

### *Conflict provokes a deterioration of food security for poor households and IDPs*

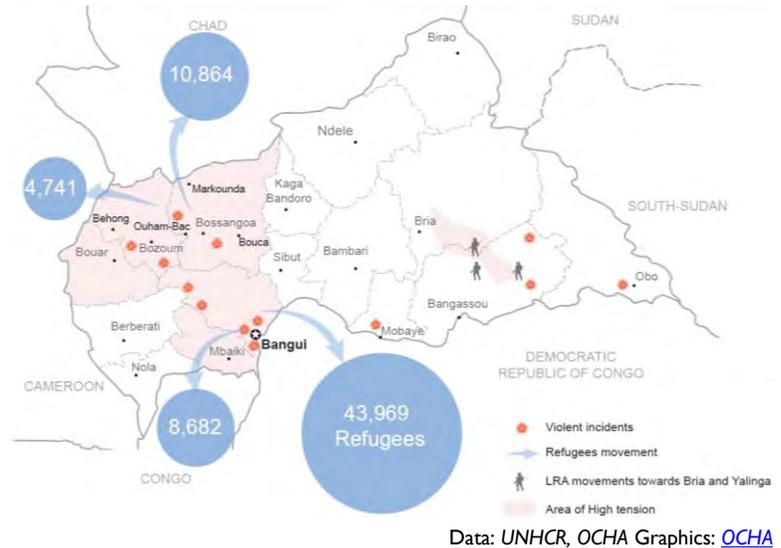
Security conditions in Central African Republic (CAR) remain volatile, particularly in the northwest and west-central regions and in Bangui. This has been compounded by a new wave of violence in these regions since December 5, 2013, causing hundreds of deaths and thousands of displacements. This insecurity has also contributed to poor 2013/14 harvests and below-average household incomes. Due in part to ongoing humanitarian assistance, poor households, including IDPs, in regions worst affected by conflict are currently facing Stressed (IPC Phase 2!) food insecurity. However, if ongoing humanitarian assistance was disrupted between now and the start of the next harvests in October 2014, food security in these zones would likely deteriorate to Crisis (IPC Phase 3) levels.

In northwest and west-central areas, food security during the 2013/14 consumption year will be driven by the negative effects of conflict on 2013/14 harvests, income sources, and market functioning. Satellite imagery and ground reports confirm that, despite normal rainfall levels, the agricultural season in the western half of the country, particularly in Mambéré-Kadéï, Lobaye, Ombella, Ouham, Ouham-Pende, Kaga, Bandoro, and Sibut, was disrupted by population displacements, difficult access to fields, and a lack of agricultural inputs. As a result, 2013/14 crop production levels at both a regional and national level are expected to be below average. In affected regions, household food stocks will deplete earlier than normal in February/March instead of March/April as in a normal year, causing the 2014 lean season to start one to two months earlier than normal. Disruptions to the agricultural season have also reduced opportunities and incomes from agricultural wage labor work for poor households in rural areas, reducing their purchasing power.

The effects of conflict on market functioning within CAR are also reducing food availability and access. Ground reports since December 5, 2013 indicate the absence of trade flows from Cameroon and from surplus-producing areas of the country towards Bangui. Store closures, as well as acts of looting and destruction of certain markets/stores, have also been observed. In northern zones, market supply has slowed due to the weak purchasing power of large traders who have suffered significant losses in terms of food stocks and livestock. As a result, supply is currently limited and at below-average levels at local markets. These market anomalies have led to atypical price increases in Bangui between November and the second week of December of 40 percent for local rice, 41 percent for cassava, 36 percent for peanut oil, and 167 percent for shelled peanuts.

Since the new wave of violence in December 2013, IDP population estimates have been fluctuating on a daily basis. However, [the most recent estimates from OCHA indicate that 639,000 IDPs are present within CAR, including 214,000 new IDPs in Bangui displaced since December 5](#). Given that the Central African Republic has a population of approximately 4.5 million people, IDPs represent about 14 percent of the country's total population. Currently, food consumption among IDPs is reduced and minimally adequate. According to two rapid assessments conducted by ACTED on December 17, 2013 of IDPs in Bangui, households are relying on a combination of market purchases, wild foods, and solidarity mechanisms (gifts and humanitarian assistance) to cover their food needs.

**Figure 1.** Recent conflict within CAR and refugee flows to neighboring countries, December 14, 2013



Due to ongoing humanitarian assistance, at-risk populations (including IDPs) in conflict-affected, northwest and west-central regions, as well as in Bangui, are currently covering their basic food needs but are unable to meet their essential nonfood expenditures. As a result, they are currently facing Stressed (IPC Phase 2) food insecurity. However, if ongoing humanitarian interventions are interrupted before the start of the next harvests in October 2014, households will begin to face food consumption gaps and acute food security outcomes will deteriorate to Crisis (IPC Phase 3) levels. Well-targeted emergency interventions are necessary to prevent food consumption gaps and protect livelihoods.