

International Rescue Committee Central African Republic: Strategy Action Plan



D Belluz / IRC

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IRC2020 GLOBAL STRATEGY OVERVIEW

The International Rescue Committee's (IRC) mission is to help the world's most vulnerable people survive, recover, and gain control of their future. The aim of the IRC's global strategy, IRC2020 (see right), is to make measurable improvements in health, safety, education, economic wellbeing, and decision-making power. Therefore, the IRC has made investments to design more effective programs, use resources more efficiently, reach more people more quickly and better respond to beneficiaries' needs.



CAR OVERVIEW

The Central African Republic (CAR) has struggled with insurgencies and army mutinies since the late 1990s. As a result, the CAR has suffered from an ineffective government and a lack of basic services.

The current crisis began after rebels seized power in late 2012. Throughout 2013, the state collapsed. Violence between opposing militias trapped thousands in enclaves and forced over a million people to flee to camps, across borders, and into the forest.

Crisis-affected people in the bush and camps are highly vulnerable to

illness and gender-based violence. Despite the presence of a UN force, civilians are still not safe. The judiciary and institutions are weak or non-existent in most of the country, resulting in widespread impunity.

The CAR's already poor healthcare system further deteriorated as a result of inter-militia violence. Health facilities have been attacked and workers have fled to Bangui or overseas. The crisis has had disastrous health consequences for women and girls, leading to many cases of trauma, sexual violence, and HIV infection.

Many girls and boys are out of school, schoolhouses have been destroyed and teachers have fled. Restricted access to education leaves girls and boys with few options to earn an income.

Despite great need in many areas, the CAR remains a forgotten crisis, which requires long-term vision and sustained action.

The IRC's new strategy for the CAR illustrates its commitment to improving the health, safety, education, and economic wellbeing of crisis-affected people in the CAR.

IRC'S STRATEGIC PROGRAMMING

The IRC has been present in the CAR since late 2006, following violence and population displacement. Over the past decade the IRC has delivered programs to improve the health, economic well-being, and safety for people in Ombella M'Poko, Nana Gribizi, Ouham Pendé, and Kémo prefectures.

From now until the end of 2020, the IRC's new strategy in the CAR will prioritize keeping people healthy and safe, increasing decision-making power, developing economic wellbeing and the improving the quality of education (see Figure 1). The IRC will reach 290,000 people in the CAR by the end of 2020, specifically targeting Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and host communities, with a focus on women and girls.

The IRC's commitment to gender equality strives for equal outcomes for women and girls, and men and boys. To narrow the gender gap, the IRC will

incorporate gender-focused programming into all activities.

Innovative programs to transform harmful gender norms and reduce violence in the home will target men and boys through workshops, dialogue and reflection. For survivors of violence, the IRC will offer peer mentorship to support healing.

Community unity will be promoted, ensuring women, girls, boys and men are safe where they live, learn and work. For example, collaborative cash-for-work projects will contribute to social cohesion.

Youths' ability to make decisions, like where or how to live, will be enhanced through youth leadership programs. Equal opportunities for women and girls to access education and economic opportunities will be promoted through targeted literacy and numeracy programs and safe spaces where girls and women can learn skills, exchange ideas, and find work.

Figure 1: Priority Outcomes and Future Programs

	Priority Outcomes in the CAR	Potential Future Programs
HEALTH	> Harmful gender norms and inequalities impeding women's and girls' health are transformed	> Encourage men to become allies in ending gender-based violence through dedicated workshops
SAFETY	> Women and girls are equally safe from harm as men and boys where they live, learn, and work	> Promote community unity through cash-for-work initiatives and peace education
POWER	> Women and girls are equally able as men and boys to choose where to live, how to live and how they are governed	> Advance youth leadership through programs which give girls and boys the power to make choices about economic opportunities
ECONOMIC WELLBEING	> Women and girls are equal to men and boys in the extent to which their basic needs are met, they are food secure, and they use, generate, and control income and assets	> Provide safe spaces for women and girls to exchange ideas, learn skills, and access economic opportunities
EDUCATION	> Women and girls are equally skilled in literacy and numeracy, social-emotional, and livelihoods as men and boys	> Equip women and girls with basic literacy and numeracy skills to improve their job prospects and economic wellbeing

COMMITMENTS FOR IMPACT

In order to maximize impact and achieve the priority outcomes, the IRC in the CAR is making new investments to be more responsive to beneficiaries and partners, improve program effectiveness, respond more quickly when crisis strikes even when humanitarian access is not guaranteed, and use resources more efficiently. The IRC made the following commitments to strengthen programming and improve the lives of the people it serves in the CAR.

Figure 2: Commitments to Ensure Impact



Responsiveness

- > Develop efficient partnerships with local organizations to promote sustainable change while responding to beneficiaries' immediate needs
- > Partner with communities to develop communications systems that better engage beneficiaries and respond to their needs



Effectiveness

- > Conduct a baseline measurement of economic wellbeing and health in the CAR, including food security and nutrition status, to understand change in beneficiaries' situations over time
- > Mobilize a comprehensive gender analysis across programs to ensure women, girls, boys and men receive the support they need



Speed & Timeliness

- > Establish contingency plans for natural disasters and violent crises in all sectors, to be prepared to respond quickly when assistance is needed
- > Leverage mobile data technology for faster collection, analysis, and response to beneficiaries' needs



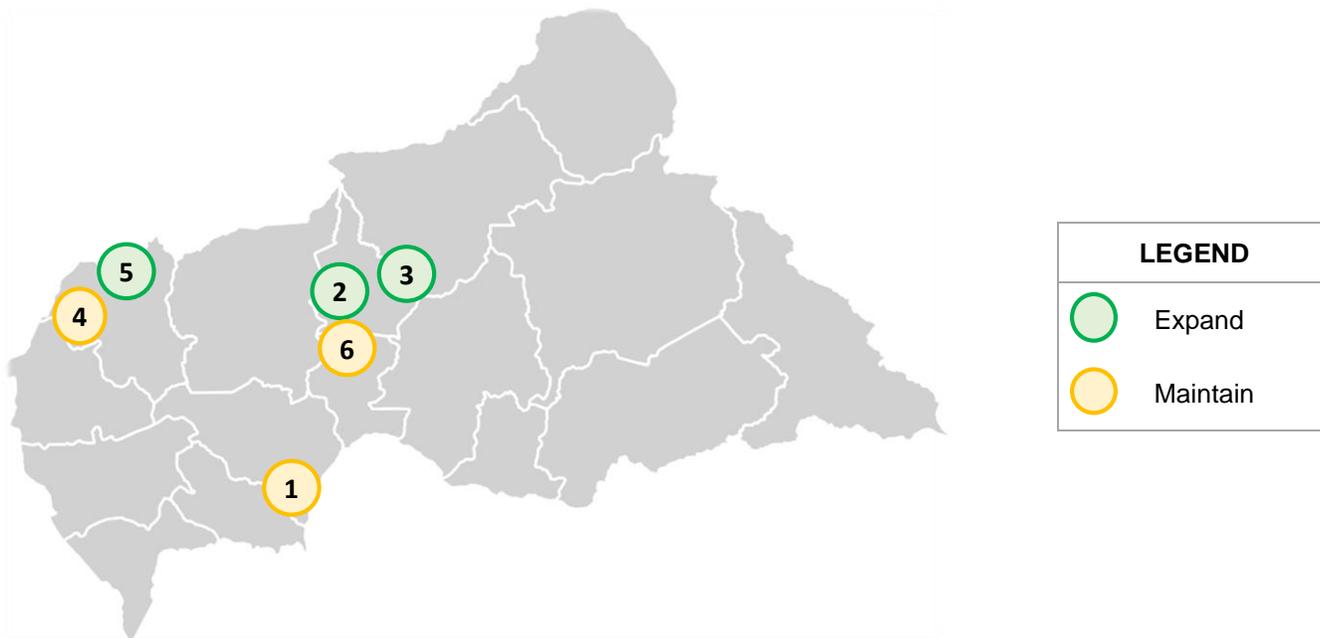
Best Use of Resources

- > Increase the amount of time staff spend serving beneficiaries by investing in an expanded field presence to reduce travel time between program sites

IRC'S STRATEGIC PRESENCE

From now until the end of 2020, the IRC will maintain and expand its presence in sites across the CAR based on an analysis of where the greatest need is and where the IRC can create the biggest impact.

Figure 3: The IRC's Geographic Transitions in the CAR



Location	Geographic Transition
1 Bangui	Continue to coordinate programs country-wide, while building the capacity of partners and the government
2 Kaga-Bandoro Area	Pivot from safety promotion to improving the economic well-being of communities and supporting their recovery, while maintaining emergency response capacity
3 Mbres sub-prefecture	Respond to emergency health needs, such as disease prevention, in communities returning from living in camps in the forest
4 Bocaranga	Build upon strong partnerships to deliver interventions through local organizations and women's groups
5 Ngaoundaye	Maintain health programming and begin to program in underserved sectors like economic wellbeing to ensure people's basic needs are met
6 La Kemo	Continue health activities and maintain emergency response capacity



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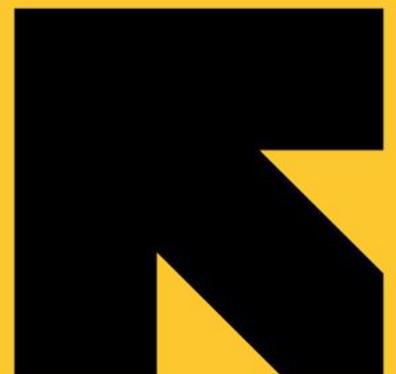
The IRC in CAR



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[Rescue.org/where/CAR](https://www.rescue.org/where/CAR)



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