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# Central African Republic

## Country Profile



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## Summary Indicators

Indicator	Value	Year
Population number (last census)	4,525,000	2012
Population number (projection)	5,266,960	2015
Population growth rate	2.13%	2014
Population density	7.12/km <sup>2</sup>	2011
Urban composition	39.1%	2011
Average household size	5	2011
Age distribution	40.6% under 15	2014 est.
Life expectancy at birth	Male: 47.7 Female: 51.3 years	2014 est.
Under-five mortality	93/1,000 live births	2014 est.
Maternal mortality	890 per 100,000 live births	2010
Malnutrition prevalence	23.5%	2010
HDI ranking and (value)	185/187 (0.341)	2014
Corruption perceptions index ranking (value)	150/174 (24/100)	2014
Population below the poverty line (under USD 2 a day)	61%	2008
Hunger Index value	21.5	2014
World Risk Index ranking (value)	82/171 (6.8)	2014
Gender Inequality Index ranking (value)	144/152 (0.65)	2013
Literacy rate	56.6%	2008–2012

Sources: Geohive, UN Data, Transparency international 2014, CIA Factbook, World Bank, Clean Cookstoves, CIA, WFP 06/2009, Global Hunger Index 2014, World Risk Report 2014.

The Central African Republic (CAR) is a landlocked country bordered by Chad to the north, Sudan to the northeast, South Sudan to the east, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Congo to the south, and Cameroon to the West. It has a landmass of 623,000km<sup>2</sup>. The country is on an undulating plateau. In the northwest, the high granite plateau is related to the Adamawa Plateau of Cameroon. In the northeast, the Bongos Range extends into Sudan. The Chari River originates in the northern

third of the country. The waterways in the rest of the country run into the Ubangi River, on the southern border with Congo and DR Congo.

CAR is divided into 16 prefectures and one commune, Bangui (UNPAN 11/2004). The prefectures are divided into 71 subprefectures. See table page 10.

### Prefectures of the Central African Republic



Source: Central African Republic, Map No. 4048 Rev.6, April 2013, United Nations

### Hazard Profile

Natural hazards are floods and drought. The wet season lasts from April until September. Most flooding occurs around the Ubangi River, bordering Congo, and the Buhr Aouk River, bordering Chad. Drought is infrequent. In 2012, 400,000 people were exposed to drought. The southeastern part of the country is most at risk (Inform Index, retrieved 07/2015).

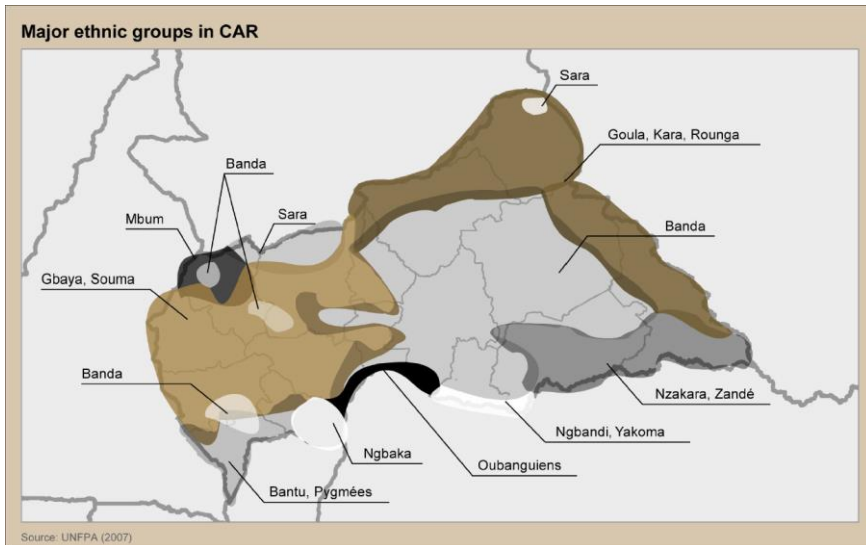
Lack of water poses risks for the population and increases the propensity of desertification and deforestation. Some mining practices are harmful to the human body (CORAI 2012).

### Society and Communities

The population is primarily rural, and concentrated along roads in the northwest, the centre, the central south region, and the periphery of the capital Bangui. Bangui, Bimbo (Ombella-Mpoko prefecture), Berberati (Mambere-Kadei) and Kaga-Bandoro (Nana-Grebizi) are the most populated cities. Most people live in the west (AmbaFrance 27/04/2011). 49% of the population is under 18 years of age (based on 2007 data). 50% of the population is female (Internews 2012).

**Ethnic groups and languages:** There are more than 80 ethnic groups in CAR. The biggest are Gbaya (33% of the population), Banda (27%), and Mandjia (13%). The Fulani (1%) and pygmies (0.3%) are among the smallest. The Gbaya are primarily found in the west, the Banda in the centre and east. The Fulani are based along the Cameroon and Chad borders. The pygmies are in the southwest (NRC 12/2014).

The official languages are Sangho and French, although each ethnic group has its own language (CIA Factbook retrieved 04/2015; Global Security 2014; World Bank 05/2011). A 1988 census calculated 350,000 people speaking Sangho as their first language and 1.6 million people speaking it as a second language (Ethnologue retrieved 07/2015). French is divided into two types: European French and a French influenced by Sango. A 1993 census reported that 76% of the CAR population had no knowledge of French, 16% had some French knowledge, having had at least two years of schooling, and 8% had at least six years of schooling in French (L'aménagement linguistique dans le monde retrieved 07/2015; Etudes Geostrategiques, 26/01/2014).



**Religion:** 80% Christian (51% Protestant, 29% Catholic), 15% Muslim, and 5% who practice indigenous beliefs. Christians are found throughout the country, while Muslims mainly live in the northeast (US Department of State 17/11/2010; Nations Encyclopedia retrieved 07/2015).

**Pastoralists and agriculturalists:** Tensions between sedentary farming communities (farmers) and pastoralists (Peul, or Fulani –the Mbororo are a subgroup of the Fulani) are frequent, and violence has escalated since 2007, sometimes resulting in displacement. The conflict in 2013 intensified clashes between pastoralist and farming communities. Many Mbororo were victims of anti-balaka violence, which resulted in some joining ex-Seleka. Others formed their own groups and attacked non-Muslim populations (ICG 01/2014; ICG 12/2014).

**Zaraguinas:** Also known as ‘coupeurs de routes’, these armed criminal gangs raid villages, kidnap people for ransom, and have been responsible for significant displacement over past decades. Based in the north of the country, such gangs, have been active since the 1980s, but a spike in their number and spread in their activity was seen in the early 2000s. They remain active (IRIN 31/03/2008; Libération 16/07/2008; HRW 01/2009).

**Gender equality:** In 2013, CAR was ranked 142 out of 149 countries in the Gender Inequality Index measured by UNDP, taking into account reproductive health, empowerment, and economic activity. 10.3% of women had reached secondary education. Women in CAR are rarely allowed to own property, and have to depend on a male for housing. Should the male figure die or leave a marriage, the female

has little to no chance of keeping the property. The majority of IDPs are female and have difficulty accessing healthcare, livelihood opportunities and education; most programming is still centred on males (UNDP HDI 2014; IASC 06/2014; NRC 02/2015).

## Historical Background

The Central African Republic gained independence from France on 13 August 1960. Since then, political change has mainly come about through violence (CCDP 2015).

**1961–2003:** David Dacko was the first president of CAR. His army chief of staff, Colonel Jean-Bedel Bokassa, then took power in a coup in 1965, and ruled until Dacko again became leader in a France-backed coup in 1979. Two years later, General André Kolingba seized power. Kolingba concentrated the armed forces in favour of the Yakoma ethnic group, increasing tensions in the country. He held multiparty elections. In 1993, Angel-Felix Patassé won the elections with support from the northwestern prefectures. Peace soon broke down, however. In 1997, the first peacekeeping missions arrived in CAR. The French sent 2,300 military forces and BONUCA (The UN Peace-Building Office in CAR) was in charge of peace consolidation and national reconciliation (DCAF 02/02/2015; CCDP 2015; ISSAT/DCAF 02/02/2015).

**2003–2012:** Patassé’s presidency ended in 2003, when François Bozizé, supported by Chad, led a coup d’état. His claim to the presidency was challenged by new militant groups, with major conflict in 2004. Political dialogue led to the adoption of a constitution in December 2004 and legislative and presidential elections in 2005 – won by Bozizé and his coalition. Democratic institutions were also established (Parliament, Constitutional Court, State Council, Court of Appeals, Conflict Tribunal, Court of Auditors, High Council for Communication, the Mediator’s Office, etc.). However, armed opposition persisted. The situation calmed after a peace agreement was signed in June 2008, and another in 2011 (France Diplomatie 19/01/2015; ICG 2013).

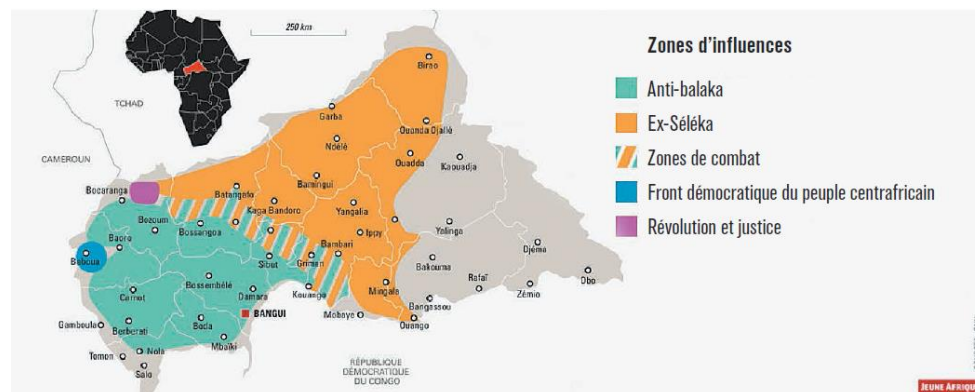
**Since late 2012:** The end of 2012 is considered the start of the current crisis in CAR. Armed opposition groups in the northeast allied to form Seleka (‘coalition’ in Sangho). They began making their way towards the capital. At the end of December 2012, their advance was stopped 100km from Bangui by Chadian troops and MICOPAX, the peacekeeping mission operating under the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). Negotiations in January 2013 resulted in a ceasefire and power-sharing deal that would release prisoners, withdraw foreign troops, and increase political participation. In March, however, Seleka resumed the

offensive, attacking the capital. President Bozizé was overthrown. Michel Djotodia assumed the presidency, dissolved Parliament, and suspended the constitution.

Seleka was officially disbanded in September 2013, to little effect, and the fighters became known as ex-Seleka. Militias formed locally to counter ex-Seleka violence. Known as 'anti-balaka', they were supported by FACA (Forces armées centrafricaines) defectors. The conflict took on a religious aspect as the ex-Seleka was largely composed of Muslims, and the anti-balaka had a large Christian membership. By early December 2013, the UN Security Council had approved an African Union peacekeeping mission, MISCA, and authorised the support of French forces. The country was declared an L3 humanitarian emergency (Britannica 08/11/2014; Brief Political History of the Central African Republic 2014; AFP 26/12/2013).

President Djotodia and Prime Minister Nicolas Tiengaye resigned in January 2014. The National Transitional Council appointed Catherine Samba-Panza, former mayor of Bangui, interim President. Muslims fled towards the Chadian border as violence persisted (ICG 2014).

### Division of CAR among the Main Stakeholders



Source: Jeune Afrique 07/2014

## Governance

Governance has been weak and strongly centralised since independence. The country has one of the lowest rankings for transparency, and is known for corruption and poor accountability.

**Legal system:** The legal system was reviewed in 2005 (International Media Support 2014). It is based on the French civil law system (DCAF 02/02/2015).

**Political institutions:** According to the 2004 constitution, the President is elected for a five-year term and is both head of state and head of government. The President can appoint all cabinet members without parliamentary approval. The Prime Minister is appointed by the majority party in the National Assembly. Parliament is unicameral and consists of 105 members elected for five-year terms; its role as a check on the executive is weak (Diplomatie 01/2015; Global Security 2013; DCAF 02/02/2015).

However, the 2004 constitution was suspended by Michel Djotodia in March 2013. The Constitutional Charter for the Transition was adopted in July 2013, along with a National Transitional Council (NTC) of 135 members as well as a Constitutional Council. The CNT is acting as a parliament and constituent assembly, creating constitutional and electoral code (AFDP 06/2014). The new government is made up of both ex-Seleka and anti-balaka. A referendum on a new constitution is scheduled for 4 October 2015 (AFP 19/06/2015).

**Local government:** The country is subdivided into seven regions, 16 prefectures, 71 subprefectures, 177 communes, and 8,300 villages and neighbourhoods (WFP 2009). Local authorities include the Chef de village and Chef de quartier (village chief and district chief), as well as mayors. Village and district chiefs were introduced by French colonisers. They are informally elected by residents for a period of ten years and report to mayors. Officially, mayors are elected by the municipal council, but they are more often appointed by central government. They are involved in overseeing transactions (NRC 12/2014). Due to lack of state presence and stability, local authorities tend to implement local decisions or come up with their own, often applying religious and community values (NRC 12/2014). There has been a High Commission for Decentralisation and Regionalisation to speed up decentralisation since 2008, but corruption and insecurity have affected implementation.

**Security forces:** The national police, under the authority of the Ministry of the Interior in Charge of Public Safety, has a history of institutional weakness and poor training. The police force consists of about 1,350 officers for the entire population. The Gendarmerie, a military force with police duties, has historically been present throughout the country (DCAF 02/02/2015). Security institutions are in the process of reconstruction. MINUSCA sent 1,800 UNPol personnel in 2013 to provide support (DCAF 02/02/2015). In March 2014, French gendarmes were deployed to carry out missions alongside gendarmes from CAR in Bangui and Bria. EUFOR supported CAR gendarmes in securing areas of the country (EUROGENDFOR 2015).

The FACA are institutionally weak and lack training, partly intentionally, as they are perceived as a potential threat to power. There were 5,000 FACA troops in 2009, including 1,500 operational soldiers; 75% were stationed in Bangui. Several thousand former Seleka members were integrated into FACA by decree after 2013 (DCAF 02/02/2015; ICG 2013; IPIS 11/2014; local media 16/09/2013). The Presidential Guard ranges from 200–800 soldiers and is stronger than FACA. At the start of the conflict, 600 Chadian soldiers arrived in CAR to serve in the Presidential Guard. In the past, both forces have committed human rights abuses.

**Elections** have been held in 1960, 1993, 2005, and 2011, but only 1993 resulted in the democratic and peaceful transition of power. Presidential elections are scheduled for 18 October 2015, with a second round on 22 November. They have already been delayed due to persistent insecurity and lack of resources (The Guardian 16/02/2015; IRIN 09/02/2015; AFP 19/06/2015).

**Freedom of expression:** In 2015, CAR was ranked 110 out of 180 in the Reporters without Borders press freedom index (RSF, 2015). Many journalists stopped reporting in 2013 and 2014. Newspapers, radio, and television shut down.

## Political Stakeholders and Background

**Ex-Seleka:** The ex-Seleka is made up of 10-15 groups of 1,500-3,750 fighters from the northeast, including Muslims, Sudanese and Chadian militants (Enough, 30/06/2015). The Seleka formed in late 2012 in northeastern CAR, merging pre-existing and often opposing groups. After being disbanded, with the exception of 17,114 fighters confined to three military camps in Bangui, most ex-Seleka moved out of the capital. By January 2014 they had taken control of most of central and northern CAR. Bambari, Ouaka, reportedly became the ex-Seleka headquarters. Rival ex-Seleka groups have clashed on several occasions (ACLEDD 01/2015; IRIN 17/09/2014; Jeune Afrique 27/10/2014). Seleka has generated three new political parties: The Union for Peace in the Central African Republic (UPC) in Bambari, the Popular Front for the Renaissance of Central Africa (FPRC) in Kaga-Bandoro, and the Patriotic Assembly for the Renaissance of Central Africa (RPRC) in Bria (ACLEDD 01/2015; MG 04/03/2015).

**Anti-balaka:** Anti-balaka formed in order to counter the Seleka; there are around 75,000, though the numbers are contested, and their main leaders and political programme remain unknown. It is suspected that up to ten anti-balaka factions function in the vicinity of Bangui (IRIN 12/01/2015; IRIN 12/02/2014). The anti-balaka has formed the Central African Party for Unity and Development (PCUD), but it lacks control over factions.

## Foreign Relations

**Sudan:** Influence in CAR includes military training to armed groups. Armed groups, like the SPLA, have also used northeastern CAR as a safe haven (CSS 04/2009; CFR 02/01/2007).

**Chad:** The Chadian Government has kept a close interest in CAR. Its president has acted as a mediator and is claimed to have helped François Bozizé come to power in 2003. Additionally, militants have used the northeastern region of CAR to convene and strengthen (CSS 04/2009). Following the outbreak of the 2013 conflict, the Chadian Government provided peacekeeping forces, but removed its MISCA contingent from CAR after accusations that it was supporting Seleka (R2P retrieved 07/2015).

**France:** France has attempted to retain influence in CAR. Financially, the Central African Franc is pegged to the Euro, with deposit funds controlled in Paris (European Commission 11/2008). President Samba-Panza has asked France to extend its military presence until the CAR presidential election (UN News Service 2013).

**US military:** The US is providing logistical support and advisers to African troops operating against the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in eastern and southeastern CAR. This is part of the Lord's Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act signed in May 2010 (US Department of State 24/03/2014).

**Peacekeeping missions:** Operations include MINUSCA, MINURCA, MINURCAT, BONUCA, BINUCA, MISAB, FOMUC, EUFOR, and MICOPAX. Initial peacekeeping missions in CAR focused on regional security and disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes. In August 2013, MISCA was deployed by the African Union, led by Uganda. It was supported by 1,600 French troops (Sangaris) from December 2013. The UN's MINUSCA took over from MISCA in September 2014. It is larger than the MISCA force, and numbers 6,500 troops and 1,000 police (AFP 12/2013; CCDP 2015). EUFOR was authorised in January 2014. By end May 2014, it consisted of 700 troops. In March 2015, the operation was replaced by the EU Military Advisory Mission, to reorganise the CAR armed forces (European Union External Action 15/03/2015).

## Humanitarian and Development Stakeholders

Humanitarian response capacity is weak to non-existent in CAR. Overall, the CAR crisis is seen as a forgotten crisis, with only 15% the 2015 humanitarian funding requirement of USD 613 million available (OCHA 14/04/2015; CCDP 2015; OCHA 2015).

**International organisations:** Humanitarian presence has been characterised by relief efforts such as food assistance, aid for displacement, and emergency medical care. DDR has been a priority in the past decade as well, though without much success. Clusters have been functional since August 2008 and the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) was established in January 2010 (OCHA 2012).

**National organisations:** Capacity is limited. Local NGOs such as the CAR Red Cross, Echelle, and JUDEPEC, associations, and village cooperatives have provided support.

## Economy

Despite being a resource- and mineral-rich country, the Central African Republic remains a low-income nation. Subsistence agriculture accounts for about 60% of GDP. Poor road infrastructure and access to the sea affect economic development. Some GDP growth was seen in 2008–2012, but the economy shrank by nearly 30% in 2013 and exports fell by 60% (Global Edge 2013; FAO 2005; WFP retrieved 06/2015).

Consequently, economic growth is highly reliant on public spending. This dependency is further reinforced by difficulties for foreign investors, due to widespread corruption, regulatory hurdles, and insecurity. CAR ranked 187 out of 189 on the World Bank's ease of doing business index (World Bank Group, retrieved 07/2015).

**Gross national income per capita:** USD 449 in 2012 (UNDP 2012).

**Currency:** The Central African Franc (XAF) conversion rate is USD 1.00 to XAF 597.82 (Currency Converter 09/12/2014).

**Inflation:** In 2014, the inflation rate was recorded at 25.58% in June. From 1981–2014 the average inflation rate was 3.81% (Trading Economics retrieved 07/2015).

**Budget:** In 2013, government revenues were estimated at USD 186 million, (9.1% of GDP). Expenditures totalled USD 270.8 million, leaving a budget deficit of -4.1% (CIA Factbook 2013).

**Banking:** CAR has the smallest financial sector in the Economic Community of Central African States. Limited access to financial services is a key inhibitor to economic growth. Under 1% of the population have access to bank accounts and financial services: most are civil servants (IMF 2009). The country has three commercial banks, two microfinance institutions, two post office banks, one social security agency and two insurance companies. From 2006–2009 bank liquidity

recovered due to a more favourable business sector and export growth but even then banks struggled to expand. The World Bank, IMF, European Union and the African Development Bank have operations in the country, which were suspended after the 2013 coup (African Development Bank 06/2014).

**Labour force per occupation:** The total labour force has increased over the past five years, totalling 2.2 million in 2013. There is no data calculating the percentage of the population employed in agriculture, industry, or services. Most of the labour force is informal. Recent data on unemployment is also lacking (Global Edge 2013).

**Main export products:** Timber and diamonds, followed by cotton (CIA Factbook 2013).

**Main export partners:** Belgium 31.7%, China 27.9%, DRC 7.8%, Indonesia 5.2%, France 4.5% (CIA Factbook 2012).

**Imports** totalled USD 218.6 million in 2013. Imported commodities include food, textiles, petroleum products, machinery, electrical equipment, motor vehicles, chemicals, and pharmaceuticals (CIA Factbook 2011).

**Main import partners:** Netherlands 20.3%, France 9.7%, Cameroon 9.1%, South Korea 9.1% (CIA Factbook 2012).

**Food imports:** Wheat and flour, dried vegetables, cane or beet sugar, cereals, as well as palm oil and its fractions. In 2011, food imports measured 31% of merchandise imports (Trading Economics retrieved 07/2015).

**Services:** Services accounted for 28.9% of GDP in 2013 (CIA Factbook 2014 est.).

**Key industries:** Gold and diamond mining, logging, cotton, and sugar refining.).

**Extractive sector:** Mining made up 1.8% of GDP in 2013. The Kimberley Process has since been suspended and diamond exports have halted or gone underground (African Economic Outlook, 2014). Diamond-mining regions were controlled by Seleka before the current crisis and are today controlled by different ex-Seleka factions (CIA Factbook 2013; Stratfor 13/05/2013). Global Witness estimates that up to 50% of all diamonds produced in CAR are mined/exported illegally. Diamonds are primarily exported to Belgium (which has become the country's main trading partner) and are estimated to account for upwards of 50–60% of all export revenue. The diamonds are predominantly sold uncut, reducing their export value (Global Witness 11/11/2014).

**Timber:** 'Blood timber' operations – the illegal logging of forests in conflict zones – have grown significantly. The main export market for timber and cotton produced in CAR is China (which is the second largest trading partner). Timber exports account for an estimated 16% of all export earnings (Global Witness 2014).

**Agriculture:** 69% of the population works in agriculture, accounting for about 60% of GDP. Most is subsistence farming, though part is export crops such as cotton, coffee, and tobacco. Cassava is the main food crop, covering 40% of the total crop area in 2009, followed by groundnuts, cereals, and other dry legumes and vegetables. Prior to the conflict, 2 million of the 15 million hectares available were cultivated each year. 1970s agrarian reform, financial crisis, and poor development have all damaged the sector. Food crop production in 2014, estimated at 762,690 metric tons, was 58% below the pre-crisis average (OCHA 04/03/2015; CIA Factbook 2012; FAO 2005; FAO/WFP 29/10/2014; FEWSNET 05/2012).

## Infrastructure

**Airport:** There are 42 airports in CAR. Bangui-Mpoko is the main airport and the only one meeting international standards. The 41 others allow primarily humanitarian deliveries. Domestic travel is provided by United Nations Humanitarian Air Services (UNHAS) (Logistics Capacity Assessment 2009; CIA Factbook 2013).

**Roadway:** 23,810km of roads; 643km are paved. Without any proper maintenance programmes in place, the roads are in poor condition, cutting off certain regions year-round. Many villages are not reachable by road at all. During the rainy season, rain barriers are set up across the country to prevent deterioration to the roads, though this is not a reliable solution. Road crime is a major concern (Logistics Capacity Assessment 2009; CIA Factbook 2010).

**Ports and harbours:** Douala in Cameroon, which is in the same economic zone, handles 80% of CAR's international trade, but the journey takes at least 20 days from Bangui. Pointe Noire in Congo and Matadi in DRC can only be accessed from June–December or January, because the Ubangi riverbed silts and the journey requires combined transport (Logistics Capacity Assessment 2009; CIA Factbook 2011).

**Electricity:** In 2010, 9.5% of Central Africans had access to electricity, 5.4% in rural areas and 15.8% in urban areas (World Bank 2010).

## Media and Communication

**TV:** Public television covers Bangui and some neighbouring prefectures. National television covers government activity, music, and religious programmes. The only private channel is Tropic TV. The two available satellite packages are only accessible to wealthier Central Africans (Mamaye 30/09/2011; Internews, 07/2012).

**Radio** is the most common medium of communication in the country with around 30 state-run, independent, religious or community-based stations. Some politicians subsidise radio stations. Radio Centrafrique is owned by the state. Fondation Hirondelle, Radio Ndeke Luka, Radio Centrafrique, and Radio Notre Dame are all operational. International radio stations like BBC, Radio France International and Voice of America are also available. During the height of the conflict, only six of the 30 stations functioned, and these were based in Bangui. The rest of the country had to rely on friends and family for news (International Media Support 02/2014; Columbia Journalism Review 14/03/2014).

**Print:** Newspapers are primarily distributed in Bangui. There are between 30 and 40 titles, but few are published regularly. The main newspapers include *Le Citoyen*, *Le Confident* and *Hirondelle*. No newspapers were published in 2013. ACAP, l'Agence Centrafricaine de Presse, is the state-run press agency, Be Afrika is private (International Media Support 02/2014).

**Internet:** CAR was one of the last countries in the world to have Internet access; services were introduced in 2000. At 2013, only 3.5% of the population was using the Internet. Penetration of Internet is concentrated in Bangui. There are three mobile Internet providers and one fixed-line provider. The biggest is Orange Centrafrique (International Media Support 02/2014; Internews 07/2012; BBC 20/09/2013).

**Mobile Network:** Mobile coverage extends throughout the entire country, with one in three Central Africans using mobile phones. There are four mobile phone operators: Moov, NationLink Telecom RCA, Orange, and Telecel. Moov has been down since April 2014 (International Media Support 02/2014; Internews 07/2012; Africa & Middle East Telecoms retrieved 05/2015; OAfrica 06/01/2013).

## Food Security and Livelihoods

The Central African Republic has a high poverty rate, ranking 185 out of 187 countries in the 2013 UNDP Human Development Index. More than 77% of the population lives on less than USD 2 per day (World Bank retrieved 06/2015; WFP retrieved 06/2015; WFP 12/2014).

**Food security:** At March 2015, 1.5 million people (33% of the total population) were in need of food assistance. Protracted displacement has affected agricultural activity and overall access to food. Moreover, insecurity and road conditions affect access to market and prices. Prior to the conflict, one-third of households failed to cover their nutritional needs. People consumed an average of 1.6 meals per day, with children consuming the most. Food stocking is limited in CAR and the conflict has

worsened the situation (WFP 2009; IPC 31/10/2014; OCHA 04/03/2015; FEWSNET 05/2012). See map page 11 for details of livelihood zones.

## Health

The under-five mortality rate in 2012 was 129 per 1,000 live births, an improvement compared to 164 in 2000, but much higher than the average for low-income countries in 2013, which was 76 per 1,000. Life expectancy stood at 49.5 years in 2012, compared to 43 years in 2003 (Plan Stratégique Système Santé RCA 09/2007; WHO 2013).

Malaria, respiratory diseases, and waterborne diseases are the most common causes of death. Poor access to water and sanitation as well as population movement, overcrowding, and open defecation increase the likelihood of waterborne disease transmission. Low vaccination coverage has led to frequent serious outbreaks of avoidable communicable diseases (WHO 2014; WHO 12/2013).

**Health system:** Even with international aid, the health system only covered 10–20% of the population by end 2013. Out of 815 health facilities, 451 are operating, 110 partially operating, and 254 are closed (OCHA 10/2014). Many services are provided by external assistance and the availability of medicine is low.

The system consists of a public sector managed by the Ministry of Public Health, the broader public sector, the private sector, and denominational private sector. Healthcare is not free, which prevents many from receiving treatment (WHO 2013). There are seven health regions, including Bangui, and 16 health prefectures. Prior to the conflict, the public sector consisted of five regional hospitals, 12 district hospitals, 199 health centres, and 422 health posts. From 2006–2015, a National Plan for Health Care Development was established in order to meet the Millennium Development Goals, but it was never implemented (WHO 11/2006; RCA Ministère de la Santé Publique 05/2011; Plan Stratégique Système Santé RCA 09/2007).

**Health expenditure:** In 2003, total expenditure on health was 2.2% of GDP. Per capita health expenditure was USD 18.28 in 2011, compared to the Central African regional average of USD 94.6. Households financed 90.4% of their health expenses out of pocket. In 2011, 35.5% of the health sector was financed by external assistance (USAID 2013; Medicus Mundi International 06/2006)

**Traditional sector:** Traditional medicine is authorised by law; however, it is not regulated (Homeopathy & Ayurvedic Medicine 2014). Self-medication is common due to the challenge of reaching a healthcare facility, especially in the countryside. People use

local plants to create traditional treatments (University of Queensland School of Public Health 06/12/2013).

**Maternal health:** The maternal mortality ratio was 890/100,000 in 2010 and estimates remain the same through 2014 (UNDP HDI 2014). 54% of deliveries were carried out with the assistance of health staff. In 3% of births, doctors are present, paramedics 51%, and auxiliary midwives/birth attendants 37%. Nearly one in four women gave birth in the presence of traditional birth attendants (18%) or community workers (7%). Women in rural areas (38%) are much less frequently attended by skilled staff than those in urban areas (83%) (MICS 2010).

53% of births occur in a health facility (46% in public sector institutions and 6% in the private sector) and 45% of births take place at home. Home births are more likely among rural women (58%), those who have made no antenatal visit (81%), women with no education (58%), and women from the poorest households (66%). 5% of deliveries are by caesarean, 2% in the rural and 8% in urban areas (MICS 2010).

**Vaccination:** Coverage among children 0–11 months from January to April 2015 for was 39% for measles and 36% for the pentavalent vaccine (polio, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, hepatitis b, HiB) (WHO 30/06/2015). 53% of pregnant women received at least 2 doses of the tetanus vaccine during their last pregnancy. 65% of pregnant women and their newborns are protected against tetanus (Ministry of Public Health and Population 05/2011; Medicusmundi 2006; MICS 2010).

**Cholera:** Outbreaks are common due to population movement, overcrowding, inadequate hygiene and sanitation, and poor access to water (WHO 2013). In early November 2011, a cholera outbreak swept through Central Africa, affecting 24 countries, including CAR. Lobaye, Ombella Mpoko and six arrondissements in Bangui were affected (GHA 14/11/2011; CDC Foundation 2011).

**Malaria:** A 2013 malaria outbreak in northwestern CAR was aggravated by insecurity. 70% of all child deaths in hospitals not supported by NGOs in 2013 were from malaria (IFRC 23/10/2013).

**Measles:** A measles outbreak began in 2 January 2013 in the suburbs of Bangui. A vaccination campaign was carried out in Bangui in May, then in the interior of the country in July. 600 confirmed cases were reported by October 2013 (IFRC 16/05/2013; OCHA 29/11/2013; UNICEF 22/07/2013).

**Yellow fever:** In November 2009, yellow fever was detected among four patients in the subprefecture of Yaloke-Bossembelle, Ombella Mpoko prefecture, and in the subprefecture of Bagamongone, Lobaye prefecture. Two yellow fever outbreak preceded this, earlier in 2009 and in 2008 (WHO 01/12/2009).



**HIV:** HIV prevalence is the highest in French-speaking sub-Saharan Africa: in 2010, it was 4.9%, compared to 15% in 2002. In 2007, there were 145,500 adults and children living with HIV and approximately 140,000 orphans, based on 2006 UN data. By 2010, this number had decreased to 130,000 HIV positive individuals.

Women are twice as likely to be HIV positive at 6.3% compared to men (3%). HIV prevalence is higher in urban areas. Bangui (7.7%), Haute Kotto (8.5%), and Nana-Mambere (7.7%) prefectures all have a higher prevalence than the national average. In 2011, 14,400 people were receiving ARV treatment, compared to 2,900 in 2006. The suspension in 2010 of grant agreements by the Prevention Fund against AIDS has led to a shortage of ARVs, which caused an interruption of treatment for all patients. Information is lacking concerning testing levels and treatment coverage. (Ministere de la Sante Publique 05/2011; WHO 2013; Global Fund 2007; UNAIDS 2010; MICS 2010; MSF 11/2011).

## WASH

Water supply and sanitation has undergone reform, but it has been slow. 2.3 million people do not have access to improved safe water or improved sanitation. Prior to the conflict, 1.27% of the national budget was used for WASH. Rural areas are largely neglected (WHO/UNICEF JMP for Water Supply and Sanitation; OCHA, 22/23/2014; WSP, 2011).

**Water supply:** Based on 2008 measurements, only 34.7% of the population has access to improved drinking water. The Joint Monitor Programme (JMP) assessed that access to drinking water in 2008 stood at 51% in rural areas and 92% in urban areas. 2015 estimates indicate that 54% of the rural population has access to water and 90% of the urban population. Overall, only 2% of the population has water piped onto premises, 66% has other improved sources of water, 29% has some unimproved sources of water, and 3% consume surface water. Water availability fluctuates between 3L and 12L per capita per day (WHO/UNICEF JMP for Water Supply and Sanitation; WSP 2011). The General Directorate of Water estimates much lower figures for water supply.

**Sanitation:** As of 2012, 22% of households had improved sanitation facilities, 13% had access to shared facilities, 42% had access to other unimproved facilities, and 23% used open defecation (UNGLAAS 2012). Sewage systems do not exist (WSP 2011).

**Waste management:** Outside Bangui, there are no waste management structures. Waste is disposed of on the street and into the environment (WSP 2011).

## Shelter

Prior to 2013, 85% of the population was a homeowner, with a higher percentage (94%) owning homes in rural areas than urban areas (75%). In urban regions, 17.4% of households were rented (WFP 06/2009).

The main materials used for houses in CAR are grass/straw and palm/bamboo, depending on availability. Sheet metal is also frequently used. Walls are made from traditional adobe, or finished material like cement blocks and clay brick. Most homes do not have finished floors: 12.5% of assessed homes have rooms with cement floors (WFP 06/2009).

## Education

Education is mandatory from age 6 to 14, though the average number of years spent in education is 4.5. The education system in CAR is based around eight academic 'inspections' in Bangui, Mbaiki, Bouar, Bossangoa, Bambari, Bangassou, Kaga-Bandoro and Ndele. A national education profile cited 788,000 students enrolled in primary and secondary education: 28% of primary school-aged children were out of school. Only 1.8% of pupils go beyond secondary education. There is one university, in Bangui (WFP 06/2009; UNHCR 2005; National Education Profile 2014).

School enrolment was 46.4% for girls and 66.1% for boys (UN Data 2012). There were 13,250 classrooms for the 2007–2008 academic school year. Only 5% of Fulani and pygmy children attend school.

The overall literacy rate of adults over 15 was estimated at 56.6% in 2011, or 67% according to national statistics from 2011 to 2012 (World Bank 2012). Youth literacy (15–24 years) was 65.9% in 2011: 59.1% for girls and 72.3% for boys (UNICEF 2011).

## Protection

**Female genital mutilation (FGM):** Despite national legislation banning FGM since 1966 (amended in 1996), the prevalence of female genital mutilation in 2008 was 25.7%. 52% of girls who experienced FGM did so between the ages of 10 and 14 (UNICEF 12/2013; WHO 2008; UNICEF 2013).

**Children:** 432 children were killed or maimed by violence in 2014. The number of children recruited into armed groups has risen to 6,000–10,000, from 2,500 at the beginning of the crisis (The Guardian 29/04/2015; The Guardian 18/12/2014; OCHA 04/12/2014).

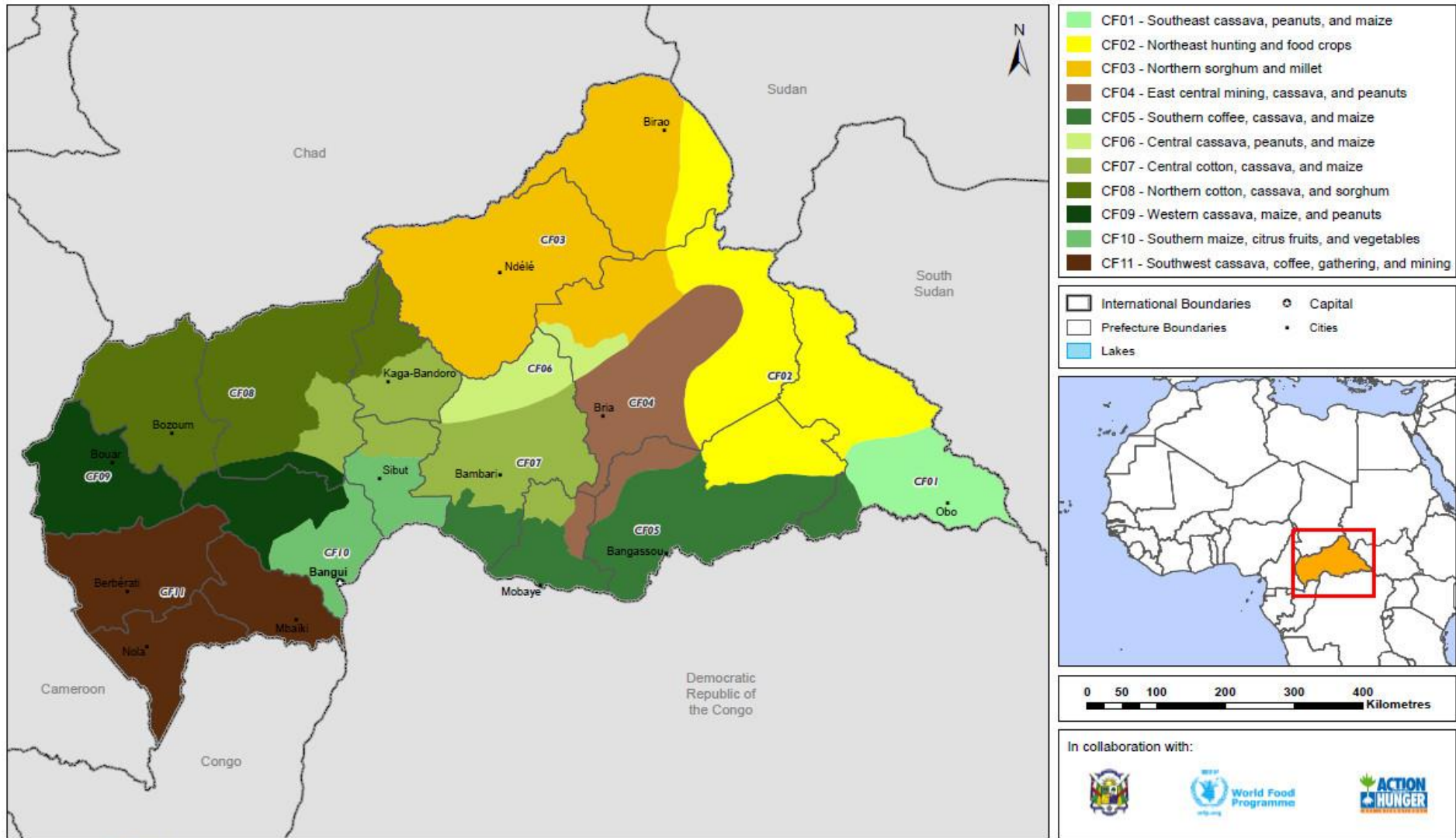
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## Population by Prefecture

Prefecture	Capital	Population (2003)	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Pop. density (/km <sup>2</sup> )
Bamingui-Bangoran	Ndele	43,229	58,200	0.7
Bangui	Bangui	622,771	67	9,295.1
Basse-Kotto	Mobaye	249,150	17,604	14.2
Haut-Mbomou	Obo	57,602	55,530	1.0
Haut-Kotto	Bria	90,316	86,650	1.0
Kemo	Sibut	118,420	17,204	6.9
Lobaye	Mbaïki	246,875	19,235	12.8
Mambere-Kadeï	Berberati	364,795	30,203	12.1
Mlbomou	Bangassou	164,009	61,150	2.7
Nana-Gribizi	Kaga-Bandoro	117,816	19,996	5.9
Nana-Mambere	Bouar	233,666	26,600	8.8
Ombella-Mpoko	Boali	356,725	31,835	11.2
Ouaka	Bambari	276,710	49,900	5.5
Ouham	Bossangoa	369,220	50,250	7.3
Ouham-Pende	Bozoum	430,506	32,100	13.4
Sangha-M'baere	Nola	101,074	19,412	5.2
Vakaga	Birao	52,255	46,500	1.1

## CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC - LIVELIHOOD ZONES



Updated: August 13, 2012

Source: Fewsnat, 2012

## Seasonal and Critical Events Calendar

Key seasonal data	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Average rainfall precipitation 1990-2009 (mm)	8.6	12.7	50.9	99.2	144.2	164.8	202.4	238.6	203.7	163.1	37.4	9.5
Average temperature 1990-2009 (Celsius)	24.4	26.5	27.7	27.6	26.5	25.3	24.5	24.3	24.4	25	25.2	24.5
School year												
Rainy season				Rainy season - South			Peak rainy season countrywide					
Lean season				Lean season South: April-July; North: July-September								
<b>Critical events</b>												
Elections (presidential & parliamentary)										Scheduled 2015	Scheduled 2015	
Floods									2012			
Measles*										2013		
Meningitis*	2000		2001/2004		2001	2001						
Cholera*								2011				
Yellow fever*							2008	2009				
	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec

\* Epidemics: month of the start of the outbreak