

News bulletin

18 August - 1 September 2008

Highlights

- Clashes in the northwest of CAR
- Socio-economic recovery in Paoua boosted by the Danish Refugee Council
- First evaluation of Emergency Response Fund (ERF) supported projects
- 70 Central African police officers trained by the Office of the United Nations in CAR
- First-ever allocation of \$ 2.3 million by the Common Humanitarian Fund

Background and security

Political developments

Charles Massi, who had been appointed Political Coordinator of the *Union of Democratic Forces for Unity* (UFDR) on 12 May 2008, resigned from the group on 14 August.

The *New Alliance for Progress* (NAP), a political party lead by Jean-Jacques Démafouth, who is also the Coordinator of the *Popular Army for the Restoration of Democracy* (APRD), was recognized by the Interior Ministry on 20 August. The request for registration had been deposited in 2006.

End of SOCATEL staff strike

The Central African Government on 25 August pledged FCFA 1 billion (\$ 22.7 million) to respond favorably to the demands of staff of the *Central African Telecommunications Company* (SOCATEL), on strike since 11 August.

The funds are earmarked to clear three months of staff salary arrears and to buy technical equipment for the implementation of a mobile telephone project, the two main demands of the striking employees. The strike ended the same day.

Clashes in the northwest of CAR

On 21 and 22 August, clashes took place between the APRD and a self-defence group of Talé village, at 35 km from Bozoum in the northwest of the country. The APRD reportedly kidnapped two women of the village. The self-defence group

retaliated the next day, liberating the women and capturing three APRD fighters who are now in custody in the gendarmerie of Bozoum.

Current events

Boosting Paoua's socio-economic recovery

The *Danish Refugee Council* (DRC) has supported more than 13,000 displaced, returned and vulnerable people since March 2008 in Paoua and the surrounding area with a variety of socio-economic recovery activities. As a result, 11 hectares of low-lying land meant for rice-growing were rehabilitated and 25 community groups with 703 members received agricultural tools to work in their rice fields. In addition, 74 groups received tools and seeds for food-growing crops and they were trained in agricultural techniques for the rehabilitation of 234 hectares of land. In support of agriculture using animal traction, 80 draught oxen were vaccinated.



Displaced Peuhl in Paoua assisted by DRC

In collaboration with the *Central African Association for Family Care* (ACABEF), 151 young women were identified to participate in trainings on human rights, reproductive health and HIV as well as vocational training, as part of a social reintegration project for sex workers in Paoua. The DRC also assessed the training needs of some 150 young men and women who already manage a small business so as to help them to make their business more professional, in collaboration with local partners. These young people are currently perfecting their skills in carpentry, masonry, ironworks, dressmaking, welding and mechanics.

The activities are funded by the *United Nations High Commission for Refugees* (UNHCR), the Danish cooperation Danida and the ERF.

For more information : drcar@drc.dk

70 Central African police officers trained

François Lonseny Fall, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General in CAR, on 22 August presented 70 Central African police officers who completed training in 2008 with a diploma during a ceremony in the National Police Academy of Bangui.

Among the certificate recipients were 20 Chief Inspectors who graduated from the Judicial Police course, 30 officers who completed the training in the professional code of ethics and 20 civil servants of the police services who attended the General Intelligence course.

During his speech, Mr. Fall said that there was often a conflictual relationship between the police and the people in CAR and he entrusted the 70 officers with the task of restoring public confidence in the police so that the service is perceived as contributing to public security.

The *Office of the United Nations in the Central African Republic* (BONUCA) organized the courses between May and August 2008 in the framework of its mandate to strengthen the operational capacity of the security services in the country.

For more information: tourea@un.org

ERF project evaluation in Ndélé

An evaluation team visited ERF financed projects in Ndélé, and Kotissako and Bamingui on the road from Ndélé to Mbrés, from 21 to 23 August. The mission included medical doctors of the *World Health Organization* (WHO) and Merlin, an English NGO working in health, and a representative of the Embassy of the United States. The mission evaluated three projects of *Aide Médicale Internationale* (AMI), a French NGO which supports the Ndélé hospital, 14 health posts and two larger health centers in Bamingui-Bangoran province.



The well-stocked pharmacy of Kotissako

Meetings with AMI staff, visits to several health structures involved in the project and patient interviews enabled the evaluation team to appraise

the results of the assistance provided through the project: the immunization coverage and the number of deliveries assisted by qualified staff went up and 15 times as many people are making use of the services of the Ndélé hospital compared to last year. The percentage of women accessing prenatal health care is increasing as well. The evaluation team suggested that AMI ensures that basic vaccines and anti-malarial drugs remain available when government supplies are out of stock in the province.

This first-ever evaluation of ERF funded projects found that the project was implemented in line with the approved work plan and that the project had a real and positive impact on the quality of life of the target population.

Coordination

CAP field workshop in Kaga-Bandoro

The first field workshop on the 2009 humanitarian strategy, which will be formulated in the Coordinated Aid Programme (CAP), was held in Kaga-Bandoro on 25 August to collect inputs from humanitarian field workers of the central northern part of the country and to analyze the general context, humanitarian needs, and priorities for humanitarian action in the next year.

Two participants, out of the 26 NGO and United Nations agency staff who attended the meeting, were chosen to report on the outcome of the Kaga-Bandoro workshop during the main meeting in Bangui on 9 and 10 September. The next field workshop will collect inputs from humanitarians working in the northwest of CAR and will be held in Paoua on 3 September.

The workshop was organized by the *Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs* (OCHA) with the support from the *United Nations Children's Fund* (UNICEF) and the *World Food Programme* (WFP).

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New humanitarian offices in Bangui

The new office of the *European Union Humanitarian Aid Department* (ECHO) in Bangui is located on the *Rue de Flandres*. Muriel Cornelis is the new representative. Contact: muriel.cornelis@ec.europa.eu | + 236 72 27 67 67

Cordaid, a Dutch NGO, opened an office in Bangui as registration formalities with Central African authorities have been finalized. Cordaid will carry out projects in health, water and vocational training in several towns in the north west of the country and in Birao in the north east. For more information: vlora.gojani@cordaid.net

Financial resources: First allocation of the Common Humanitarian Fund

Dr. Zakaria Maïga, the acting United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator, on 28 August issued the first-ever standard allocation of the Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF), the successor of the ERF. The CHF will help to make humanitarian action in CAR more efficient, targeted and coordinated.

Summary of CHF allocations		
Education	\$ 230,000	10%
Food security	\$ 230,000	10%
Health	\$ 460,000	20%
Protection	\$ 287,500	12.5%
Water and sanitation	\$ 287,500	12.5%
Early recovery	\$ 345,000	15%
Coordination services - UNHAS	\$ 460,000	20%
Total	\$ 2, 300,000	100%
Emergency Reserve	\$ 499,612	
Total available funding (incl. pledges)	\$ 2, 799,612	

Out of the close to \$ 2.8 million pledged to the fund by Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom and Sweden, about 20% was set aside as an emergency reserve and \$ 2.3 million is being allocated for humanitarian and recovery programmes. This money was allocated to priority sectors as per the table to the left, and projects will be selected during a process that ends on 15 September.

September 2008 schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		CAP Paoua*	HDPT- 5 PM	Mission Ireland and OCHA to Paoua		
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	CAP workshop Bangui		HDPT- 5 PM			
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	ERF evaluation mission Paoua					
			HDPT- 5 PM			
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
ERF mission Paoua			EUFOR - Gen. Ganascia			
			HDPT- 5 PM	MDG report°		
29	30	1	2	3	4	5
			HDPT – 17h.			

* Field workshop on CAP in Paoua

°Presentation of MDG report at the National Assembly