we-are-children-not-soldiers/24696>

“Enclaves”⁴³ of Muslims formed in or near several cities and towns, where at times they were protected by certain Christians (often Church members) and international military forces. Muslims are often unable to leave due to attacks by anti-balaka forces. International forces have responded to these attacks, sometimes saving people from being killed, but they have been unable to prevent the attacks. While in 2013 and 2014 the international forces assisted some Muslims to flee to other countries, more recently Muslim communities have been confined to the enclaves as both the local authorities and the international community do not want to be accused of promoting ethnic cleansing. Many deaths from malnutrition and disease have been documented in the enclaves: for example, in the Yaloké enclave, Human Rights Watch reported that at least 42 Muslim Peuhl had died from malnutrition and disease since February 2014.⁴⁴

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An International Commission of Inquiry on CAR was created by the UN Security Council (UNSC) in 2013 to investigate human rights abuses, and has submitted a series of reports. This Commission in January 2015 recommended the setting up of an international tribunal to investigate war crimes.⁴⁵ The Commission found that all three parties to the conflict (FACA, Seleka, and anti-balaka) had committed grave violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, constituting crimes under domestic law and the Rome Statute.⁴⁶ After the Commission of Inquiry report was released, UN military forces arrested one of the most senior of the suspected anti-balaka leaders named in the report, Rodrigue Ngaibona, also known as Andilo.⁴⁷

In September 2014, the International Criminal Court opened an investigation of the CAR case, but Central African leaders have not been indicted (though Jean-Pierre Bemba of the Democratic Republic of Congo was indicted for his activities in CAR and found guilty of crimes against humanity and war crimes including rape and murder in CAR on March 21, 2016).⁴⁸ The abuses by Seleka (or ex-Seleka), anti-balaka, and other armed groups continue with impunity and, to date, none have been brought to justice – many of the victims are ordinary citizens.

Although the most numerous and serious human rights violations took place in 2013 and 2014, a steady flow of abuses continues: Human Rights Watch documented hundreds of deaths, and thousands of homes burned in the center of the country even in close proximity to

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43. Human Rights Watch (2014) Central African Republic: Muslims trapped in enclaves: Authorities, peacekeepers should allow evacuations, improve security. 22 December 2014. Human Rights Watch. Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2014/12/22/central-african-republic-muslims-trapped-enclaves>
 44. Human Rights Watch (2014) Central African Republic: Muslims trapped in enclaves: Authorities, peacekeepers should allow evacuations, improve security. 22 December 2014. Human Rights Watch. Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2014/12/22/central-african-republic-muslims-trapped-enclaves>
 45. United Nations (2015) Central African Republic: UN investigators urge establishment of war crimes tribunal. United Nations, 21 January 2015. Available at: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=49863#.VikA6X6rTIX>
 46. UNSC (2014) Letter dated 19 December 2014 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council: Final Report of the International Commission of Inquiry on the Central African Republic. UNSC: 22 December 2014. Available at: <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/N1471229.pdf>
 47. France 24 (2015) Anti-balaka militia chief arrested in CAR. France 24: 19 January 2015. Available at: <http://www.france24.com/en/20150119-anti-balaka-militia-chief-arrested-car-un-andilo-rodrigue-ngaibona>
 48. ICC (2016) ICC Trial Chamber III declares Jean-Pierre Bemba Gombo guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Press Release: 21 March 2016. Available at : https://www.icc-cpi.int/en_menus/icc/press%20and%20media/press%20releases/Pages/pr1200.aspx

UN presence.⁴⁹ There have been allegations of human rights abuses committed by both the police and the military. For example, between November 2015 and February 2016, of the 269 reported human rights violations, 80 were committed by state authorities (including the Central Office for the Suppression of Banditry, the Central African armed forces, the police, the gendarmerie, the State intelligence service and State administrative authorities). In comparison, of those 269 reported violations, 29 were committed by the LRA, 42 by anti-balaka, and 68 by the Seleka.⁵⁰ Additional human rights abuses have been committed by Chadian and Congolese (Republic of Congo) MISCA forces, French Sangaris, and MINUSCA forces from various countries.

A (hybrid) “Special Criminal Court” was created to investigate and prosecute grave human rights abuses committed since 2003, and the law was signed by President Catherine Samba-Panza in June 2015, but it has not yet become functional.⁵¹ A letter was released on August 24, 2015, signed by 22 civil society organizations, calling for the international community to provide urgent financial and technical support to the Special Criminal Court.⁵² The issue of transitional justice remains unresolved and of course highly sensitive, with many alleged perpetrators still in power. Prosecutions of those involved in the illicit trade of wildlife and natural resources are still pending, and would probably implicate many military and political actors.

Refugees/IDPs

As noted above, a significant portion of the Central African population is now living as refugees and IDPs. Hopes for their return are particularly challenging due to the nature of the conflict, which resulted in a large number of burned and pillaged homes and land.⁵³ A report by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) based on extensive research, warned that if these rights’ violations were not addressed, consequences might include the growth of slums, reduced livelihoods, the inability of the displaced to return, and the discrimination of minorities.⁵⁴ UNOCHA reported in its 2015 Response Plan that 2.7 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance, more than half of the population of 4.8 million, including 0.4 million IDPs, 0.2 million hosts, 1.4 million with food insecurity, and 0.7 million returnees.

2.7 million
people were in need of
humanitarian assistance, more
than half the population

By May of 2015, international NGOs had reduced CAR from its highest rating of humanitarian crisis, yet thousands of Central Africans remained IDPs and refugees, the destruction of the country had hardly been

49. UN Human Rights Council. (2015) Interactive dialogue with the independent expert on the Central African Republic. 30 September 2015. Human Rights Watch. Available at: <http://www.hrw.org/news/2015/09/30/un-human-rights-council-interactive-dialogue-independent-expert-central-african>

50. UNSC (2016) Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic. United Nations S/2016/305: 1 April 2016. Available at: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/305

51. A “Reference Group” was created to guide and support the Special Criminal Court in CAR, which includes: Belgium, Canada, Chad, Denmark, Finland, France, Japan, Luxembourg, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Senegal, Sweden, Switzerland, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, the United States (US).

52. Civil Society (2015) Public civil society letter on the Special Criminal Court in the Central African Republic: Next steps to operationalize the Special Criminal Court in the Central African Republic. 24 August 2015. Human Rights Watch. Available at: <http://www.hrw.org/news/2015/08/24/public-civil-society-letter-special-criminal-court-central-african-republic>

53. Some groups carried out scorched earth policies resulting in complete destruction of homes, crops, granaries, etc.

54. Norwegian Refugee Council. (2014) Securing housing, land and property rights in conflict-affected Central African Republic. NRC. Page 2. Available at: http://www.nrc.no/arch/img.aspx?file_id=9195620.

repaired, and only 21 percent of the proposed needs (US\$613 million) for humanitarian assistance had been funded.⁵⁵ The UNHCR reported severe underfunding of refugee and IDP programs: only 14 percent of funds for those inside CAR and 9 percent for those in neighboring countries had been obtained.⁵⁶ Only 52 percent of the humanitarian funding requested by the UN had been received for 2015, with a shortfall of US\$298 million. An additional need for US\$565 million was estimated by humanitarian actors for 2016.⁵⁷ As of April/May 2016, the UNHCR reported 275,844 CAR refugees in Cameroon; 66,919 in Chad; 112,775 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and 28,639 in the Republic of Congo.⁵⁸

As of September 2015, the UNHCR was assisting 378,425 IDPs; 4,631 Congolese refugees; 1,943 Sudanese refugees; 466 refugees from other countries, and 399 asylum seekers.⁵⁹ However, by March 2016, the number of IDPs had risen to 421,283, with the highest number living in Ouaka prefecture (61,024), and in Bangui and Bimbo (54,120). In addition, between November 2015 and March 2016, an additional 7,000 South Sudanese refugees fled to inaccessible areas of CAR in the south and east without access to the basics. Many IDPs have experienced human rights abuses. The UNSG report of April 2016 noted the following violations at M'Poko Airport IDP site: sexual violence by former Seleka and anti-balaka, sexual exploitation by international forces, and recruitment of child soldiers by anti-balaka.⁶⁰

Refugee returns to date have been minimal: the UNHCR reported 12,658 spontaneous returns from Cameroon and CAR as of August 15, 2015.⁶¹ A few interviewees noted that there had been some returns to the northwest at the end of 2015, to Bouar, Baoro, and the triangle of those towns and Nana-Mambere prefecture. Previously a trickle of returnees had come to Bangui. They were not expected to return to Bossangoa due to the ongoing hostility there.

12,658

spontaneous refugee returns
from Cameroon and CAR were
recorded as of August 15, 2015

The September/October 2015 violence

During the first week of this CA process in September 2015, the most serious violence of 2015 occurred in Bangui, when on September 26 the body of a murdered Muslim moto driver was placed in a public place. This catalyzed a raft of violence by Muslims (attributed to [ex]-Seleka forces), countered by violence that was attributed to anti-balaka, resulting in approximately 77 deaths, 300 to 400 injuries, and 40,000 newly displaced people (prior to this incident there had been 27,000 people in IDP sites in and around Bangui, afterwards close to 70,000); pillaged and burned homes and NGO offices; numerous road blocks; numerous

55. International Rescue Committee. (2015) Too soon to turn away: Security, governance and humanitarian need in the Central African Republic. IRC. July 2015. Available at: <http://feature.rescue.org/carreport/#introduction>

56. UNHCR (2015). Central African Republic at risk of becoming the world's largest forgotten humanitarian crisis. UNHCR, Press Releases, 27 April 2015. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/553e49ec6.html>

57. UNSC (2016) Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic. United Nations S/2016/305: 1 April 2016. Available at: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/305

58. UNHCR (2016) Réponse Régionale à la crise des Réfugiés en République centrafricaine : Portail Interagence de partage de l'Information. UNHCR : April/May 2016. Available at: <http://data.unhcr.org/car/regional.php>

59. UNHCR (2015) Central African Republic Quarterly Factsheet. UNHCR: September 2015. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/51498a7d9.html>

60. UNSC (2016) Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic. United Nations S/2016/305: 1 April 2016. Page 6. Available at: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/305

61. UNHCR (2015) Central African Republic Quarterly Factsheet. UNHCR: September 2015. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/51498a7d9.html>

attacks on gendarmeries; large-scale prisoner liberation; targeted killings of armed-group and government leadership; stone-throwing at UN vehicles; attacks on UN military forces; and a government-mandated curfew.⁶² Further research showed that many of the killings were targeted at individuals, and 250 buildings were destroyed in the Bazanga and Sara neighborhoods of Bangui including two churches and a mosque.⁶³

The violence initially set back progress towards peace, and exacerbated the dire conditions of the many and increasing numbers of displaced people, as humanitarian assistance became even more difficult to deliver. There were already severe shortfalls in funding for humanitarian assistance: for example, the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies reported that its emergency appeals from February 2014, updated in August 2014, remained only 18-percent funded.⁶⁴

Some observers attributed the violence in September to political figures trying to disrupt the transitional government and to postpone the elections. The transitional president had been supported by the international community, and MINUSCA and other international forces were essentially acting as the military force supporting the transitional government. To the (political) groups that saw Catherine Samba-Panza as biased, corrupt, and illegitimate, this support from the international community gave rise to further mistrust of both the international community as well as of the state.

However, the country has been relatively stable since the September violence and, both then and up to the present, several regions have showed remarkable restraint in the aftermath. In Bouar, for example, a Catholic priest and the PCRC, in collaboration with CRS, convened a representative group of more than 100 people (Christians, Muslims, IDPs, police, military, local authorities, NGOs, MINUSCA, etc.) for a peaceful dialogue that many observers credited with keeping the peace there. Hundreds of people, both Christians and Muslims, were reported to have attended a dialogue in the conflict-affected PK5 neighborhood,⁶⁵ and the Archbishop (and now Cardinal) Dieudonne Nzapalainga reported that the anti-balaka had promised to return vehicles that had been stolen.⁶⁶

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The country has been relatively stable since the September violence and, both then and up to the present, several regions have showed remarkable restraint in the aftermath.
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But there were setbacks. On December 14, a Seleka leader, Nouredine Adam, attempted a secessionist movement declaring the northeast

62. The numbers of dead and injured varied across various reports. UNOCHA (2015) République centrafricaine: Situation à Bangui après les violences de 26 - 30 sep 2015 (au 5 Octobre 2015) 6 October 2015. UNOCHA. Available at: <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/r-publique-centrafricaine-situation-bangui-apr-s-les-violences-de--0> or http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/CAR_VIZ_bangui_snapshot_20151005_Fr.pdf; UNOCHA (2015) Central African Republic: Humanitarian Coordinator stresses that humanitarian organizations are strongly committed to staying and delivering assistance. 6 October 2015. UNOCHA. Available at: <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/central-african-republic-humanitarian-coordinator-stresses> BBC (2015) CAR clashes in Bangui after Muslim taxi driver killed. 26 September 2015. Available at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world/africa>.

63. Human Rights Watch. (2015). Central African Republic: New spate of senseless deaths: Government, peacekeepers should increase protection. 22 October 2015. Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/10/22/central-african-republic-new-spate-senseless-deaths>

64. International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. (2015) Renewed violence in Central African Republic halts life-saving humanitarian work. 5 October 2015. IFRC. Available at: <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/renewed-violence-central-african-republic-halts-life-saving>

65. Missionary International Service News Agency (2015) After violence, Bangui seeks peace. 5 October 2015. Available at: <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/after-violence-bangui-seeks-peace>

66. Personal communication between Archbishop and key informant on 1 October 2015.

an autonomous zone. The transitional government and international community denounced the move.⁶⁷ Previous secession moves were also unsuccessful,⁶⁸ though the push for secession remains worrisome, indicating that Seleka forces could continue to cause instability.

Elections and the Constitution

Prior to the most recent elections in 2015 and 2016, the last election was in 2011, and though considered by international observers as flawed,⁶⁹ President Francois Bozizé came to power along with a single-house national assembly of 105 members with 5-year terms. However, Bozizé was deposed by Michel Djotodia in March 2013, followed by a period of instability: Djotodia finally resigned on 10 January 2014. A National Transitional Council (NTC) then elected the interim president Catherine Samba-Panza on January 20, 2014 (by 128 out of 135 NTC members). The head of government was Prime Minister Mahamat Kamoun.

CAR's constitution was ratified in 2004, and amended in 2010; it upholds most aspects of the rule of law, human rights, and good governance. The government has ratified many international agreements:⁷⁰ however, few of those provisions have been put into practice. The 135-member NTC adopted a revised constitution on August 31, 2014, which was adopted by referendum held on December 13, with the support of 93 percent of the voters. Unfortunately, the constitutional referendum was marred by violence, including grenade attacks, with 28 injured, although the results were still upheld by Transitional Constitutional Court with no appeals registered.⁷¹

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CAR's constitution upholds most aspects of the rule of law, human rights, and good governance.
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In 2015, legislative and presidential elections⁷² were postponed repeatedly. Originally scheduled for February 2015, then August, then October, they were finally held in December. The first round of presidential

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67. Mudge, L. (2015) Central African Republic elections: Five key challenges. *Newsweek*: 25 December 2015. Available at: <http://europe.newsweek.com/central-african-republic-elections-five-key-challenges-country-turmoil-408254> and Katarina Høije, K. (2015) Rebel secession claims underscore security challenges in CAR. *Voice of America*: 16 December 2015. Available at: <http://www.voanews.com/content/rebel-secession-claims-underscore-security-challenges-central-african-republic/3105915.html>
68. Smith, D. (2014) Central African Republic's Seleka rebels call for secession amid sectarian war. *The Guardian*: 25 April 2014. Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/apr/25/central-african-republic-muslim-seleka-rebels-demand-secession-sectarianism>
69. The election was held in two parts, due to widespread irregularities in the first election in January, somewhat improved in the March round. See EISA (2011) Rapport Mission D' Observation Electorale: Republique Centrafricaine Elections Présidentielles Et Législatives 23 Janvier Et 27 Mars 2011. Election Observer Mission Report, No. 39. Available at: <https://eisa.org.za/pdf/car2011eom.pdf>
70. Peacebuilding Commission. (2008) Rule of law and good governance in the Central African Republic. Available at: http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/cscs/car/key_docs/bg_paper_rol_good_governance_22_10_2008.pdf
71. UNSC (2016) Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic. United Nations S/2016/305: 1 April 2016. Page 2. Available at: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/305
72. As of September 2015, the US\$34 million election budget was still short US\$10 million (See UNDP. (2015) Cinq cent mille dollars du Maroc en appui au processus électoral en Centrafrique. 21 September 2015. UNDP. Available at: <http://www.cf.undp.org/content/car/fr/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2015/09/21/cinq-cent-mille-dollars-du-maroc-en-appui-au-processus-lectoral-en-centrafrique/> Political parties include: Alliance for Democracy and Progress or ADP [leader Clement BELIBANGA]; Central African Democratic Rally or RDC [Louis-Pierre GAMBIA]; Civic Forum or FC; Democratic Forum for Modernity or FODEM [Saturnin NDOMBY]; Liberal Democratic Party or PLD; Londo Association or LONDO; Movement for Democracy and Development or MDD; Movement for the Liberation of the Central African People or MLPC [Martin ZIGUELE]; National Convergence or KNK [Francois BOZIZE]; National Unity Party or PUN; New Alliance for Progress or NAP [Jean-Jacques DEMAFOUTH]; Patriotic Front for Progress or FPP [Alexandre Philippe GOUMBA]; People's Union for the Republic or UPR [Pierre Sammy MAKFOY]; and Social Democratic Party or PSD [Enoch LAKOUE]. See CIA. (2015) CIA World Factbook. Last updated 14 October 2015. Available at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ct.html>

and legislative elections was held simultaneously on December 30, and MINUSCA reported no major human rights violations.⁷³ In spite of concerns about the violence during the Constitutional referendum, the situation remained relatively calm. Unfortunately, the results of the first round of legislative elections were annulled due to a large number of appeals (415) and the first round was repeated successfully on February 14, along with a second round of presidential elections that was necessary as none of the presidential candidates had received the required 50 percent of the vote.

The run-off election was between the two final candidates (both former prime ministers): Faustin Archange Touadéra (PM under Bozizé, and a former math professor and university official who remained in Bangui since 2013) and Anicet-Georges Dologuele (PM under Patassé, and a former president of the Development Bank of Central African States). Both candidates promised peace, security, unification, and reconciliation of the country. In the run-off election held on February 14, 2016, Touadéra won 63 percent of the votes, and on February 20 Dologuele conceded the vote, though he expressed concern about irregularities.⁷⁴

In spite of initial controversy over the rights of refugees to vote, the court finally ruled in favor of their rights. The UNHCR conducted sensitization activities with refugees in Cameroon and Chad to allow them to vote and 109,000 were initially identified for the initial presidential election on December 27, 2015.⁷⁵ Elections in the neighboring countries ran relatively smoothly, and about 60 percent of eligible refugees voted.⁷⁶

On April 4, 2016, the President appointed the Prime Minister, Simplicie Mathieu Sarandji, a fellow professor from the university. Many observers had expected a Muslim appointee, which would have given a strong signal of the President's commitment to representative government, but the appointment of a close colleague and corruption-free technocrat is also understandable. The cabinet includes three people who ran for president in the recent election, and does not include any former Seleka or anti-balaka leaders.⁷⁷ At the time of this study, there was much optimism about the peaceful elections, and hope for a democratic government.

ECONOMIC

CAR is approximately the size of Texas, or Ukraine, and as of the 2010 census had a population of 4.5 million. It is a landlocked country that borders Chad, Sudan, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, and Cameroon. CAR ranks 187 out of 188 on the

73. UNSC (2016) Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic. United Nations S/2016/305: 1 April 2016. Page 7. Available at: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/305

74. Aljazeera (2016) Central African Republic: Touadéra wins election. Aljazeera: 21 February 2016. Available at: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/02/central-african-republic-touadera-wins-election-160221044730048.html>

75. However, of the total 460,000 refugees outside of CAR, the majority of whom are Muslim, only 26 percent were registered to vote. See Essa, A. (2015) Everything you need to know about elections in CAR. Al Jazeera: 30 December 2015. Available at: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/12/elections-car-151229200503671.html>

76. UNHCR (2016) Thousands of refugees vote in second round of CAR presidential election. UNHCR News Stories 16 February 2016. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/news-and-views/news-list/news-detail/article/thousands-of-refugees-vote-in-second-round-of-car-presidential-election.html>

77. AFP (2016). Central African Republic unveils new government. AFP: 12 April 2016. Available at : <http://www.africanews.com/2016/04/12/central-african-republic-unveils-new-government/>

UN Human Development Index,⁷⁸ and in 2013 the GNI per capita (Atlas Method) was US\$330. While in 2008 the “poverty headcount ratio at national poverty lines” was 62 percent of the population,⁷⁹ in 2015, the Global Hunger Index reported that 48 percent of the population was undernourished.⁸⁰ Corruption is endemic and CAR is ranked 150 out of 175 on Transparency International’s Corruption Perceptions Index 2014.⁸¹ CAR is also at risk of natural disasters including floods, droughts, storms, and harmattan winds, which are being effected by climate change. These natural disasters have significant effects on agriculture (such as seed planting and harvest) and transhumance patterns, which in turn can result in increased agro-pastoral conflict.

Although CAR is often reported to be rich in natural resources – including gold, copper, diamonds, arable land, water, timber, and uranium – many of the resources are difficult to access on an industrial scale (due to the long distance of their sources away from populated areas, the lack of infrastructure, insecurity, corruption, and lack of reliable government institutions). Many Central Africans rely on either agriculture or animal herding, and the role of livestock in the agricultural economy is greater than 50 percent.⁸² Although water is abundant in many parts of the country, with good availability of hydropower, desertification in the north has added to stresses of the inhabitants, especially pastoralists. Wildlife serves as another form of income for many, and poaching is lucrative and widespread both in CAR and neighboring countries. The major exports are diamonds, timber, cotton and coffee; and the major trading partners include Belgium, Cameroon, China, Democratic Republic of Congo, France, Indonesia, Morocco, the Netherlands and South Korea.⁸³

Diamonds have been CAR’s most important export, and different areas are controlled by various rebel and ethnic groups. Historically, both diamond and gold trades have been primarily controlled by Muslim groups. This became a grievance among non-Muslim groups and competition over resources has been an important root cause of the conflict in CAR. Central African Christians – the majority of the mining workforce – have grown resentful over perceived inequality of market access,⁸⁴ poor working conditions, and predatory labor practices.⁸⁵ Former President Bozizé’s attempts to consolidate control of the mining industry in the name of his Christian majority were a prominent grievance of the predominantly Muslim Seleka during the 2013 coup.⁸⁶ These existing tensions were instrumentalized by armed groups during post-coup violence in the southwest, and socio-economic tension quickly turned into open interreligious conflict.⁸⁷

187

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78. U.N. Development Programme, “Table 1: Human Development Index and its components”. Available at: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/HDI>.

79. <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/reports.aspx?source=2&country=CAF&series=&period=>

80. Iaccino, L. (2015) Global Hunger Index: Conflict-hit Central African Republic has highest rate of undernourished people. *International Business Times*: 12 October 2015. Available at: <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/global-hunger-index-conflict-hit-central-african-republic-has-highest-rate-undernourished-people-1523565>

81. Transparency International. (2015) The 2014 Corruption Perceptions Index. Available at: <http://www.transparency.org/cpi2014/results>

82. Interview with CRS pastoral expert.

83. Arieff, A. & Husted, T.F. (2015) Crisis in the Central African Republic. 17 August 2015.

Congressional Research Service 7-5700 R43377. Page 3. Available at: <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R43377.pdf>

84. International Peace Information Service (IPIS), Diamonds in the Central African Republic, December 2014

85. Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Key Informant Interview, September 2015

86. International Peace Information Service (IPIS), Diamonds in the Central African Republic, December 2014

87. This paragraph from James Sayre.

Due to the conflict, since May 2013, diamond exports were halted under the Kimberly Process, an attempt to stop trade in 'conflict diamonds' and ensure that it did not finance rebel movements undermining legitimate governments.⁸⁸ The security situation and conditions for workers remain poor in most of these diamond-producing areas. In the Southwest, while the ex-Seleka forces used to be in control, the anti-balaka took control of many of the mines. Although the Transitional Authorities had worked with the Kimberly Process on the conditions of the ban, in some areas the government had not been able to meet those conditions while in parts of the Southwest and West the ban has been lifted. Illegal trade in diamonds has funded many of the various armed groups' (both Seleka and anti-balaka) activities. Since the suspension, an estimated 140,000 carats of diamonds, worth US\$24 million have been smuggled out of the country.⁸⁹ In addition, the ban has not affected buying and selling *within* the country - CAR's millions of dollars of diamonds are held by two major "buying houses" - ready to sell once the ban is lifted.⁹⁰ Labor rights are another problem in the diamond industry. Laborers are required to pay taxes, protection fees, and special fees to those in charge, and forced labor and child labor are rampant.⁹¹

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Gold is also a significant industry in CAR and, as with the diamond industry, is controlled by rebel groups; both ex-Seleka and anti-balaka profit from the trade.⁹² They also engage in various indirect money-making activities alongside the gold and diamond trades including looting, taxation, and extortion, estimated to be between US\$3.9 million and US\$5.8 million annually.⁹³ Several potential oil fields have been identified in CAR with a potential of 1 billion barrels, and exploration started in the Northeast near the border with Chad in 2011 by the China National Petroleum Corporation and its Sudanese partners.⁹⁴ However, due to insecurity and lack of infrastructure, exploration is now on hold - huge investments would be needed. While Chad is already exporting oil from its side of the border, research has

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88. See Southward, F., Weyns, Y., Hoex, L. & Hilgert F. (2014) Diamonds in the Central African Republic. December, International Peace Information Service (IPIS), Available at: http://ipisresearch.be/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/20141222_Insight_diamonds1.pdf.
89. UNSC (2014) Letter dated 28 October 2014 from the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic established pursuant to Security Council resolution 2127 (2013) addressed to the President of the Security Council. S/2014/762 29 October 2014. Page 3. Available at: <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/N1453897.pdf>
90. Bell, James (2015) Thousands of carats of blood diamonds may be set to hit world markets. 29 September 2015. UK: Buzzfeed. Available at: <http://www.buzzfeed.com/jamesball/thousands-of-carats-of-blood-diamonds-may-be-set-to-hit-worl#.as25aJdRZ>
91. Smith, S.E. (2015) Blood diamonds from the Central African Republic may flood the market. Care2: 9 October 2015. Available at: <http://www.care2.com/causes/blood-diamonds-from-the-central-african-republic-may-flood-the-market.html>
92. "In the west of the Central African Republic, anti-balaka members are digging for and trading in diamonds in remote villages like Boda (Lobaye Province) and Guen (Mambere-Kadeï Province). In the east, Séléka forces retain a tight grip on artisanal gold mines like Ndassima (Ouaka Province). State mining authorities are gradually re-establishing control in diamond-producing areas around Bria and Sam-Ouandja (Haute-Kotto Province) and resuming official trade to Bangui. Individual Séléka commanders, however, have captured part of the trade, taking diamonds to the Sudan instead." UNSC (2014) Letter dated 26 June 2014 from the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic established pursuant to Security Council resolution 2127 (2013) addressed to the President of the Security Council. UN: S/2014/452: 1 July 2014. Page 2. Available at: <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/N1441518.pdf>
93. The Enough Project. (2015) Warlord business: CAR's violent armed groups and their criminal operations for profit and power. Available at: <http://www.enoughproject.org/files/Warlord%20Business%20061615.pdf>
94. Brown, D.E. (2013) Africa's booming oil and natural gas exploration and production: National security implications for The United States And China. Strategic Studies Institute and the U.S. Army War College Press. December 2013. Pages 125-126. Available at: <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/pub1186.pdf>

suggested that Chad may have an interest in the continuing insecurity in CAR thus preventing further oil exploitation in CAR.⁹⁵

Most of the population engages in subsistence agriculture of tobacco, cassava, peanuts, maize, sorghum, millet, sesame, and plantain, though coffee and cotton are more significant exports. The agricultural sector accounts for 58 percent of GDP.⁹⁶ The most significant exports are timber and diamonds. The country's economic activities are insufficient to support the population, and in the case of continued violence and insecurity, there is little hope for foreign investment. With subsistence farming, the food stockpiles are vulnerable to attack and more than 50 percent of the population needs foreign assistance to survive. The government has faced severe deficits on successive budgets in spite of substantial foreign aid.

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The World Bank had several large infrastructure projects in 2015: US\$12 million to rebuild the health care system;⁹⁷ US\$20 million to rebuild roads in rural areas by providing jobs to local people;⁹⁸ and US\$10 million for an emergency public services response project.⁹⁹ Lending from the World Bank to the RCA was as follows: US\$65 million in 2011, \$19 million in 2012, \$25 million in 2013, \$50 million in 2014, and \$22 million in 2015.

TRANSHUMANCE

Local-level conflicts over resources frequently arise in the context of the two main rural livelihoods of farming and cattle-raising. Although the seasonal movements of people (primarily Peuhl, including Mbororo, an ethnic sub-group of Peuhl) with their livestock, known as transhumance, has been occurring for centuries across the region (notably between Sudan, CAR, Chad, and Cameroon), recent population pressures and other changes have exacerbated the rate of conflicts. The presence of Peuhl from Sudan and Chad is also blamed for exacerbating the conflict, as these Peuhl (labeled as “foreigners”) are often much more heavily armed than the Peuhl from CAR. Furthermore, as the Seleka armed groups included many Peuhl combatants, the local communities often conflated Peuhl with Seleka, blaming all Peuhl as being Seleka, even though this has not been the reality. In addition, there are cultural differences among the various Peuhl sub-groups, between the size of their herds, their practices of conflict management, and thus their propensity to be in conflict with various other groups.

With the large exodus of primarily Peuhl refugees from CAR into Cameroon and Chad after the fall of Seleka and rise of anti-balaka groups, various additional problems have arisen. Local communities in

95. Weyns, Y., Hoex, L., Hilgert, F., and Spittaels, S. (2014) Mapping conflict motives: The Central African Republic. November 2014. International Peace Information Service (IPIS). Page 66. Available at: <http://ipisresearch.be/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/IPIS-CAR-Conflict-Mapping-November-2014.pdf>

96. CIA. (2015) CIA World Factbook. Last updated 5 May 2016. Available at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ct.html>

97. World Bank (2015) World Bank helps to rebuild health care delivery system in Central African Republic. World Bank: 22 May 2015. Available at: <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/world-bank-helps-rebuild-health-care-delivery-system-central-african>

98. World Bank (2015) World Bank brings public works jobs to rural families in Central African Republic. World Bank: 30 July 2015. <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2015/07/30/world-bank-brings-public-works-jobs-to-rural-families-in-central-african-republic>

99. World Bank (2015) Emergency Public Services Response Project. World Bank: 19 May 2015. Available at: <http://www.worldbank.org/projects/P154304?lang=en>

neighboring countries have blamed the refugees for bringing disease with their cattle, as many have lived in remote areas without access to vaccinations. The majority of the refugees in fact lost their cattle either through theft, illness or poverty, while crossing the border, or when in a neighboring country. With changing patterns of climate, migration, and conflict, these corridors have increasingly become targeted by bandits and kidnappers.

A recent study commissioned by the UNHCR to examine the causes of and solutions to agro-pastoral conflicts in northern and eastern Cameroon examines regions where CAR refugees live, and where historical transhumance corridors run. The study examined the impact of the refugees on these conflicts, and indicated that while for many years the farmers and herders had lived in harmony, recent conflicts were due to changing transhumance routes, an increase in the number of weapons among the pastoralists, and increased numbers of roadblocks (*coupeurs des routes*).¹⁰⁰ The study goes on to say that the pressure on pastoral lands was huge, with the arrival of hundreds of thousands of refugees, some of whom had come with their animals. Such a large influx resulted in disruption of the entire livestock and agricultural sectors, hence an increase in the incidence of conflict. The types of conflicts found included a wide variety: between farmers and pastoralists; between traditional authorities and farmers or with youth; between humanitarian aid agencies and traditional chiefs or with refugees over the targeting of beneficiaries, type and quantity of goods and services, and decision making power in service delivery; between refugees and local authorities, improved site administrators, and security forces; between old and new refugees; and between refugees at the sites.¹⁰¹ Some of these conflicts have also been found through this CA.

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SOCIO-CULTURAL

The population in 2014 was approximately 4.8 million with 2 percent annual population growth, a life expectancy of 50 years, mortality rate of under-fives of 134 per 1,000 live births, and a 4 percent prevalence of HIV and AIDS (ages 15-49).¹⁰² Although primary school enrollment in 2012 was reported to be 95 percent,¹⁰³ literacy was only at 37 percent.¹⁰⁴ Youth make up a large percentage of the population, with 40 percent between 0 and 14 years of age, and 20 percent between 15 and 24 years.¹⁰⁵ The official languages are Sango – spoken by almost all Central Africans – and French. Most of the population also speaks one or more tribal languages. There are 28 mobile phone subscriptions per 100 users, and 3.4 percent of the population are internet users;¹⁰⁶ in Cameroon these numbers are 75 and 6.5 percent respectively.¹⁰⁷

100. Kossoumna Liba'a, N. (2015) Etude sur les Conflits Agro-Pastoraux dans les Régions Camerounaises du Nord, Adamaoua et Est : Rapport Final. Lutheran World Federation (Commissioned by UNHCR): December 2015. Page 11.

101. Kossoumna Liba'a, N. (2015) Etude sur les Conflits Agro-Pastoraux dans les Régions Camerounaises du Nord, Adamaoua et Est : Rapport Final. Lutheran World Federation (Commissioned by UNHCR): December 2015. Page 38.

102. <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/reports.aspx?source=2&country=CAF&series=&period=>

103. <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/centralafricanrepublic>

104. Arieff, A. & Husted, T.F. (2015) Crisis in the Central African Republic. 17 August 2015. Congressional Research Service 7-5700 R43377. Available at: <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R43377.pdf>

105. CIA. (2015) CIA World Factbook. Last updated 14 October 2015. Available at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ct.html>

106. CIA. (2015) CIA World Factbook Central African Republic. Last updated 5 May 2016. Available at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ct.html>

107. CIA. (2016) CIA World Factbook Cameroon. 5 May 2016. Available at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cm.html>

There are more than 60 ethnic groups in CAR as follows: Gbaya, 33 percent; Banda, 27 percent; Mandjia, 13 percent; Sara, 10 percent; Mboum, 7 percent; M'Baka, 4 percent; Yakoma, 4 percent, and "other", 2 percent. Though animism and the other religious beliefs may be combined, 35 percent of the population is characterized as animist, 25 percent as Catholic, 25 percent as Protestant, and 15 percent as Muslim.¹⁰⁸ In Bangui, as of March 2014, only 8 of the 36 mosques were still standing, and 80 percent of Muslims were said to have fled the country.¹⁰⁹ For example, in Bangui before 2012, there were 122,000 Muslims, and now only 15,000 remain.¹¹⁰

Although statistics were not available, it is widely reported that prior to the most recent conflict, intermarriage between Christian and Muslims was very common, and most extended families include both religions.¹¹¹ Although Muslims made up only about 15 percent of the population, they have played pivotal roles in trade and commerce, and their displacement has severely affected transport networks and markets, resulting in diminished food security throughout the country.

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The conflict has taken a great toll on the inhabitants of CAR. As early as 2010, before this latest round of violence, the people of CAR were already suffering from the effects of conflict: four out of five respondents had had to flee their homes in 2002, and three out of five felt their lives were threatened, were separated from family, or had lost property.¹¹² Even in 2010, sexual violence was witnessed by 21 percent, 20 percent had been attacked, and 10 percent had been abducted. Between December 2015 and March 2016, the UN documented 269 new human rights abuses, most of which (139) had been committed by the armed groups (anti-balaka, former Seleka, and LRA), while 80 had been committed by the state authorities including the armed forces.¹¹³

Although statistics on **post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)** in the general population were not available, a recent study indicated that 60 percent of children suffer from PTSD.¹¹⁴ Services for trauma-related illnesses are lacking, though psychological support and other services are provided in Bangui and some areas of the country by NGOs such as the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and Medecins Sans Frontières for general trauma victims, including women victims of SGBV.¹¹⁵ CRS has a community trauma-healing program: Healing and Rebuilding

108. CIA. (2015) CIA World Factbook Central African Republic. Last updated 5 May 2016. Available at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ct.html>
 109. Alexandre, M. (2014). Peacebuilding in Central African Republic. Caritas Internationalis, 21 March 2014, Africa, Blog, Central African Republic. Available at: <http://www.caritas.org/2014/03/peacebuilding-in-central-african-republic-between-christians-and-muslims/>.
 110. Human Rights Watch (2015) Central African Republic: New spate of senseless deaths: Government, peacekeepers should increase protection. HRW: 22 October 2015. Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/10/22/central-african-republic-new-spate-senseless-deaths>
 111. See <http://odihpn.org/magazine/supporting-social-cohesion-in-the-central-african-republic/>
 112. This study surveyed 1,879 individuals in Bangui, Lobaye, Ombella M'Poko, Ouham, and Ouham-Pende prefectures. See: Vinck P. & Pham, P. (2010) *Building peace, seeking justice: A population-based survey on attitudes about accountability and social reconstruction in the Central African Republic*. University of California at Berkeley Human Rights Center: August 2010. Available at: https://www.macfound.org/media/article_pdfs/CAR_AUGUST2010.PDF
 113. UNSC (2016) Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic. United Nations S/2016/305: 1 April 2016. Pages 7-8. Available at: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/305
 114. Kidd, J. (2015) Six in 10 children experience post-traumatic stress in Central African Republic, Save the Children finds. ABC, 29 May 2015. Available at: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-05-29/ptsd-widespread-among-children-in-central-african-republic/6508080>
 115. Guibert, K. (2016) Brutal rapes of girl and mother haunt Central African Republic psychologist. Reuters: 8 March 2016. Available at: <http://news.trust.org/item/20160308070242-ak4e9/>

Our Communities (HROC) under the SECC program, which focuses on self-knowledge of both victims and perpetrators, trust-building, and individual and community healing.¹¹⁶ Through this program, after initial 3-day workshops, local facilitators are chosen from among the participants for additional training as “healing companions” and facilitators, who then accompany villagers through their healing process. In addition, trauma-healing components are included under the CRS’ Interfaith Peacebuilding Partnership (CIPP) program, supported by CRS partners at Palo Alto University.

The rights of women are not equal to those of men in CAR: glaring pre-existing inequities have been exacerbated by the conflict.¹¹⁷ Women suffer from sexual and gender-based violence (including rape, domestic violence and female genital mutilation), and many forms of discrimination including limited family decision-making, disinheritance, and limited access to public space and economic resources. Single, divorced, or widowed women are not considered heads of households. The percentage of women who are married between 15 and 19 years of age is 42 percent.¹¹⁸ Women have limited access to housing, land and property rights; very few women are property owners; and these limited rights are exacerbated in the case of IDPs and returning refugees.¹¹⁹

In areas of insecurity that usually result in livelihood insecurity, especially along borders, women and girls have engaged in transactional and commercial sex. In the context of conflict, women and girls have been victims of sexual violence, including by UN forces. The International Rescue Committee (IRC) reported that of the 950 women who had visited their “Listening Centers” in Bangui in 2014, 80 percent had been raped, often by more than one perpetrator, most of whom were affiliated with armed groups.¹²⁰ Of the 269 human rights cases documented by the UN between December 2015 and March 2016, 39 cases were of sexual violence committed against 49 individuals (30 women, 18 girls and 1 boy. Some cases involved more than one victim). Rape was alleged in 33 cases (23 of which were by multiple perpetrators), and attempted rape in 6. The accused perpetrators included 18 people from Seleka elements, 12 from anti-balaka, and 2 from LRA. Fifteen of the 39 cases had not yet been fully investigated or verified and it was suspected that many other cases had not been reported. An additional 21 cases of sexual exploitation and abuse were reported of violations against children by international armed forces.¹²¹

Young people have played an important role in this conflict: 6,000 to 10,000 youth were estimated to be in armed groups in early 2015

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116. See Ntakarutimana, F. (2014) Community Based Trauma Healing Program in the Central African Republic. 12 December 2014. Available at: <http://aglifpt.org/rfk/?p=406> See also <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bs8mlREgaKQ>

117. OCHA. (2014) Gender Briefing Note on Central African Republic, June 2014. Available at: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/central-african-republic/document/gender-briefing-note-central-african-republic-june-2014>

118. Social Institutions & Gender Index (2015). Available at: <http://genderindex.org/country/central-african-republic>

119. Norwegian Refugee Council. (2015) Displacement and women’s housing, land and property rights in the Central African Republic: Consequences of evicting widows. Norwegian Refugee Council. Central African Republic Brief. February 2015. Available at: http://www.nrc.no/arch/img.aspx?file_id=9195622

120. Mora, D.T., Roesch, E. & Poulton, C. (2014) Gender-based violence in the Central African Republic. *Humanitarian Exchange* No. 62: September 2014. Available at: <http://odihpn.org/magazine/gender-based-violence-in-the-central-african-republic/>

121. UNSC (2016) Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic. United Nations S/2016/305: 1 April 2016. Pages 7-8. Available at: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/305

(from 2,500 estimated at the start of the crisis).¹²² Between December 2015 and March 2016, 39 children were abducted by the presumed LRA forces in the east, but 22 were able to escape.¹²³ An additional 1,209 children were separated from anti-balaka and Révolution et Justice armed groups in the same period.

Due to the lack of social services and state infrastructure, many young people have not been able to pursue their education. In this environment there is a lack of critical thinking, resulting in youth making poor short-term decisions, and being susceptible to recruitment into armed groups.

Grievances of youth are mainly related to a lack of economic opportunities, and this has created ripe conditions for recruitment into fighting forces. In the face of a lack of security provisions from the central government, and the lack of other employment, youth have been the core of the self-defense forces (especially anti-balaka) in both urban and rural areas.

Civil society is active, especially religious groups, and NGOs have been taking on many roles that the state has not been able to fulfill, including in health care and humanitarian assistance, as well as local security. Civil society organizations are active in Bangui, and also at local levels, but there are very few that have national, decentralized structures, except for religious groups. However, both domestic and international human rights groups have been harassed and threatened.¹²⁴ **The media** has also suffered from the conflict, as radio and print media offices were looted, and many ceased to function due to the violence: of the 29 radio stations that existed before the conflict, in March 2014 only 15 were open, 6 of which were in Bangui.¹²⁵ Although various media groups are receiving assistance from several NGOs including Internews, Search for Common Ground, and the Association of Journalists for Human Rights, the media is plagued by problems such as lack of reach to remote areas, and a lack of proper validation of news stories, resulting in rumormongering, unprofessionalism, politicization, and bias. Local journalists have been threatened and killed,¹²⁶ including the highly publicized killing of a French journalist. An informal survey of interviewees in Bangui indicated that many listen to Radio Ndeke Luka (funded by Fondation Hirondelle and run by Search for Common Ground) and Radio France International.¹²⁷

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Many authors have commented upon the **lack of trust** between the various family, ethnic, and religious groups of CAR, which has been exacerbated by the more recent conflict. As mentioned above, isolated population settlements are separated by a lack of roads and telecommunications, which has reduced contact between communities, and increased mistrust. A recent survey by the NRC on women's housing, land and property rights

122. Katz, A. Back and Forth in Central African Republic's Unholy War. 15 January 2015. *Time Magazine*. Available at: <http://time.com/3640525/central-african-republic-conflict-anti-balaka-seleka/>

123. UNSC (2016) Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic. United Nations S/2016/305: 1 April 2016. Page 8. Available at: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/305

124. US Department of State (2014) Central African Republic 2014 Human Rights Report. Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014. United States Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. Available at: <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/236552.pdf>

125. Quintanilla, J. & Pedneault, J. (2014) Supporting local media in the Central African Republic. Humanitarian Exchange No. 62: September 2014. Available at: <http://odihpn.org/magazine/supporting-local-media-in-the-central-african-republic/>

126. Internews (2014) Internews joins national and international media and rights organizations calling for protection for the free flow of information. 24 June 2014. Available at: <https://internews.org/our-stories/project-updates/call-for-protection-journalists-CAR>

127. See <http://www.radiondekeluka.org/>

indicates that the low level of formal marriage (approximately 10 percent) is at least partially based on a lack of trust in society.¹²⁸

Arguably the most widely published author on CAR, Louisa Lombard has written about the importance of understanding the **social practices of violence**, in particular popular punishment (which includes mob violence) and vengeance (at the family, community and national levels) in understanding wartime mobilization in CAR.¹²⁹ Several other authors have written about other aspects of violence (including the misinterpretation of violence by outsiders, the trends of uncertainty which have accompanied the waves of “cataclysmic” violence, insecurity of the political elites, and conceptions of power).¹³⁰

EXTERNAL INFLUENCES

Although CAR is often described as a forgotten country,¹³¹ it has been constantly under foreign influence. Each successive regime after independence (and its opposing or rebel group) has relied on foreign support if not a direct contribution of military forces. France in particular has been intensely involved for more than 120 years, keeping troops in the country until 1997 even after independence in 1960, and intervention in the coups of 1965, 1971, and 1981 to safeguard French interests.¹³² Foreign interest has often been related to the extraction of resources – for example France, Libya and Chad have been involved in gold and diamond mining, with Chad also involved in oil and wildlife, France in uranium, and South Africa in oil and diamonds. Outside military forces from Chad supported (if not made up large percentages of) Bozizé’s army, as well as several other armed groups including the Seleka.¹³³ In addition to Chad, the Seleka were also supported by Sudan, as well as Libyan and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) military forces (which have also fought in CAR for Ange-Félix Patassé).

Various Central African rebel groups have fled over various borders seeking refuge in neighboring countries (especially Chad and Sudan), and while there, at times were trained for use by those governments’ regional strategies.¹³⁴ Congolese rebels of Jean-Pierre Bemba and the

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Each successive regime after independence (and its opposing or rebel group) has relied on foreign support if not a direct contribution of military forces.
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128. Norwegian Refugee Council. (2015) Displacement and women’s housing, land and property rights in the Central African Republic: Consequences of evicting widows. Norwegian Refugee Council. Central African Republic Brief. February 2015. Page 8. Available at: http://www.nrc.no/arch/img.aspx?file_id=9195622
 129. Lombard, L. Batianga-Kinzi, S. (2014) Violence, popular punishment, and war in the Central African Republic. 16 December 2014 (online) African Affairs (London). Available at: <http://afraf.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2014/12/15/afraf.adu079.abstract>
 130. Lombard, L. (2014). The Central African Republic (CAR) in a hot spot. Fieldsights - Hot Spots, *Cultural Anthropology Online*, 11 June 2014. Available at: <http://www.culanth.org/fieldsights/538-the-central-african-republic-car-in-a-hot-spot>
 131. See <https://www.hrw.org/news/2013/09/18/forgotten-crisis-central-african-republic> or <https://www.thenation.com/article/central-african-republics-forgotten-crisis/> or <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/inpictures/2016/07/displaced-forgotten-central-african-republic-160717113644108.html>
 132. Somerville, K. (2014) France, Chad, Gaddafi and the CAR: Years of meddling should not be ignored now. 16 January 2014. *African Arguments Online*. Available at: <http://africanarguments.org/2014/01/16/france-chad-gaddafi-and-the-car-years-of-meddling-should-not-be-ignored-now-by-keith-somerville/>
 133. Debos, M. (2008) Fluid loyalties in a regional crisis: Chadian ‘Ex-Liberators’ in the Central African Republic. *African Affairs*, 107/427, 225-241. Available at: http://s3.amazonaws.com/academia.edu.documents/30965352/Debos_FluidLoyalties_AfAffairs_May08.pdf?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJ56TQJRTWSMTNPEA&Expires=1461506432&Signature=lvATx3uS8D0sRaq94Yyp2%%2FpX%2FB0%3D&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%2-Ofilename%3DFluid_loyalties_in_a_regional_crisis_Cha.pdf
 134. Somerville, K. (2014) France, Chad, Gaddafi and the CAR: Years of meddling should not be ignored now. 16 January 2014. *African Arguments Online*. Available at: <http://africanarguments.org/2014/01/16/france-chad-gaddafi-and-the-car-years-of-meddling-should-not-be-ignored-now-by-keith-somerville/>

Lord's Resistance Army (LRA - via DRC) have made incursions into CAR. There have also been reports from our interviews, as well as in the press,¹³⁵ that Boko Haram elements from Nigeria have entered CAR via Chad or Cameroon. As described in the CAF as a conflict risk factor of "bad neighborhoods", the ongoing conflicts in Chad, Sudan, DRC, Republic of Congo, and most recently Cameroon, all threaten the peace in CAR. Conflict and exploitation by neighbors (and their international backers) result in the proliferation of weapons, marauders, cattle rustlers, diamond smugglers, and resource exploitation crossing borders.¹³⁶

CAR has been described as a "playground for peacekeeping and peacebuilding", with several successive international and regional missions that have been plagued with problems.¹³⁷ In 2010, the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA), was created, which in September 2013 was strengthened by additional mandates including: "support for the implementation of the transition process; support for conflict prevention and humanitarian assistance; support for the stabilization of the security situation; promotion and protection of human rights; and coordination of international actors involved in the implementation of those tasks."¹³⁸ However, due to the deteriorating situation, additional missions were deployed in December 2013 including an AU International Support Mission to the CAR (MISCA) and French peacekeeping force (Operation Sangaris).¹³⁹ The UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) was launched in February 2014, with a formal transfer from MISCA to MINUSCA in September 2014, with a goal of 10,000 military personnel, and significant civilian personnel. However, funding is inadequate for much of the UN mission, including for DDDR and elections.¹⁴⁰ In addition, there have also been complaints that the UN forces have been late in responding to local conflicts which some feel could have been prevented from escalating,¹⁴¹ and the results of their interventions at the political level to reduce violent conflict have been difficult for many observers to discern.

Accusations have been made that international peacekeepers have been involved in sexual exploitation and abuse, as well as indiscriminate killings,¹⁴² and biased towards particular groups in CAR, which eventually

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There have been complaints that the UN forces have been late in responding to local conflicts which some feel could have been prevented from escalating.
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135. Lister, T. (2013) Religious violence in CAR plagues 'most abandoned people on earth'. CNN: 12 December 2013. Available at: <http://www.cnn.com/2013/12/12/world/africa/car-violence/> and Pilgrim, S. (2015) Boko Haram 'eyeing power vacuum' as CAR heads to polls. Radio France International (RFI): 14 December 2015. Available at: <http://en.rfi.fr/africa/20151214-boko-haram-eyeing-power-vacuum-car-heads-polls>

136. This study for example says that it is Sudan and China who are taking oil from CAR: <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/pub1186.pdf> This source implicates Chad: http://www.enoughproject.org/files/CAR_Report_-_Behind_the_Headlines_5.1.14.pdf

137. Lombard, L. (2013). Is the Central African Republic on the verge of genocide? 5 December 2013. Africa is a Country Blog. Available at: <http://africasacountry.com/2013/12/is-the-central-african-republic-on-the-verge-of-genocide/>

138. See <http://binuca.unmissions.org/>

139. MINUSCA (2015) Background. Available at: <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/minusca/background.shtml>

140. "Des dizaines d'élèves blessés dans des échanges de tirs à Bangui", RFI, 6 June 2015.

141. International Rescue Committee. (2015) Resurgence of violence in Bangui: People trapped, humanitarian workers targeted. 5 October 2015. IRC Press Release. Available at: <http://www.rescue.org/press-releases/resurgence-violence-bangui-people-trapped-humanitarian-workers-targeted-27280>

142. See Amnesty International. (2015) CAR: UN troops implicated in rape of girl and indiscriminate killings must be investigated. AI. 11 August 2015. Available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2015/08/car-un-troops-implicated-in-rape-of-girl-and-indiscriminate-killings-must-be-investigated/>

prompted the UNSG to ask for the resignation of the head of the CAR peacekeeping mission which occurred in August 2015. In May 2015, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, called on member states to investigate allegations of human rights abuses including sexual and gender-based violence: an External Independent Review Panel was appointed by the UN in June 2015. Despite these problems with the UN forces, several individuals and organizations have called for a stronger UN mandate in CAR to keep the peace, including calls as recently as October 2015¹⁴³ and Human Rights Watch.¹⁴⁴

The anthropologist Louisa Lombard noted how the CAR's colonial history under France and trans-Saharan slave traders, more recent corporate deals, and fear of Chadian (Muslim) raiders had led to "widespread anxiety that the country is being invaded and plundered by foreigners".¹⁴⁵ Peacekeepers have often been seen as biased, with the perception that the Chadians side with Muslims and the French with Christians.¹⁴⁶ This lack of neutrality was probably more than merely a perception, as Cameroonian troops have been stationed along the CAR/Cameroon border, and DRC troops along the CAR/DRC border. Both Chadian and Congolese (Brazzaville) African Union (AU) forces have been involved in suspicious events causing the death or disappearance of civilians.¹⁴⁷ There have been several attacks against MINUSCA troops, primarily by Seleka and anti-balaka elements.¹⁴⁸ The foreign religious actors (priests and nuns) however, seem to have a special "insider-outsider" status in CAR as they are frequently fluent in Sango, have been in the country for decades, and often provide essential services such as health and education.¹⁴⁹ Many have also been involved in peacebuilding activities.

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US interests in CAR were identified as primarily related to US involvement in humanitarian assistance, internal stabilization, and peacekeeping operations. Other issues resulting from CAR's crisis and recognized as having a wider impact for US Congressional interests include: maintaining "stability in the wider central Africa region; the prevention of mass atrocities; the status of US efforts to counter the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a small but brutal militia present in CAR and neighboring states; and the impact of instability in CAR on wildlife poaching and other cross-border criminal activity in the region."¹⁵⁰ In addition, the US has interests in a variety of natural resources, most notably, oil, as 15 percent

143. Reuters (2015) Central African president calls for tougher mandate for U.N. mission. 3 October 2015. Reuters. Available at: <http://www.trust.org/item/20151003151211-fxsla/?source=fiOtherNews2>

144. Human Rights Watch (2015) Central African Republic: New spate of senseless deaths: Government, peacekeepers should increase protection. 22 October 2015. Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/10/22/central-african-republic-new-spate-senseless-deaths>

145. Lombard, L. (2013). Is the Central African Republic on the verge of genocide? 5 December 2013. Africa is a Country Blog. Available at: <http://africasacountry.com/2013/12/is-the-central-african-republic-on-the-verge-of-genocide/>.

146. Ingerstad, G. (2014). Central African Republic - Trapped in a cycle of violence? Causes, conflict dynamics and prospects for peace. May 2014. FOI-R--3877--SE Ministry of Defence. Pages 61-62.

147. Taub, A. (2014) A brief guide to one of the world's least-understood crises: The Central African Republic. Vox: Human Rights in Crisis: 29 October 2014. Available at: <http://www.vox.com/2014/10/29/7078285/car-human-rights-explainer>

148. For example, see Reuters/Vice News (2015) Hundreds break out of prison as violence continues in Central African Republic. Reuters and VICE News: 29 September 2015. Available at: <https://news.vice.com/article/hundreds-break-out-of-prison-as-violence-continues-in-central-african-republic>

149. Interview with CRS staff person.

150. Arieff, A. & Husted, T.F. (2015) Crisis in the Central African Republic. 17 August 2015. Congressional Research Service 7-5700 R43377. Available at: <http://www.fas.org/sqp/crs/row/R43377.pdf>

of its oil supplies already come from Sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁵¹ The US is also interested in monitoring and balancing China's increasing economic, diplomatic, political and academic interests in Africa.¹⁵²

In summary, the most important contextual risk factors identified in the CAF are *all* met in CAR, making it at high risk indeed: “partial democracies”; recent history of conflict; “bad neighborhoods”; low levels of human development; state discrimination; and poverty.¹⁵³



151. Bowers, D. (2015) Colonialism, coups, and conflict: The violence in the Central African Republic. *Foreign Policy Journal*: 6 February 2015. Available at: <http://www.foreignpolicyjournal.com/2015/02/06/colonialism-coups-and-conflict-the-violence-in-the-central-african-republic/>

152. Ibid.

153. USAID (2012) CAF. Page 19.

Conflict dynamics

In the CAF, conflict dynamics are described as follows: “The dynamics of conflict are shaped by how key actors mobilize the communal grievances and resiliencies found in all human social systems. Grievance and resilience emerge from an interaction between identity groups and institutional performance that produce enduring social patterns.”¹⁵⁴ After a review of the key issues discovered in the research, this section follows the structure of the CAF to discuss key actors, their grievances and identities, then institutional performance, social patterns, and resilience.

KEY ISSUES

The following key issues were identified through the interviews and a literature review, as possible sources of violence in CAR: fragmented security and conflict between armed groups; state services failure; violent political contestation; competition over resources; agro-pastoral conflict; and refugee and IDP return.

Fragmented security and conflict between armed groups

The state armed services were in theory disarmed during the transitional period, though some still have weapons. Although they have gradually been providing some security in some areas including in Bangui, these services are not always conducted on behalf of the state, as there are interchanging identities between political entities, in particular with the anti-balaka. While the quality of these services is highly variable, the majority of interviewees had favorable perceptions of the FACA forces – though perceptions were localized and depended on the past history of conflict in each specific area. For example, FACA were generally positively viewed in many parts of Bangui, and have received some of the credit for the reduction in criminal activity in the city. Whereas in rural locations such as Bossangoa, FACA forces have predominantly turned to racketeering and as a result were viewed negatively by the local communities interviewed.

Crime is rampant throughout the country and is not controlled by the security forces. Road cutting, kidnapping, illegal taxation, and poaching by various armed groups contributes to insecurity. The conflicts between agriculturists and pastoralists also contributes to the fragmentation of the security situation in CAR, and an increasing number of pastoralists are armed and are mixed with foreign forces (in particular from Chad). Incursions of military forces from neighboring countries (Sudan, Chad, Nigeria) or other armed groups, like the LRA, further complicates the security situation.

In a country with an almost non-existent judiciary, and police forces only present in the capital and rarely in the countryside, the security of citizens is inevitably fragmented. High crime rates are often related to

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Crime is rampant throughout the country and is not controlled by the security forces. Road cutting, kidnapping, illegal taxation, and poaching by various armed groups contributes to insecurity.
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154. USAID (2012). Conflict Assessment Framework Application Guide. June 2012. Washington D.C.: USAID. Page 2. Available at: <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/working-crises-and-conflict/technical-publications>

conflict between various armed groups and/or to economic deprivation. At present, the primary armed conflict is seen as between the forces of (primarily Muslim) Seleka versus (primarily Christian) anti-balaka, though this conflict is a potent mix of political, religious, ethnic and family factors, with roots in political power seeking, conflict over resources, and the need for security. While both the groups, especially the anti-balaka, are somewhat fluid, the majority of the members are young men, and in certain areas there are majorities of certain ethnic groups. The fragmentation within these two armed groups has also been great cause for concern, as various military leaders compete for resources, and their political representatives jockey for ministerial posts.¹⁵⁵

While the armed conflict is often attributed to religious divides, all Central African interviewees we spoke to disagreed (as did religious leaders in public reports),¹⁵⁶ and suggested that religion had been manipulated. As at least 30 percent of the population hold animist beliefs, and many anti-balaka (thus presumably Christian) members share these beliefs, they should not be labeled a religious movement. Furthermore, there are some Christians within the Seleka groups. No one has evoked the violation of the Koran or the Bible in the crisis, and no priest, pastor, or imam has claimed leadership or affiliation with the armed groups.

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Superimposed on this armed conflict is the conflict between pastoralists and farmers (over grazing, crop damage, cattle rustling, and access to water). These layers of conflict have created fractures along lines of religious and ethnic identity (pastoralists/Peuhl/Muslim versus farmers/Christian). Poaching of wild animals is another factor that is superimposed on the primary lines of fracture (Seleka/anti-balaka).

The culture of violence described above, has now been reinforced by the last several years of extreme suffering of the civilian population due to both direct and indirect violence of the various armed groups. The violence has occurred in waves, with one attack leading to retaliatory attacks, resulting in cycles of revenge killings of increasing intensity.¹⁵⁷ Furthermore, this culture of violence has spilled over (and also had origins in) violence at the family level, with extremely high levels of domestic violence. The prevalence of poaching, as well as other types of resource extraction by various armed groups is another source of violence. In the absence of state services, Lombard describes the tactics of people in the northeast in parkland areas to support their livelihoods as “threaten and hide”,¹⁵⁸ which although not culminating in actual physical violence, is just as effective in creating environments of fear. The proliferation of small arms is another underlying factor in this violence, due to the recent Seleka and anti-balaka fighting, and

155. United Nations Security Council (2014) Letter dated 28 October 2014 from the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic established pursuant to Security Council resolution 2127 (2013) addressed to the President of the Security Council. 29 October 2014. United Nations S/2014/762. Page 2. Available at: http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_2014_762.pdf

156. See for example Sullivan, R. & Stigant, S. (2014) Central African Republic: Religious leaders call for dialogue backed by grassroots. USIP: 20 November 2014. Available at: <http://www.usip.org/olivebranch/central-african-republic-religious-leaders-call-dialogue-backed-grassroots> and Alexandre, M. (2014). Peacebuilding in Central African Republic. Caritas Internationalis, 21 March 2014, Africa, Blog, Central African Republic. Available at: <http://www.caritas.org/2014/03/peacebuilding-in-central-african-republic-between-christians-and-muslims/>.

157. Human Rights Watch. Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/africa/central-african-republic>

158. Yale University, Department of Anthropology. (2015) “New article by Professor Louisa Lombard: ‘Threat Economies and Armed Conservation in Northeastern Central African Republic’”. 10 September 2015. <http://anthropology.yale.edu/news/new-article-professor-louisa-lombard-threat-economies-and-armed-conservation-northeastern>

the presence of several regional armed forces (in particular Chad). The long and porous borders exacerbate the problems of readily available weapons and easy movements of armed fighters in and around CAR. The UN has been attempting to tackle this problem (having, for example, created a weapon-free zone in Bambari)¹⁵⁹ but with the ongoing conflict, disarmament will undoubtedly be a huge challenge.

State services failure

One of most important root causes of conflict is related to the failure of state services (the phantom state), especially in rural and peripheral areas in CAR.¹⁶⁰ This failure can be traced back to a colonial history of lack of development, as well as decades-long political wrangling and strongman leadership resulting in selective application of social services based upon ethnicity, religion, and political allegiance. State services failure is usually seen as a *root* cause of conflict, and not a cause that can be tackled in the short term for focus of response in a conflict analysis. However, the complete lack of security for inhabitants of CAR, the corruption, the lack of transportation and communication infrastructure, the crumbled economic networks for ordinary citizens, and the weak or non-existent institutions (security, judiciary, health, education, and administration) to deal with problems and conflicts makes this issue of state services failure a core component in the dynamics of conflict.

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Violent political contestation

Historical violent political contestation has contributed to the failure of state services. The major cause of conflict in CAR stems from elite political actors who often resort to violence to pursue or protect power and resources, creating military forces often based on ethnic and/or family ties or divided along religious and geographical lines. This method of political change, hidden under a mask of pseudo-democratization, is closely related to several other causes of conflict mentioned below: the fragmented security situation, competition over resources, failure of state services, pastoralist/farmer conflict, refugee and IDP flows, as well as underlying poverty and underdevelopment. Elections (and their delays over the last year) have been a strong potential trigger for violent conflict. Fortunately, however, except for the constitutional referendum, the elections were conducted peacefully and without major incident.

In the past year, many members of the international community have been pushing for rapid elections (in the hope of reducing their assistance to CAR). Now that the elections have occurred, some donors are rushing to extricate themselves, in spite of ample evidence that in CAR, and elsewhere, elections do not equal instant democracy. A panel of experts in late 2015 warned that the only way to avoid the mistakes

159. Reuters. (2015) U.N. establishes 'weapons-free zone' in Central African Republic. 9 September 2015. Available at: [http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/09/09/us-centralafrica-violence-un-idUSKCNOR91KB20150909?ct=t\(RtoP_Weekly_1_5_June_20156_1_2015\)](http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/09/09/us-centralafrica-violence-un-idUSKCNOR91KB20150909?ct=t(RtoP_Weekly_1_5_June_20156_1_2015)) However the UN in a 2014 report did not find any significant violations of an arms embargo – see United Nations Security Council (2014) Letter dated 28 October 2014 from the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic established pursuant to Security Council resolution 2127 (2013) addressed to the President of the Security Council. 29 October 2014. United Nations S/2014/762. Page 2. Available at: http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_2014_762.pdf

160. ICG (2007) CAR: Anatomy of a Phantom State. ICG Africa Report No. 136. – 13 December 2007. Available at: <http://www.crisisgroup.org/-/media/Files/africa/central-africa/central-african-republic/Central%20African%20Republic%20Anatomy%20of%20a%20Phantom%20State.pdf>

of the past in CAR would be if the international community made a firm commitment to long-term development, including rebuilding infrastructure and institutions (rather than fleeing after elections).¹⁶¹

Competition over resources

Competition over resources is a major root cause of the conflict in CAR. Both the state, and the rebel groups used ethnicity and religion as tools to create group identities but underlying power struggles and greed were actually driving these group identities – much of the current fighting is driven by economic interests, especially the high-value trade in diamonds, gold, and uranium. As mentioned above, conflict over resources occurs frequently, especially since certain groups are in control of certain industries. For example, people from Muslim groups had controlled the majority of the gold and diamond mining, along with certain ethnic groups, but some were forced to flee during the conflict. In some cases, anti-balaka forces claimed sites of resource extraction after driving Muslims away and these resources were used both to maintain control of territory, and to claim political legitimacy. The presence of foreign intermediaries whose roles have changed with the conflict could further complicate the return of those who have been displaced.

Agro-pastoral conflict

Although violence between pastoralist and farming communities has existed for centuries, the violence has been exacerbated due to perceived (and some real) links between pastoralists and Seleka, especially in west and central CAR.¹⁶² This violence has been further magnified due to several factors: the migration of outside pastoralists (mainly from Chad) into CAR; the reverse migration (or flight) of CAR pastoralists to Chad and Cameroon due to the conflict; the radicalization of some of the pastoralists groups, resulting in collapse of the livestock and farming sectors; the regular practice of “brutal retaliation” to cattle theft in the face of changing youth/elder dynamics and loss of traditional mediation structures; and the changing demographic of youth, away from pastoralism and towards armed groups.¹⁶³

In Bossangoa, local authorities and civil society groups cited numerous failed attempts of negotiation between agriculturalist and pastoralist communities over the previous 12 months. Failure was attributed primarily to two factors: Violence and criminal activity continue to degrade goodwill at critical moments of negotiations. Resulting insecurity also, in some cases, completely prevents talks from taking place. Negotiation efforts have also often lacked necessary preparation. Agriculturalists and local leadership often know little about the herder group they are negotiating with let alone that group’s motivations and expectations for potential agreements. As a result, parties within a negotiation perceive differences as irreconcilable. Should mediation efforts continue to fail, agriculturalist and pastoralist communities will likely grow disillusioned, increasing the potential for violent conflict.

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Information from the CRS program to restore pastoral activities indicates

161. Ratnam, G. (2015) Risk to Central African Republic lies in avoiding mistakes of the past, experts say. United States Institute of Peace: 2 December 2015. Available at: <http://www.usip.org/publications/2015/12/02/risk-central-african-republic-lies-in-avoiding-mistakes-of-the-past-experts>

162. International Crisis Group (2014). The Central African Republic’s hidden conflict. Policy Briefing, Africa Briefing N°105. 12 December 2014. Nairobi/Brussels: ICG. Available at: <http://www.crisisgroup.org/-/media/Files/africa/central-africa/central-african-republic/b105-la-face-cachee-du-conflit-centrafricain-english.pdf>. Page 1.

163. Ibid.

that the dynamics of conflicts within and between Peuhl and Peuhl anti-balaka differ depending on the region, the ethnic origins of the population, and their dynamics. For example, the nature of conflicts related to transhumance in the east, which is of Sudanese origin is completely different from the northwest.¹⁶⁴

Refugees/IDP return

While currently comprehensive refugee and IDP return is not yet foreseen, future returns will undoubtedly create widespread risks for conflict. As property and land (farming, residential and business) have been destroyed on a massive level, significant investments will have to be made to restore shelter and livelihoods to returnees. Massive rehabilitation needs are acutely visible in many neighborhoods. Interviewees often spoke of these concerns (though the degree of concern varied widely, depending upon the history of the local conflict, the amount of destruction, and the dynamics of flight and return). Although several of the areas vacated by Muslims have been left unoccupied (though decimated), there could actually be fewer conflicts over land than in other post-conflict countries, because it may be the former position held by Muslim business people that will be the heavily contested point of re-entry. Where Muslims have fled areas of resource extraction where they controlled the business (these include areas of diamond and gold mining, among others), return will be extremely difficult. When the violent evictions have occurred in cases of property or financial disputes, and when money is owed to those who have left, returns could also be particularly problematic. Many refugees and IDPs have lost their official, legal, and identity documents. Local and international justice and governance mechanisms will need to manage conflict that arises over property rights (commercial and residential), market access, and other issues noted above, but these mechanisms are as yet either non-existent, or lack capacity.

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While there have not been surveys to determine locations for refugee and IDP return, a 2014 study on social cohesion of refugees from CAR noted negative perceptions held by (primarily Christian) communities in CAR, towards Central African and Chadian Muslims; these negative perceptions would likely negatively affect return.¹⁶⁵ There have been small numbers of returnees to date, thus not at a level that could stimulate the types of conflict mentioned in this section.

Cross-cutting themes

Several cross-cutting themes have been identified. These include: **gender** (high incidence of SGBV, yet the important role of women in building peace); **youth** (unemployment and erosion of traditional authority contributing to dynamics of armed conflict); **“foreigner” versus local dynamics** (mistrust of foreigners, and regional intervention in the CAR conflict); the related **lack of trust** in society; **religious differences**; and finally, the **spiritual dimensions of the conflict** (armed groups’ reliance on sorcery, and high incidence of popular or mob justice related to the punishment of crimes of sorcery or other offenses against spiritual beliefs).

164. This CA has not been able to examine the conflicts in such detail, but further information can be obtained in the following report: Food and Agriculture Organization, Danish Refugee Council, and Catholic Relief Services. (2015) Situation de la Transhumance et Étude Socioanthropologique Des Populations Pastorales Après la Crise de 2013-2014 en République Centrafricaine : Rapport Conjoint de Mission FAO-DRC-CRC. March 2015. Available at: <http://fscluster.org/central-african-republic/document/mission-devaluation-de-la-transhumance>

165. Erickson, A. (2014) Social Cohesion Assessment of CAR Refugees in Southern Chad and Eastern Cameroon. July-August 2014. Catholic Relief Services-CAR.

Although the issues of youth and gender are not themselves drivers of conflict, they are highlighted here to emphasize the need for their inclusion as a cross-cutting theme in this CA because certain sub-groups within these categories are often more vulnerable and thus heavily impacted by conflict. After recent years of violent conflict, with the influence of globalization and extreme poverty (resulting in migration and providing incentives for youth to join armed groups), there has been an increasing divide between generations.¹⁶⁶ As youth in the region have lost faith in their elders, there has been an erosion of traditional leadership, which has led to an even greater crisis of traditional dispute-resolution mechanisms.¹⁶⁷ The issue of unemployed youth, their economic difficulties and the erosion of the power of elders and traditional leaders are key contributing factors to the conflict in CAR. Women in CAR are marginalized and suffer from a great number of human rights abuses, and a high prevalence of SGBV.

.....
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Another factor, often seen as peripheral in the analysis of conflict in most countries, but which is a core issue to be tackled in CAR (similar to the issue of state services failure), is the impact of **external influences** and the related **mistrust of “foreigners”**. In particular, Chad’s involvement in the support of the Seleka and in resource extraction; France in politics and resources; and the UN currently in security (including its inability to respond rapidly to violence) and development (as well as in human rights abuses) need to be explored. Furthermore, the distrust that most people in CAR feel towards foreigners (except perhaps for religious figures) is an important issue that must be considered. This mistrust of foreigners happens even domestically across ethnic groups and regions, as many are wary of accepting Central Africans from other groups and regions.

While **religious difference** is not a separate factor that is a *cause* of conflict, the “potent mix of political, religious, ethnic, and family factors, with roots in political power seeking” mentioned above certainly contributes to conflict, and conflict actors have used the name of religion and religious labels to incite violence. The **spiritual dimensions** of conflict, including the processes used for recruitment, initiation, as well as departure from the various armed groups, and the use of witchcraft and its punishment in society, are important to consider in both the analysis of conflict, and the determination of response options.

The **lack of trust**, particularly between various identity groups, is a great obstacle to social cohesion, and long-term and deep processes are needed to overcome the past differences. Even actors involved in social cohesion activities are plagued with this lack of trust among certain beneficiary groups: processes to assist people to develop empathy and understanding of the “other” are crucial. In addition, the impact of the years of conflict on society and social structures remains relatively unexplored, with few studies of the mental health situation available, although initial programs of trauma healing indicate a great need and interest in these services.

In conclusion, there are a range of **groups that lack social cohesion** due to the various reasons (political contestation, competition for resources,

166. As mentioned above, the majority of combatants in the Seleka and anti-balaka are young people.

167. Kossouma Liba’a, N. (2015) Etude sur les Conflits Agro-Pastoraux dans les Régions Camerounaises du Nord, Adamaoua et Est : Rapport Final. Lutheran World Federation (Commissioned by UNHCR) : December 2015.

agro-pastoral differences, etc.) that have all led to violent conflict. These groups include:

- **Seleka vs. anti-balaka** (political competition, resources, economic security, etc.)
- **Pastoralists vs. farmers** (use of land for farming vs. herding – overlap with Seleka vs. anti-balaka)
- **Refugee/IDP vs. host communities** (competition over resources, economic security, land, business)
- **Ethnic groups** (politicians giving preference to their own ethnic groups related to the capture of power, access to resources)
- **Christians versus Muslims** – not due to ideological or theological difference, but more an issue of conflict actors labeling people as one religion or another during conflict
- **Central Africans vs. “foreigners”** – (regional dynamics of minerals, oil, access to resources, armed foreign fighters in CAR)

KEY ACTORS

Politico-military groups and leaders: Key mobilizers for conflict

In the complex situation of CAR, the separation as well as the linkages between the political leaders and military leaders are extremely difficult to unravel. While some sources blame the military leaders, most others identify political actors as the main force behind the instability, violence, and corruption—and the reason why CAR has such an ineffective and insufficient government service structure. Leaders’ struggles over power, and thus access to the relatively rich resources of CAR are at the root of much of the conflict, which is then played out in myriad ways throughout society. Many of these political actors (or their proxies) have been the same for decades, rotating in and out of power with the support of various foreign powers.

.....
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.....

Armed groups can be divided into several (but overlapping) categories: Seleka, Peuhl, foreign (external to CAR), anti-balaka, self-defense, regional military (Sudanese, Chadian, LRA/international), and the government forces (FACA). Views of these groups vary widely depending on local perceptions.

(Ex-)Seleka and anti-balaka are the key military groups identified as being key actors in the conflict, but their amorphous and fluid nature and the multitudes of splits and rejoinings makes their clear identification difficult. Current and former members of the **FACA**, although officially disarmed, continue to play a role in the conflict. This preliminary study did not allow detailed exploration of these other key groups, which are also implicated in various conflicts, participating through loose alliances with both anti-balaka and Seleka: Révolution et Justice, Union des Forces Démocratiques pour le Rassemblement, Convention des Patriotes pour la Justice et la Paix, Front Populaire pour le Redressement, and Front Démocratique du Peuple Centrafricain. Further examination of key actors’ organizing capacity, financing, and support networks will contribute to a better understanding of the conflict dynamics and could be performed in a continuation of this study at a later date.

The **Seleka** was the mainly Muslim military force that swept across the country from Sudan in the east to take over the capital Bangui and install Michel Djotodia at the end of 2012. He lasted barely a year in power when, in a negotiated settlement in early 2014, he stepped down. The Seleka forces committed horrific crimes, and often targeted women and girls.¹⁶⁸

168. Townsend, M. (2013) Raped, plundered, ignored: Central Africa state where only killers thrive. *The Guardian*: 27 July 2013. Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jul/27/central-african-republic-rebels-seleka>

The Peuhl (sometimes called Mbororo or Fulani) groups are further divided into four groups: traditional or old, local, ex-Seleka, and foreign. Much of the violence attributed to Peuhl pastoralists was blamed on the foreign elements, especially those from Chad and Sudan, but these may just be perceptions as it is difficult to determine the facts.

The UNSG's report of April 2016 reported an increase in violent incidents between the armed Peuhl herders, and the anti-balaka and Seleka groups, related to cattle theft, grazing land use, and informal taxes.¹⁶⁹ Some of these incidents resulted in school closures and population displacements and, in March 2016, in Bambari, seven people died in such violence. In the west of the country, the former Seleka group Mouvement Patriotique pour la Centrafrique and Révolution et Justice cooperated to extend their areas of control, including towards trade routes to Chad.¹⁷⁰

With the recent elections, and the appointment of a non-Muslim prime minister, several interviewees expressed concerns that the Seleka military forces could resort to violence if their grievances related to exclusion and marginalization were not accommodated.

The **anti-balaka** have been described as comprising three different groups: 1) an armed group with command structures linked to political and economic leaders; 2) local militias seeking justice (or vengeance) against (ex) Seleka forces for previous abuses; and 3) criminal gangs acting with impunity for personal gain.¹⁷¹ They most often use homemade weapons or machetes, and their tactics include burning and looting villages, extra-judicial killings, and sexual violence. Many are young men, and the great majority are Christian. Anti-balaka induction rituals often include elements of animist beliefs and sorcery: many wear *gris-gris* amulets for perceived protection. They are in the habit of using their weapons and status to generate income. Unfortunately, the DDDR plan currently would exclude many anti-balaka, as they do not have modern weapons, which are a prerequisite to be accepted into the programs. Grievances of the anti-balaka groups include their inability to return home with some sort of livelihood, as well as their high expectations of DDDR that have not been met, resulting in exacerbation of conflict.

The **Lord's Resistance Army**, originally a Ugandan armed group, was created 30 years ago by Joseph Kony, and over the years up to 100,000 have been killed by the group (including many civilians), and millions driven from their homes. The LRA has been particularly active in the southeast of CAR, and in 2016 in a mine-rich area.¹⁷² Although it is still nominally led by Kony, he remains elusive and was rumored to be in Sudan or in the jungles of CAR. In spite of the presence of US Special Forces working in conjunction with the Ugandan military, attacks in CAR and the DRC continue. Several interviewees labeled the LRA as no longer Ugandan, but an international bandit group that has recruited young people from many countries including CAR, Chad, Sudan, and others. It

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Lord's Resistance Army

169. UNSC (2016) Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic. United Nations S/2016/305: 1 April 2016. Page 5. Available at: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/305

170. UNSC (2016) Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic. United Nations S/2016/305: 1 April 2016. Pages 5-6. Available at:

171. Giffen, A. Keenan, M. (2014) Prioritising protection of civilians in peacekeeping in the Central African Republic. *Humanitarian Exchange*. No. 62: September 2014. Available at: <http://odihpn.org/magazine/prioritising-protection-of-civilians-in-peacekeeping-in-the-central-african-republic/>

172. UNSC (2016) Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic. United Nations S/2016/305: 1 April 2016. Available at: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/305

allegedly now only numbers 120 members with 100 accompanying family members, yet, in the first two months of 2016, the LRA abducted more than 250 people including 54 children. These increases in abduction incidents in CAR more than double the total number of abductions that occurred in CAR throughout all of 2015.¹⁷³¹⁷⁴ Its presence continues to create great insecurity and displacement in the southeast of CAR, due to the abductions and looting. On April 18, the LRA killed a UN peacekeeper from Morocco in Rafai in the southeast near the border with DRC.¹⁷⁵

FACA As described earlier, FACA had numbered between 7,000 and 8,000 in 2012, though the group has been decimated by the attacks from Seleka, desertion, poor management, insufficient salaries, and disarmament by international forces. FACA personnel were reported to have been in command positions in some of the anti-balaka groups, during 2013 and 2014.¹⁷⁶ Some of these men have returned to FACA, including some who have been accused of war crimes. While they are not a conflict actor as a group, individual members have acted as conflict actors in various local level conflicts.

Religious extremists, though their numbers seem to be very small, have been identified as possible conflict actors. For example, in Boda, several interviewees said that a small group of religious actors had used the conflict to foment tensions between the Muslim and Christian communities, and contributed to the conflict by mobilizing young people along religious lines.

Interreligious platform / Religious leaders: Key actors for peace

As mentioned throughout this document, religious leaders, notably those involved with the PCRC, are arguably the most potent actors for peace in CAR. In several locations, Christian leaders have protected Muslims, and Muslims have protected Christians, often putting their own lives at risk. Several religious leaders have spoken out for peace when conflict is imminent or ongoing, and have often been quoted saying that the conflict is not about religion, but rather is political. Religious leaders have distanced themselves from alignments with military groups.¹⁷⁷ Religious groups are also actively involved in mediation, response programming, and peace sensitization. Furthermore, they operate across the country through decentralized bodies and therefore are one of the few structures that provide a link between local communities and the national level (Bangui). These national-local links are particularly important in times of conflict to deter violence.

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 In several locations, Christian leaders have protected Muslims, and Muslims have protected Christians, often putting their own lives at risk.

173. Laing, A. (2016) Joseph Kony's LRA abducts scores of child soldiers in new wave of attacks. The Telegraph (London): 3 March 2016. Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/joseph-kony/12182422/Joseph-Konys-LRA-abducts-scores-of-child-soldiers-in-new-wave-of-attacks.html>

174. See also "LRA Crisis Tracker" at: <https://www.lracrisistracker.com/>

175. Associated Press (2016) UN: Moroccan peacekeeper killed in Central African Republic. AP: 18 April 2016. Available at: <http://www.12newsnow.com/story/31753307/un-moroccan-peacekeeper-killed-in-central-african-republic>

176. UNSC (2014) Letter dated 26 June 2014 from the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic established pursuant to Security Council resolution 2127 (2013) addressed to the President of the Security Council. UN: S/2014/452: 1 July 2014. Available at: <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/N1441518.pdf>

177. Alliance Evangélique Centrafricaine (2014) Evangelical Alliance in Central African Republic (AEC) Distances Itself from Certain Pastors Supporting the Anti-Balaka Militias. AEC: 19 February 2014. Available at: <http://www.pharosobservatory.com/c/africa/central-african-republic/central-african-republic-evangelical-alliance-in-central-african-republic-aec-distances-itself-from-certain-pastors-supporting-the-anti-balaka-militias-en>

Local authorities, traditional leaders, and social cohesion committees.

At the local level, many interviewees noted that some local authorities and traditional leaders were important actors for peace. For example, in Bossangoa, local governors and the Préfet of Bossangoa have increased efforts to provide “good offices” and mediation services for agro-pastoralist conflict, often with backing from MINUSCA.¹⁷⁸ Social cohesion and protection committees were also often cited as important actors for peace, as were the NGOs and international organizations working with them. The international organizations mentioned included CRS, Mercy Corps, Cordaid, the Lutheran World Federation, World Vision, the World Food Programme, UNICEF, Search for Common Ground, Plan International, Médecins Sans Frontières, Cooperazione Internazionale, and the International Organization for Migration.¹⁷⁹ National NGOs mentioned that were working towards peace included the following: CEJP, OFCA, Project Londo, prefectural Youth, JICA, CCCS, etc. Neither of these lists of NGOs are exhaustive.

Nongovernmental organizations

Various international NGOs, including CRS, Danish Refugee Council, and Mercy Corps have supported communities to form committees known as social cohesion committees or peace committees, which work in tandem with local authorities and civil society to promote peace and non-violent conflict resolution. These structures have remained functional and active beyond the project lifespans of these NGOs, and play an active role in promoting peace. In addition to these committees, women’s groups such as the OFCA, senior citizens’ groups, and other religious bodies constitute consistent, prominent sources of social capital across the region. A few of these localized bodies are tied to regional bodies, particularly in the case of OFCA and the CDJP. It should be noted however, that the perceptions of some Central Africans are that NGOs are actors for conflict, citing rumors about certain of them supplying arms to various groups.

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External actors: Key actors for conflict, but also for peace

In most CAs, the emphasis is put on local and national analysis, while the regional and international actors are identified as influences rather than instigators – not so in the case of CAR. As discussed in the history section, the role of “foreigners” has been instrumental in CAR’s history and some have been primary actors contributing to conflict. Firstly, the **Muslim slave traders** decimated the population of CAR during the slave trade and contributed to the isolation, lack of trust, state services deficiencies and general poverty of the country.¹⁸⁰ Secondly, **France**, across history, in its perceived attempts to extract CAR’s resources, has been involved in local politics, both propping up and destabilizing various governments, which has contributed to the root causes of conflict in CAR. Its colonial system of giving businesses concessions, which then extracted payments from the local people, resulted in limited support to infrastructure (both physical and human) in CAR, which has greatly contributed to the creation of an illiterate and poor population, and to the unparalleled lack of government services that are root causes of conflict.

178. “Good offices” here signify officially recognized mediation bodies within the government that can manage local disputes and can be called in as an unbiased arbitration body.

179. Although both IOM and MSF were mentioned by some interviewees as conflict actors, due to unsubstantiated rumors that they had been providing arms to rebel groups.

180. See Carayannis, T. & Lombard, L. Editors. (2015) *Making sense of the Central African Republic*. London: Zed Books.

Finally, **Chad** should be identified as a key actor through its support of various leaders (especial Michel Djotodia) and for its part in the creation of the Seleka. Several other actors, including Sudan, the DRC, Cameroon and Libya, have played more intermittent roles in border conflicts and the harboring of various armed groups. More recently, the AU, the EU, the US and others have played key roles in attempting to moderate the conflict. In addition, the rumored involvement of various transnational terrorist networks could be involved in recruitment for armed groups, weapons shipments, funding from conflict diamonds, and other regional problems that could increase instability in CAR.

Finally, the UN and the other international forces should be highlighted in the current situation as being seen as the greatest hope for stability in CAR for the short term (though their ability to respond rapidly to burgeoning conflict needs improvement).¹⁸¹ MINUSCA was most often seen as a peace actor, but others felt MINUSCA was biased and ineffective at least partly because it was lacking means. Sangaris, United States, and Ugandan military forces were usually mentioned as peace actors, but also occasionally as conflict actors (especially the Sangaris). As noted elsewhere, the role of various international contingents in sexual abuse scandals has hurt their already tenuous reputations. Depending upon the locality, the conflict history, and the nationality of the forces, they may be perceived as heroes or implicated in the conflict. In general, French forces are often seen as protecting Christians, and Muslim forces (e.g. Bangladeshi and Pakistani) perceived as protecting Muslims.¹⁸²

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GRIEVANCES

In the last decade, the major grievances are arguably those of the Muslim population, particularly in the north and east of the country, as it has suffered from marginalization in government and an almost complete lack of social services, including roads, schools, and health services. This marginalization was one of the main factors that gave rise to the Seleka fighting forces. However, after the primarily Muslim Seleka swept through the country (along with Chadian and Sudanese mercenaries) leaving death, injury, and complete destruction of property and fields in its wake, grievances of the primarily Christian victims of this destruction gave rise to the self-defense forces. These, later labeled the anti-balaka, then created mayhem among Muslim communities (and also Christians and others who were seen as not supporting them). Christians, including the anti-balaka, also held grievances due to the Muslim control of much of the transportation and mining sectors. Both groups, and indeed much of the population, held grievances related to general economic decline and lack of services that were transferred onto the “other”. These tit-for-tat grievances have led to a heightened stalemate – with both sides having suffered death, injuries and destruction, leaving bitter feelings of grievance and the desire for vengeance on all sides. There is overlap between these grievances of religious groups (which have been created and stoked by political actors rather than being caused by religious differences) and older grievances between regions – originally north-south divisions predominated, but east-west divisions have also

181. However, it should be noted that in their role in supporting the current President Samba-Panza's role within the transitional government, some actors see the international community as contributing to instability by propping up an illegitimate government.

182. Giffen, A. Keenan, M. (2014) Prioritising protection of civilians in peacekeeping in the Central African Republic. *Humanitarian Exchange*. No. 62: September 2014. Available at: <http://odihpn.org/magazine/prioritising-protection-of-civilians-in-peacekeeping-in-the-central-african-republic/>

been identified. Grievances of various ethnic groups along religious, political, family and regional lines further complicate matters.

The country as a whole holds many grievances against its string of incompetent governments that have not provided adequate state services, nor the climate needed for economic advancement and basic livelihoods. Youth also hold grievances as many are without work, education or meaningful futures.

IDENTITIES

The various religious and ethnic identity groups have been identified in the socio-cultural section above: superimposed on these identities is a layer of political and family allegiances. Each person in CAR may claim several of these identities, some of which have become linked with various leaders. When political power changed, so did military power, which resulted in drastic see-sawing of access to jobs and resources – causing further grievances and cycles of revenge. Religious identities have also been used to incite violence by various armed groups. Regionalism, especially for those living in the marginalized northeast, was an important aspect of identity that led to the recruitment of large numbers to the Seleka in that area. Strong traditional beliefs are an important aspect of identity for Central Africans. The anti-balaka movement draws its spiritual force from traditional beliefs about invincibility. Witchcraft practices and beliefs are so important that courts receive many sorcery cases, and witchcraft allegations often lead to mob justice and serious violations of human rights.¹⁸³

.....
Superimposed on the various religious and ethnic identities is a layer of political and family allegiances.
.....

INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE

As defined in the CAF: “Institutional performance refers to the extent to which formal and informal institutions produce outcomes that members of society consider to be legitimate and/or effective”.¹⁸⁴ Sadly most of the formal (and some of the informal) institutions are not seen as either legitimate or effective – even when they exist. In many places there are no civil authorities, no jails and no courts, such as in the Bossangoa area; in other words, around the Ouham and Ouham-Pendé prefectures. As described in the context section, the French colonial legacy resulted in weak state structures throughout the country but especially in rural areas. Into this void arose systems that were discriminatory and which created economic and political inequality – often along the lines of ethnicity, family, and religious ties. Both a cause and an effect, the elite political forces also exhibit a lack of trust in government institutions. When they exist, most state institutions are weak and corrupt.

A major consequence of the lack of state control has been the mismanagement of natural resources; this has reduced state coffers and further negatively affected development. Education, health, communication, and transport systems and institutions are also non-

183. Bannor-Addae, R. (2009) Central African Republic: Children, not witches. UNICEF: April 2009. Available at: http://www.unicef.org/wcaro/4501_5144.html; Esslemont, T. (2015) Witch burning rebels stoke Central African Republic violence. Reuters: 25 November 2015. Available at: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-centralafrica-witchcraft-idUSKBN0TF03920151126>; UNSC (2016) Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic. United Nations S/2016/305: 1 April 2016. Page 7. Available at: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/305
184. USAID (2012) Conflict Assessment Framework: Version 2.0. June 2012. Washington D.C.: USAID. Page 20. Available at: <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/working-crises-and-conflict/technical-publications>

existent or poorly functioning. These state services are often mismanaged, corrupt, and hampered by lack of infrastructure, materials, and trained personnel. The courts function very slowly, if at all. It can take years to process files. Court officials do not comply with procedures. Popular justice occurs in many areas, partly due to frustration with or absence of a state system. Many interviewees spoke about the lack of social services, especially in education and health. The lack of these services is yet another disappointment to the people, indicating the complete failure of governance. In the most conflict-affected areas where local authorities had entirely fled, the government interviewees also spoke about their frustration with the numerous obstacles to recruiting and training new staff, and then re-equipping the social services sector. At the time of this CA, many were hopeful that the new government would make quick changes in these sectors, though these high expectations must be measured against the historical weaknesses of government.

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The lack of social services, especially in education and health, is yet another disappointment to the people, indicating the complete failure of governance.
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The FACA forces have not been reconstituted since the crisis, and command structures are unclear and poorly managed. The forces are paid late or not at all, and they lack materials and supplies. Both the police and military are unequipped to cover the large geographic areas to which they are assigned. Criminals circulate freely, including war criminals and foreign fighters. Prison breakouts are common and prison conditions abysmal. Border security is very weak, covering large distances, many sections of which are inaccessible, and borders are extremely porous.

Although little information was available about traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, apparently the village chiefs (and *chefs des arrondissements*) still play a major role in resolving disputes, as do traditional healers or ritual specialists (*nganga*), Muslim and Christian religious leaders, leaders among the Peuhl minorities, and state authorities such as the *sous-préfets*, and elder committees (*comités des sages*). The PCRC in Bangui and its partners in the provinces have played a significant role in mediating conflict, and promoting peace.

However, for many types of conflict, such as those related to the destruction and rebuilding of the homes of displaced persons, and in cases where local authorities are absent or temporary, there is a lack of mechanisms for resolving conflict.¹⁸⁵ In addition, there is cause for concern in the current post-conflict and conflict period, as the ICG reported:

Mediation: a lucrative activity ... Even more worryingly, ex-Seleka “*comzones*” or “*combases*” have also taken over traditional mediation mechanisms. In Kabo, local warlords now “arbitrate” in conflicts between pastoralists and farmers.¹⁸⁶

Although armed forces have been involved in ongoing conflicts, their leaders do not often take part in community mediation efforts or dialogue processes.¹⁸⁷

In spite of all these problems, the country’s institutional performance is gradually improving. For example, there are a variety of organizations

185. Smith, W. (2015) Notes dynamiques locales de conflit, cohésion sociale et Protection à Boda. CRS unpublished paper.

186. International Crisis Group (2014). The Central African Republic’s hidden conflict. Policy Briefing, Africa Briefing N°105. 12 December 2014. Nairobi/Brussels: ICG. Page 7. Available at: <http://www.crisisgroup.org/-/media/Files/africa/central-africa/central-african-republic/b105-la-face-cachee-du-conflit-centrafricain-english.pdf>

187. Smith, W. (2015) Notes dynamiques locales de conflit, cohésion sociale et Protection à Boda. CRS unpublished paper.

assisting the judicial sector including the UNDP and the American Bar Association. There are 24 intermediate courts (*cours des grands instance*) in the country: the UNDP is providing equipment and furniture to 9 of those, as well as to 3 appeals courts. Assistance is also being given to the police and gendarmes by a variety of organizations.

Churches are an important institution in CAR, and they are active and diverse, though in some particular denominations there is a lack of structure and organization. Catholic schools function fairly well, although they are also not able to pay adequate wages. As noted above, church leaders are often key mobilizers for peace. For example, in Bouar, in September 2015 after the violence in Bangui had started, Monsignor Armando Gianni, the Bishop of Bouar under the PCRC and CDJP, assisted by CRS, brought together more than 100 people from all sectors of the community to discuss alternatives to violence – and there was no violence in Bouar.¹⁸⁸ In addition, in November 2015, a visit by Pope Francis contributed towards the unification of CAR, as he met with Christian and Muslim leaders, and visited the mosque in the PK5 neighborhood where 15,000 Muslims remain besieged, surrounded by anti-balaka forces.¹⁸⁹ Many interviewees mentioned the Pope's visit. For example, a Muslim political leader stated: "The Pope's visit was amazing and made a huge difference in CAR. He even went to visit the mosque. His presence and that visit to the mosque served to calm the population down and showed the importance of one simple act on the conflict."

Social cohesion activities – State of the field

Several NGOs as well as the UN have been working on various methods to promote community reconciliation, including problem-solving and dispute-resolution skills. CRS and others have also created community-level peace, social cohesion, or dialogue committees for a variety of purposes including to "maintain and promote social cohesion and address interreligious and intra-community conflicts"¹⁹⁰ CRS, through its SECC program, as well as the CRS-funded social cohesion project, has trained more than 1,300 religious and community leaders as social cohesion ambassadors in various parts of the country.¹⁹¹ In addition, 16 Community Social Cohesion Committees have been established, which receive ongoing support from CRS. As part of these programs, 500 villagers have participated in trauma-healing workshops, and 85 of those have become village-level resource persons and facilitators. "CRS' signature social cohesion workshops cover topics such as conflict analysis, appreciative inquiry, personal responsibility, forgiveness, leadership, and practical mediation techniques. Various metaphors allow participants to visualize the dynamics of conflict. A tool called the 'barometer for peace' is used to map participants' views on the current status of social cohesion, good governance and national

500

villagers have participated in trauma-healing workshops, and 85 of those have become village-level resource persons and facilitators

188. CRS (2015) Central African Republic: Responding to violence with unity. CRS: 14 October 2015. Available at: <http://www.crs.org/media-center/central-african-republic-responding-violence-unity>

189. Sherwood, H. & Benn, M. (2015) Pope Francis visits besieged mosque in Central African Republic. *The Guardian*: November 30, 2016. Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/nov/30/pope-francis-mosque-central-african-republic> and Associated Press (2016) Candidates promise unity in Central African Republic vote. Associated Press: February 13, 2016. <http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/candidates-promise-unity-in-central-african-republic-vote-20160212-5>

190. Community Social Cohesion Committees (CSCCs) were formed as part of the CRS-led SECC project. See <http://www.crs.org/our-work-overseas/program-areas/justice-and-peacebuilding/secure-empowered-connected-communities>

191. See CRS (2016) Secured, Empowered, Connected Communities. Available at: <http://www.crs.org/our-work-overseas/program-areas/justice-and-peacebuilding/secure-empowered-connected-communities>

pride in CAR. At the end of each workshop, participants work together to draft a common vision for their country. Programming emphasizes a process of “binding, bonding and bridging” that aims to restore the social fabric across faith and ethnic lines.¹⁹² The Community Social Cohesion Committees discuss a variety of important topics, and also undertake various activities; for example, the Committee in Bouca conducted an awareness-raising campaign related to the occupation of land owned by Muslims.¹⁹³

MINUSCA and other UN offices supported local authorities in social cohesion projects for youth and other vulnerable groups including “Rapid-Impact Labor-Intensive” and income generation projects.¹⁹⁴ The UNDP, through partners, created 39 Local Peace and Youth Committees and provided conflict management training to 790 of their members.¹⁹⁵ However, it is not clear if this support has been sustained, which if not, can greatly reduce impact. MINUSCA and France served as facilitators for a “Non-aggression Pact” in Bangui’s Third Arrondissement, which allowed Muslims access to their cemetery in the Boeing arrondissement for the first time in 3 years.¹⁹⁶

There is a nascent Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs network to coordinate UN and NGO social cohesion activities, with plans to conduct a mapping exercise. USAID requires its grantees working on the same thematic projects to coordinate together, and started a Social Cohesion Working Group in 2014.¹⁹⁷ This coordination can be extremely useful, as long as an atmosphere is created for real coordination and information-sharing so all partners are open to doing so, and intellectual property rights are respected.

SOCIAL PATTERNS

Healthy social patterns as defined in the CAF may include “those that support rule of law, social mobility, freedom of expression, the forging of inclusive political coalitions, and expansive or pluralist notions of identity and nationhood” which “all play a role in bolstering resilience to violence”¹⁹⁸ – sadly these are often absent in CAR. On the other hand, the five key social patterns that most commonly result in grievances in conflict-affected states as identified in the CAF, are all found in CAR: elitism, exclusion, chronic capacity deficits, ‘transitional moments’ (following state change when citizens have higher expectations than the state can meet), and corruption.

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Five key social patterns that most commonly result in grievances in conflict-affected states are all found in CAR: elitism, exclusion, chronic capacity deficits, ‘transitional moments’, and corruption.

192. CRS (2016) Secured, Empowered, Connected Communities. Available at: <http://www.crs.org/our-work-overseas/program-areas/justice-and-peacebuilding/secure-empowered-connected-communities>

193. CRS (2016) Secure, Empowered, Connected Communities (SECC): Central African Republic | Democratic Republic of the Congo: Annual Report: Fiscal Year 2015. CRS. Page 22.

194. UNSC (2016) Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic. United Nations S/2016/305: 1 April 2016. Page 4. Available at: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/305

195. UNDP (2014) Fast Facts: Crisis in Central African Republic. UNDP: September 2014.

196. UNSC (2016) Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic. United Nations S/2016/305: 1 April 2016. Page 4. Available at: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/305

197. USAID (2014) Complex Crises Fund: Central African Republic: Mid-Cycle Portfolio Review. USAID: December 2014. Available at: http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00KBR6.pdf

198. USAID (2012) Conflict Assessment Framework: Version 2.0. June 2012. Washington D.C.: USAID. Page 25. Available at: <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/working-crises-and-conflict/technical-publications>

The malfunctioning state institutions have led to other negative social patterns including nepotism, regionalism, tribalism, insecurity and impunity. The effects of the continuing conflict have also led to further problems, including unemployment; youth unemployment and under employment; and a lack of social cohesion.

One positive social pattern reported, is that prior to the most recent conflict, there were individuals, groups, communities, and regions of CAR that were coexisting and intermarriage was reportedly common in the past. Many interviewees spoke of the hope that this pattern would re-emerge in the near future. In addition, the rapprochement between different religious denominations as they advocate for peace, is a hopeful emerging social pattern.

RESILIENCE

A small number of NGOs and UN agencies are conducting reconciliation and social cohesion activities that draw upon the resiliencies and capacities of local communities. In order to coordinate these activities, a monthly Social Cohesion Network meeting is held in Bangui as a positive example of institutional performance. Further areas of resilience are identified in the section on key actors (religious leaders) and are the focus of the response option section below.

In some areas, the communities have saved and preserved the homes of refugees and IDPs, and anticipated their return – this phenomenon was reported in Bouar town and Mbaïki. For example, in the run-up to the crisis, many Muslim residents in Mbaïki had assurances from the local government and community members that their homes would be left intact. The government went so far as to produce documents attesting to ownership of the residence. Therefore, many private structures in Mbaïki have lasted through the conflict, while only a few of the public Muslim structures, including several mosques, were destroyed.

Several interviewees spoke about the small conflicts that have arisen in Bangui since September and felt that both armed groups and local communities had been restrained and had not allowed violence to flare up and take over. But several interviewees also cautioned that if the grievances that caused the rise of Seleka were not addressed by the provision of immediate infrastructure and economic development to the east, especially the northeast - such as inclusion of some Seleka forces into the armed forces, and inclusion of some Muslim politicians into the new government - then these resiliencies would fast be nullified.

Trajectories include both trends (long-term) and triggers (short-term) which can lead to either greater stability or instability, and towards conflict or reconciliation. These trends and triggers have been based on either the literature review or the perceptions of interviewees.

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In some areas, the communities have saved and preserved the homes of refugees and IDPs, and anticipated their return – this phenomenon was reported in Bouar town and Mbaïki. For example, in the run-up to the crisis, many Muslim residents in Mbaïki had assurances from the local government and community members that their homes would be left intact.
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Trajectories

TRIGGERS

The main potential trigger identified by interviewees was manipulation by politicians (or their supporting regional forces). These triggers could include murders (such as the murder of the Muslim moto-taxi driver in Bangui which triggered the September 2016 violence), coup d'états, rumors, etc. Currently there are ongoing conflicts between agriculturists and pastoralists; one of the research teams was unable to continue interviews in a small town near Bossangoa due to a threat of a potential attack in the area from an armed Peuhl pastoral group. While these attacks have been generally localized and are often due to destruction of fields by herds, or thefts of cattle, there is still a risk that a small local dispute can expand into a wider conflict.

General incidents of insecurity such as attacks by armed groups (be they bandits, warlords, or auto-defense groups) often result in deaths, displacement, assault, robbery, sexual violence, pillaging and looting. Some bandit groups are kidnapping for ransom or political reasons, and cutting roads. All of these incidents of insecurity could set off a wider conflict as cycles of vengeance can occur. Many fear that when DDRR begins and more weapons are seized by MINUSCA, violence could erupt.

There was significant concern around the return of IDPs and refugees, that there would be violence if their homes and businesses were occupied, or had been destroyed – violence instigated either by the returnees or by the occupiers. If destroyed homes were not rebuilt, frustration could cause violence on the part of the returnees. As returnees tried to reclaim their economic roles (in small business, transport, mining, etc.), or recoup debts, further violence was expected. Several interviewees expressed concerns that if the NGOs were to reduce their support, or withdraw altogether, violence could erupt.

Many contributing and contextual factors related to these potential triggers were identified, including poor distribution of resources; impunity; poor implementation of DDRR; marginalization and exclusion; youth unemployment; rumors and irresponsible media; and the rising prices of basic commodities.

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The main potential trigger identified by interviewees was manipulation by politicians (or their supporting regional forces).
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TRENDS

The following trends were highlighted by interviewees and the literature:

- Continued **discrimination and stigmatization** against minority groups such as Peuhl.
- **Inadequate housing** due to destruction of private homes and infrastructure due to conflict and neglect – with growing needs due to increased population pressures.
- To date, interviewees noted general **mismanagement around addressing the issue of illegal occupation of houses** – which could lead to problems with refugee/IDP returns.¹⁹⁹
- **Continued mistrust** – Lack of acceptance of others by both sides (depending on localities).
- **Gradual but low volume return of refugees / IDPs** – localized.
- **Increasing efforts of social cohesion** and peace committees.
- **Social tension increasing due to lack of resources and employment.**
- **Young people increasingly showing less respect for elders.**
- **Cycles of increasing and decreasing mob justice** (can be motivated by revenge, or accusations of sorcery).
- **Increasing agro-pastoral tension** because herders and farmers are increasingly armed; **the corridors for transhumance have been changed or narrowed due to increasing population pressure, climate change, or attacks from armed groups.** The attacks from armed groups are also increasing economic pressure, predominantly on agricultural communities that can no longer farm, and are no longer integrated into larger market structures due to insecurity/ road cutting. However, this trend is counteracted in certain localities by increased involvement of local authorities in mediation between farmers and herders in some places (Bossangoa area).

199. The NRC and the UNHCR have developed programs related to housing, land, and property (HLP) rights in the context of return; they have trained local authorities on HLP restitution; and more than 10,000 IDPs have attended awareness-raising sessions on HLP rights. However, interviewees were not aware of these programs. See UNHCR (2015) Central African Republic Quarterly Factsheet. UNHCR: September 2015. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/51498a7d9.html>

Conclusion

This conflict analysis has highlighted several key issues that increase the risk for violent conflict: fragmented security and conflict between armed groups; state services failure; competition over resources; agro-pastoralist conflict; and refugee and IDP return. In addition, the cross-cutting themes of gender, youth, foreigner versus local tension, lack of trust in society, and spiritual dimensions of conflict have been addressed.

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Most interviewees agreed that two main issues need to be addressed immediately: insecurity and the composition of the government at all levels.
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Most interviewees, as well as the literature, agreed that two main issues need to be addressed immediately: firstly, insecurity (particularly short-term security for all citizens, including immediate attention to DDDR, and later SSR); and secondly, the composition of the government at all levels (to be more inclusive of all sectors of society – in particular, Muslims, and to be focused on the well-being of the people rather than financial gain). At the local level, agro-pastoral conflict is worrying to many, as is refugee and IDP return. In spite of an already great investment in social cohesion, more efforts are needed, and these efforts need to be broadened and deepened. Linked to short-term recovery and the reconstitution of government and the armed forces, is the issue of transitional justice, which will need a long-term approach. The triggers that could set off conflict are widespread and myriad – essentially, any small incident could be used by various conflict actors to exacerbate a violent and widespread conflict.

Humanitarian and development issues are key factors in CAR's recovery. Increasing employment and income of vulnerable Central Africans should serve to reduce violence over the short term. It will not, however, address grievances between socioeconomic groups that drive conflict in CAR.²⁰⁰ Mining is only one example of the many economic power imbalances and predatory relationships that plague CAR's economy. Reducing intercommunal tension in the future will require international and local actors to better understand and respond to localized structural violence. If not, short-term gains from traditional development and peacebuilding programs will do little to break the cycles of violence, distrust, and inequality.²⁰¹

The effects of the conflict are everywhere: from the devastated physical infrastructure and human resources, to the psychosocial trauma, fear, and lack of trust. Yet in spite of the trauma, Central Africans have shown great resilience in the mere fact of their survival, and at this juncture remain very optimistic about their new government and their futures. Many interviewees expressed their extreme war fatigue and strong desire for peace. They need the concerted and coordinated efforts of the international community to help pull them out of a long-standing quagmire, and to assist them as they participate fully in their citizenship, each taking part in the reconstruction of the country.

200. ICG (2014) The Central African Crisis: From predation to stabilisation. *Africa Report* N°219. 17 Jun 2014. Available at: <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/africa/central-africa/central-african-republic/219-the-central-african-crisis-from-predation-to-stabilisation.aspx>

201. This paragraph from James Sayre.

A long-term human rights observer in CAR, Lewis Mudge, concluded in December 2015 that there were five key challenges to the new government in CAR: addressing the violence, tackling impunity, disarming rebel and militia groups, return of refugees and IDPs, and obtaining donor support.²⁰² These observations are very similar to the findings of this conflict analysis. The last challenge, obtaining donor support, may be one of the main challenges. In the past, DDRR is said to have failed due to lack of adequate donor support – DDRR’s failure contributed to the resurgence of the most recent violence and with it came further paucity of long-term solutions. The UN Commission of Inquiry also cited donor support as being crucial to the various transitional justice measures recommended and to reinstate a culture of the rule of law in order to end impunity; ending impunity often being mentioned as pivotal to long-term solutions. Economic revitalization is also of primary importance, so development assistance from donors will be pivotal. And of course donor support is needed for the massive reconstruction efforts to rebuild this shattered country and to return the many refugees and IDPs. In the next section, we turn to response options, for which donor support is vital.



202. Mudge, L. (2015) Central African Republic elections: Five key challenges. *Newsweek*: 25 December 2015. Available at: <http://europe.newsweek.com/central-african-republic-elections-five-key-challenges-country-turmoil-408254>

Response options and entry points

As a final step in this CA, the following response options were developed by the research teams based on interviews, and in workshops with CRS and partner staff. These were supplemented by the literature review. These response options are not meant to be exhaustive, as so many important issues are raised in a CA that not all can be addressed. However, efforts were made to discuss the key issues, as well as to encourage both horizontal and vertical linkages in order to promote top-down and bottom-up solutions, as well as horizontal people-to-people approaches. These options aim to provide feedback into CRS programming, in order to prevent, manage, and mitigate conflict. As concluded above, one of the biggest challenges is to obtain adequate donor funding for many of these recommendations. If funding is not a priority, CAR risks missing this small window of opportunity when hopes are high and chances for positive outcomes are higher than any time in many years.

The issues identified above include fragmented security, state services failure, competition over resources, agro-pastoral conflict, and refugee and IDP return [See detailed response recommendations developed for each research site (Boda, Bossangoa, Bouar) and for each national level issue (governance, transhumance, natural resources, and refugee and IDP return) in Appendices 4-7].

An analysis of the situation in CAR and the international community's failure to focus on conflict prevention concluded that past interventions were primarily reactive rather than proactive, and were mainly concerned with regional dimensions of conflict rather than the conflict in CAR itself. To remedy these oversights, both short- and long-term strategies for long-term development are needed, as well as to put a greater focus on governance, and reduce the reactive nature characteristic of previous interventions.²⁰³

URGENT RESPONSE OPTIONS

Urgent need for security

As the **need for security was one of the top needs identified by interviewees** (and in the literature), this should be a top priority. Insecurity creates the vacuum in which a number of conflict drivers thrive (criminality, agro-pastoralist conflict, etc.). While strengthening the capacity of the CAR security forces to fulfill their role (including material and technical assistance, short-term salary assistance, management system improvement, etc.), efforts to ensure that the forces are following human rights norms and are accountable to government are equally important.

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Insecurity creates the vacuum in which a number of conflict drivers thrive.
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203. Aksaki, G., Ballestraz, E. & Sow, M. (2015) What went wrong in the Central African Republic? International engagement and the failure to think conflict prevention. Geneva Peacebuilding Platform: Paper No. 12. Available at: <http://www.gpplatform.ch/sites/default/files/PP%2012%20-%20What%20went%20wrong%20in%20the%20Central%20African%20Republic%20-%20Mar%202015.pdf>

The international community should expand its support to the security sector in order to improve security to the people as a top priority. NGO projects such as the SECC project on community security should be encouraged and facilitated, so that communities can peacefully and non-violently respond to security threats in their local areas, and better communicate with local authorities about their problems and needs.

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The international community should expand its support to the security sector in order to improve security to the people as a top priority.
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While the majority of this conflict analysis' **interviewees, and local researchers, advocated for the reinstatement of the FACA, this must be done in conjunction with controls** to ensure that the security forces comply with international standards of human rights. Although tensions are high between MINUSCA and the Ministry of Defense, creative ways should be found to assist the Ministry in monitoring the behavior and functioning of the security forces.

Local police and gendarmeries are lacking physical and human resources including transport, offices, materials and supplies, as well as training and management support – much assistance is needed. Prison facilities are lacking and conditions are abysmal. Lessons learned should be gathered from other countries that have weathered transitions – Liberia, Cambodia, etc.

The security services and MINUSCA need to continue to find ways to deal with the road cutting, kidnapping, banditry, and general lawlessness that plague CAR, especially in rural areas. Protection of civilians is paramount. MINUSCA now has 52 Community Liaison Assistants placed with field commanders to create community protection plans and alert mechanisms.²⁰⁴ As OCHA is in the process of training dialogue facilitators, dialogues should be started to discuss practical methods to reduce violence and protect civilians.

Weapons-collection programs should continue in conjunction with upcoming DDDR programs.

Urgent need for DDDR (later SSR)

Many of our interviewees spoke about the **urgent need for comprehensive, inclusive, and fully-funded DDDR, as a top priority for peace and stability**. Many felt that the failure of previous DDDR efforts had exacerbated the current conflict. Several expressed concerns about the Bangui Forum agreements signed in May 2015, in that many anti-balaka might not be included, as they may be too fragmented and disorganized and may not own the modern weapons that are a prerequisite to inclusion in the DDDR Program. If the anti-balaka are not included the DDDR programs, the other groups may not withdraw, and security threats would no doubt continue. Some observers have spoken publicly about the need to include the anti-balaka forces, including providing economic incentives.²⁰⁵ **The actual number of affected combatants should be reassessed** to improve planning for interventions and general development activities.

DDRR has long been a huge challenge for peace agreements around the world, yet at the same time there are lessons learned that can be useful in

204. UNSC (2016) Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic. United Nations S/2016/305: 1 April 2016. Page 6. Available at: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/305

205. IRIN (2015) Central African Republic: Life after combat in CAR. IRIN: 17 February 2015. Available at: <https://www.irinnews.org/report/101134/life-after-combat-car>

CAR. For example, in reference to the above issue, one study suggested that DDDR programs should be as widely applied as possible and that “eligibility criteria should not be overly restrictive” – this study had a host of other recommendations.²⁰⁶ Many other recommendations have been included in other papers and reports – **a summary “lessons learned” document on DDDR for CAR should be written which could be applied to development projects in general.**²⁰⁷

Fortunately, many observers have realized that DDDR does not just mean trading guns for money. **Long-term vocational training, chosen by each individual, with adequate prospects for economic viability in the future are crucial.**²⁰⁸ **The communities must also be involved**, as must families, and vocational training must be paired with non-violence training. Reintegration incentives are needed for both host communities and former combatants.²⁰⁹ One interviewee, Archbishop Dieudonne Nzapalainga stated: “Many young men are now quiet, sitting and waiting for the future. They have put down their weapons, but these weapons are laid down next to their chairs. It is a crucial time, as they can just lean down and easily pick up those weapons. We urgently need vocational training and income generation activities that provide these young men with a way to feed themselves and their families.”

Although this CA did not allow a full analysis of the state of SSR or the gathering of recommendations, one point was mentioned repeatedly – that a **complete overhaul of the security services is needed**, and that those services need to be integrated to reflect all significant armed groups (especially the Seleka as it could easily start another conflict if not satisfied with the integration). The forces should be balanced so that all ethnic groups are represented, and imbalances created in the past corrected. Management procedures and oversight via the international community (in the short term) and National Assembly (in the short and long term) should ensure that the security services are a function of government, rather than under the tutelage of individual politicians.

Urgent need for justice, rule of law, and end to impunity

Many interviewees, as well as the literature, listed ending impunity as one of the top priorities for CAR.²¹⁰ Closely related to reinstating government and improving the security situation, improvements to the justice sector are paramount. Local government, including the judiciary and police, needs additional financial, human, and physical resources to maintain law and order, and fulfill their administrative responsibilities. Governors and mayors lack offices, office supplies, and means of transportation; local and regional

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Long-term vocational training, chosen by each individual, with adequate prospects for economic viability in the future are crucial.
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206. Banholzer, L. (2014) When do disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes succeed? Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik: Discussion Paper 8/2014. Available at: https://www.die-gdi.de/uploads/media/DP_8.2014.pdf

207. Herbert, S., Dukham, N. & Debos, M. (2013). State fragility in the Central African Republic: What prompted the 2013 coup? Rapid literature review. Birmingham, UK: GSDRC, University of Birmingham. Available at: http://www.gsdr.org/docs/open/car_gsdr2013.pdf See also: World Bank. 2008. Central African Republic: Lessons from a disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration program. MDRP dissemination note; no. 4 (August - September 2008). Washington, DC: World Bank. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2008/09/9969696/central-african-republic-lessons-disarmament-demobilization-reintegration-program>

208. Any vocational training needs to take into account labor market realities, and reform in CAR's key industries that will actually end up hiring a significant number of workers.

209. IRIN (2015) Central African Republic: Life after combat in CAR. IRIN: 17 February 2015. Available at: <https://www.irinnews.org/report/101134/life-after-combat-car>

210. See for example Mudge, L. (2015) Central African Republic elections: Five key challenges. Newsweek: 25 December 2015. Available at: <http://europe.newsweek.com/central-african-republic-elections-five-key-challenges-country-turmoil-408254>

prisons are destroyed or non-existent; and the justice sector lacks the human resources necessary to process cases brought to their attention.

Judges need to be protected, trained, supported, and provided with adequate salaries. Corruption within the justice and security sectors needs to be ended. While short-term fixes are not possible, a combination of long-term assistance from large international donors such as the World Bank and UNDP to address structural issues, along with short-term measures to restore confidence within the population are needed. Exchange visits, cooperation with other countries, and involvement in regional and international forums can assist with improving the judiciary. The Appeals Courts and Supreme Council of the Magistracy need technical and material support to reduce corruption and malfeasance, and to implement laws and disciplinary actions. More dialogue is needed between the people, civil society, the UN, and the government on justice and security sector reform. This topic will play an extremely important role in the return of refugees and IDPs.

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Corruption within the justice and security sectors needs to be ended.
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Urgent need for humanitarian and development assistance for CAR

Some members of the international community, having pushed for elections in CAR that were carried out successfully, are now suggesting that funding levels can be decreased. However, the situation remains extremely tenuous, as many interviewees suggest that the smallest spark could still set off violent and widespread conflict. Increased employment and economic security alone will not address structural violence and economic power imbalances that drive conflict in CAR. Donors and implementers should give equal priority to interventions that address these historical and structural inequities.²¹¹

- **Support for infrastructure, economic development, and general education** is extremely important to deal with the root causes of the conflict and for long-term solutions in CAR. The peace education programs conducted under the CIPP program, by UNICEF and others are extremely important.
- **Supplemental income generation and vocational training programs for all**, but especially young people, could be important to reduce youth disenfranchisement among vulnerable refugee, IDP and host communities.
- **Advocacy is needed to avoid the proposed reduction of funding by donors.**

Urgent need for representative, functional government

At the time of this CA, President Touadera had just been elected and the new Prime Minister, Simplicie Mathieu Sarandji, appointed. There were many hopes expressed for a strong, peaceful and balanced government. Several interviewees felt that unless Muslims were fully represented in the government, Seleka forces could rise again to begin conflict. Although the President undoubtedly had many debts to repay in return for support during the electoral period, there were still hopes he would address some of the structural inequalities of the past. Of the 23 ministers of the new government, four were Muslim: in Bambari on April 14, there was a peaceful march by the Muslim community objecting to this configuration.²¹²

211. Last two sentences courtesy of James Sayre.

212. Radio Nkeke Luka (2016) Bambari : les musulmans contre la configuration du gouvernement Sarandji. 15 April 2016. Available at : <http://www.radiondekeluka.org/societe/item/25103-bambari%20-les-musulmans-contre-la-configuration-du-gouvernement-sarandji.html>

NGOs should set up new civic education programs or provide support to scale-up and sustain existing ones. As Central Africans are expecting to improve democratic governance and increase their knowledge of their rights and responsibilities, civic education programs are sorely needed. For example, CRS and JPC have been conducting human rights and rule of law trainings in the northwest that have been well received by participants. These programs should be linked from top to bottom, so that citizens and their representatives have opportunities to meet.

NGOs should encourage their stakeholders to meet their local and regional representatives to encourage top-down and bottom-up communication and to improve governance. Newly elected National Assembly members should be encouraged to be responsible to their constituencies.

Local government could consider setting up a complaints mechanism to improve communication between government and the people, and implement participatory and inclusive planning and monitoring. This could be in the form of a telephone hotline, appointing liaison person/s stationed within the community, or a letter box. In addition, ombudsman offices have been used successfully in other countries. This would also provide the opportunity to demonstrate success stories and other positive developments.

Urgent need for solutions to agro-pastoral conflict in the short, medium, and long term

Our interviewees were very concerned about the increasing levels of agro-pastoral conflict, especially as these conflicts have become conflated with ethnic-religious conflict (between Peuhl Muslims and Christians of various ethnicities, notably Gbaya) and politico-military conflict (between Seleka and anti-balaka). Thus, these response options below suggested by our team members, our interviewees, and by the literature, are of great importance.

More attention has been paid recently to the issue of pastoralism and increasing agro-pastoral conflicts: a conference on security challenges in West and Central Africa concluded that the system was under threat and that governments and civil society should be directly involved in peacebuilding efforts and conflict prevention.²¹³ One of our interviewees mentioned that the **new government of CAR should become more involved in various regional mechanisms,** such as the regional platform on transhumance between CAR, Chad and Sudan. In addition, Central Africans should be supported to join organizations such as the Confédération Sous-Régionale des Eleveurs de Gros Bétails en Afrique Centrale, la Confédération des Fédérations Nationales de la Filière Bétail et Viande d'Afrique, and the Pastoralist Knowledge Hub of FAO.²¹⁴

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Our interviewees were very concerned about the increasing levels of agro-pastoral conflict, especially as these conflicts have become conflated with ethnic-religious conflict (between Peuhl Muslims and Christians of various ethnicities, notably Gbaya) and politico-military conflict (between Seleka and anti-balaka).
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213. Government of Nigeria, Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) (2014) International Conference on Security and Development Challenges of Pastoralism in West and Central Africa: Final Communiqué. Available at: http://www.iwgia.org/iwgia_files_news_files/1060_INTERNATIONAL_CONFERENCE_ON_PASTORALISTS_SECURITY_AND_DEVELOPMENT_-_FINAL_COMMUNIQUE.pdf

214. FAO, Velasco Gil, G. (2016) La Plateforme de connaissance pastorale (Pastoralist Knowledge Hub). Presentation made at the Atelier régional sur le développement durable du pastoralisme et d'élevage en Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre 7-9 Janvier 2016. Bamako, Mali. Available at : <http://vsf-international.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Pr%C3%A9sentation-du-Pastoralist-Knowledge-Hub.pdf> See also: http://vsf-international.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Rapport-final-atelier-de-Bamako-sur-l%C3%A9levage-et-le-pastoralisme-en-AOC_pam-2.pdf , <http://vsf-international.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/D%C3%A9claration-finale-de-Bamako-.pdf>

Consider ways to mitigate the conflict around armed herder groups. Start by conducting research into which groups and individuals are armed and why, and what role the herders from other countries (Chad, Sudan) are playing in the armed conflict. Consider convening, or working with others (such as the FAO and Danish Refugee Council with whom CRS has already been working) to convene, a workshop to discuss these issues.²¹⁵ Coordinate this research with the extensive research already conducted by the UNHCR and LWF in Cameroon related to agro-pastoral societies.

Improve and increase agro-pastoral reconciliation efforts. Social cohesion programming in the region has played a significant role in strengthening social infrastructure, reducing violence and promoting dialogue within agriculturalist communities. Access challenges, however, have prevented social cohesion actors from reaching pastoralist communities with similar programming. In many cases, improved engagement of pastoralist communities will be a necessary prerequisite for the success of mediation and reconciliation efforts. Government and civil society actors should develop strategies to map and engage pastoralist communities with social cohesion programming. These efforts could serve to de-escalate violence, improve channels of communications between the two groups, strengthen intragroup cohesion among pastoralist groups, and help pastoralists to prepare for constructive dialogue.

Consider an anti-violence program, or other ways to deal with the issues of armed Peuhl groups. As mentioned below, firstly, more information is needed about the presence of arms, and the conditions of the various Peuhl groups in order to develop mitigation strategies.

Provide support to Mbororo/Peuhl groups. This is important to provide equal voice to this minority group, in order to find mutually agreeable solutions to agro-pastoral conflicts. It appears that the leadership of these groups has either become refugees, or gone underground.

- Many of the following recommendations have come from, and exist within, a new and innovative transhumance project recently started in CAR by CRS that includes many measures such as participatory decision-making and conflict resolution, micro-projects, veterinary care, and other technical assistance. **A midterm evaluation could provide valuable lessons learned from this important and timely project.** Other groups and projects may also have other lessons learned that could be used to develop new programs.
- **After consultation with agro-pastoralists at the local level, and putting into place measures to protect them from attacks, the government should limit and clearly define grazing corridors, and put into place local conflict-resolution mechanisms for agro-pastoral conflicts.** While several interviewees recommended the protection and limitation of transhumance corridors (and agricultural areas) as a solution to increasing conflicts, some studies suggest that this may not be a panacea, and that local, more flexible solutions may be more effective and resilient.²¹⁶

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Government and civil society actors should develop strategies to map and engage pastoralist communities with social cohesion programming.
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215. For general research about the transhumance situation in CAR, see: Food and Agriculture Organization, Danish Refugee Council, and Catholic Relief Services. (2015) Situation de la Transhumance et Étude Socioanthropologique Des Populations Pastorales Après la Crise de 2013-2014 en République Centrafricaine : Rapport Conjoint de Mission FAO - DRC - CRC. March 2015. Available at: <http://fscluster.org/central-african-republic/document/mission-devaluation-de-la-transhumance>

216. Moritz, M. et al. (2013) Rangeland governance in an open system: Protecting transhumance corridors in the Far North Province of Cameroon. *Pastoralism: Research, Policy and Practice* 3:26 October 2013. Available at: <http://pastoralismjournal.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/2041-7136-3-26>

- Another recommendation made in the literature and by interviewees was **development of basic services along transhumance corridors**, particularly water points and access to markets and (both animal and human) health care.²¹⁷
- An important aspect of all solutions would be to **include the end users (both pastoralists and agriculturists) in decision-making**, which would require special efforts due to the pastoralists' nomadic lifestyle.
- **The creation of government posts in rural areas** for veterinary and agricultural services could help improve livelihoods and outputs. Furthermore, if these post-holders were also trained in dispute resolution, they could possibly assist in diverting local-level conflicts.
- **Several interviewees suggested that decision-making at the prefectural (mayoral) level should be institutionalized.** This could enhance participation by all stakeholders in decisions and assist in local-level dispute resolution. As mechanisms should also be in place for communication between prefectural authorities, the movement of pastoral groups across territories could be presaged so that issues could be avoided.

Several suggestions were made by ICG in 2014 and would still be useful including the creation of an early warning mechanism; the reviving of traditional agro-pastoralist mediation mechanisms, and the broadcasting of messages of common interest on community radio.²¹⁸

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Managing the control of resources of CAR, especially high-value ones, using equitable and transparent systems (that do not fund divergent armed groups, but do provide jobs and economic opportunities to local communities), is crucial in order to maintain a stable and peaceful system of governance.²¹⁹

Advocate for positive change in the diamond industry and across the mining sector.²²⁰ As the roots of interreligious conflict in the southwest stem from recent violence and historical economic inequality, peacebuilding efforts should focus on both reconciliation and the

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Managing the control of resources of CAR, especially high-value ones, using equitable and transparent systems, is crucial in order to maintain a stable and peaceful system of governance.

217. Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (2010) Legislation to Support Crossborder Livestock Mobility. POLICY BRIEF Number 14 February 2010.

218. International Crisis Group (2014). The Central African Republic's hidden conflict. Policy Briefing, Africa Briefing N°105. 12 December 2014. Nairobi/Brussels: ICG. Available at: <http://www.crisisgroup.org/-/media/Files/africa/central-africa/central-african-republic/b105-la-face-cachee-du-conflit-centrafricain-english.pdf>. Page 2. Following are the detailed ICG recommendations: "Create early warning mechanism - Create an information network, coordinated by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the CAR livestock ministry, in order to locate the areas at risk of violent confrontation between, on the one hand, pastoralists and, on the other, anti-balaka and local communities. This network must serve as an early warning mechanism for CAR authorities, NGOs and international forces (the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and the French mission Sangaris). Revive traditional agro-pastoralist mediation mechanisms through organization of informal meetings between representatives of the different communities by conflict prevention NGOs. As confidence-building measures, international forces should forbid armed groups to get involved in these mechanisms. Broadcast messages of common interests through community radios run by churches and local NGOs recalling common interests and exchanges between pastoralists and farmers. These messages should especially be circulated among women who usually play a key role in these intercommunity exchanges."

219. Friends Committee on National Legislation. (2015) Central African Republic crisis: Managing natural resources for peace. November 2014. FCNL Shared Security Policy Brief. Available at: http://fcnl.org/issues/ppdc/CARPolicy_Web.pdf

220. Courtesy of James Sayre.

promotion of equitable and transparent diamond extraction. In addition to promoting reconciliation, international NGOs can also support civil society to advocate for positive change in the diamond industry. In eastern DRC, the Diamond Development Initiative works with civil society, government and the private sector to register small-scale miners, document their working conditions and form associations. These sorts of transparency measures would clarify labor standards and help the government of CAR to track mining activity. Improved documentation of sites and labor conditions would not only help miners, but also provide concrete evidence for government and mining company efforts to lift the Kimberly Process export ban.

PLANNING FOR REFUGEE AND IDP RETURN

Although refugee and IDP return has been spontaneous, the numbers are very small and localized. While some areas (such as in Bouar) may be more ready for returnees, in others (such as in Boda and Bossangoa) return is less accepted. In any case, **planning for return should start immediately**, to ensure that land and property issues related to economic independence and shelter are not last-minute obstacles. **Both positive and negative examples of returns to date should be examined for lessons learned.** Positive examples of cases where communities protected properties left by their perceived enemies until their returned could be examined for lessons learned (this has reportedly happened in Kenya).

TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE

Transitional justice is a thorny problem to address before, during, and after IDP and refugee return. Often those who destroyed, looted, and pillaged cannot be identified. Some victims are expecting compensation and are hoping to return to their homes. Others want a new start. Determining who did what to whom and when is not an easy task, and is not the priority of the government, nor indeed many of the people: regaining economic stability and satisfying basic needs comes first. There are certainly some accused perpetrators who are easily identified: some of them are in detention, some are free, and some are even in positions of power. As a national priority, this effort requires a strong political will with the necessary resources to cover the various sub-components, for example, victims' justice, truth telling, accountability, compensation/reparation, reintegration, forgiveness, memorialization and reconciliation.

Support government actors who resist allowing armed group leaders to take public office. In an important step towards transitional justice, on December 9, 2015, the Transitional Constitutional Court invalidated the presidential applications of former President Bozizé, and anti-balaka leader Patrice-Edouard Ngaïssona.²²¹ In addition, there were no anti-balaka or Seleka leaders appointed as ministers in the new government of President Touadera and Prime Minister Surplice. In Boda prefecture, eight accused war criminals have been arrested. These positive measures in fighting impunity should be commended.

Conduct a referendum or other mechanism to ask people about desires for transitional justice measures, and when (including trials, truth-telling mechanisms, memorialization, vetting, lustration, and reparations).

221. UNSC (2016) Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic. United Nations S/2016/305: 1 April 2016. Page 2. Available at: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2016/305

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One interviewee shared an anecdote about youth assisting in the rebuilding of a house of returning refugees: “We would benefit from a return of the refugees because we can involve them in reconstruction projects. It’s up to us to find projects that are significant (reconstruction of a church and a mosque)”.

.....
Another interviewee related a story of a former anti-balaka member, who had destroyed some houses, pitching in to rebuild those houses. These positive success stories should be gathered and publicized.
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The views of the people (all of the population, including refugees and IDPs) on the priorities and timing of transitional justice measures should be considered. The results of the Bangui Forum of May 2015 (and the many preparation meetings held) would be an important starting point. Members of the former CNT who were involved in the Bangui Forum process should be consulted.

Memorialization projects could be cautiously started. If managed carefully, sites of mass violence can be a tool for healing – if government, victims, and perpetrators are all involved – and if perpetrators are prepared to apologize or at least acknowledge. These groups could create commemorative sites where both sides perished.

Rescuers – publicly **highlight cases when individuals or groups saved people** from other groups.

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If managed carefully, sites of mass violence can be a tool for healing – if government, victims, and perpetrators are all involved – and if perpetrators are prepared to apologize or at least acknowledge.

LAND

Land issues were seen to be of great importance to most communities, especially land from which refugees and IDPs fled, or where refugees and IDPs are living. Studies could be commissioned related to current and future land needs.

SOCIAL COHESION AND CIVIC EDUCATION – SENSITIZATION, TRAINING, CAPACITY-BUILDING

The majority of the following activities are related to the goals of **increasing understanding between different ethnic, religious, and other groups to promote social cohesion, reduce prejudice and stereotyping, and improve their capacity to resolve conflicts.**²²²

Create a pool of social cohesion resource persons

In order to better carry out and coordinate many of the social cohesion activities suggested below, the Social Cohesion Network, with the assistance of a donor such as the EU or USAID, should identify and fund a pool of social cohesion resource people for the country. This could be an organ of the religious leaders or of a neutral entity in CAR, that could in turn provide training of trainers for target individuals (such as youth and other key peace or conflict actors) in peace education and social cohesion.

222. These social cohesion activities may include:

- National level events – Day of Peace, Refugee Day, Miss Cameroon, Soccer stars
- Dialogue – between particular groups (CS, political, religious), social cohesion training
- Joint/community activities - Parks, joint sports activities, publishing newsletters, joint youth groups or working with two different youth groups together
- Joint problem solving – joint committees for water projects, well management, agro-pastoral, decision-making (Peace and Social Cohesion Committees)
- Income generation projects - bakeries, chicken raising, savings groups, etc.
- Exchange Programs – adults, youth, women, agricultural, etc.
- Training programs on Social Cohesion/Peacebuilding– separate first, then joint – on stereotypes, discrimination, peacebuilding, conflict resolution, and decision-making
- Other training programs – focusing on common interests - especially income generation, business development, animal care, agriculture, etc.
- Trauma-healing activities – establish environments for relationships and trust-building
- Create community radio stations and programs - by both local and international organizations that permit refugees and host communities to express themselves (use local languages)
- Sensitization on a wide variety of topics relating to recommendations in this CA – but link with projects or make sure there is monitoring to examine the results of sensitization
- Programs in inter-generational communication – between disenfranchised and unemployed youth, and older generations who also feel marginalized

Mainstream and coordinate social cohesion efforts

As many organizations are conducting social cohesion activities in CAR, there is a great need for coordination and communication between programs and projects. Many of these activities are titled “sensitization” but organizations may look at this differently, and attending one meeting does not change attitudes or actions. Some organizations claim to conduct social cohesion but have little background or expertise, and social cohesion and reconciliation are very sensitive. Repeated workshops and activities are needed, conducted by skilled facilitators, that provide skills in communication, dialogue, dispute resolution, etc. When these are linked with concrete projects, ideally to improve development and promote income generation, impact can be greater. However, people must not be forced together and care must be taken not to inflame delicate situations. Thus, organizations conducting social cohesion activities should have the expertise to do so.

Include civic education programming with social cohesion

Linkages between social cohesion efforts and local government are important, especially in the context of CAR when local authorities have been non-existent, under-resourced, underpaid, weak, and/or threatened. If local authorities and traditional leaders are involved in social cohesion activities, greater sustainability is likely. At the household level, CRS is well placed with its partners to conduct community sensitization campaigns, including on topics such as national identity, trauma, religious coexistence, and peaceful conflict resolution for couples. In particular, the “Faithful Households” methodology could be explored in this context for discussing delicate topics like women’s empowerment and intimate partner violence.²²³

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Ensuring they do not create further divisions or stigmatization, government and organizations should strive for religious and ethnic balance among their staff based on local population figures.
.....

Avoid stereotyping. Organization staff should reflect ethnic/religious/gender balance of affected community

While many Central Africans claim that ethnicity is not an issue in CAR, the history of stacking government positions with ethnic groups of those in power has contributed to the conflict. As part of social cohesion activities, stereotyping based on ethnicity should be discussed. Ensuring they do not create further divisions or stigmatization, government and organizations should strive for religious and ethnic balance among their staff based on local population figures. This is a very delicate task, so ways to address the issue should be explored carefully.

Explore ways to strengthen institutions dealing with conflict

This preliminary study has not been able to investigate all the various traditional and government institutions that normally deal with conflict (formal judicial system, as well as business, ethnic, resources, sport, farming, religious, community, family, and interpersonal dispute resolution mechanisms). Given the state services failure, other mechanisms are urgently needed. Little research was found on the types and efficacy of the various peace committees that are operating in CAR, about what further information is needed as these are a likely entry point for peacebuilding activities. In spite of a multitude of peacebuilding and mediation efforts

223. “Faithful Households” is a CRS approach to counseling for young people and couples, guiding the participants through facilitated discussions on topics related to relationships within the family structure, using the visual model of the construction of a house as a guiding tool. It’s methodology is applicable to a number of different contexts and issues, and it has been used successfully in Uganda to address HIV and AIDS awareness.

in certain high-tension areas such as Bangui's PK5 neighborhood, conflict continues to break out; further exploration of past efforts could lead to guidance about future plans. Other entry points should be explored, for example, how to deal with conflict between farmers and pastoralists: recommendations suggested in other reports should be investigated, such as "Revive traditional agro-pastoralist mediation mechanisms through organization of informal meetings between representatives of the different communities by conflict prevention NGOs".²²⁴

Strengthen and empower the media in conflict-sensitive reporting.

Media have been playing a role in recruitment of youth in armed conflict and in spreading rumors about various ethnic and religious groups and thus increasing stereotypes, stigmatization and misunderstandings. Conflict-sensitive training is needed. Several organizations are already conducting training, such as CRS, the UNHCR, Internews, and Search for Common Ground, but much more is needed.

Focus on youth and former combatants

There should be a focus on youth and former combatants in social cohesion activities and development activities to reduce the likelihood they will take up arms (again). The significant and serious divides between younger and older generations should also be addressed in humanitarian and development activities.

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There should be a focus on youth and former combatants in social cohesion activities and development activities to reduce the likelihood they will take up arms (again).
.....

Conduct further studies on violence and on gender

Several authors and interviewees have spoken about the culture of violence in CAR as in, for example, the cases of punishment for witchcraft and the institutionalization of this punishment. Further information about how violence starts and ends, who become combatants, who do not, and their motivations, is needed to better identify appropriate entry points for projects. In addition, in the current situation of extremely weak government structures, especially outside of the capital (being almost nonexistent in the northeast), at least in the short term more information is needed about current structures used to mediate and moderate conflicts – including leaders and institutions of traditional/ethnic groups, religious groups, military and paramilitary structures, business, and families. Gender aspects of all these suggested studies are important to include, to assess the different roles of men and women of different ages in conflict and in peace. A specific study on gender roles in conflict should be conducted following the format of UNSC Resolution 1325 to ensure that the following key aspects are included: women's participation, protection of women and girls, gender training, inclusion of gender perspectives, and on prevention of conflict. Furthermore, recommendations related to the role of women in the peace process, negotiations, and peace and conflict are needed, based on this suggested research, using UNSC Resolution 1325 as a guideline.

Networking

The Social Cohesion Network should be prioritized and strengthened. Donors should be encouraged to coordinate both within their grantees

224. International Crisis Group (2014). The Central African Republic's hidden conflict. Policy Briefing, Africa Briefing N° 105. 12 December 2014. Nairobi/Brussels: ICG. Available at: <http://www.crisisgroup.org/-/media/Files/africa/central-africa/central-african-republic/b105-la-face-cachee-du-conflit-centrafricain-english.pdf>

and between grantees of different organizations. Coordination of the many social cohesion activities is of great importance to avoid duplication and to ensure that both geographic and topical coverage is achieved. Consider a joint publication on lessons learned. Engage donors about social cohesion. Conduct discussion and/or research on comparison of various types of peace or social cohesion committees.

RESEARCH

Further research on, and investment in, various methods (formal and informal) of dispute resolution is essential if CAR is to develop and thrive. Many of the recommendations in this section relate to increasing trust, but **more research is needed to examine the processes, methods, successes, and failures of trust-building**. The Social Cohesion Network may be an appropriate setting to undertake such research. Several sections above suggest further research. In brief these include:

- Roles, movements, grievances, needs, presence of arms in various types of armed groups – in particular, Peuhls – especially those from foreign countries
- Compilation of lessons learned on various topics such as DDRR, SSR, and rebuilding decimated security and justice sectors
- Desires of the people concerning transitional justice
- Research to prepare for dialogue between the people, civil society, the UN, and the government on justice and security sector reform
- Qualitative study of the impact of training social cohesion
- Studies on effective resolution of disputes and mediation processes
- Anthropological studies on violence
- Land and property issues, particularly in relation to refugee and IDP return

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More research is needed to examine the processes, methods, successes, and failures of trust-building.
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Appendices

MAPS

Figure 1. Central African Republic



Figure 2 Locations of Research in the Lobaye Prefecture (Boda)



Figure 3 Locations of Research in the Ouham Prefecture (Bossangoa)



Figure 4 Locations of Research in the Nana-Mambéré and Ouham-Pendé Prefectures (Bouar)



LIST OF PARTICIPANTS/RESEARCHERS/FIELD TEAMS

Field Teams	Research Sites:
Boda	
Fidele Mbosse (CEJP) Victorine Sambeko (DADES/AEC) Nicodeme Bay-Den-Balé (CEJP) Djamila Ledeng (UJMCA) Ian Proctor (CRS)	Boda Centre Boganangone Bodjoula Ngotto Bossoui Mbaïki
Bossangoa	
James Sayre (CRS) Mbelesso Sosthène (CEJP) Ngbouando Arnaud (Consultant) Bengai Priscilla Michaella (CEJP) Mbaita Hilaire (CDJP Bossangoa) (Appui des agents de CCCS Bossangoa)	Bossangoa Centre Bowaye Zere Kouki Nana-Bakassa Benzambe
Bouar	
Gilbert Gvette (CDJP Bouar) Alfred Yekele (CDJP Bouar) Jean Louis Sinakolo (CDJP Bouar) Khalil Mamadou Zendadine (JICA)	Bouar Centre Niem Herman Brousse Wantiguera Paoua Baboua Baoro
Bangui	
Gouvernance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corinne Dacko (DEDD) • Laura McGrew (CRS) • Max Maitovo (Barreau de Centrafrique) • Amos Bissafi (CNT) Ressources Naturel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guy Tampon (CRS) • Hamidou Namarwa (JICA) Transhumance / IDP Refugies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rekia Mbassa (JICA) • Guy-Alain Passi (AEC/GAPAFOT) 	

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES²²⁵

BANGUI

- Driss Moumane, Chief of Party for SECC Project, Catholic Relief Services
- Maiga Mahamadou, Food Security and Livelihoods Coordinator, Catholic Relief Services
- Léa Koyassoum-Doumta, Deputy at the National Transitional Council
- Jérôme Grimaud, Humanitarian Affairs Officer at the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
- Herve Hesse, Deputy Director for DDDR at MINUSCA
- Ibrahim Pombot, Imam for the Central African Islamic Community in Bangui
- Jean Didier Keyazounam, Pastor and President of the 4th Arrondissement Synod in Bangui
- Cecile Alla, Member of the Organization of Central African Women
- Henriette Kampbade, Member of the Organization of Central African Women
- Florence Ndaye Kongaye, Member of the Organization of Central African Women
- Florence Beanan, Member of the Organization of Central African Women
- Agnes Ndogbaya, Member of the Organization of Central African Women
- Agnes Outene, Member of the Organization of Central African Women
- Hadja Amina, Member of the Organization of Central African Women
- Fiona Mangan, CAR Country Representative at the U.S. Institute of Peace
- Omar Kabine Lamaya, Imam for the Central African Islamic Community in Bangui
- Dieudonne Nzapalainga, Archbishop (now Cardinal) for the Central African Catholic Community in Bangui
- Lamido Issa Bi Amadou, Adjunct General Rapporteur and Representative for the Peuhl and Pygmy Minorities for the National Transitional Council
- Alexis Guerengbenzi, Coordinator for the National Humanitarian Coordination
- Sabi Mondjo, Deputy Secretary General for the Union for Central African Renewal
- Youth Representative for the Union for Central African Renewal
- Gael Ngouka Langandi, Coordinator for the Network of Journalists for Peace in CAR and OMC Media Observer for CAR
- Moustaphat Younous, Vice President for ORJMUSCA
- Mohammed M. Malick Fall, Representative for UNICEF
- Regis Regobengli, Expert at CIONGCA
- Songo Awe Rambault, Adjunct General Treasurer at CIONGCA
- Gertrude Zouta, Minister of Commerce, Industry, and Small and Medium Business
- Modibo Ata, National Coordinator for the National Federation of Central African Cattle Raisers (FNEC)
- José Richard Pouambi, President for the High Council of Transition Communication
- Phillip Adapoe Kodjo, CAR Country Director for Cordaid
- Justin Zaguika, Social Cohesion Coordinator for Cordaid
- Representative of the Embassy of Cameroon to the Central African Republic
- Yannick Hondida, Secretary General for the National Youth Committee (CNJ)
- Edgar Abdelkader Ngaro, Representative of Chadian Refugees in CAR
- José Rodriguez Mackpayen, Secretary General of National Union of Mineral Cooperatives of CAR
- Florence Ntakarutimana, Trauma Healing Advisor for Catholic Relief Services
- Aude Bertrand, Program Manager for Catholic Relief Services
- Antoine, Cabinet Director for the Ministry of Social Affairs
- Arnault Serra-Horguelin, Chargé of Civilian Affairs for MINUSCA
- Joseph Muyango, SECC Team Leader for Catholic Relief Services
- Jules Tombet, Cellule National Expert for Participative Management of Forest Resources for the Ministry of Water, Forest, Wildlife, and Fish
- Arcade Ngbiteme, Member of the Firewood Friends Association
- Martial Thierry Kombo, Member of the Central African Jewelers Association (ASBICA)
- Barrie Freeman, Director of Political Affairs for MINUSCA

BOUAR

- James Adrian, Head of Bouar Sub-Office for Catholic Relief Services
- Cyrille Ngbaba, Representative, Caritas Bouar
- Mohamadou Modibo, Imam for the Central African Islamic Community in Bouar
- Mamadou Bako, Trauma Trainer and President of the Muslim Youth Association in Bouar

225. In addition to those listed above, 34 other interviewees remain anonymous. The following were interviewed during the initial planning period: Alberto Begue, Consultant, Save the Children, Bambari; Sylvain Demangho, Chargé de Mission at the Ministry of Political Dialogue and National Reconciliation (Interviewed by John Katunga and James Sayre); Abbé Martin Mordue, Justice and Peace Commission (Rafai, southeast); Volkhardt, Cordaid; Thomas Paul Banze, Search for Common Ground; and John Katunga, Erin Lewis, Driss Moumane, Kyla Neilan, and James Sayre, CRS.

- Lady Bako, Vice President of the Muslim Women's Association in Bouar
- Talla Kaltouma, Member of the Community Social Cohesion Committee in Bouar
- Brigitte Dewane, Member of the Community Social Cohesion Committee in Bouar
- Veronique Nadane, Member of the Community Social Cohesion Committee in Bouar
- Marthe Mbita, Trauma Trainer and President of the Organization of Central African Women in Bouar
- Saintpoursaint Nuemandji, President of the Prefectural Youth Association in Bouar

NIEM

- Arialdo Urbani Umberto, Missionary Priest
- Ibrahim Bachirou, Representative of the Muslim Community
- Daniel Bekosso, Representative of the Auto-Defense Group
- Herman Brousse
- Remy Gbangole, Chief of Quarter and Member of the Peace Committee
- Jeanne Patoue, Mayor and Member of the Community Social Cohesion Committee
- Wantiguera
- Bienvenue Yabengue, Manager and CECI Member

PAOUA

- Herman Cadeau, Service Chief for Western Animal Production for the National Agency for the Development of Cattle Raisers

BABOUA

- Marthe Doui, Member of the Community Social Cohesion Committee
- Felicien Yanede, Brigade Commander for the Gendarmerie
- Serge Mopiane, Captain for the Congolese Detachment Contingent for MINUSCA

BAORO

- Dieudonne Yahaka, Priest
- Celestine Ngonoagbo, President of the Organization of Central African Women in Baoro
- Dieudonne Demonkom Bona Doiu, President of Sub-Prefectural Youth Association of Baoro

BOSSANGO

- Cripin, Representative for CDJP Bossango
- Jacques Denamfea Semsona, IEC and Statistics Service Chief for the Hospital of Bossango
- Banale Fleury Fulgence, Adjunct to the Base Chief for INSO
- Junior Zouibona, Chargé of the Food Security Program for AFEB
- Eric Dilla, Brigade Commander of the Gendarmerie
- Mathurin Gonidane, Procurer of Bossango
- Guira Docka Kouta, Traditional Healer
- Geiville Touapesse, Station Chief for Radio Ndeke Luka/RJDH
- Raphael Nganare, Radio Correspondant for Radio Ndeke Luka/RJDH

BOWAYE

- Yangama Natacha, Vice President of the Organization of Central African Women for Bowaye
- Namneionde Nehmi, Pastor for the Evangelical Church of the Brothers of Bowaye
- Jeannot Benagai, Member of the Community Social Cohesion Committee of Bowaye
- Saintoi Sylvain Omega, President of the Committee of the Health Management Organization
- Koire Bailone, Small Businessperson and Member of the Youth Group

KOUKI

- Marc Kparezane, Former Pastor
- Victor Deahoun, City Councilor and Chef de Groupe for Kouki A
- Marceline Bekassa, General Councilor for the Organization of Central African Women of Kouki

NANA-BAKASSA

- Gibert Ouibona, Member of the Community Social Cohesion Committee
- Celestin Oufeigan, Member of the Community Social Cohesion Committee
- Gildas Kibi Georges, Responsable du Point d'Ecoute SOS
- Nelson Senam, Monitor of the Friendly Space for Children
- Jean Mari Nganabeam, Vice President of the Mokere Group
- Jacob de Nambozoui, Secretary General of the Third Age Group
- Gilbert Serengai, Former Pastor of the Third Age Group

BODA

- Jean Baptiste Fouli-Kiba, Captain and Chief of Staff for MINUSCA
- Kossi Kpogo, Head of Boda Sub-Office for Catholic Relief Services
- Mariam Garba, President of the Muslim Women's Association
- Amadou Yaouba, Representative of the Imam for the First Central Mosque of Boda
- Oumarou Ali, Representative of the Imam for the First Central Mosque of Boda
- Abdarrahim Abdaraman, Vice President of the Muslim Youth Association
- Yassir Mbaradim, President of the Muslim Youth Association
- Marguerite Zongokine, President of the Organization of Central African Women of Boda
- Theophile Ligounda, Sub-Prefect of Boda
- Boniface Katta, Mayor of Boda
- Fidèle Soussou, Former Mayor and Quarter Deputy of Boda
- Theierry Bogui-Ange, Displaced Person and Former Mechanic
- Jean Albert Konda, Displaced Person and Former Mason
- Lorette Service, Displaced Person
- Soeur Marguerite, Catholic Mission Church of Boda
- Aimée Dobo, Coordinator for the Anti-Balaka of the Interreligious Youth Platform
- Rameaux Bifi, Brigade Commander for the Gendarme
- Ange Urbain Mbomboli, Pastor for the Interreligious Platform/AEC
- Claude Bernard Wakouzou, Priest for the St. Michel Parish of Boda
- Rose Mucerwa, Head of Human Resources for Tearfund
- Marceline Bawe, President of the Women's Mutual of Boda
- Representative of the International Organization on Migration
- Rabi Moussa, Displaced Person and Head of the Displaced Women
- Hamath Sosal, Cattle Raiser

BOGANANGONE

- Pascal Abouandge, Sub-Prefect of Boganangone
- Martin Mbolu, Mayor of Boganangone
- Hippolyte Boukoni, Brigade Commander of the Gendarme
- Joachim Gba, Chef de Groupe

BODJOULA

- Martha Wayen, President of the Women's Association
- Giselle Wayen, Member of the Women's Association
- Josiene Sembona, Member of the Women's Association
- Bernadette Mica, Member of the Women's Association

NGOTTO

- Henri Chantal Seleive, Secretary General for the Mayor of Ngotto
- Suzanne Boussaka, President of the Waligala of Ngotto
- Claudin Ngaté, Member of the Waligala of Ngotto
- Nicole Dassemba, Member of the Waligala of Ngotto
- Yolande Dilla, Member of the Waligala of Ngotto
- Merlin Ngabi, Member of the Waligala of Ngotto
- Evelyn Mbengai, Member of the Waligala of Ngotto
- Jeanne Sabongo, Member of the Waligala of Ngotto
- Annette Kotaya, Member of the Waligala of Ngotto
- Chanelle Mamoussio, Member of the Waligala of Ngotto
- Sandra Vopimadé, Member of the Waligala of Ngotto
- Nathalie Temoungue, Member of the Waligala of Ngotto

BOSSOUI

- Placide Ndimba, President of the Youth Organization of Bossoui
- Colette Bokogala, Member of the Youth Organization of Bossoui
- Laurent Bozone, Member of the Youth Organization of Bossoui
- Gertrude Wafio, Member of the Youth Organization of Bossoui
- Thibault Yadele, Member of the Youth Organization of Bossoui

MBAÏKI

- Pascal Kiki, Mayor of Mbaïki
- Urbain Leonard Boymandja, Secretary General of the Prefecture of Lobaye
- Pulchérie Mbongui, President of the Organization of Central African Women of Mbaïki
- Ismaël Beorofei, Adjunct Secretary of the Youth Organization of Mbaïki

SUMMARY OF THE SITUATION IN BODA²²⁶

The Lobaye prefecture houses more than 215,000 people and covers an area of 19,235 square kilometers.²²⁷ The town of Boda serves as the seat of the Catholic Diocese, which encompasses the Lobaye prefecture exactly. The administrative capital of the prefecture is Mbaïki. These two towns function as transportation and economic hubs for the prefecture Mbaïki as the gateway to the eastward national capital of Bangui, and Boda as the connection point for the western, more remote villages. The research team for this prefecture covered Boda and Mbaïki, as well as the towns of Ngotto, Bossoui, Boganangone, and Bodjoula. Figure 3 of Appendix 1 demonstrates the relative location of these research locations.

SECURITY SITUATION AND ACCESS

For the majority of interviewees, the conflict in the Lobaye Prefecture began with the arrival of the Seleka armed groups and, specifically, the installation of local captains near their villages. This arrival happened concurrently with the March 2013 national-level crisis. While the continued presence of certain Seleka groups sometimes stabilized the security situation, most people generally felt that the influence the Seleka held over the population fomented interreligious and inter-communal tensions where none had existed previously. Local Muslim youth were mobilized into the Seleka groups in their area or into autonomous armed units. Christian civilians often fled in advance of these armed groups, allowing for Muslim occupation of vacated lands and houses.

Though the timeline varies for each locality, in general the local Christians organized youth into what they called “self-defense groups”.²²⁸ These often retaliated against Muslim occupation of their villages, seizing property and goods once held by the local Muslims, specifically mining operations. The occupation of the region by the Seleka ended with the arrival of the anti-balaka forces at the beginning of December 2013, though French Sangaris forces had entered the region and conducted security operations prior to anti-balaka arrival. As Seleka fled, anti-balaka forces moved in, reinforcing local Christian self-defense groups in some areas, and creating these groups in others.

The arrival of MINUSCA forces and the departures of the Seleka and anti-balaka forces is largely viewed as the turning point for security in the region. Since the February 2014 deployment and July 2014 ceasefire agreement, MINUSCA has worked to secure the axes between major towns – Bangui to Mbaïki to Boda, and then Boda to the more distant towns. Circulation between villages remains difficult, but mostly due to the conditions of the infrastructure rather than the security situation. Occasionally, MINUSCA and those NGOs operating in the prefecture will encounter illegal roadblocks. Criminality remains a persistent threat to regional security here, as DDRR programs have yet to reach the entire affected population. Meanwhile, human security needs abound, as many who fled the conflict still live in the forests and do not feel confident to return. Basic food, shelter, and sanitation needs continue to go unmet in many locations because of limited access due to poor infrastructure and the inability to cover large stretches of territory. In the sub-prefecture of Boganangone, for example, one Gendarme, the Brigade Commander, is responsible for covering the entire zone, some 8,000 square kilometers.

CONTEXT

Refugees and the internally displaced

Some 130,000 people lived between the towns of Boda, Mbaïki, Boganangone, and Ngotto before the crisis.²²⁹ The town of Boda is situated in the Lobaye Prefecture in the central-southeastern part of CAR. The local

226. This section written by Ian Proctor.

227. The “Recensement Général de la Population et de l’Habitation de 2003” census conducted by the Central African Institute of Statistics, Economic and Social Studies (ICASEES) in 2003 (the most recently conducted study) found the population of Lobaye to be 214,137. Further data can be found here: <http://statoids.com/ucf.html>, while the reference to such a census can be found at the Global Health Data Exchange, here: <http://ghdx.healthdata.org/record/central-african-republic-population-and-housing-census-2003>. Unfortunately, the census report itself appears to be unavailable virtually.

228. It is difficult to determine the distinction between “self-defense groups” and Seleka- or anti-balaka-affiliated armed groups. Generally, when interviewees referred to “self-defense groups”, they were referring to locally organized youth, a more ‘home-grown’ armed youth party. In contrast, interviewees explicitly referred to the Seleka and anti-balaka groups as being from the ‘outside,’ foreign to their town/village/area. Therefore, these self-defense groups generally identified with the town, while the Seleka and anti-balaka identified with the national-level movement. That said, it was often that interviewees of one religious identity referred to youth from the opposing religious identity as moving interchangeably between the local self-defense group and the national-level Seleka or anti-balaka forces. Indeed, some interviewees made little distinction between the Seleka or anti-balaka and their local, religiously similar self-defense group.

229. This figure is an estimate collected from the information gathered from these towns’ mayor’s offices and health center. They are not exact figures and the geographic zone is ill-defined for who is and is not included in the estimate.

administration in the town often referred to Boda and Ngotto together when citing demographic information, and in fact did not have information for the individual towns for the period after the crisis. Before the crisis, Boda had a population of approximately 24,800, and 35,000 lived in Ngotto, though at the height of the conflict, some 15,000 people were displaced from these two sites and only 3,000 have returned and are mostly living in the forests because their houses were destroyed. Boda also hosts a sizeable population of 4,600 people, including Peuhl herders and other Muslim identity groups, displaced from other areas around the region.

POPULATION ESTIMATES BY LOCATION*

Before the crisis

Boda: 24,800

Ngotto: 35,000

Boganangone: 44,500

Mbaïki: 25,000

After the crisis

Boda and Ngotto:

52,400

Boganangone: 36,100

Mbaïki: 24,740

DISPLACED POPULATION ESTIMATES*

15,000 from Boda and Ngotto

4,450 from Boganangone

* Information gathered from interviews with local mayors and sub-prefects

Before the crisis, there were 44,500 people living in Boganangone, and the local officials interviewed said that about 10 percent of the population was displaced during the conflict. The local administration was aware of only one family having returned. Many Muslims remained in the village during the conflict because they felt confident in their security. Now, the population is 36,100 in the vicinity of Boganangone. This area consists of 8,003 square kilometers, according to the local gendarme unit's scope of control. In Mbaïki, there were 25,000 people living in the town prior to the violence; now there are now 24,740. Less the 20 people remain displaced, as the population has come back to the city, although the local official interviewed was uncertain of the number displaced. According to the interviews conducted there, the cooperation between the Muslim community members and municipal administration to protect private houses through documentation and official registration allowed for the return of the majority of the population, though some residences continued to be occupied by youth. During the crisis, it was primarily the mosques that were attacked and destroyed.

Markets and Infrastructure

Throughout the region, the onset of the crisis disrupted the economic activities that once sustained people. Residents generally practiced subsistence agriculture to accompany growing cash- or staple-crops, raised cattle, and ran small commerce stands in the central markets selling a diversity of products. In addition, citizens participated in the mining sector as laborers. In each of the sites visited, interviewees reported that the markets specifically had been hit hard by the insecurity caused by the presence of the armed groups. Progress toward the return of activities in the market has been intermittent and largely dependent on the presence of related infrastructures to support the circulation of goods and services. In Mbaïki, for example, the presence of paved thoroughfares, specifically between Bangui and the town, has facilitated the return of the majority of displaced people, bringing with them a demand for supplies that the improved roads and proximity to Bangui can provide. However, further west, away from the regional capital toward Boda and then beyond, the extension of state services grows weaker and weaker. Roads move from being paved, to unmaintained and treacherous for commercial vehicles. Some routes are impassable during inclement weather and some receive no commercial traffic for months. Interviewees in Ngotto attested to the difficulty of restarting the markets there because they were unable to travel outside of the town. This lack of mobility limits not only the supply of goods to the local market, but also the ability to transport excess and access to neighboring villages. NGOs and government services rarely reach these outlying areas, so the need is dire for not just start-up capital for small commerce activities, but sometimes just the basic means of survival.

Housing

Due to the conflict, adequate housing remains a key issue for a large portion of the population across the Lobaye Prefecture. At the height of the crisis, private houses and public structures – especially places of worship – were targeted by armed groups, who burned many structures and made the possibility of

return much harder. Some 32,559 people remain displaced, either in the forests surrounding Boda or in displacement camps where housing units are sometimes insufficient to meet the needs of the entire family unit.²³⁰ In other locations, communal structures like mosques were targeted, and their continued state of disrepair can discourage communities from returning, as has happened in Ngotto. In addition to the unmet housing needs of the displaced and resident communities, there is also a lingering problem of occupation. Whereas Mbaïki's Muslims largely had ownership documentation and assurances that their houses would be left intact by the local government and the occupying armed groups, such was not the case in the other research locations. In Boda, many houses were burned as communities purged minority groups from their neighborhoods, driving them out and creating the Enclave Muslim and non-Enclave Christian system that exists today.²³¹ Christian and Muslim communities have each experienced occupation of housing and land by the other, disproportionately affecting those displaced who are not able to return and claim ownership of their property. As more and more people choose to return home, the need for adequate and permanent housing will increase.



Road between Boda and Ngotto. Photo courtesy of Ian Proctor

Recovery of social cohesion

Slowly, the international NGO community, local civil society organizations, and local government administrations have worked together to introduce, or in some areas reintroduce, programs aimed at the return of these affected communities to a state of peaceful coexistence. In many locations, programs of sensitization, particularly of youth and across religious lines, have been undertaken by interreligious and youth civil society organizations. With the support of international NGOs, local government officials have introduced programs to engage youth in municipal administrations. Women continue to be a strong mobilizing force for the return of peace as they often take the lead in organizing social and economic activities for the community. Finally, former armed group members and even some former leaders of armed factions have begun the process of reintegrating into the community, taking on local leadership roles in youth associations, and implementing social cohesion activities across religious lines. However, some interview subjects said that their communities were not ready for social cohesion, either because their basic needs remained unmet or their communities had not yet recovered from the trauma caused during the conflict. Some interviewees, therefore, identified the need for sensitization as the primary step before the introduction of programs on reconciliation or social cohesion. In particular, the presence of some former combatants – who circulate freely in the communities and are perceived to operate with impunity for their actions during the crisis – prohibits a return of peace in earnest.

Potential for return

Despite progress in providing basic assistance across many sectors, the likelihood for return of many of those displaced by the conflict remains questionable. Many groups were cited as wanting to return to their homes; however, in many cases the damage done – both physical and psychological – during the crisis remains unaddressed and serves as a barrier to re-entry. About 4,600 people live in Boda, displaced from areas around the region, and a further 3,000 IDPs originally from Boda and the surrounding area have returned to the town but must be housed in designated sites. Even in Mbaïki, where only 20 people are thought to remain displaced, there is a significant need to address the conditions either created during the conflict or having persisted through it. Different segments of the population have disappeared from certain sites too. For example, in Bossoui, many Muslim men were killed in the conflict or fled the village, leaving behind widows and abandoned families.

230. Numbers dated to 16 May 2016. According to UNHCR: <http://data.unhcr.org/car/download.php?id=757>.

231. By minority groups here, we refer to Muslims or Christians living in predominantly opposing religiously identified neighborhoods.

For example, many Muslims lived in the predominantly Christian “Mission” neighborhood before the conflict. Due to the violence, the dominant religious group in each neighborhood would attack the religious minority, creating the cantonment phenomena referenced above.

Numerous interviewees expressed a lack of readiness to consider the return of displaced people. Economic conditions often play a part in whether a community feels it can absorb more people; if housing, market, and employment needs are being met, interview subjects tended to say the displaced could return. Unfortunately, these responses usually broke down along religious identities, as many of the displaced are Muslim. Stigmas symptomatic of the conflict persist in the minds of locals, and many assign blame for the crisis to other identity groups as a whole, in addition to specific armed groups and other external forces.

Status of state and local institutions

Prior to the start of the conflict, interviewees often responded that local administrations ranged between being corrupt and unresponsive to the needs of local people or ineffective or absent. Fortunately for some, the conflict actually forced out many local officials viewed as problematic by their communities. However, the weaknesses of the state remain, and effective and ineffective officials alike fled during the violence. Because many local leaders have not returned, capacity and administrative gaps in the functioning of local government persist. The few officials who have remained in place throughout the crisis have been joined by a few new individuals, and this small group must now attempt to govern a large, dispersed population. Physical capacity issues – such as office space, equipment, and personnel – are coupled with the need to build communal trust and confidence in local leadership, things that require long-term change but have short-term implications.

Key problems/issues

Five major problems emerged from the interviews conducted in the prefecture of Lobaye.

Political nature of the crisis under the guise of religion

In the vast majority of interviews, subjects emphasized the political drivers of the conflict, even saying that the conflict was not religious, despite appearances. Many said that the incitation of politicians and other political actors targeting youth, alongside the presence of external armed groups like the Seleka and anti-balaka, were the main drivers of the conflict, not the religious identities within each community. In fact, for many, religion was used as a means to perpetrate the conflict, rather than a motivator in and of itself.

Conflict over interests

Boda and its neighboring towns host a variety of economic activities, although disparities in the distribution of wealth and the control over certain key sectors seemed to have motivated the different armed groups toward violent conflict. Specifically, many cited the control of mineral extraction operations by local Muslims and the exploitation of the Christian labor force as a motivator for many locally mobilized armed groups to participate in the conflict as a means to seize wealth, property and resources.

Marginalization and exclusion

Accompanying the aforementioned interests driving the conflict, the community at large experienced inequalities that many perceived allowed for disenfranchised youth and others to engage in the violence. In addition to Muslim control over key economic activities, Christian and Muslim community members often perceived a particular individual of another identity group gaining political power or societal leadership as a grievance. These grievances sometimes are reflected in what the communities feel are policies of exclusion, such as when a group of the same identity as the local official gains from one of their own being in power. Generational cleavages between youth without any economic outlook and the larger community also plague these communities.

Bad governance

Corruption, nepotism, and misuse of resources were all cited as being indicative of a grand theme of lack of good governance. While the conflict has had the unintentional effect of forcing out many officials from their posts, including those corrupt ones, what remains is a vacuum of leadership and local capacity for governance. The future of local administration is tenuous at best without the material, financial and authoritative support to local institutions. Such local bodies, such as the mayor's office, local courts, and municipal administration, are caught between the mounting needs of the communities they represent and the limited ability to respond to such responsibilities. In addition, the nascency of the justice systems means that systemic controls over longstanding problems like corruption continue to be ineffective, inviting manipulators, old and new alike, into the governance space.

Human Insecurity

Underlying all of these key issues is the dire need of significant segments of the population in critical sectors

- including basic food security, water and sanitation, health, and shelter. The crisis has only exacerbated the poor conditions for most people, as they are no longer able to perform basic economic functions to sustain themselves and must rely on aid programs in order to subsist. Coupled with these human insecurity needs are the pervading grievances related to the social and economic inequalities that fomented the conflict and have gone unaddressed. Because many people were unable to access productive economic opportunities before the crisis due either to exclusion or barriers to access, the scale of human need has grown. Already critical prior to the conflict as CAR rested toward the bottom of the human development scale, the implication of the conflict for the Central African people is that the number of most vulnerable has only grown.

Key actors

As identified by interviewees from around the Lobaye prefecture, the main actors who participated in or mobilized for the violent conflict fall into four categories. First are the Christian armed groups, which are comprised of the anti-balaka network of armed groups, and the locally mobilized Christian self-defense groups. Second are the Muslim armed groups, which in equal measure were made up of Seleka groups and Muslim local self-defense groups. Third, politicians and other political men capitalized on the insecure environment and the presence of their respective religiously affiliated armed groups to incite youth to violence and seize power. Finally, youth on both sides of the religious divide were used as a mobilizing and recruiting base to instigate violence in their local communities.

But youth were also identified as a group among the actors for peace. In this sense, youth have organized as a post-conflict group among civil society actors to implement and participate in social cohesion and other activities, and have included former combatants in some instances. In a larger sense, the set of civil society actors - ranging from interreligious platforms, to women's, youth, and mixed associations, and other community-based organizations - have continued to serve as the organizing force for community cohesiveness with the support of the international NGOs. Finally, local authorities who have made efforts to implement programs and policies aimed at reuniting the communities and bringing back economic and social opportunity to their affected communities were included among the group of peace actors.

Potential response options

In general, potential responses suggested by interviewees and developed by the assessment team fell into several general categories: basic assistance, development, sensitization, security, government, justice, and the economy. Basic assistance responses include the delivery of food and other items, the distribution of housing materials, and the implementation of cash for work programs. Longer-term development includes the improvement of infrastructure such as roads, schools and health centers. Sensitization activities consist of programs targeting the two religious communities, youth and former fighters; advancing the cause of victims of sexual and gender-based violence; creating a civic education program; and creating a community radio program. Under the security sector, there is a need to reinforce road safety and national security forces, and to implement an effective DDDR program. For the government, re-establishing local authority through the installation of administrators in each location is a priority. In addition to relaunching the courts and justice mechanisms, there is also a need for religious leaders from both communities to work on communal dispute resolution and arbitration mechanisms. Finally, the need to restart local economies pervades all sectors, and involves the reinforcement of the mining, agriculture, and herding sectors through the introduction of new capital and micro-credit. In addition, support must be given to the local labor forces through the creation of training centers - specifically for women, youth, and the displaced - and the creation of jobs in the formal economy with supporting programs to connect these groups to employment opportunities. Finally, a reparations program needs to be devised to support victims of the conflict in a conflict sensitive and equitable manner.

Conclusions

While the needs across the Lobaye prefecture are complex and compounding, three key conclusions can be drawn from the information collected from the cadre of interviewees. First, it is important to introduce social cohesion and reconciliation programming slowly and progressively, as many communities are still grappling with lingering traumas. Second, support must be given to the local government institutions by the international community - the UN, NGOs, and bilateral partnerships - to build capacity for an eventual handover and reinforce humanitarian coordination in all of the zones. Finally, especially for social cohesion programming to be accepted and fostered by the population, all concerned parties must coordinate to promote the restart of economic and social activities as the first stepping stones. As identified by many interviewees, without the basic means to survive and peacefully coexist, social cohesion activities would not be able to take root.

SUMMARY OF THE SITUATION IN BOSSANGOYA

SECURITY SITUATION AND ACCESS

The diocese of Bossangoa covers the entirety of Ouham prefecture and sections of Ouham Pendé prefecture. The city of Bossangoa is the capital of Ouham prefecture. As the former hometown of President François Bozizé, the city became a symbolic target for Seleka, in their rebellion against his rule and perceived ethnic and regional favoritism. Following the installation of President Michel Djotodia, Seleka established a loose network of outposts in the zone, claiming that their arrival marked the beginning a 50-year Seleka occupation of the territory. Following a similar trajectory to the crisis that was unfolding in Bangui, Seleka rule quickly disintegrated into disorder. Localized Seleka units – often in cooperation with local Muslim herder populations – began to loot, murder, rape, and burn homes in villages across the region. Large portions of the population were displaced fleeing into the bush, whereas others made their way to neighboring Chad and Cameroon.

While displaced, the agriculturalist-Christian population, which constitutes the majority of the population in the diocese, organized self-defense groups and sought out military training in anti-balaka camps across the Northwest. Once trained and initiated, these self-defense forces – with support from regional and national anti-balaka units – drove the Seleka out of Bossangoa, and other primary regional cities located across its transit routes, forcing the Seleka north into the bush. The anti-balaka's brutal and indiscriminate reprisals against Muslims during this period forced an exodus of Muslims out of the region, in some cases under armed escort from Chadian or other international forces.

The installation of French Sangaris in December 2013, and subsequent arrival of MINUSCA forces in 2014 brought calm back to the city of Bossangoa, and allowed for the reinstatement of government authorities. Rural towns in Bossangoa have also seen the return of local governance, with the reinstatement of local préfets and mayors. This process, however, has not been accompanied by reinstatement of security or police forces; though MINUSCA has established a presence along certain roads, there is little to no presence of Central African police, gendarmes or military outside of the city of Bossangoa. Meanwhile, armed groups including the anti-balaka, ex-Seleka, and RJ have maintained presences in the bush and in certain cities across the North, particularly along the border with Chad. Armed confrontations between these groups, road cutting, and other forms of criminality continue to plague the region.

CONTEXT AND KEY ISSUES

In the absence of security forces, local government faces considerable challenges in maintaining order and rule of law. In the resulting security vacuum, the following barriers to development and peace have persisted beyond the height of the 2013 crisis.

Conflict between agriculturalists and pastoralists

Before the crisis, agriculturalist and pastoralist communities in the northwest coexisted more or less peacefully. They held common agreements concerning issues such as grazing and herding corridors, and they generally respected established conflict resolution mechanisms. These mechanisms allowed the two groups to manage shared resources and avoid violent conflict. When Seleka forces arrived in 2013, they – in many cases – entered into alliances with herder communities, capitalizing on shared religion, culture, language, and grievances of economic and political exclusion. When recounting stories of the violent acts committed by the Seleka in the region, the agricultural population explicitly noted the presence of local herders in the Seleka ranks. Regardless of whether the majority of the local herder communities were complicit in these crimes, the agriculturalist community viewed this evolution as herders' wholesale allegiance with the Seleka forces. Furthermore, agriculturalist Christian communities hold local herder communities equally responsible as Seleka for the death and destruction wrought during this period.

While agriculturalists hold both local herders and the Seleka forces accountable for the 2013 violence, they further categorize the pastoralist communities into three groups. The first are the local pastoralists, known as "*les anciennes*" who lived in peace with the agriculturalist communities before the crisis. The second group is referred to plainly as the Seleka. In the region, the Seleka is seen simultaneously as an armed group, herder population, and a criminal entity. Random criminal acts, such as road cutting, theft, and murder, are most often attributed to this group. The last herder entity – and the most ambiguous of the three – is known as "*les invitées*". Depending on the source, members of this group are said to include Central African herders from other parts of the country, Chadian herders, armed Chadian youth, and even armed and herder groups from Nigeria.

Division of the herder population into these three groups drastically complicates reconciliation efforts. Attacks by the Seleka and by foreign herders routinely spoil mediation efforts between local herders and agriculturalists. Ambiguous leadership structures and fractured identities also complicate the efforts of government, MINUSCA, and the agriculturalists to effectively engage pastoralist communities.

Popular justice and accusations of sorcery

Local government authorities have taken a strong stance against popular justice. Despite their efforts, interviewees disclosed numerous cases of accusations of sorcery, community trials, and subsequent ritual executions. The continuation of popular justice in CAR can be attributed to the failure of the Central African judiciary, and to deeply held traditional beliefs of Central Africans. However, it is worth noting that a number of interviewees expressed the view that accusations of sorcery were being used as a tool by local defense forces, including the anti-balaka, to protect and promote their interests. Those accused of sorcery are most often the elderly, many of whom occupy positions of authority within local villages. Interviewees noted that armed youth had used accusations of sorcery to target the elderly in order to disrupt local power structures and spread fear. Examples were also shared of armed groups using sorcery accusations as a means to pursue revenge and remove economic as well as political rivals.

Economic reconstruction

In Bossangoa town, the primary market has reopened. In the absence of the Muslim community, who previously dominated trade through several larger-scale firms, a multitude of smaller-scale Christian traders have moved in to fill the void. Security has improved along the road from Bossangoa to Bangui, but the poor condition of the roads slows and increases the cost of trade. Insecurity and poor road conditions along Bossangoa's rural, radial axes have severely decreased the market integration of former trading hubs. Road cutting continues to occur with startling frequency. One interviewee noted that along a particular route to a trading center in Northern Ouham, the Seleka forces robbed traders on a weekly basis on the day before market day. Despite the frequency and predictability of these attacks, the dire economic situation of local merchants forced them to take the risk. Degradation of roads and bridges also poses significant challenges for traders, raising the cost and time required to transport goods.

Bossangoa and the surrounding region was previously a center for cotton production, but the decline of this industry has led the majority of the population to turn to subsistence farming, hunting, and herding. Conflict between agriculturalists and pastoralists, and the breakdown of traditional herding routes, has brought economic production by farmers and hunters to a near halt. Access to farmlands and hunting areas has become significantly risky. Interviewees relayed numerous examples of farmers and hunters being shot upon and killed when they encountered armed herders in their farmlands or in the bush.

Border insecurity

In addition to their alleged complicity in violent acts committed at the height of the crisis, Chadian armed groups – including government and non-government forces – continue to destabilize border regions in Ouham and Ouham Pendé. In May 2014, 18 residents of the town of Markounda were murdered,²³² reportedly by a combination of Peuhl and Chadian armed forces. The subsequent installation of MINUSCA forces in Markounda, and in other towns along the border have improved security, but their reach is limited. Smaller scale attacks by Chadians and Peuhl groups have reportedly continued, particularly in rural border areas such as the Nana-Markounda river crossing. Residents also report that Chadian armed forces have become particularly aggressive in protecting the border itself. Central Africans – who historically crossed the border on a regular basis to access water or hunting grounds – now report that Chadian troops fire on them if they so much as approach the border.

Barriers to returns

Continued insecurity and strained relationships between agriculturalist and pastoralist communities are worsening Christian-Muslim relations, which were already devastated by the 2013 crisis. In a few isolated areas, particularly along the border, Muslims and Christians coexist. But for the vast majority of interviewees in Ouham and Ouham Pendé prefectures, and in Bossangoa town in particular, Christian communities voiced views that they are not ready to reconcile with their former Muslim neighbors.

232. Reuters (2014) Gunmen kill 15 in raid on Central African Republic border town. Reuters: 2 May 2014. Available at: <http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/478c8e0043d9f2c7b167b3f0c0fe2c4c/Gunmen-kill-15-in-raid-on-Central-African-Republic-border-town>

In Bossangoa town, economic dimensions further complicate prospects for returns. As small traders have occupied market space vacated by the Muslim population, they may prove reluctant to accept the return of economic rivals. Furthermore, Christians who are now occupying homes and shops belonging to Muslim IDPs and refugees also have a vested interest in preventing their return.

KEY ACTORS

National

Following the 2013 crisis, social infrastructure has begun to be rebuilt, owing largely to the reestablishment of local civil society and government organizations. In Bossangoa town, local administration, including the offices of the *préfet*, *sous-préfet*, mayor, judiciary, and police are functioning and work closely with MINUSCA. However, without the necessary human and financial resources, these bodies are not fully effective. Police often lack the funds and means of transportation to follow up on reported incidents and the judiciary is too understaffed to address the claims that are brought to its attention.

In rural areas, targeted killings and internal displacement left many towns in the region without local governance during the height of the crisis. Now, in most areas, regional *sous-préfets*, governors, mayors and local chiefs are back in place. Similar to Bossangoa town, they often lack the financial and physical resources needed to fulfill their administrative responsibilities. Needs range from physical spaces in which to work, to means of transportation, to even basic office supplies and equipment. In rural areas where MINUSCA or police are not present – which is the vast majority of the region – local government is often powerless to address insecurity, or to resist the influence of armed groups. Despite these challenges, local government officials largely remain in place and dedicated to fulfilling their responsibilities. Interviewees in the region reported that many conflicts brought to the attention of local mayors were managed equitably and efficiently. Local mayors and the *Préfet* of Bossangoa have also increased efforts to provide good offices and mediation services for agro-pastoralist conflict, often with backing from MINUSCA.

Various international NGOs, including CRS, DRC, and Mercy Corps have also supported communities to form community committees known as Social Cohesion Committees or Peace Committees, which work in tandem with local authorities and civil society to promote peace and non-violent conflict resolution. These structures have remained functional and active beyond the project lifespans of these NGOs, and play an active role in promoting peace. In addition to these committees, women's groups such as "*l'Organisation de Femmes Centrafricainne*" (OFCA), senior citizens' groups, and other religious bodies constitute consistent, prominent sources of social capital across the region. A few of these localized bodies are tied to regional bodies, particularly in the case of OFCA and the CDJP.²³³

International

The degree of devastation wrought by the 2013 crisis in Bossangoa caused many international NGOs to focus their humanitarian efforts on the area. In addition to their regional hospital, MSF provides support to rural health posts and has supported the creation of local health committees. Other humanitarian actors such as CRS, DRC, Action Contre la Faim (ACF), International Medical Corps (IMC) and others continue to support the immediate needs of the population through shelter, food security, health, and education programming.

MINUSCA has played a significant role in maintaining security in the areas of the region where they are present. Increased efforts of their political affairs wing have also allowed for improved engagement of local leadership structures in joint actions and operations. They will, however, continue to face challenges in engaging certain portions of the population; for example, interviewees reported that herder communities are reluctant and fearful of engaging with MINUSCA. Interviewees from local civil society organizations also said that herders avoid engagement because they perceive the UN as biased in favor of the local government and by extension the agriculturalist community. Despite this trend, herder communities have, in isolated cases, agreed to enter into dialogue with agriculturalists, particularly when the local government and MINUSCA provided good offices for mediation.

TRENDS

Stunted economic recovery

The economic situation for agriculturalist, hunter, and trader populations in rural areas of the region is

233. The CDJP in partnership with CRS, supported communities to form Community Social Cohesion Committees, and continues to provide technical and administrative support to these bodies

becoming increasingly dire. Without access to fields, hunting grounds, or trade routes, these populations are left without viable economic opportunities necessary to cover even their most basic needs. These communities hold the Seleka and herder groups responsible for their economic plight. As the economic situation worsens, potential for open conflict between agriculturalists and pastoralist groups will increase. Agriculturalists also hold the government and by extension MINUSCA responsible for maintaining the conditions of basic security and rule of law necessary for economic activity. Therefore, the population will hold local government and MINUSCA partially responsible for the economic impacts of continued insecurity.

Cyclical failure of agro-pastoral mediation efforts

Local authorities and civil society groups cited numerous failed attempts at negotiation between agriculturalist and pastoralist communities over the past 12 months. Failure was attributed primarily to two different factors. Firstly, violent and criminal activity degrades good will at critical moments in negotiations. Resulting insecurity also, in some cases, completely prevents talks from taking place.²³⁴ Secondly, negotiation efforts have often lacked necessary preparation by the communities themselves, even with NGO accompaniment. Due to the lack of reliable means of communication and information gathering in remote areas, agriculturalists and local leadership often know little about the herder group they are negotiating with – let alone which herder group they are negotiating with – and their motivations and expectations for potential agreements. As a result, parties within a negotiation perceive differences as irreconcilable. Should mediation efforts continue to fail, agriculturalist and pastoralist communities will likely grow more disillusioned, increasing the potential for violent conflict.

Growing tensions with Chadians

Violent attacks and criminality in the border region and the interior of the country is straining already precarious relationships between Chadians and Central Africans. Weak border controls allow herders and armed groups to pass across the border freely, and poor communications infrastructure leads to rumors, stigmas, and negative perceptions of Chadians who live in the border regions.

RESPONSE OPTIONS

Re-establish security infrastructure

The population, particularly in rural areas surrounding Bossangoa, sees the reinstallation of a security force – be it FACA, police, or MINUSCA – as a necessary first step in responding to key issues driving conflict that are mentioned above. Interviewees noted that government security forces, including police and military, were the best placed to re-establish government authority and rule of law; maintain the security and integrity of trade routes and transhumance corridors; prevent popular justice and accusations of sorcery; and prevent the influx of criminal elements from Chad. As a first step, interviewees proposed increased advocacy efforts to ensure that regional and national government understands the severity of the security situation in rural areas, particularly along transit routes, and responds accordingly.

Support to local government including the judiciary and police

Local government, including the judiciary and police, will need additional financial, human, and physical resources to maintain law and order, and fulfill their administrative responsibilities. *Préfets, sous-préfets*, and mayors lack offices, office supplies, and means of transportation; local and regional prisons have been destroyed or are non-existent; and the justice sector lacks the human resources necessary to process cases.

Improved and increased agro-pastoral reconciliation efforts

Social cohesion programming in the region has played a significant role in strengthening social infrastructure, reducing violence, and promoting dialogue within agriculturalist communities. Challenges in access, however, have prevented social cohesion actors with similar programs from reaching pastoralist communities. In many cases, improved engagement of pastoralist communities will be a necessary prerequisite for success of mediation and reconciliation efforts. Government and civil society actors should develop strategies to map and engage pastoralist communities in social cohesion programming. These efforts could serve to deescalate violence, improve channels of communications between the two groups, strengthen intra-group cohesion among pastoralist groups, and help pastoralists to prepare for constructive dialogue.

234. While traveling to Zambe to observe an agro-pastoralist mediation within a social cohesion committee, a research team learned of an attack that had happened along the route earlier that day. The attack had forced the communities to cancel the mediation, and the research team was forced to return to Bossangoa.

Economic integration of vulnerable youth

Throughout the conflict, youth have been particularly vulnerable to recruitment by armed groups. Amid the depressed economy of the region, youth are left without employment opportunities and turn to participation in the conflict and criminal activity for income. Youth criminality, in the form of isolated incidents and attacks by armed groups, continues to destabilize the region. Cattle theft, as an example, has repeatedly triggered conflict between agriculturalist and pastoralist communities. Opportunities for vocational training, savings and lending groups, and other economic strengthening programs targeting youth should be explored to increase productive opportunities for youth and steer them away from criminality.

CONCLUSION

Though various actors have persevered in responding to immediate humanitarian needs and incremental improvements have been made since the height of the crisis, Bossangoa and the surrounding region remain unstable and its population vulnerable. Insecurity is paralyzing reconstruction and development, especially in rural areas, preventing the population from accessing social services, and pursuing economic activities to cover their most basic needs. Agro-pastoralist conflict and criminality are the primary driving forces behind instability in the zone and therefore, government, civil society and international actors must prioritize durable solutions to these problems. Establishing security and stability will not only allow for more effective development and reconstruction efforts, but will also ensure that forward progress is not undone by continued violence.

SUMMARY OF THE SITUATION IN BOUAR

Unfortunately, a detailed summary of the research conducted in Bouar and the surrounding area was not possible due to a lack of available personnel.

RESPONSE OPTIONS

a. Options de Réponse – Boda

Problèmes Clés	Options de Réponse déjà sur place	Options de Réponses (suggérer par les interviewés, ou par l'équipes.)	Acteurs de Réponse	Quel élément du CAF / quel but ?
Boda (avec application pour tous les endroits)				
Chômage	Cash for work (CRS, OIM) ; en trade aide (Commerçants) ; des faïres pour connecter besoins à labor (CRS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Créer les options d'emploi formelle et informelle Centre de formation et réinsertion des jeunes dés œvré Programme de fond d'appui pour relancer les activités économiques Mise en place des projets de développement Faire de la promotion des activités génératrice de revenue Favoriser l'exploitation minière et organiser l'exploitation minière Reprise de société forestière (IFB et ECOFAC) 	Les ONG (Tearfund, CRS, OIM), Le gouvernement	Répondre aux griefs
Destruction des maisons	Aide pour les matériaux/argent des construction (CRS) ; des faïres pour connecter besoins à labor (CRS) ; dans certains quartiers, la communauté a déjà commencé de construire leurs maisons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construire les maisons en la taille de ménage Meilleurs kits de reconstruction des maisons Retourner le terrain occupé aux propriétaires 	Les ONG (CRS), Le gouvernement, Les bénéficiaires	Augmenter la résilience
Exclusion	Programmes d'inclusion pour les jeunes (OFCA/Mutuëlle) ; action culturelle et sportif (Jeunes, OFCA/Mutuëlle) ; encourager le libre circulation (communauté)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sensibilisation dans la vivre ensemble dans les communautés Favoriser le retour des déplacés Organiser les activités et fêtes pour favoriser l'inclusion de toute la communauté 	Les leadeurs communautaires, la société civile de Boda, l'administration, les ONG (Search for Common Ground, CRS, COOPi, DRC), La Plateforme Confessionnel	Appuyer les acteurs clés de la paix ; Augmenter la résilience
Marginalisation	Rien			
Pauvreté et la destruction de la système économique	Travaux sur les secteur santé, agriculture privée, logement, alimentaire, cash for work (ONG) ; Début de relance d'activité commercial (commerçants et operateur économique)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Donnez l'appui pour rétablir les troupeaux des éleveurs Donnez l'appui pour relancer les champs des agriculteurs Donnez l'appui pour soutenir les marchés Grandissez les programmes de cash for work Prise en charge une personne vulnérable Faire la construction des maisons Installer les centres de formation professionnelle Faciliter l'accès aux services sociaux de base ('eau, santé, électricité, école, etc.) Donnez l'appui pour relancer les chantiers miniers Faciliter le transport pour les échanges commerciaux entre Boda, Bangui, et les autres pays Relancer des groupements et des coopératives Initier les petit et moyen entreprise Créer un banc de credit 	L'état, Les ONG nationale et internationale	Augmenter performance institutionnelle ; Eviter les modèles sociaux négatif, promouvoir les modèles sociaux positif

Problèmes Clés	Options de Réponse déjà sur place	Options de Réponses (suggérer par les interviewés, ou par l'équipes.)	Acteurs de Réponse	Quel élément du CAF / quel but ?
Manque de respect pour les autorités locale	Sensibilisation des jeunes (OFCA/ Mutuelle, Plateforme Confessionnel) ; Le message dans chaque église/ mosquée (Individuel)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sensibilisation de jeunes Installer une programme d'éducation civique à la base Construire et renforcer des maisons des jeunes et de culture Organiser des fêtes civique pour les jeunes 	La système d'éducation nationale, la mouvement de jeunesse, OFCA/ Mutuelle, L'état, les systèmes religieux	Détourner les Acteurs de Conflit Clés (Mobilisateurs)
Inefficacité, Corruption, et Mal Gouvernance de l'état	Installation/Début de l'autorité de l'état (L'état)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revaloriser les salaires des fonctionner et leurs retraités Reconstruction des infrastructures de l'état Reprise de pouvoir publique Favoriser la bonne gestion du budget de l'état Installer un programme de lutter contre la corruption, fraude, et détournement Favoriser l'inclusion de toutes les parties prenantes Renforcement de la capacité de fonctionner dans le domaine de gestion, financement, et administration 	Le gouvernement, la société civile, les forces sécuritaires de Boda	Augmenter performance institutionnelle
Analphabétisme et manque de capacité d'éducation	L'appui pour les écoles de Mission (Intersource, UNICEF) ; Réfection des écoles (UNICEF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renforcer les structures scolaires avec kits, personnelle titulaire Subventionner la scolarisation des enfants pour les parents Favoriser la cantine scolaire Créer le centre d'alphabétisation et de remise à niveau 	La système d'éducation nationale, les autorité locales, Les ONGs (Intersource, UNICEF), l'enseignement privé, les parents (associations des parents et d'élève)	Augmenter la résilience ; Augmenter performance institutionnelle
Manque des infrastructure	Cash for Work sur le routes (OIM, CRS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installer des programmes pour vouloir, reconstruire, ou construire les infrastructures de l'état (routier, bâtiments, fonctionnaire, etc.) 	L'état, les ONGs (OIM, CRS, UNICEF, OMS, PUD)	Augmenter performance institutionnelle ; Eviter les modèles sociaux négatif
Les prix des aliments sont trop cher	Rien	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Envoyer des techniciennes agricoles pour diriger les travaux Sensibiliser les agriculteurs Trouver les semences améliorées Créer des centres de formation agricole pour donner les nouvelles techniques agricoles Relancer l'élevage de volaille et du petit bétail Créer une marché hebdomadaire 	L'administration municipale, Coli et Waligala de Boda, les producteurs, les operateurs économiques, les ONGs	Augmenter la résilience ; Augmenter performance institutionnelle

Problèmes Clés	Options de Réponse déjà sur place	Options de Réponses (suggérer par les interviewés, ou par l'équipes.)	Acteurs de Réponse	Quel élément du CAF / quel but ?
Justice et processus de crime	Le tribunal a été installé/réinstallé récemment (L'état)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrêter et traduire les auteurs de crime • Mobiliser les leaders de les deux communautés religieuses pour travailler sur les mécanismes de justice communautaire • Accélérer le processus de criminels au niveau de la justice • Traduire et punir conformément à la loi • Reconstruction des prisons 	L'état (ministre de la justice), les forces d'ordres	Répondre aux griefs ; Augmenter la résilience ; Augmenter performance institutionnelle ; Détourner les Acteurs de Conflit Clés (Mobilisateurs) ; Préparer pour les déclencheurs potentiels
Traumatisme	Centre de cout est sur place (COOPI) ; L'appui de SGBV victimes (Femmes Juristes/Femmes de Plateforme Confessionnel)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financier et assurer les réparations pour les victimes de la guerre • Plaidoyer pour les victimes de SGBV en spécifique • Mise en place un centre d'appui, de cout, et d'assistance psychosocial • Information, éducation, et conseil pour la guérison du traumatisme • Favoriser l'accès au soin pour les traumatisés mentaux 	Les ONG (COOPI), la ministre de santé, la société civil	Répondre aux griefs ; Eviter les modèles sociaux négatif
Présence des groupes armés et détention des armes qui facilité le crime	Prise de conscience de groupes armés et sensibilisation pour la paix (les groupes armés) ; L'interdiction de circulé avec les armes (MINUSCA, les forces d'ordre)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mise en place une programme de DDRR • Répression des acteurs clés de crime • Sensibiliser la communauté et les groupes armés pour le DDRR • Sécuriser les routes, suppression des barrières illégales • Réinstallation et réhabilitation de FACA dans les zones • Surveiller les anciens chefs de guerre présent dans la localité 	MINUSCA, les forces d'ordre (FACA, gendarme, et police), Ministres de Défense, la Justice et de l'Intérieur	Augmenter la résilience ; Augmenter performance institutionnelle ; Détourner les Acteurs de Conflit Clés (Mobilisateurs) ; Préparer pour les déclencheurs potentiels
Manque d'organisation dans l'exploitation des ressources minières	Un projet pour la distribution des carnets de chefs de chantier, des artisans minier, et des ouvriers (?)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organiser les ouvriers miniers en groupement et en coopérative • Faire les formations sur les nouvelle techniques des exploitations artisanales • Réviser les barèmes du prix du diamant • Favoriser l'exploitation semi-industrielle • Lutter contre les ventes anarchiques de diamant et de l'or 	Ministre de Mines, les exploitants minières (coopératives et groupements)	Augmenter performance institutionnelle ; Eviter les modèles sociaux négatif, promouvoir les modèles sociaux positif

Problèmes Clés	Options de Réponse déjà sur place	Options de Réponses (suggérer par les interviewés, ou par l'équipes.)	Acteurs de Réponse	Quel élément du CAF / quel but ?
Gouvernance d'assistance et coordination	Réunions fréquent pour coordination (ONG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renforcer les réunions de coordination des ONGs Créer la synergie dans les interventions des ONG Impliquer les autorités locales dans la planification des projets 	Les ONG, le Ministre du Plan et de coopération, les autorités locales	Augmenter performance institutionnelle
Boganangone et Bodjoula (en particulier)				
Sécurité	Rien	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Augmenter la capacité des force d'ordre Assister les logistiques Prévoir une maison pénitentiaire (La reste est couvert par Boda - Présence des groupes armés et détention des armes qui facilité le crime) Agrandir le couverture d'action des ONG pour les endroit éloignée 	L'état, les forces d'ordre	
Non-assistance alimentaire	Distribution infrequenté (CRS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agrandir le couverture d'action des ONG pour les endroit éloignée 	Les ONG	
Manque d'infrastructure physique et social	Rien	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construire l'infrastructure sous-préfectorale, des gendarmerie Augmenter les routes et les ponts Agrandir les hôpitaux et fournir personnel qualifiés et des médicaments 	Les ONG, l'état	
Manque des semences	Rien	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agrandir le couverture d'action des ONG pour les endroit éloignée 	Les ONG	
L'appui pour les groupes vulnérables (veuves, orphelins, déplacés)	Rien	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appuyer les famille d'accueil, des femmes abandonnées, les femmes veuves, et des orphelins (plupart Peuhl) Réintroduire l'autorité de l'état pour réinviter les déplacés qui restent dans la brousse 	Les ONG	
Ngotto et Bossoui (en particulier)				
Manque d'infrastructure physique et social	Rien	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Augmenter les routes et les ponts, installer un bac motoriser Renforcer les structures sanitaires avec personnels qualifié et avec matériaux Assurer une budget annuelle avec la documentation officielle au niveau municipale Renforcer la capacité de clinique maternelle avec personnes qualifié et fournir une ambulance Trouver des solutions pour les problèmes des routes qui empêchent le commerce (voir de solutions infrastructurel) 	L'état, Les ONG	
Commerce inexistant	Rien		Les operateurs économiques, Les ONG, l'état	
Pas de présence des ONG, l'état	Rien	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agrandir le couverture d'action des ONG pour les endroits éloignés Suivi sur le terrain Installer les autorité permanente 	Les ONG, l'état	

b. Options de Réponse – Bossangoa

Location	Problèmes Clé	Options de Réponse déjà en place	Options de Réponse à proposer	Acteurs de Réponse	Quel éléments du CAF		
Bowaye Kouki, Nana Bakassa, Ben-Zambé	Transhumance	Réconciliation ; Peuhl/ Agriculteur ; Cohésion Sociale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sensibilisation proximité à la population (Peuhl) Doter de ccs en moyen afin de matériel pour mener les sensibilisations Augmentation des efforts de CCCS (éducation, information, sensibilisation) des 2 communautés afin de les préparer à la réconciliation Meilleure coordination entre les acteurs qui travaille dans la Domain de cohésion sociale dans la zone 	CCCS, CDJP, CRS CCCS, CDJP, CRS CCCS, CDJP, CRS	Augmenter la résilience ; Répondre aux griefs ; Eviter les modèles sociaux négatif ; promouvoir les modèles sociaux positif		
			Insécurité	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plaidoyer auprès de gouvernement par l'installation (partage d'information concernant les défis sécuritaires vécus par les communautés) Sensibilisation sur le pré-DDRR 	Gouvernement, Minusca, FACA	Augmenter performance institutionnelle	
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinstallation des forces de l'ordre et de sécurité dans les sous-préfectures (police et gendarmerie) Installation de la FACA 	Gouvernement, Minusca, FACA, Gouvernement, Minusca, FACA	Augmenter la résilience	
			Restauration de l'autorité de l'état	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plaidoyer des villages cite auprès du gouvernement pour l'installation des forces armes de la FACA D'augmenter les effectifs des éléments de la force de sécurité Redonner la crédibilité aux autorités locales suite aux créations des postes avances de la FACA 	Gouvernement, Minusca, FACA Gouvernement, Minusca, FACA	Augmenter performance institutionnelle ; Détourner les Acteurs de Conflit Clés (Mobilisateurs) ; Préparer pour les déclencheurs potentiels	
Bossangoa	Cohésion sociale	Activités CCCS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intensification des activités de la cohésion sociale pour le changement de comportements et de mentalités dans la commune touche par le conflit. Formations techniques technique et autres efforts d'intégration des jeunes dans certaines activités génératrice de revenue Dotation en matériels de bureau et en moyens logistique aux gendarmes/police Réhabilitation des deux maisons d'arrêt de la ville 	CCCS, CDJP, CRS, Cordaid	Eviter les modèles sociaux négatif, promouvoir les modèles sociaux positif Augmenter la résilience		
			Insécurité	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assurer la sécurité des agents de justice pour leur permettre d'accomplir leur mission Financier la CDJP pour les réalisations des activités de la cohésion sociale Intensifier les activités de la cohésion sociale surtout dans la sensibilisation de proximité de la population cible 	CCCS, CDJP, CRS, Acted, DRC, SFCG Gouvernement, Minusca, FACA Gouvernement, Minusca, FACA	Augmenter performance institutionnelle Eviter les déclencheurs Augmenter performance institutionnelle	

c. Options de Réponse – Bouar / Nana Mambere/ Sous Préfecture de Bouar (Commune de Niem Yelewa et Gaudrot)

Problèmes Clés	Options de Réponse déjà sur place	Options de Réponses (suggérer par les interviewés, ou par l'équipes.)	Acteurs de Réponse
<p>Transhumance :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problème de conflit entre agriculteurs et éleveurs ; • Vol de bétail par certaines milices antibalaka ; • Mauvaise délimitation des zones de cultures et de pâturages ; • Insécurité dans les couloirs de transhumance ; • Injustice et corruption des autorités locales (Maire, Chefs de groupe/ Ardo, Lamido/ quartiers, villages). • Présence massive des peulhs armes ; • Représailles des peulhs armes sur la population ; • Non respect des zones de cultures par certains éleveurs ; • Destruction des champs par les troupeaux des peulhs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faire un travail de cohésion sociale à la base entre les agriculteurs et éleveurs ; • Renforcer les capacités des agriculteurs et éleveurs dans le domaine de la gestion et résolution pacifique des conflits ; • Implication des techniciens de surface en élevage et agriculture • Sensibilisation et implication des autorités locales dans le processus de cohésion sociale en vue de rapprocher les deux communautés ; • Formation sur la cartographie des ressources, risques/conflits, les droits humains, et de la guérison du traumatisme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Création d'une Plateforme régionale et sous régionale dans le domaine de la problématique sur la Transhumance • Reconstruire des infrastructures (sanitaire vétérinaire, marche à bétail et des points d'eau et pâturage • Sécurisation des couloirs de transhumance • Faire participer activement les Agriculteurs, les Eleveurs et Techniciens de surface en la matière de cohésion sociale, les autorités locales dans la résolution de conflits en matière de la transhumance • Respect des zones de cultures et de pâturages par les éleveurs et agriculteurs ; • En cas de violation ou de destruction des champs par les troupeaux, il faut réparation du dommage cause conformément à la loi. • Désarmement des Groupes armes et Peulhs armes de la zone et dans les couloirs de la transhumance • Eviter la corruption, l'injustice ; • Déployer des forces de défense au niveau du village ABBA (frontalier) avec le Cameroun) et les forces intérieures : la police, la Gendarmerie à Yelewa centre. • Dotation des forces internes en moyens logistiques et ressources humaines quantitatifs et qualitatifs • Contrôler les troupes des éleveurs dès leur entrée sur le territoire centrafricain ; • Formation de communautés (chrétiennes et musulmanes et peulhs) sur les Droits Humains et connaissances des lois locales, de cohésion sociale ; • Sensibilisation, implication des jeunes des deux communautés pour la consolidation de la paix et la cohabitation ou le vivre ensemble 	<p>Le Ministère de l'Agriculture et de l'Élevage, Les Personnels Institutionnels de l'Élevage et de l'Agriculture : DROP, SOPA, SOSA, Coordinateur FNEC, CRS dans le Cadre du Projet de Transhumance a Niem et a Bouar Le Maire (CNT) de Niem, Les autorités locales, Chefs de groupes et de quartiers, les Leaders religieux (Plateforme Interreligieuse), Sensibilisation, Information et éducation dans les Medias locaux tels que : Radio diocésaine SIRIRI et radio Maigaro</p>

Problèmes Clés	Options de Réponse déjà sur place	Options de Réponses (suggérer par les interviewés, ou par l'équipes.)	Acteurs de Réponse
<p>Problème de Cohésion sociale :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupation illégale des maisons, biens, terres des musulmans par certaines milices ou hommes de mauvaise foi, • Détention illégale des armes par les milices antibalaka et autres dans les quartiers, villages ou régions de la préfecture et sous-préfectures • Problème de justice populaire de manière généralisée, • Accusation de la sorcellerie • Le taux du chômage élevé des jeunes • Problématique sur le retour des déplacés internes et réfugiés • Le problème de l'exclusion économique et marginalisation de certaines communautés(Musulmane) sur les places de marches, • L'injustice sociale 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension de la cohésion sociale dans le projet de société ou communautaire • Sensibilisation des deux communautés (chrétiennes et musulmanes) en matière de cohésion sociale • Formation surtout des Réfugiés(Musulmans) sur leur retour en cohésion sociale le vivre ensemble, à la guérison du traumatisme et la reconstruction de la communauté • La Réhabilitation et reconstruction des maisons détruites par la crise • Renforcement des capacités des autorités judiciaires : la police, Gendarmerie, les Forces l'Ordre (FACA) en matière de cohésion sociale, au respect de droit de l'homme, à la lutte contre l'injustice, la corruption, les racketage (argent) sur les barrières et la douane ; 	<p>Insérer dans les projets selon les domaines d'intervention des ONGs Nationales et Internationales le Programme Intensif et prolonger de Cohésion sociale par exemple :</p> <p>Projet SECC (CRS) basée à Bouar, Mercy Corps, Fédération Mondiale Luthérienne (FLM), Coordaid, UNHCR, Caritas, CDJP et la Plateforme interreligieuse etc...</p> <p>utilisation des Medias Locaux pour la sensibilisation en matière de la cohésion sociale (Radio Diocésaine SIRIRI et Maigaro)</p> <p>La MINUSCA</p>
<p>Insécurité Frontalière entre RCA/Cameroun</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insécurité sur les axes Bouar-Garouamboulai par exemple : Village de Foro, Ndiba, Zoukombo, Petit Doula etc . <p>Ensuite sur les zones ou couloir de la Transhumance : Besson, Yelewa, Gaudrot avec la présence des groupes armes (des milices), les peulhs armes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Représailles des peulhs armes sur la population autochtone • Le vol des bétails par certains milices (AntiBalaka) • Le Braquage, Banditisme • Mauvaise gestion dans le cadre de DDRR pourrait entrainer le conflit 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restauration de l'autorité de l'Etat dans son ensemble ; • Dotation et équipements des forces intérieures en moyens logistique pour mieux exercer leur travail • Que le DDRR soit réalisable • Cantonnement et désarmement des Antibalaka et Seleka • Des Groupes armes, peulhs armes dans les couloirs de transhumance • Assurer la sécurité et le retour des éleveurs et réfugiés • Assistance aux victimes de guerre, pillages envers les réfugiés, déplacés • Lutter contre les injustices sociales et l'impunité (appliquer la justice punitive que les bourreaux doivent répondre à leurs actes devant la justice • Création des activités génératrices de revenus, formation professionnelle et technique des jeunes 	<p>Implication du Gouvernement en Place :</p> <p>Le Ministère de la Défense, la Gendarmerie, la police, les FACA de Justice, Appui et Accompagnement des Forces des Nations Unies mais pas la Sangaris</p>

d. Options de Réponse – Gouvernance – Niveau Nationale

Problèmes Clés	Options de Réponse déjà sur place	Options de Réponses (suggérer par les interviewés, ou par l'équipes.)	Acteurs de Réponse	Quel élément du CAF / quel but ?
Insécurité <ul style="list-style-type: none"> mal fonction des polices/gendarmes l'Etat se concentre trop sur Bangui 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> La réforme du secteur de sécurité (SSR) - Soulever l'embargo des armes de FACA Gestion de per diem, alimentaire, donner les salaires réguliers Doit conscientalisé les chefs des FACA qui dirigent les soldats sur le terrain 	PNUD/ MINUSCA/ AU, CEAC, (Tchad,France)	Augmenter performance institutionnelle ; Détourner les Acteurs de Conflit Clés (Mobilisateurs) ; Préparer pour les déclencheurs potentiels ; Eviter les modèles sociaux négatif, promouvoir les modèles sociaux positif Répondre aux griefs ;
Insécurité - Criminalité, Barrières illégales, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FACA n'ont pas des salaires, quelques quitte leurs postes Prolifération des groupes armés 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Désarmer les bandits, après la restauration de l'autorité de l'Etat et FACA 	Ministères de Défense, Sécurité, FACA, autorités locaux	
Insécurité Transfrontière <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Les frontières sont longues et inaccessibles, frontières poreuses, facile à entrer dans le pays par des forces étrangères Soudan / Tchad est désert 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sécurise des frontières (par FACA - après la première réforme FACA) Abolir la LRA en RCA 	Ministères de : Défense, Sécurité Publique, Administrative Territoire, Douane, Finance	
Prolifération des armes	Désarmement volontaire	DDRR	Min Défense/ Chef de DDRR	
DDRR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Échec DDRR dans le passé - la corruption Insecureté à cause des grandes armes 	Pre-DDRR – 1000 Seleka – 1500 AB, 500 de 13ieme, arrondissement, PK5, ne seront pas admissibles parce que ne pas avoir de grands armes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Améliorer la gestion des DDRR - des objectifs clairs Soldats démobilisés choisissent eux-mêmes travailler, avec des possibilités de génération de revenus, e.g .mécanique, agriculture, élevages, Doit inclure tous les groupes, AB sans les grands armes Programmes de cohesion sociale 	Min of Defense, Réconciliation MINUSCA, ONGs IOM (difficile de trouver les ONGs pour travailler à DDRR) UNICEF	

<p>Enfants soldats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problème de chômage, enfants des rues, et quelques retour aux groupes armés • Certains ont été soldats pendant de nombreuses années, difficile de trouver des solutions pour eux 	<p>Education, réintégration, formation professionnelle, soutien psychosocial</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formation professionnelle avec génération de revenus, autrement, ne pas mettre les armes. • Pour les très jeunes, doit mettre dans les familles d'origine ou d'accueil - mais elles ont besoin de soutien • faire des recherches sur les familles d'accueil et de réinsertion des enfants soldats dans la société • do research to see why it works it not, we have a problem of structure, we don't have orphanages or reinsertions, - to re-encadrations – • Restructurer le ministère des Affaires Sociales pour mieux soutenir des familles d'accueil • Cree les services psychosociaux • Capitaliser sur les normes sociales existantes d'accepter les enfants dans des familles, et promouvoir la solidarité de la passe 	<p>Min Aff Soc/ UNICEF Autres NGOS Enfants sans frontières, Vitalité Plus</p>	
<p>Impunité et mal gouvernance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impunité - évasions • Juges envoyés prisonniers à prison - mais les gardes prennent l'argent pour les laisser disparaître 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promouvoir la bonne gouvernance : rétablir la justice • Améliorer la capacité des gardiens de prison, et le personnel doit être contrôlé • Poursuivre les gardes trouvés libérer les prisonniers 	<p>Govt</p>	
<p>Juges corrompus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mal payé • menacer • lié à l'insécurité 	<p>Cour d'appel peut renverser les mauvaises décisions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payer les salaires adéquats • Haut Conseil de Magistrature doit améliorer les règles et la mise en ouvre disciplinaires • Utiliser de bons juges avec intégrité à titre d'exemples, donner des prix • Programmes d'échange, adhérer à des associations internationales de juges • Assurer une meilleure sécurité pour les juges (et la société en général) 	<p>Min of Justice, UNDP, World Bank, ONGs, Haut Conseil de Magistrature</p>	<p>Augmenter performance institutionnelle ; Eviter les modèles sociaux négatif, promouvoir les modèles sociaux positif</p>
<p>Mal Gouvernance- Nepotism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alliances sont grandes et difficiles - problème d'ethnicité et mentalité 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensibilisation des gens politiques - conscientisation • Contrôle par l'Assemblée nationale - règlements et implémentation 	<p>Min Territoire, l'Assemblée nationale</p>	

<p>Mal fonction des autorités locales</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absente • Mal formés • Mal éduqué 	UNDP programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restaurer l'autorité de l'Etat • Prioriser la méritocratie • Reconstruction physique des bureaux, matériaux, • Examen personnel existant, si nécessaire les envoyer à l'INAM • Intégrer les jeunes - coordonner avec le Conseil National de Jeunesse, Conseil des Femmes , des stagiaires 	Govt, UNDP, World Bank	
<p>Mal Gouvernance - Corruption</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensibilisation contre la corruption - toute la population, institutions, écoles, etc. • Mesures contre la corruption - une loi anti-corruption doit être créée et implémenter • Contrôle par l'Assemblée nationale 	Govt; ONG, UN Min of Justice, Finance, Cellule Primature l'Assemblée nationale	
<p>Manque des Services de 'Etat - Education</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construire et réparer des écoles • Envoyer des enseignants, fournir plus de formation, donner les salaires supplémentaires pour les écoles rurales 	Min Soc Aff Min Education UNICEF, ONGs	
<p>Manque des Services de Etat Santé</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construire et réparer des centres de santé • Envoyer des personnels qualifiés, fournir plus de formation, donner les salaires supplémentaires pour les centres rurale 	Min Santé UN, ONGs	
<p>Manque des Services de 'Etat Routes</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construire et réparer des routes, en générale, et entre les villes et les villages, pour que les gens peuvent transporter les produits aux marches 	Min Transportation, Communication	
<p>Exclusion/Marginalization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manque de musulmans / Peuhls dans les positions du gouvernement 	La Constitution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mettre en œuvre la constitution • Sensibilisez la population - éducation civique pour l'inclusion, discrimination, tolérance, et l'importance d'éducation. • Fournir plus d'écoles, près des zones transhumance 	Gouvernement, l'Assemblée Nationale, UN, ONGs	Répondre aux griefs ; Augmenter performance institutionnelle ; Eviter les modèles sociaux négatif, promouvoir les modèles sociaux positif

e. Options de Réponse – Ressources Naturel – Niveau National

Problèmes Clés	Options de Réponse déjà sur place	Options de Réponses (suggérer par les interviewés, ou par l'équipe.)	Acteurs de Réponse	Quel élément du CAF / quel but ?
Conflits sur les ressources naturelles	Beaucoup d'espoir avec les élections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> L'Etat doit assurer et contrôler la gestion des ressources naturelles qui constituent l'une des principales sources de conflit Sécurité suffisante Médiation entre les parties 	Gouvernement, ONG Internationales, ONG Nationales, Associations, Partenaires nationaux et internationaux	Augmenter performance institutionnelle ; Détourner les Acteurs de Conflit Clés (Mobilisateurs) ; Préparer pour les déclencheurs potentiels ; Eviter les modèles sociaux négatif, promouvoir les modèles sociaux positifs ; Répondre aux griefs ;
Mauvaise gestion et répartition des ressources naturelles	Restauration de l'autorité de l'Etat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bonne gestion et meilleure répartition des ressources naturelles (or, diamant, bois, cobalt) Contrôle par l'Assemblée Nationale 	Ministère des mines, ministère des eaux, forêts, chasse et pêche et l'Assemblée Nationale	
Pas assez d'agents des eaux et Forêts, du ministère des mines et contrôleurs des prix du ministère du commerce		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sécurité suffisante Reformation de gouvernement avec assez des agents 	Ministère des eaux, forêts, chasse et pêche, ministère de la défense, ministère du commerce, association pour la défense des consommateurs, forces internationales	Augmenter performance institutionnelle ;
Corruption		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploitation du pétrole, de l'uranium, du fer et ciment etc. Opérateurs économiques doivent respecter les textes réglementaires (Code minier, Code forestier et du secteur du commerce) Sensibilisation, éducation et information de la population à travers les médias (multi -médias) et le théâtre, dans le cadre de la lutte contre la déforestation avec ses corollaires qui sont le réchauffement climatique et la désertification.¹ 	Ministère des mines, ministère des eaux, forêts, chasse et pêche, ministère du commerce, ministère de la défense, ministère de la communication, Directeurs de publication des journaux, Parlement pour voter de nouvelles lois, association des revendeurs de bois (Amis Bois) , association pour la protection de l'environnement etc.	Augmenter performance institutionnelle ; Eviter les modèles sociaux négatif, promouvoir les modèles sociaux positifs ; Répondre aux griefs ;

Problèmes Clés	Options de Réponse déjà sur place	Options de Réponses (suggérer par les interviewés, ou par l'équipes.)	Acteurs de Réponse	Quel élément du CAF / quel but ?
<p>Prédation des ressources naturelles par des groupes illégitimes armés --- Insécurité</p>	<p>MINUSCA/ FACA (Forces armées centrafricaines)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amélioration de secteur de sécurité • Renforcement des capacités de COMIGEM et ORGEM (structures mises en place par l'Etat à travers le ministère des mines et de la géologie pour l'achat des matières premières) • Renforcement des capacités des bureaux d'achat d'or et diamant, bijoutiers, artisans miniers, collecteurs et vendeurs, ministère des mines • Subvention des bijoutiers par les ONG internationales • Allègement des taxes reversées à l'Etat sur la vente de l'or et diamant • Allègement des patentes des collecteurs et artisans de diamant, • Allègement des taxes des revendeurs de bois et petits commerçants 	<p>MINUSCA/FACA, Ministère de la défense, Ministère de l'administration du territoire, ministère de la Sécurité ONG Internationales, ONG nationales, associations, Université de Bangui, Faculté des Sciences de l'Université, Faculté des Lettres et Faculté de Droit, ISDR, Cellule de gestion des ressources forestières (conformément à l'une des recommandations du Forum de Bangui).</p>	<p>Augmenter performance institutionnelle ; Détourner les Acteurs de Conflit Clés (Mobilisateurs) ; Préparer pour les déclencheurs potentiels ; Eviter les modèles sociaux négatif, promouvoir les modèles sociaux positif Répondre aux griefs ;</p>
<p>Déforestation</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reforestation par le gouvernement et des communautés locales • Sensibilisation 	<p>Ministère des eaux, forêts, chasse et pêche, ONG nationales et locaux Ministère de la communication, Directeurs de publication des journaux etc.</p>	<p>Augmenter performance institutionnelle ;</p>

f. Options de Réponse - Transhumance Et Refugies/IDPs – Niveau National / Bangui (Boali)

Problèmes Clés	Options de Réponse déjà sur place	Options de Réponses (suggérer par les interviewés, ou par l'équipes.)	Acteurs de Réponse	Elément du CAF / quel but ?
Refugiés et IDPs				
Retour des déplacés et Réfugiés	Dialogue inter communautaire	Appui aux comités locaux de paix et de cohésion	Comités de paix, ONGs	Augmenter la résilience
Problème lié à la cohabitation entre les communautés	Activités relatives à la cohésion sociale	Renforcement de capacité en médiation et en cohésion, mener des activités mixtes ; Promouvoir le respect de la culture de l'autre	Les ONGs	Augmenter la résilience
Maisons détruites	Souhaiter et encourager le retour	Reconstruire les maisons détruites par la communauté avec l'appui des acteurs humanitaires en utilisant ceux qui avaient détruit ces maisons	La population et le Gvm	Augmenter performance institutionnelle ; Détourner les Acteurs de Conflit Clés (Mobilisateurs) ; Préparer pour les déclencheurs potentiels ; Eviter les modèles sociaux négatif, promouvoir les modèles sociaux positif Répondre aux griefs
Occupation illégale des maisons	Sensibilisation auprès de la population	Libérer les maisons illégalement occupées, create new shelter program; state give land ppl give local materials,	Autorités et communautés locales, ONG	Augmenter la résilience
Mauvaise gouvernance : exclusion, marginalisation, injustice	Prise de conscience des acteurs de conflit	Promouvoir la bonne gouvernance : rétablir la justice Sensibilisation, inclusion, tolérance	Gouvernement	Augmenter performance institutionnelle
Peur du retour des déplacés du fait de la détention illégale d'armes de guerre par les groupes armés et une partie de la population		Rétablir la sécurité dans les zones de retour DDRR	MINUSCA et le Ministère de Défense, du Désarmement et de la réforme du secteur de la sécurité	Performance institutionnelle ; Répondre aux griefs
Chômage des jeunes : manipulation par acteurs de conflit	Mise en place des AGR dans le cadre des THIMO	Promouvoir l'emploi des jeunes, promouvoir la formation professionnelle, génération de revenus	Gvm, autres acteurs de développement et les acteurs économiques	Répondre aux griefs
Refus de cohabitation entre les différentes communautés	Sensibilisation sur la cohésion sociale	Guérir les traumatismes Sensibilisation sur la cohésion sociale, projets, activités	Gvm/ ONGs, autorités religieuses en locales	Augmenter la résilience
Transhumance				

Problèmes Clés	Options de Réponse déjà sur place	Options de Réponses (suggérer par les interviewés, ou par l'équipe.)	Acteurs de Réponse	Elément du CAF / quel but ?
Non-respect des couloirs de transhumance à cause de l'insécurité	Création des nouveaux couloirs de transhumance	Création des nouveaux couloirs de transhumance Sécurisation des couloirs de transhumance et le respect des textes en la matière	Min ; de l'élevage et celui de l'agriculture, FNEC, ANDE	Augmenter performance institutionnelle ; Détourner les Acteurs de Conflit Clés
Implication des éleveurs étrangers armés	Réunion tripartite (Tchad, Cameroun, RCA) mais en veilleuse	Règlementer l'entrée des éleveurs étrangers sur le territoire, assurer le contrôle aux frontières ; Relancer la réunion tripartite	CEMAC, CEEAC, Min de l'Administration du territoire, et Défense	(Mobilisateurs) ; Préparer pour les déclencheurs potentiels ;
Multiplication des groupes d'auto-défense	Création des comités villageois pour la résolution des conflits	Redéployer les forces de défense et de sécurité sur l'ensemble du territoire afin de restaurer l'autorité de l'Etat, Désarmer les groupes armés Création des comités villageois pour la résolution des conflits	Conseil de Sécurité des Nations-Unies, MINUSCA, Autorités nationales et locales	
Vol des b ufs des éleveurs	Sensibiliser les communautés locales	Assurer la sécurité des éleveurs, appliquer les textes relatifs aux zones de culture et de l'élevage ; Reconstruire les cheptels des éleveurs Instaurer les systèmes de résolution de conflits	Gouvernement, Leaders communautaires FNEC, Gvm,	
Violence des éleveurs et groupes armés	Vengeance ou représailles	DDRR pour des groupes armés, désarmement des éleveurs, punir les coupables, sensibiliser		
Rechauffement climatique	Changement de couloirs de transhumance, augmentation du nombre des éleveurs étrangers	Reconstruire les infrastructures (santé vétérinaire marché à bétail point d'eau et pâturage), reboisement Instaurer les systèmes de surveillance	Min du développement ONG, UN	Augmenter performance institutionnelle ; Préparer pour les déclencheurs potentiels ;

1. **Exemple** : reboisement de la colline de Gbazoubangui par une ONG nationale qui a replanté 120 000 arbres dans le cadre d'un projet créé sur les cendres d'un ancien projet allemand GTZ qui travaille dans les préfectures de l'Ombella-Mpoko, Ouham et Sud-Ouest de la RCA, (Sangha-Mbaéré, Mambéré-Kadei et Lobaye) en collaboration avec la Cellule Participative de Gestion des Ressources Forestières du Ministère des Eaux, Forêts, Chasse et Pêche.

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