



## Central African Republic: Floods

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**CHF 98,717 (USD 82,059 or EUR 60,047) has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the National Society in delivering immediate assistance to 756 households (3,780 people) in Bangui and Bossangoa.**

**Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.**

**This operation is expected to be implemented over 3 months, and will therefore be completed by end of December 2007; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation.**

[<Click here to go to the map of the affected area>](#)



The six-month old baby pictured above had been carried away by floodwater; luckily she was rescued at the Lipia 4 neighbourhood.

### The situation

Since July 2007, heavy rains have continued pouring in the eight sub-divisions of Bangui (the capital of the Central African Republic) and in Bossangoa, 305 km from Bangui. The heavy rains have caused flooding in various localities, resulting in serious material damages. Houses have been partially or fully destroyed and many people have been made homeless. Meteorological forecasts indicate that the rains are likely to continue into October.

According to assessments carried out by the Central African Red Cross Society (CARCS) with support from the Federation's Representation in Central Africa Sub-zone, over 6,000 persons have been affected in Bangui alone, where 225 houses have been completely destroyed and 1,812 people rendered homeless. Bossangoa, the chief town of Ouham Prefecture, has also been affected by the flooding due to the overflow of the Ouham River; over 2,800 people have been affected, 393 houses totally destroyed and 1,965 people left homeless. Some of the partially destroyed houses are collapsing progressively.

About 40 per cent of the affected people are children aged under 15 years who are now exposed to harsh weather conditions and are at risk of contracting diseases such as malaria, hepatitis E and typhoid. Assessments have also revealed that the extent of material damages is increasing on a daily basis as temporary shelters and farms are destroyed by floodwater. Additionally, the displaced people are exposed to water and vector borne diseases because water wells have been contaminated by dirty floodwater and sewage from destroyed and overflowing latrines. There is also a lack of clean and safe drinking water.

The following tables summarize the situation as observed by the joint assessment teams as at 13 September 2007.

**Table 1: Number of flood affected people**

Town	Locality	Family heads	Dependents		Children	Homeless
			Male >15 yrs	Female >15 yrs		
Bangui	2 <sup>nd</sup> Arrondissement	485	1,253	1,441	1,258	1,442
	4 <sup>th</sup> Arrondissement	153	210	323	623	317
	5 <sup>th</sup> Arrondissement	46	40	74	175	53
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>684</b>	<b>1,503</b>	<b>1,838</b>	<b>2,056</b>	<b>1,812</b>
Bossangoa	1 <sup>st</sup> Arrondissement	64	56	85	289	392
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Arrondissement	129	90	143	431	481
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Arrondissement	186	157	231	593	829
	4 <sup>th</sup> Arrondissement	71	61	76	160	263
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>1,473</b>	<b>1,965</b>
<b>Grand total</b>		<b>1,134</b>	<b>1,867</b>	<b>2,373</b>	<b>3,529</b>	<b>3,777</b>

**Table 2: Flood-induced material damages**

Town	Locality	Material damages			
		Houses destroyed completely	Houses destroyed partially	Damaged latrines	Wells contaminated
Bangui	2 <sup>nd</sup> Arrondissement	160	438	2,300	1,700
	4 <sup>th</sup> Arrondissement	47	39	1,415	835
	5 <sup>th</sup> Arrondissement	18	40	2,320	1,987
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>6,035</b>	<b>4,522</b>
Bossangoa	1 <sup>st</sup> Arrondissement	78	38	112	89
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Arrondissement	96	183	226	17
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Arrondissement	166	152	326	124
	4 <sup>th</sup> Arrondissement	53	34	124	5
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>788</b>	<b>229</b>
<b>Grand total</b>		<b>618</b>	<b>924</b>	<b>6,823</b>	<b>4,751</b>

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The initial assessment conducted by the National Society did not adequately determine the needs of flood-affected people. Consequently, to get a vivid picture of the situation on the ground and to understand better the needs of affected people, a joint Federation/CARCS assessment was initiated on 6 September 2007. Preliminary findings – half way through the joint assessment – indicate that the majority of losses registered are material losses; houses have been completely or partially destroyed, kitchen utensils and other household materials (such as beds and accessories) have been swept away and crops have been washed away.

### The needs

Inhabitants of affected localities are among the poorest in the country and live in an environment with limited and unplanned basic facilities. They face serious hygiene, water and sanitation problems which makes them vulnerable to preventable diseases. There is a need to address these issues urgently so as to prevent outbreaks of water and vector borne diseases.

Immediate needs include non-food items such as blankets, tarpaulins, mosquito nets and cooking utensils, water treatment chemicals (for disinfecting water wells) and latrines. Provision of these needs will help to minimize the risk of water and vector borne diseases outbreaks and enable the affected people to take care of themselves and stop depending on host families; this will in turn help them to recover their human dignity.

## The proposed operation

To meet the immediate needs of flood-affected people, the CARCS has prepared a plan of action which will be implemented for three months with funds from the Federation's DREF. The Red Cross intervention aims at improving the living conditions of 756 most vulnerable flood-affected families (3,780 persons) in Bangui and Bossangoa.

**Goal: To reduce the vulnerability of flood-affected people in Bangui and Bossangoa.**

**Objective: The living conditions of 756 most vulnerable flood-affected families are improved through distribution of non-food items, treatment of water points and cleaning of gutters.**

### Expected results:

- The flood management capacities of Red Cross volunteers in Bangui and Bossangoa sub-divisional committees are strengthened;
- Non-food items, including blankets, impregnated mosquito nets, cooking and hygiene kits, are distributed to selected 756 families;
- At least 75% of the people in affected areas have access to potable water;
- Gutters in flooded zones are cleaned;
- 90% of the affected population is sensitized to hygiene and sanitation rules and puts them into practice;
- 90% of the affected population is sensitized to a floods early alert system;
- At least 75% of the affected population is protected against waterborne diseases through sensitization by Red Cross volunteers;
- Relief and sanitation materials are put at the disposal of the local committees of the Red Cross involved in the operation.

### Activities to be carried out:

- Following up the situation;
- Retraining Red Cross volunteers and building the material capacities of the National Society;
- Purchasing and distributing non-food items for 2 months;
- Treating water points and disinfecting latrines;
- Cleaning gutters and carrying out sanitation work
- Sensitizing the population to hygiene and sanitation rules;
- Sensitizing the population to the need and techniques of monitoring water levels on a regular basis to ensure that an early alert is given timely incase of future potential flooding (strengthening the early alert system);
- Advocating before other partners.

### Implementation strategy

The activities planned will be implemented by Red Cross volunteers from the Bangui and Bossangoa local committees of the CARCS, under the supervision of the national disaster management team and in close collaboration with the national health department. A community-based approach will be used to ensure that the capacities of both the Red Cross local committees and targeted communities are built.

To that effect, National Society intends to develop a population sensitization and mobilization system in order to encourage members of the community to dig and clean gutters in their communities, to treat wells and to disinfect latrines with the support of Red Cross volunteers. This work is expected to begin by mid-November 2007 (after the rainy season) under the supervision of family heads. An efficient advocacy exercise will be conducted to ensure that the Red Cross works in close collaboration with other partners.

## Coordination and partnerships

From the onset of the rainy season and resulting flooding, the Government of Central African Republic called upon partners to assist flood-affected people whose numbers have been increasing as the rains continue. The Central African Red Cross Society immediately initiated assessments to determine the needs on the ground. Based on information from the Red Cross, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) pledged to donate mats, tarpaulins, mosquito nets, cooking kits, chlorine tablets and drums of water to vulnerable persons.

As regards sanitation work and cleaning of gutters, the government has received support from the European Union for the implementation of the THIMO III and TAG Projects<sup>1</sup>. Once the projects are complete, they will contribute to preventing flood disasters in Bangui. However, the projects are focusing only on the main streets of Bangui; the conditions of the inner streets also need to be addressed.

Based on information from the Red Cross, the Member of Parliament for the second subdivision of Bangui donated XAF 20,000 to 25 families whose houses have been completely destroyed. The financial support will enable the families to pay up to two-months rent. The parliamentarian also donated XAF 15,000 to the families whose houses are partially destroyed and XAF 5,000 to heads of families whose houses have been flooded.

## How we work

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the National Society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

### Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

## Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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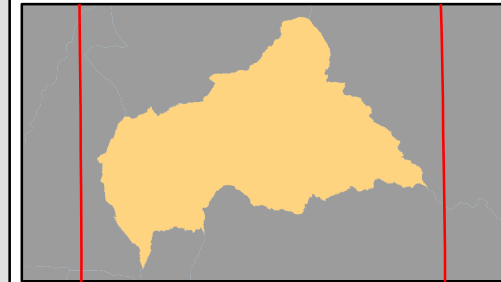
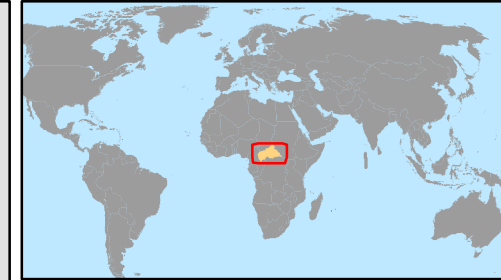
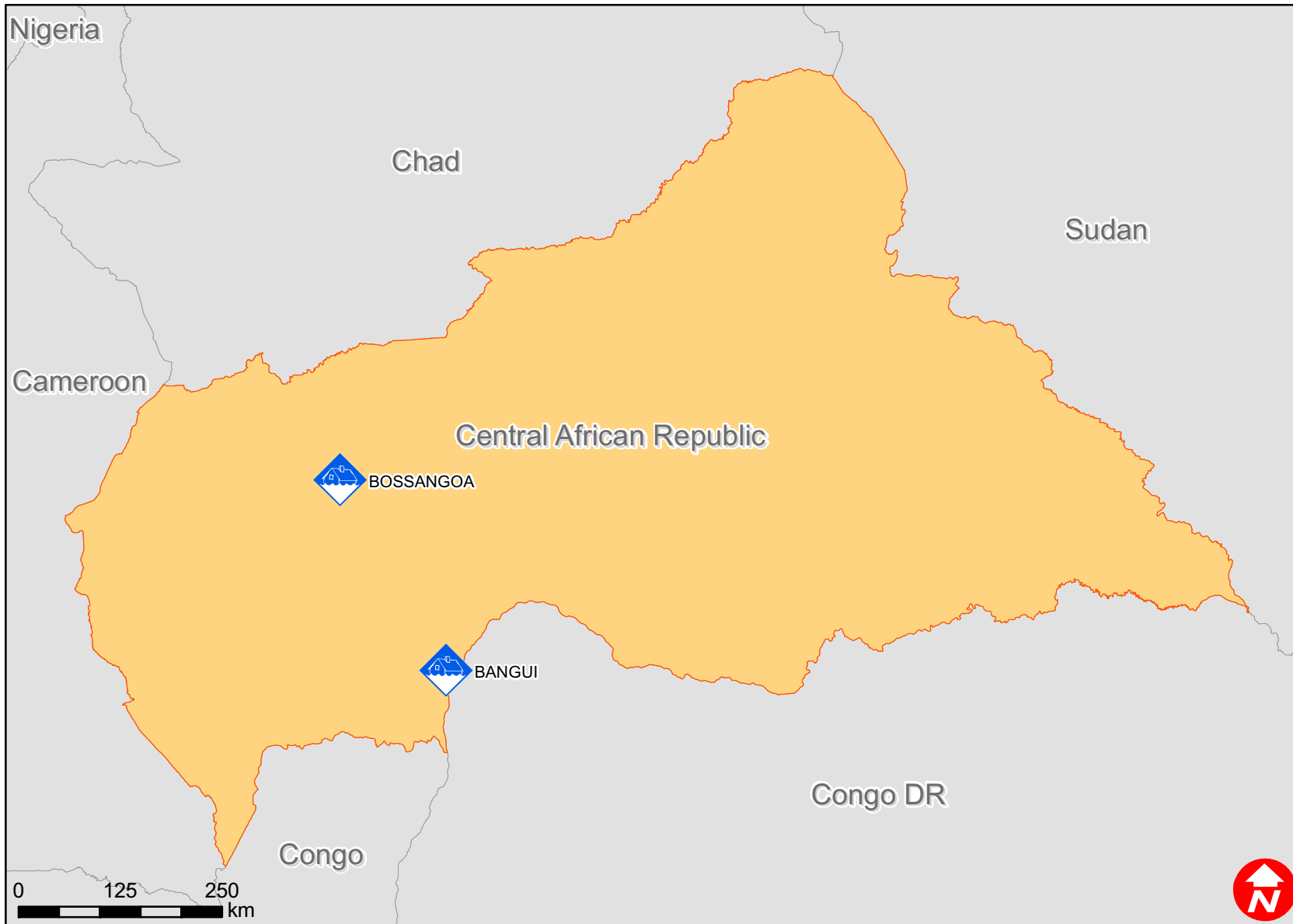
[<Map below; click here to return to the title page>](#)

<sup>1</sup> Travaux à Haute Intensité de Main d'œuvre (THIMO III)

Travaux d'Aménagement des quartiers Galabadjia (TAG) I, II, III, IV et V dans le 8<sup>ème</sup> arrondissement exposés aux inondations



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