

## News bulletin

10 - 17 November 2008

### Highlights

- Nine soldiers killed in an ambush close to the Chadian border
- Protecting the displaced in the north-west from malaria
- Training in microfinance and on political participation of women
- Civil-military coordination workshop in Bangui on 12 November

## Background and security

### Nine soldiers killed in an ambush

Nine Central African soldiers were killed on 11 November in an ambush laid by presumed rebels at Nobandja, 50 km from the Chadian border and about 400 km north of Bangui.

Their army vehicle was destroyed by a rocket-propelled grenade. The village chief and his wife were also reportedly killed during the attack. The government soldiers were coming back to their base in Kabo after a routine patrol carried out close to the Chadian border.

The attackers apparently belong to the *Democratic Front for the Central African People* (FDPC) of Abdoulaye Miskine, who signed a peace agreement with the government in February 2007. Following this agreement, the FDPC had not carried out any attacks until now.

The *Office of the United Nations in CAR* (BONUCA) strongly condemned the ambush and exhorted all political-military groups to exercise restraint in order to permit the effective implementation of the peace accords.

### Vietnam-CAR diplomatic relations

Vietnam and CAR officially established diplomatic relations. A joint declaration was signed on 10 November in Hanoi by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Pham Gia Khiem and his Central African counterpart Dieudonné Kombo-Yaya.

## Current events

### Protecting the displaced from malaria

The MENTOR Initiative, an English NGO, has set up an emergency malaria control programme in the north of Ouham Pendé, the province in the far north-west of the country. The emergency programme consists of two phases: the first one is an indoor residual spraying campaign to provide immediate protection against malaria for the displaced and local populations. The campaign, launched in June and covering the villages of Mia Pendé, Nana Barya and Bah Bessar and the town of Paoua, has temporarily protected 17,952 houses from mosquitoes.

The door-to-door spraying also allowed for the dissemination of messages on malaria prevention and treatment. This first phase helped to prepare the population for the second step of the malaria control programme, which is the distribution of long-lasting insecticide-treated mosquito nets. The implementation of this durable prevention strategy is scheduled for November and December.

To meet the health needs of the displaced population, MENTOR has established a network of "malaria agents", who are working in their hiding places in the bush.



*A malaria agent performing a rapid test on a child*

Thirty-two malaria agents have been trained in the use of rapid tests, the prescription of anti-malarial drugs for people who test positive, the referral of complicated cases to health centers or the hospital, the upkeep of consultations and drugs registers, and the administration of intermittent preventive treatment for pregnant women. Each agent is working within the community so that people suffering from malaria do not have to go further than five km. Regular supervision from the NGO's medical team ensures the quality control of the

diagnosis and the treatment as well as preventing shortages of drugs.

MENTOR plans to deploy nine more malaria agents on the road to Nana Barya in November.

For more information: [jorge@mentor-initiative.net](mailto:jorge@mentor-initiative.net)

### Microfinance training in Boali

After a first series of microfinance trainings, the 'Programme in support of the establishment of an inclusive financial sector', an initiative of the *United Nations Development Programme* (UNDP), is organizing a second training for the benefit of microfinance practitioners, namely consultants, councillors and staff of organizations specialized in this field. The workshop takes place from 27 October until 7 December in Boali, 90 km north-west of the capital.

The training programme includes sessions on debt control, calculating and setting interest rates, operational risk management, and the development of new microfinance products.

For more information: [christian.ndotah@undp.org](mailto:christian.ndotah@undp.org)

### Participation of women in politics

In line with BONUCA's mandate to support capacity-building of national institutions in CAR, the office organized a workshop on the political participation of Central African women in the peace process in the country. The meeting, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affaires and National Solidarity, was held from 12 to 14 November in Bangui.

The discussions should contribute to increase the representation of women and the visibility of their actions in the political life of the country, particularly in the political dialogue process and peace-building in general.

The following themes were discussed: the notion of female leaders and leadership for change, stock-taking of the political participation of women in CAR, strategies to increase their participation, and the immediate contribution to the ongoing peace process.

The 50 participating women originated from parliament, the Economic and Social Council, labour unions, the Organization of Central African Women, women lawyers, professional women from the communication and the informal sectors, the collective of political women and the youth network. For three days, they exchanged experiences on women's participation in politics and they made

recommendations to improve the current situation.

For more information: [tourea@un.org](mailto:tourea@un.org)

## Coordination

### Workshop on civil-military collaboration

The OCHA office in CAR organized a workshop on civil-military collaboration in Bangui on 12 November which was facilitated by the Civil-military Coordination Officer for Chad and the north-east of CAR. The meeting was part of a series of workshops which had started in March in Chad and are organized in each area of deployment of the *European Force in CAR and Chad* (EUFOR) and the *United Nations Mission in CAR and Chad* (MINURCAT).

The workshop introduced the United Nations reference documents on civil-military coordination from the view point of humanitarians. The meeting also helped to identify and define the main features of the civil-military relationships in CAR and to apply the principles of the reference documents to the field by sharing the experiences and the expertise of the participants.

The 31 representatives of humanitarian and military organizations came from NGOs, the International Committee of the Red Cross, United Nations entities, the *Peace-building mission in CAR* (MICOPAX), MINURCAT and EUFOR.

For more information: [reck@un.org](mailto:reck@un.org)

---

Contact us: **UN OCHA Bangui, CAR**

**Nancy Snauwaert** | [snauwaert@un.org](mailto:snauwaert@un.org) | +236 75 54 22 78

**Gisèle Willybiro** | [willybiro@un.org](mailto:willybiro@un.org) | +236 75 54 90 31