

News bulletin

7 - 14 July 2008

Highlights

- Mission of the Peace Building Commission CAR configuration, 10 - 12 June
- Supporting health care systems in Paoua and Ngaoundaye
- Assistance to the displaced of Kamba Kota by the International Committee of the Red Cross
- Mission to the far south east of CAR, 2 - 9 July

Background and security

Mission of the PBC CAR configuration

Pursuant to CAR having been placed on the agenda of the Peace Building Commission (PBC) on 12 June, a mission lead by Jan Grauls, Ambassador of Belgium with the United Nations and Chairperson of the CAR configuration of the PBC, visited Bangui from 10 to 12 July.

During that period, the mission met with Central African authorities, including the President, members of the diplomatic Corps, and representatives of the UN and NGOs. Following the visit, Mr. Grauls will present the CAR configuration with a report that will help to guide the discussions on the nature and the scope of the PBC's integrated strategy for the country.

MICOPAX as of 12 July

The authority over the FOMUC, the forces of the *Economic and Monetary Union of Central Africa* (CEMAC) in CAR, was transferred to the *Economic Community of the Central African States* (CEEAC) on 12 July. The forces are henceforth called the *Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in Central Africa* (MICOPAX). A Special Representative of the CEEAC will be appointed as political and diplomatic head of the mission.

Current events

Health care in Paoua

At the beginning of the rainy season, *Doctors without Borders France* (MSF-F) noted a spike of malaria cases. The number of cases increased considerably in the different wards of the sub-provincial hospital in Paoua in the north west of the

country. The reports for May and June show positive results for half of the rapid malaria tests (para-check) conducted by the out-patient ward of the hospital. In pediatrics, the tests were positive for two-thirds of the children under five years of age. The NGO also admitted an average of 30 cases per month to the malnutrition section, the condition often being linked to another illness such as malaria.

MSF-F offers medical support to the hospital, which has a capacity of about 100 beds, and to six health posts in villages near Paoua. In each post, a first aid nurse provides treatment for common illnesses and refers more complicated cases to the hospital.



MSF France pictured by the children of Paoua

MSF-F has about 160 staff on its payroll for the medical programme in Paoua sub-province. Medical care for patients in the hospital and in the six health posts is free. The hospital carries out about 1,000 out-patient consultations per month, the same number of consultations as the six health posts combined. Currently, the hospital also treats 80 tuberculosis patients and it has started anti-retroviral treatment for patients co-infected with HIV.

For more information: msff-bangui-sat@paris.msf.org

Supporting health care in Ngaoundaye

Cooperazione Internazionale (COOPI), an Italian NGO, has been supporting the health service of the Ngaoundaye sub-province in collaboration with the Catholic Mission of Ngaoundaye since February 2008. In order to revive the health system in the far northwest of the country, COOPI assists the town's hospital, 23 health posts and the rural community pharmacy. Four health posts which were badly damaged by the violent conflict are being reconstructed and six are being rehabilitated. They were selected from the 23 structures based on criteria such as services offered and the size of the population covered.

The project has also made a stock of drugs available, the distribution of which is spread over the six months of the project. Among the health posts which double as centers for the Expanded Immunization Programme, four will get a refrigerator running on fuel and six received their first fuel supply. A second supply will be given in July for their cold chain equipment.

In addition, health workers and hospital and health post management committees are benefiting from professional training. The health workers also receive a bonus on top of their salary so as to reduce the financial pressure on the revolving fund of the health structures and to increase the amount of money available for the purchase of drugs.

The project ends in August and is financed by COOPI's own funds and by the Emergency Response Fund (ERF) to the amount of \$ 159,000.

For more information: munao@coopi.org

Assistance to the displaced in Kamba Kota

Last May, a humanitarian mission came across hundreds of displaced people in Kamba Kota, in Ouham province in the north west of the country. Their living conditions are particularly precarious.

In preparation for providing assistance to the displaced and host populations, the *International Committee of the Red Cross* (ICRC) first compiled a list of the displaced and the residents in Kamba Kota, respectively 1,500 and 1,000 persons. Before the end of July, the ICRC will distribute a full kit of non-food items to the displaced families in Kamba Kota and a partial kit to the residents of the village. The partial kit of non-food items comprises a bucket, a mosquito net, two hoes and two kg of soap. In addition to the aforementioned items, a full kit also contains a plastic sheet, two mats, two blankets and kitchen equipment.

For more information: bangui.bng@icrc.org

Mission to the far south east of CAR

From 2 to 9 July an inter-agency mission visited the far south east of the country, a region that suffers from the impact of the attacks by armed men last February and March thought to belong to the *Lord's Resistance Army* (LRA). The mission was led by the *Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs* (OCHA) and counted among its members representatives of the civil society of Haut-Mbomou province, the *Comité d'Aide Médicale* (CAM), COOPI, agencies of the United Nations for population (UNFPA), refugees (UNHCR), health

(WHO), children (UNICEF), and the political office (BONUCA), and media correspondents.

Besides Obo, provincial capital of Haut-Mbomou, the mission also visited the villages along the road leading to Bambouti, bordering Sudan, a 103 km route which is hardly passable. Information on the impact of the attacks on the local population was collected. Among the 111 people abducted in the region, not a single boy, girl or woman was released. Only 34 adult men were released and an additional four escaped captivity.

The mission noted that the region's population is consumed by fear and mistrust. They are afraid that armed men of whatever origin will return and deplore the national authorities' inability to protect them, in spite of the deployment of a contingent of the *Central African Armed Forces* (FACA) in Obo after the attacks.

Several mission members brought emergency aid to the violence-stricken population in the health, HIV/AIDS and water and sanitation sectors. Following the assessment of the humanitarian situation in the far south east of CAR and the emergency assistance given, a report will be put together detailing the needs, the aid provided by the mission and recommendations to the government and its development and humanitarian partners.

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