GENERAL SITUATION

The security situation remains tense and uncertain in Bangui and the western half of the country as a whole. An estimated 639,000 people have been internally displaced in CAR. Since 5 December, an estimated 213,000 people have been displaced in Bangui. In addition, there are more than 53,000 IDPs in Bossongoa, Bozoum and Bohong, with figures in surrounding rural areas believed to be higher. In Bangui, French disarmament operations are continuing, although there are no concrete indicators that the 213,000 displaced population yet feels confident enough to leave the now 40 separate sites. Some incidents of reciprocal killings between religious groups are still reported, as well as armed group activity. In Bossongoa 10 houses were reported burned yesterday and IDPs remain afraid to leave the two main sites (Eveche and Ecole Liberté). This week UNICEF is planning to dispatch relief supplies (NFIs, drug kits, WASH supplies, etc.) and a technical monitoring and targeting team as part of an inter-agency mission to Bouar, Bozoum and Bohong in northwestern CAR.

UNICEF RESPONSE HIGHLIGHTS

WASH and Non-Food Items (NFI)
- Bossangoa: 152,000 liters of drinking water per day were produced and provided on 16 and 17 December.
- Bangui: 42 segregated latrines, 14 showers, and 2 field defecation areas were constructed across 4 sites in which there are currently a total of 17,664 IDPs.

Child Protection
- The first child friendly space (CFS) at the Airport site was launched by Save the Children with UNICEF support. Six other sites have UNICEF-supported CFS: St Paul Archeveché, Don Bosco, Monastère Boy Rabe and Église des Frères Castors in Bangui, as well as at the Évêché and École Liberté in Bossongoa.

Health and Nutrition
- Bangui: 6 out of 12 out-patient nutrition facilities have reopened. In-patient nutrition rehabilitation functionality has been confirmed in the Pediatric Complex, Bimbo Hospital and St Joseph.
- Bangui: 422 children with severe acute malnutrition (SAM) are receiving therapeutic care. UNICEF supplies RUTF and therapeutic milk via ACF.

RAPID RESPONSE MECHANISM

- The first temporary shelters at Monastère de Boy Rabe for 1,300 IDPs and St-Joseph Mukassa for 850 IDPs were constructed, giving priority to children under 5, pregnant and lactating women, and the elderly, following consultations with RRM project partners and the wider shelter/NFI actors including UNHCR and OCHA.
- 8,000 patients received soap across 8 health facilities in the St Bernard site.

INFOCOM

Media coverage yesterday included AP TV and photo interview with UNICEF Chief of Child Survival on nutrition, SABC radio interview with Deputy Representative, Kyodo (Japan) news interview and feature with Representative on humanitarian situation in CAR and interviews with the Head of Emergency for Al Jazeera Arabic and for Cape Radio Station (South Africa)

SUPPLY AND LOGISTICS

Another cargo plane containing 99 metric tons with medicine and NFI supplies arrived today. The supply of malaria drugs will cover up to 14,000 children and received NFIs will cover needs of 10,000 households.

FUNDING

By mid-December, UNICEF received 65 per cent of the US $32 million required to cover humanitarian needs for this current year while financial needs have tripled in the course of the year.

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