

News bulletin

13 – 20 July 2009

Highlights

- Attack by LRA on Ligoua in the far east
- Humanitarian response to flooding in Bangui
- Visit of the UN Assistant Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs to CAR

Background and security

Attack by LRA on Ligoua in the south-east

On Tuesday 21 July, Elements of the *Lord's Resistance Army* (LRA) have attacked the population of Ligoua village, 20 kilometres south-east of Obo in the far east of CAR. Two people who were able to escape informed forces of the *Uganda People's Defence Forces* (UPDF) currently at Obo, in Haut-Mbomou sub-prefecture.

These forces were subsequently deployed to counter the attack, and reportedly chased and killed some of the attackers.

The last attack by armed men on Ligoua took place on 20 June when a group of LRA fighters killed one person and seriously injured another, who remains under care in Obo.

Withdrawal of UFDR from the towns of Birao and Sam-Ouandja in the north-east

At the demand of the delegation of the Kara community (the majority ethnic group in Birao), made during mediation conducted by the Minister of Territorial Administration Elie Ouéfio on 2 and 3 July, the forces of the *Union des Forces Démocratiques pour le Rassemblement* (UFDR) – which are predominantly of Goula ethnicity – have withdrawn from Birao and are currently withdrawing from Sam-Ouandja.

The mediation by Minister Ouéfio occurred following two attacks on Birao on 6 and 21 June, during which several houses were burnt and more than 3,000 people were displaced or otherwise affected.

During the mediation process, representatives of the Kara community expressed the wish that the main UFDR camp being set up for the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) process be moved from Birao to the Goula zone of influence around Tiringoulou.

Current events

Humanitarian response to floods in Bangui

Following various incidents of flooding in the capital city of Bangui, principally during the night of 3 and 4 July in the 2nd, 4th, 5th and 6th districts, more than 10,000 affected people were in need of aid. Now humanitarian action has begun to improve the conditions of the flood-affected population.

The humanitarian response to date has consisted of the following: UNHCR (1,524 cooking kits, 2,500 blankets, 2 bales of clothing, 750 tarpaulins), UNICEF (750 tarpaulins, 1,500 mosquito nets, 1,500 sleeping mats), UNFPA (3,000 soaps, 6 antibiotic kits, 1,500 shawls, and a kit for the management of complications in abortion), WHO (a kit of basic medications sufficient for 1,000 people for 3 months), WFP (56 tonnes of food aid comprising cereals, oil, sugar and salt for 3,400 people for 1 month).

Additionally, MSF is helping by constructing temporary latrines and providing free health care and medicine. Volunteers of the Central African Red Cross, supported by the ICRC, are assisting the affected people.

The relief effort has been supported financially by China, represented by the chargé d'affaires of the Chinese Embassy Mr Gu, who have donated 14 million FCFA, as well as France, with the French Ambassador Mr Vidon donating more than 16 million FCFA.

On 15 July, CAR President François Bozizé visited the head quarters of the Central African Red Cross at the launch of a major distribution worth more than 12 million FCFA, comprising 12 tonnes of rice and manioc, 150kg of salt, 450kg of sugar, 900 litres of oil, 10,000 loaves of bread and 10,000 cans of sardines.

In order to combat future floods, the World Bank has allocated up to 86 million FCFA for the *Emergency Project for the Rehabilitation of Infrastructure and Urban Services* (PURISU) in the town of Bangui.

Validation of the CAR literacy survey and analysis

On Friday 17 July at Bangui, the closing ceremony was held of the workshop to validate the analysis of literacy rates in CAR and the development of a strategic policy to combat illiteracy. The workshop was organised by the Ministry for National Education and implemented by the *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization* (UNESCO).

The workshop was attended by more than 30 participants from the University of Bangui, the *Applied Linguistics Institute* (ILA), the Ministries of Rural Development, Planning, Finance, Social Affairs and Education.



« Workshop closing ceremony »

Also present were the *Central African Association for Bible Translation* (ACATBA), *The Central African Women's Association for the Fight against Illiteracy* (AFCLA), *the National Cattle-Breeders Federation* (FNEC) and representatives of the centres for literacy of the towns of Bouar, Yaloké and Kaga-Bandoro.

The next step in the process will be the development of the complete literacy strategy and its implementation.

For further information: Mahamat Ahmed Alhabo, UNESCO, (236) 70 98 50 02, ma.alhabo@unesco.org

Education

More than 1,000 people participate in the return to school

More than 1,000 teachers and parents of students are participating between 6 July and 4 August in training seminars for the revival of education programmes in the prefectures of Ouham-Pendé and Nana-Mambéré in the north-west of the country.

Split between 6 sites (204 in Bocaranga, 213 in Ngaoundaye, 176 in Bozoum, 518 in Bouar), the participants who will form the educational backbone of the region are acquiring the necessary competencies and skills to redynamise the schools in their respective areas.

The seminars are organised by Caritas Central Africa within the framework of a project to revive education and protect vulnerable children, financed by the *United Nations Children's Fund* (UNICEF), and bring together the various stakeholders in the educational system (teachers, head teachers associations of student parents).

The main aim of the seminars is to encourage the return to school of thousands of children who have been victims of the political and military crises which

have engulfed the two prefectures over the last years, forcing many children to abandon their schooling due to armed attacks.

A further aspect of the training seminar is focused on the staff of the Ministry of National Education, including school counsellors, heads of individual education sectors and school inspectors) who have been assigned to these prefectures. For these, training was focused on science, psychology and pedagogy.



« Participants at the opening of the training in Bouar »

For further information: Aurelio Gazzera, Caritas Centrafrique, (236) 72 72 24 24, gazzera.aurelio@gmail.com

Coordination

Visite of the Assistant Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs

From 26 to 30 July the UN Assistant Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Catherine Bragg, is visiting CAR.

During her stay, Ms Bragg will meet with the Central African authorities, the diplomatic corps, representatives of UN agencies, both international and national NGOs and civil society organisation. The mission will also visit displaced people and recent returnees in Birao in the north-east, Kabo in the north and Paoua in the north-west.

For further information, please contact: **UN OCHA CAR | Boris Ngouagouni**, ngouagouni@un.org | +236 70.18.80.61