

Context and humanitarian situation

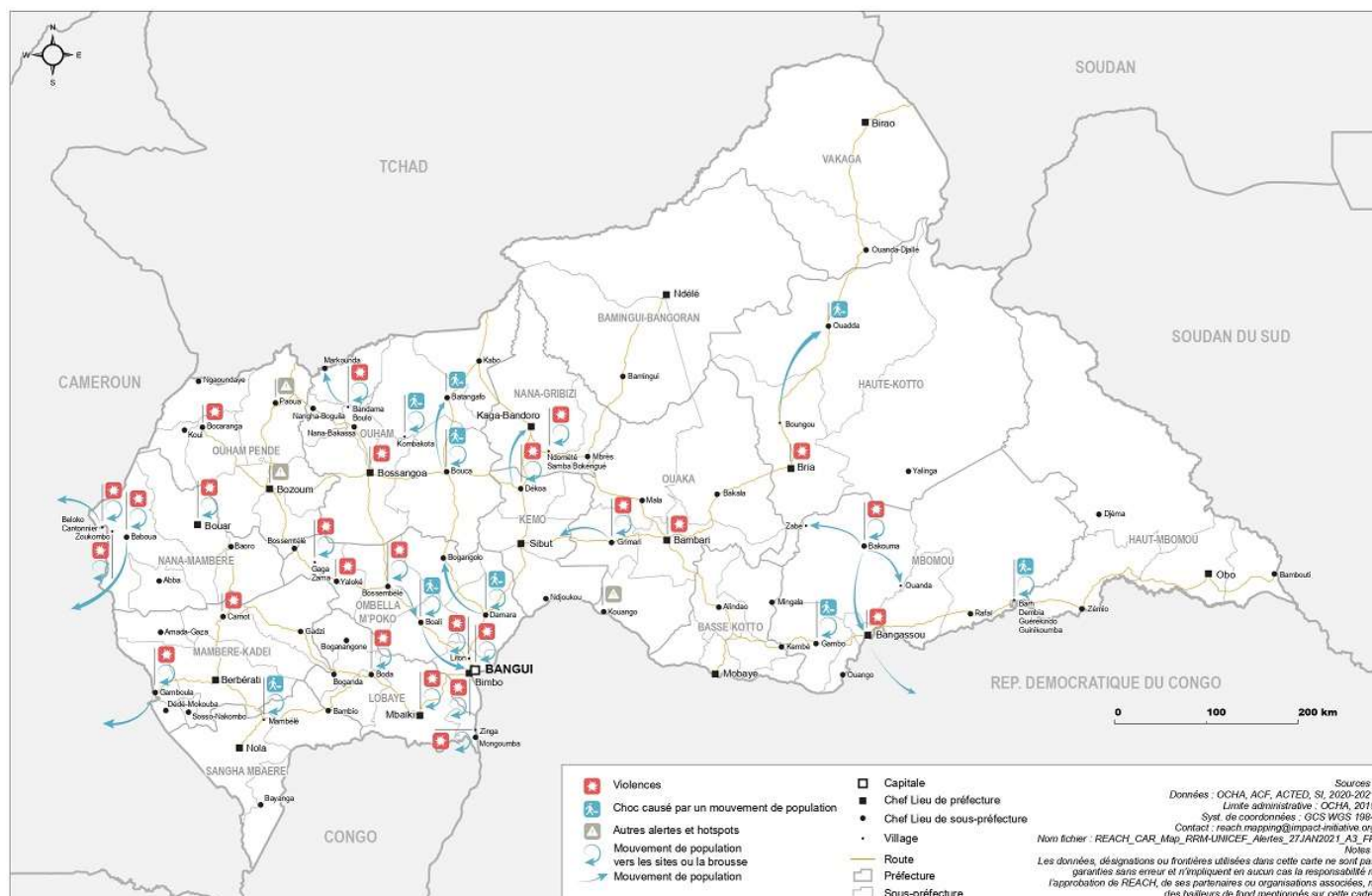
On 18 January, the Constitutional Court confirmed the reelection of President Faustin Archange Touadera in the first round of the 27 December election. The last two weeks of January have been marked by a decrease in armed violence, as the *Coalition des Patriotes pour le Changement* (CPC) seems to have mostly stopped its offensive towards Bangui but the situation remains tense and unpredictable. Fighting between CPC and governmental forces and their allies has been reported along the main two roads leading West from Bangui. A national curfew is still in force from 6pm to 5am, and on 24 January the CAR government proclaimed a state of emergency for an initial period of two weeks. Partners of UNICEF-led Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) have also issued four new conflict-related alerts across the country, resulting in the flight of about 8,000 people.



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OCHA estimates that **106,000 people remain internally displaced as of 31 January as a direct result of the post-electoral violence and ongoing tensions**, and according to UNHCR **more than 84,000 Central Africans are currently in DRC, Cameroon, Chad and the Republic of Congo** due to the crisis.

The main cities and towns affected by the influx of internally displaced people (IDPs) include Bouar, Bangassou, Dekoa, Bouca, Ndomete, Grimari and the surroundings of Bangui. IDPs are found mostly in locations considered safer within the affected towns, such as churches, peacekeeping bases, schools or in the surrounding bush. An unknown number has also found refuge with host families. The most urgent needs continue to be food, water, protection, essential household and shelter items, as well as improved access to health and adequate sanitation. Children and women are particularly at risk in this context, which aggravates the consequences of the pre-existing crisis, as UNICEF alerted in a [press release](#).

As the security situation remains volatile, humanitarian access continues to be an issue for a number of areas affected by the crisis, particularly along MSR1, the main road to Cameroon, where fighting continues and armed elements hinder the safe and timely delivery of critical humanitarian and commercial supplies in CAR. On 18 January, a 30-truck convoy which included five trucks carrying vital humanitarian among which a UNICEF container with medical supplies, was attacked causing serious injuries to three drivers. The convoy returned to Cameroon. Staple food prices have increased by up to 50 percent according to some estimates. Shortages of fuel are also reported in several towns in the country.

UNICEF response

Despite challenging security and access conditions, UNICEF and partners have continued to respond wherever possible to the humanitarian needs originating to the crisis, in close collaboration and coordination with the UNICEF field offices in Bouar, Bossangoa, Kaga Bandoro and Bambari, the UNICEF-led WASH, Education and Nutrition clusters, and the Child Protection sub-cluster.

West

In **Bouar**, the main city in the West, located on the MSR1, fighting broke out again on 17 January, increasing the number of displaced people to around 12,000 according to OCHA. UNICEF partners ACF (for the RRM) and the Agence Nationale de l'Eau de et l'Assainissement (ANEA) have been ensuring since 25 January the daily provision of 30,000 liters of safe water for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene to around 8,400 IDPs on the Saint Laurent and Cathédrale sites, and are working to increase capacity. ANEA has also built 30 emergency latrines and 9 emergency showers and is delivering hygiene promotion messages.



*In Bouar, installation of a bladder platform for water distribution
© UNICEF / A. Rama-Bessin*

Given the impact of the crisis on children, UNICEF is scaling up its child protection response with partner APADE supported by the child protection mobile response team through War Child. During the first week 2,476 displaced children (including 1172 girls) participated in recreational and psychosocial activities, and 28 children (including 10 girls) separated from their families as they were fleeing for safety have been reunited with them. 66 survivors of sexual violence were identified and

received treatment.

During screening sessions on the Bouar IDP sites, partner LWF identified 44 children under five years suffering from severe acute malnutrition and 38 in moderate condition and referred them to UNICEF-supported facilities for treatment. Thanks to the medicine kits dispatched by UNICEF, 209 patients, included two wounded by firearms, have been treated at the hospital and three health centers close to the new IDP settlements. Finally, RRM partner ACF pooled resources with MSF to distribute essential household items to 255 families on the Saint Elie site.

As the security situation remains volatile in the Southwest, UNICEF fears that an increasing number of hospitals and health centres will experience stockouts in nutrition inputs needed for the treatment of severe acute malnutrition. UNICEF therefore dispatched 35 tons of therapeutic foods and 16 boxes of childbirth kits to Carnot, Berberati, Sangha Mbaere et Gamboula health districts.

Bangui and surroundings

On 19 January, armed elements attacked villages located about 30km to the Northwest of Bangui, causing the population to flee to **Liton**, 22 km from Bangui on the main road to Damara. A rapid assessment by RRM partner ACF in collaboration with MSF found that an estimated 2,500 people found refuge in and around a school, where they live in very precarious conditions. MSF also identified and treated 34 cases of gender-based violence (GBV). ACF is preparing to intervene with essential household items, water and sanitation



Displaced people in Liton - © ACF

Centre

From 10 to 14 January, 1,405 families from **Ndomete**, 12 km south of Kaga Bandoro, took refuge at the MINUSCA base for fear of new attacks. RRM partner Solidarités International is conducting a rapid assessment and planning a WASH intervention.

After an initial emergency response in NFI for the 10,000 displaced people in **Dekoa**, a town 260km North of Bangui, UNICEF continues to deliver assistance in health, nutrition and child protection. Free primary care at the hospital supported by UNICEF partner Médecins d'Afrique (MDA) benefitted 569 people including 229 children.



Malnutrition screening in Cessakoba site in Bangassou - © MDA

In **Grimari**, following the clashes of 12-15 January, significant population movements were reported towards the Catholic church, the MINUSCA base and the surrounding bush. As humanitarian access is only now starting to improve, RRM partners ACTED is conducting a multisectoral assessment in view of a complementary response to that of ICRC and MSF.

East

In **Bangassou**, the largest town in the East, the situation remains tense. Since violent confrontations on 3 January resulting in the death of at least 11 people according to MINUSCA and the flight of an estimated 22,000 people, the CPC continues to block road access to the town. UNICEF partner MDA is providing free essential care for children and pregnant women. Following the screening of 1,436 children aged 6 to 59 months on Cessakoba IDP site, MDA detected and treated 88 SAM cases.

Funding

UNICEF's response to the ongoing crisis is made possible thanks to funding from the governments of the United States, Switzerland, Sweden, the United Kingdom, from the European Commission, the CAR Humanitarian Fund and UNICEF's global humanitarian thematic funds.

In 2021, UNICEF Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC) appeal currently amounts to US\$75.7 million for CAR. It reflects the deterioration in the situation of children and growing humanitarian needs (including COVID-19 related), even before the ongoing new. **To date, the HAC is 21% funded**, when including 2021 contributions and funds carried over from 2020.

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