

DONOR REPORT

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC PROJECTS *2014*



Islamic Relief USA
WORKING TOGETHER FOR A BETTER WORLD.

UPDATED: NOVEMBER 2014

CURRENT SITUATION

A wave of violence erupted in the Central African Republic in December 2013, and renewed fighting again worsened the humanitarian situation in fall of 2014. Thousands of people have been killed, including many children. More than 800,000 people displaced (about half inside country, half refugees in other countries). An estimated 2.2 million people need aid—nearly half of the population. More than 2 million children have been affected, and the majority of schools were closed.

Food supplies have been severely affected. According to a recent World Food Program assessment, the crisis has caused a sharp deterioration in food security. Food reserves in rural areas were estimated at 40% to 50% lower than average; livestock numbers are estimated to have declined by up to 77%. According to the World Food Program in January 2014, because of the instability of the markets caused by the conflict, 90% of people were living on one meal a day.

Even before this violence, many people were already suffering from harsh conditions. The Central African Republic recently was ranked 179th country of 187 in poverty, and half of children under 5 were chronically malnourished.

IRUSA RESPONSE: PROJECTS

COMPLETE: EMERGENCY PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT AND EDUCATION

APRIL 2014 - AUGUST 2014

Location: Bangui

PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

To strengthen child protection mechanisms for displaced children and adolescents in camps in Bangui, through setting up Child Friendly Spaces and support centers to provide support to the vulnerable children, as well as to identify special needs and to respond through psychosocial support and appropriate referral paths.

ACHIEVED OUTCOMES:

- Three Child Friendly Spaces (CFS) have been set up in the municipality of Bimbo 3, located South of Bangui in the following communities: Guitangola, Guitangola source and Mpoko Ndjongo. Twenty-one animateurs were trained (12 women and 9 men) on running CFS activities and child protection issues. Each CFS is managed by a team of 7 animators and one supervisor. Each CFS offers educational and recreational activities to the children of the community the whole day. Each CFS consists of a closed yard, a temporary wooden structure, and separate latrines for boys and girls.
- Each CFS had a listening center where staff listened to children with special vulnerabilities. If more psychosocial support was needed, children were referred to more specialized infrastructures. In addition to the recreational activities, special attention was placed on children highly affected by the conflicts, especially those who witnessed violence in their families or witnessed killing and who needed immediate psychological support, as well as unaccompanied or separated children. In such extreme cases, children were given a confidential interview in the special space organized in each CFS to understand their problem and seek ways to provide support, including referral to more specialized institutions. Children from 14-17 who might be tempted to be enrolled with armed groups were involved in group discussions on various topics ranging from child rights to peace and security, reconciliation and living together. The idea is to prevent violence through revenge and other violent practices.
- 1,374 children received support through the listening centers in each CFS. These separate structures provide a confidential space for children to talk through experiences with CFS supervisors. These provide children with an initial informal psycho-social support session and helps staff identify cases for referral options when needed. Forty-five children were referred to local medical centers around the CFS.
- 188 cases were referred for individual material support (109 girls), including clothes, helping unaccompanied children locate families, or supporting victims of sexual violence to locate medical care. Thirty children were supported to return to school. 147 unaccompanied children were identified, 26 were referred to UNICEF for support and 11 were reunited with their families by Enfants Sans Frontières.
- An estimated 1,380 children came to participate in CFS activities each day, approximately 400 per CFS; the proposed maximum was 200, but the need was greater than anticipated. 6,990 children were registered across the three CFS. Some children stayed the whole day; some children only came for a few hours. Children were organized by age, and activities were tailored to fit with age groups.
- Nine discussion groups were established with 213 adolescents to participate in group discussions and awareness sessions to promote equality and inclusion, and overcome gender communal divisions, to prevent further violence. Discussions were also held on social cohesion, child rights, sex education, HIV and AIDS. Fifty members participated in additional workshops to discuss roles of young people in CAR society. Mass awareness sessions conducted around CFS communities, with up to 10,000 people visiting to hear messages about child protection. 8,000 community members attended sessions on social cohesion, respect of children, and risk of sexual violence.
- Twenty-one community members in child protection committees were trained in protection issues in two sessions. Training covered identifying risks to children, focusing on sexual violence, and how to run community awareness campaigns. The committees were responsible for informing communities of CFS, encouraging parents to send their children regularly, leading awareness campaigns, and identifying most vulnerable children for referral to CFS staff. A five-day mass awareness campaign was held in which household visits were made to identify cases of extreme vulnerability and to raise awareness of child protection issues.

7,035 PEOPLE WERE HELPED DIRECTLY THROUGH THIS PROJECT; 10,000 WERE HELPED INDIRECTLY.

ONGOING: EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE AND RECOVERY SUPPORT

(Joint IRUSA/Catholic Relief Services project)

JUNE 2014 - DECEMBER 2014

Location: Boda Town, Lobaye Region

PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

Providing one-time lifesaving support to extremely vulnerable families suffering from displacement in Central African Republic. The interventions will be focused in specific areas to ensure the greatest possible impact, assisting internally displaced persons and host families to recover lost and depleted essential assets, improve food security, increase resilience, and reduce overall vulnerability.

PROPOSED OUTCOMES:

- Improve household food security.
- Reduce vulnerability by providing items required to support food preparation, hygiene and health concerns; also, promotion of dignity and reduced threat to health due to availability of materials to allow preparation and storage of safe drinking water.
- Provide household-level sustainable food security and essential humanitarian aid items to Muslim communities currently trapped in Boda.
- Improve household crop production allowing for low-level income generation and supporting recovery of market availability and activity.

36,000 PEOPLE ARE EXPECTED TO BE HELPED THROUGH THIS PROJECT.

IRUSA RESPONSE: ADVOCACY

INTERFAITH PLATFORMS WITH GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC

IRUSA met with the three highest religious leaders in the Central African Republic—a pastor, an archbishop, and an imam—twice in 2014 to discuss peace and humanitarian relief. The three leaders have worked tirelessly to spread messages of hope and reconciliation, meeting with world leaders including the Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki Moon, to call for an end to the violence in their country. They were honored among TIME Magazine's 100 Most Influential People in the world in 2014.

- IRUSA met with the trio from the Central African Republic as well as other NGO leaders and U.S. government officials in April 2014 at the White House.
- IRUSA also hosted a town hall meeting in Northern Virginia in November 2014 to give the leaders a platform to tell their story of interfaith cooperation to the American Muslim and interfaith communities.

ADVOCACY AT UNITED NATIONS

IRUSA actively participates in working groups and high-level meetings related to the Central African Republic in order to draw attention to the dire situation of the beneficiaries we serve, and to demonstrate that American Muslims care deeply about communities affected by violence in CAR.

- On June 23, 2014, IRUSA's CEO was invited to give a statement on the situation on behalf of the Islamic Relief family of organizations at a United Nations meeting.
- On Sept. 25, 2014, IRUSA's CEO and the Vice President of our Board of Directors met with the Interim President of the Central African Republic at the UN General Assembly Session in New York.