

News bulletin

15 – 22 June 2009

Highlights

- Over 1,000 displaced persons in Lourea
- Bangui floods, thousands left homeless
- A week dedicated to fighting violence

Background and security

Lourea – over 1,000 flee violence

200 households - more than 1,000 people – have been displaced following clashes between the 2nd and the 14th of June in Lourea (30 km from Bocaranga in CAR's North West). The fighting was between elements of the *Popular Army for the Restoration of Democracy* (APRD) and self-defence groups around Lourea.

Most of the displaced have taken refuge at Bocaranga secondary school, emergency assistance is being provided there by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) with 200 shelter kits and non-food items (tarpaulins, cooking kits, mats, blankets, cans of jerry cans and soap). MSF-France has provided mosquito nets, soap as well as care for severely malnourished children. The Ministry of Public Health is taking responsibility for the vaccination of children.

Vakaga security – Bangui meetings

The Special Representative for the United Nations' Secretary General for Chad Victor Angelo held a meeting in Bangui with humanitarian organisations working in Vakaga in CAR's north east on the 19th of June. The aim of the meeting was to hear the concerns of humanitarian organisations in preparation for Mr Angelo's meeting with CAR's president which took place on the 22nd of June.

News

16th of June: Day of the African Child

"Call to accelerate child survival" is the theme of Day of the African Child this year. The day commemorates the massacre of children on 16 June 1990 in Soweto in South Africa, and aims to raise awareness of violence against children.

With the support of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the day's activities included games, skits, traditional dance and sports events in Bangui as well as in provincial cities such as Kaga-Bandoro, Bria, Ndele and Bossangoa.

UNICEF Representative in CAR, Mahimbo Mdoe focused on the actions taken by his institution, government and partner agencies for children. "This day is an occasion to reflect on the plight of children around the world in general and Central in particular," said Mr Mdoe.

The day ended with a meeting of more than 400 children in the National Assembly with the Representative of UNICEF and the Ministry of Education.



« Kaga-Bandoro marks Day of the African Child »

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Floods in Bangui

2,780 people have been made homeless after heavy rains during the night of 15 to 16 June, leading to flooding in 7 Bangui neighbourhoods - Yapélé 1, 2, 3 and 4, Brussels and Sapéké 2.

A joint team composed of the *United Nations Children's Fund* (UNICEF), the *Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs* (OCHA) and the Ministry of Social Affairs has evaluated the situation in the affected neighbourhoods,

Many families have found shelter in nearby lodgings while 42 families - 207 people – have taken shelter at Bangui's Ecole Saint Jean.

Immediate needs include drinking water, hygiene, sanitation and cans for storing drinking water.

Deteriorating health is also a concern, with a need for mosquito nets to protect vulnerable and especially children and pregnant women.



« Classrooms sheltering displaced persons »

MSF Spain – Belgium already has activities in place in these neighbourhoods and has provided support with medical essentials, water analysis, jerry cans as well as helping local committees to build temporary latrines.

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20 June: International Refugee Day

“Real people, real needs,” that’s the theme of World Refugee Day which was celebrated on 20 June this year.

Throughout the week of June 14-20, various cultural and sporting events were held in Bangui and at refugee and displacement sites in Paoua, Kaga-Bandoro and Sam Ouandja. Activities included games, athletics, a debate as well as a football match.

The theme of this year aims to draw attention to the gaps for the coverage of basic needs (health, education, employment, ...) as well as respect for the rights of refugees and displaced persons.

At the closing ceremony for the events at the National Assembly, Hakizimana Gilbert, Chairman of Central African Refugees Council reminded participants of the aspirations of refugees as regards justice and peace.

The ceremony was accompanied by traditional dances presented by refugees from Chad and Rwanda, a sketch produced by refugees about the challenges integrating into host communities.

Taking part in this ceremony the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Antoine Gambi, assured the refugees of the support of the government and the Central African people.

Week of combating violence

The international week against violence and the proliferation of small arms took place between the 15 and 21 June.

The speech of Chief Technical Advisor of the Reduction and Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons Ibrahima Diallo was broadcast on radio and television, with awareness raising through radio broadcasts to 8 districts in Bangui.

In his radio and television speech, Mr. Diallo focused on violence that is behind the insecurity - the main concern of the population. Other activities during the week included dramatization of robberies and other violations committed by bandits, as brought to the stage by young people’s theatre production.



« Closing ceremony march »

At the end of the ceremony, a group of women from the ‘Organisation of Central African women’ took place followed by the awarding of 3 prizes to ‘peace bearers’ at Bangui’s Barthélémy Boganda complex.

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