



# UNHCR

## PACMUN 2017

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# PACIFIC MODEL UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

Dear Delegates,

We were only supposed to last three years after World War II. Here we are now, with millions of refugees who continue to look to us for hope.

Without further ado, I welcome you, to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Our office was originally established as a subsidiary organization to the General Assembly to aid the millions of Europeans who had lost or fled their homes in the aftermath of the Great Second World War. The Refugee Crisis, which was expected to diminish, has only gained momentum. After the Second World War, we were faced with the Hungarian Revolution, then African decolonization, Asian and Latin American oppression, and today we are experiencing one of the greatest and most tragic crises, the Syrian Refugee Crisis, and one of the most underfunded and unnoticed crises, the Central African Republic Refugee Crisis.

For the time that we have together from November 18 through 19th, at PACMUN 2017, let us work together to do what we have always done: protect refugees, save lives, and build a better future. Fortunately, you have been blessed with an amazing dais to guide you through these difficult and demanding times. I am Rachel Koo, a senior at International School, and I am absolutely honored to serve as your Director this year. Working beside me will be your Chair, Charlotte Gunn, a current sophomore at Bellarmine Preparatory School; your two Assistant Directors Anusha Srivastava, a sophomore at Tesla STEM High School, and Emily Glenn, a junior at Bainbridge Island High School. For the days leading up to the conference, we will work very hard to ensure that you have the best MUN Conference experience during your time with us.

We will be addressing the following two topics: Combating Gender-Based-Violence (GBV) and Discrimination in Refugee Camps and Improving Refugee Assistance in the Central African Republic (CAR). We chose the first topic, as GBV has proven to be a lasting issue throughout the entirety of refugee history, as ingrained cultural and religious discrimination towards women and people of the LGBTQIA community persist. Thus, we have decided that it is imperative we take action now, to stand for the people who are

unnecessarily suffering and being oppressed while in an already difficult situation as Refugees. Our second topic was chosen, as the CAR Refugee Crisis has gone largely unnoticed and is grossly underfunded, though it is an issue that involves the entirety of Central Africa.

Of course, it may be easy to believe that these topics will carry little debate. After all, there are very few, if any, countries who avidly support having Refugee Crises. However, delegates, I ask that you keep in mind, the most fruitful debate will occur when we are discussing the minutia of how we will provide the social, political, and economic relief to Refugees, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), and stateless people. There are so many aspects to Refugee Crises that must be explored, researched, and mastered before one can truly understand how to address this problem in the most efficient way possible. Hence, I both congratulate and welcome you to this complicated new field. Our work is difficult but definitely rewarding. It has been more than 67 years since we were first created, and yet we still face great difficulty with the refugee crises at hand. I am very excited to have the fortune of working with such an incredible generation of youth in this conference, and perhaps, just perhaps, you will be the group that the UNHCR has been waiting for all along—the group who has what it takes to create and write the ingenious resolutions needed to help the millions of displaced people worldwide.

Until we meet in person, I have one word of advice for you: research. Research a lot my friends, and you will undoubtedly do very well.

Yours,

Rachel Koo

Director, UNHCR

# INTRODUCTION: GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

In any conflict, the deplorable discrimination and brutalization against women, girls, and queer populations never cease to exist. In fact, they are often the first to be stripped of their rights in conflict. That being said, as the number of armed conflicts and persecutions rise exponentially, increasing levels of people are fleeing from home, into refugee camps. Despite these camps' ultimate purpose to provide at least a temporary safe haven from conflict for these refugees, women's rights and queer rights continue to be ignored, or at least not properly addressed, as they face violence and much discrimination in their communities.

As a general definition, a refugee is a person who flees from home, due to conflict or persecution, seeking refuge or safety. A refugee camp is commonly defined as a place where temporary housing is provided by governments and/or nongovernmental organizations for these refugees. As refugees flee from their country of origin, their traditional behavioral norms often carry into the behavior demonstrated in refugee camps. As most refugee camps have general autonomy, "refugee women and girls may be raped by other refugees, acting either individually or in gangs, and self-appointed leaders may thwart attempts to punish the offenders." Shockingly, male refugee camp residents are not the only ones to blame for these instances of abuse, discrimination, and violence. These actions have also been found to have been perpetrated by national migration administration or even humanitarian staff. Furthermore, in most countries of conflict, people of the LGBTQIA community are seen to be breaking all tradition, and are often persecuted. Thus, being an LGBTQIA refugee brings forth a new vast set of challenges to be faced.

Various actions have been put in place to further aid these women, such as with the UNHCR's Executive Committee's plan for Protecting Refugee Women: Promoting Gender Equality to emphasize and address violence, Sanitary materials, education, economic and political participation, or with women's clinics, or the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). However, as shown in the endemic violence that many women face, women and girls often hide themselves under the cultural shield of shame and silence. With this silent discrimination and violence being an ingrained part of their culture and deeply conservative society, it is very difficult for International Aid workers to promote change. Nevertheless, as the need to ensure LGBTQIA rights has been given increased attention from multiple Western nations, UN agencies, and the humanitarian aid community, the UNHCR has recently risen to action with the "most comprehensive training package of its kind globally", developed with the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

# HISTORY

In combatting gender-based violence and discrimination, the UN and other international bodies have faced difficulty in developing effective solutions applicable to refugees around the world. Previous attempts have not been enforced, or may have been too unrealistic for implementation in camps. Resolutions involving gender-based violence and discrimination often pertain to a certain region or camp, not encompassing other camp's varying conditions, size, or access to resources. Women and children, the most vulnerable groups of refugees are also denied representation, making them less inclined to report an incident. Homosexual, bisexual, transgender, and queer refugees are also targeted because their sexual orientation or how they identify themselves is viewed culturally unacceptable and wrong. If victims feel too afraid or ashamed to report it, the UN's task of eliminating gender-based violence and discrimination and making camps safe environments for all is further complicated.

The issue of gender-based violence and discrimination against refugees has been an ongoing issue ever since the formation of refugee camps. Refugees, especially women and children, are already in more compromising situations because of camp's overwhelming nature. Women are further endangered in camps as they may already be viewed unequal by those around them, worsening their status and the lowering the respect they receive. Depending on a refugee's country of origin and traditional views, treatment of a certain gender or people of differing sexual orientations could lead to automatic discrimination in camps. The high amounts of discrimination could further be attributed to the desperation in obtaining limited resources, the overcapacity of the camps, the anonymity of refugees to one another, and the lack of effective law enforcement.

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees defines "gender-based violence" as "violence that targets individuals or groups of individuals on the basis of gender." The violence could be inflicted physically, mentally, sexually, or be used as threat. While gender-based violence is conducted towards men, displaced women and girls are more likely to be the victims of sexual assault, exploitation, and abuse. Camp conditions often play a role in such attacks, despite precautionary standards. However, these standards, such as having separate male and female toilets with locking doors, are not heavily enforced and can be too expensive. For example, women who use the restroom at night are at risk because of inadequate lighting systems; thus increasing the chances of ambush and assault. Unfortunately, the likelihood of encountering violence at night, around or in the restroom, made many women become too terrified to use them. Some camps also have designated areas for each gender, automatically decreasing violence; but this allows for single women and children to become easier targets.

The prosecution of those who commit gender-based violence and discrimination is very difficult to prove, with no real solution currently existing. This is mainly due to camps' size and unorganized state. The shame and humiliation of such devastating events could also lead victims to not report it, making it impossible for the UN to know its prevalence. Even more heinously is the gender-based discrimination and violence committed by humanitarian aid workers. In 2002, a report was released documenting the numerous acts of sexual exploitation by humanitarian workers and security personnel against refugees in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. Additional reports of child abuse in the Central African Republic were also published. In response, training and screening of staff members became requirements, but were rarely conducted.

## PAST ACTION

The brutalization and unequal treatment of women and populations based on gender in refugee camps is an unacceptable trend that the United Nations has constantly worked to try to curb. These populations have endured major discrimination and poverty in their countries of origin or countries of displacement; international frameworks and conventions have constantly changed over the years to ensure the protection of women and LGBTQ refugees.

There are two principal international conventions that exist which define and outline refugee rights; the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Optional Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees. The 1951 Convention establishes both the definition of refugees as well as the rights afforded to those granted refugee status while the 1967 Protocol amended what allows a person to be declared a refugee. However, noticeably absent from the Convention was including those who faced persecution on the basis of their gender orientation, and there were numerous gaps in the protection of the millions of refugee girls and women. In recognition of the disproportionate burdens refugee women carry, UNHCR produced the Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women (Guidelines on Refugee Women) in 1991. Key areas on which the Guidelines focus are physical protection, discrimination in the provision of work, and access to services. Specifically, it addressed the gaps in the convention such as physical security risks that went unattended, particularly those related to sexual and gender-based violence; and problems gaining access to needed assistance and means of economic independence, which in turn undermined economic and social rights. In regards to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), UNHCR's Executive Committee adopted an EXCOM Conclusion on refugee protection and sexual violence in October 1993 that paved the way for subsequent developments by noting the need for training programmes, the filing and investigation of complaints, and the develop-

ment of response activities. In addition, in 1995, UNHCR published Guidelines for Preventing and Responding to Sexual Violence against Refugees (Guidelines on Sexual Violence) to specifically address violence against refugee women. The UNHCR has also developed its “Five Commitments to Refugee Women” in 2001, which have provided a framework for activities and programmes aimed at empowering refugee and returnee women. These commitments to refugee women included registration and documentation, tackling SGBV and participation in food distribution. Following these commitments, the UNHCR, promulgated a new Handbook for the Protection of Women and Girls in 2008 to update the 1991 Guidelines and provide further support and clarification. It sets out the legal standards and principles that guide UNHCR’s work to protect women and girls and outlines the different roles and responsibilities of States and other actors. These international policies often rely on individual states’ ‘gender guidelines’ which institute programs and strategies to combat SGBV and discrimination. The UNHCR later released SGBV Guidelines in 2003 to offer strategies on preventing and responding to SGBV. The Office adopted and began implementing an age, gender, and diversity mainstreaming strategy throughout the organization in 2004 as well. Continuous reports and advocacy efforts spurred the creation of a UNHCR Executive Committee Conclusion on Women and Girls at Risk in October 2006. In 2008, the UN Secretary General initiated the UNiTE to End Violence against Women campaign to end all forms of violence against women and girls in all parts of the world, especially addressing those in refugee camps.

This topic also focuses on LGBTQ discrimination and targeted violence, which is a severely neglected issue in the international and regional refugee protection policies. International protection is not constant from country to country. In some countries, LGBTQ refugees face threats of arrest, detention, and sometimes violence by the police due to laws criminalizing same-sex relations. LGBTQ refugees may also face violence from citizens or fellow members of the refugee community. A UNHCR 2008 evaluation found that UNHCR’s programmes usually focus on sexual violence against women, while other forms of GBV are less commonly and comprehensively addressed. The evaluation also found the absence of policy or guidelines on how to address SGBV against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered people of concern; that the sexual abuse of boys and men is often neglected, under-reported and hardly addressed by any of UNHCR’s programs. The UNHCR also published a Guidance Note on Refugee Claims Relating to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in 2008 as well. The current overview of doctrine related the rights of LGBTQ persons exists in the International Commission of Jurists in the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Human Rights Law.

In practice, achieving protection of refugee women and the LGBTQ population has been much more difficult. They still remain the victims of sexual violence and exploitation and cultural traditions remain a potent barrier to improving their lives. Despite the numerous international and regional programmes and frameworks, there is still much to be improved on as far as combating discrimination and violence against these populations.

## CURRENT SITUATION

There have been numerous reports of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) in refugee camps recently. From Greece to Nigeria, accounts of horrific abuses have been brought to the media's attention. For the past decade, as the refugee crisis became increasingly imminent, so did levels of reported SGBV, especially in developing nations. Refugee camps are a prime location for this to occur, and with around 50 percent of refugees being women and girls, many are in unsafe situations within these camps.

The UNHCR has a variety of initiatives, protocol, and other programs already in place to help protect and support refugee women. The committee outlined their commitment to refugee women through five ways; meaningful participation, individual registration and documentation, food and non-food items management and distribution, economic empowerment, and prevention and response to sexual and gender based violence.

The current atmosphere of many refugee camps put women as inferior to men, and many are not granted the same rights within the community. As these camps become increasingly self governed, many women are finding it hard to have a voice. One woman in Alexandria stated: "I was living in dignity, but now no one respects me because I'm not with a man,". As women do not have an equal say in the politics, they often will not be able to make important decisions about crucial things such as the layout of the camp or the jobs assigned. Women and girls are often in dangerous situations when they are doing their chores, such as collecting firewood.

The layout of the camp is also crucial to the safety of women. Women are often required to walk long distances to latrines, putting them in a dangerous position, especially after dark. Girls are often taken out of school sooner, and many women refugees are illiterate. This places women in a situation where if they are given the opportunity to work, they can only do manual labor. Many women do not even receive the right to work, and are left in their housing units to care for family members and cook. This is traced back to the views that encompass daily life in the areas of conflict that these people are coming from.

As women try to find their place in the camps, the UNHCR has been trying to help protect them. The commission has implemented various procedures to deal with specific issues surrounding women, and has protocol to help try to prevent discrimination and violence towards them. Many refugee camps have a minimum amount of women to be on deciding boards, and have specialized law enforcement within camps.

Alarming, sexual violence is being perpetrated by, along with refugees in positions of power, humanitarian staff. This issue is often overlooked, as complicated power struggles within these organizations lead to misinformation. UN Peacekeepers have protocol to attempt to keep them from participating in illicit activities, but smaller aid organizations often do not have similar protocol.

## BLOC POSITIONS

### Host Refugee Countries

Many of the countries surrounding the conflicted areas in the Middle East and Africa are overwhelmed by the large influx of refugees and are ill equipped to manage the growing refugee camps within their borders. Just ten countries shelter 56 percent of the world's 21 million refugees, but account for only 2.5 percent of global GDP. Countries like South Sudan and Chad do not possess the economic capability to house and provide for refugees; as a result, many migrants are exploited or abused at the hands of officials. It is harder to monitor and prevent gender based violence and discrimination in these camps when the host country is economically struggling. In Lebanon and Jordan, the region's two smallest countries, weak infrastructure and limited resources mean there is little attention placed towards the prevalence of GBV in their camps. Turkey, with the largest refugee population in the world at over 3.4 million, faces cultural tensions among the various urban communities. Although Turkey has contributed over \$5 billion to assuage the refugee crisis, there has been little effort to ensure refugees' rights, and even less attention on the gender-specific issues that female refugees face.

### Wealthy Aid Countries

Many of the wealthiest countries in the world, such as the US and many major European countries, are responsible for delegating financial aid to economically unstable host refugee countries. As host countries, they have a much stricter screening process, so their refugee population is considerably smaller compared to the major host countries. However, the US, in the past, has delegated considerable support and aid towards refugee camps and combating the discrimination and violence faced by refugee women, men, and children.

# CASE STUDIES

## Case Study #1: Turkey

With over 3.4 million refugees, Turkey has the largest refugee population in the world. However, when it comes to assessing the sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) occurring, with more than 55% of the total Syrian population in Turkey being women and girls, there is minimal research or responses on the enormous amount of women who have been or are victims of traumatic instances of sexual violence. Through interviews, however, it was discovered that SGBV is pervasive inside and outside of the camps. Not only is the sexism against women prevalent, but the LGBTQIA community has been seen as a threat for decades by both the refugee and citizen population as a result of cultural stigma .

The Turkish government has proven to be hesitant to invest in necessary services such as psychosocial support for survivors of SGBV and culturally sensitive reproductive healthcare support, thus contributing to further female disempowerment and marginalization in the camps. With nearly half of the population suffering from such physical, sexual, and cultural offenses, those who return to Syria will likely be much more vulnerable and have fewer capacities than before the outbreak of war. This will affect Syria's future prospects for peace. Additionally, there appears to be a lack of political will to facilitate and learn about the SGBV situation in and out of refugee camps, on the behalf of the upper management of the Turkish Red Crescent.

Refugee women often are caught victims to the stark contrasts between their own community's cultural sensitivities and that of their host community's. Thus, they are plagued by concerns in labor divisions, physical safety, and circumscribed mobility outside and within camps. Despite the UN's guidelines for gender equity, the Turkish government has insisted on homegrown solutions to the forced migration, thus causing for the UN guidelines to be completely nonexistent in many regions. Ultimately, in the long run, despite UN actions such as the UNSC Resolution 1325's intent for greater gender diverse participation in leadership and post-conflict peace processing, the Turkish Government/Turkish Red Crescent's discriminatory programming will cause for post-conflict inclusive peace to become difficult to achieve from day one.

# GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. How can GBV (Gender Based Violence) be monitored and prevented for economically unstable countries?
2. What is the best delegation of aid for refugee host countries towards the prevention of GBV?
3. How can cultural and societal obstacles be addressed within refugee camps?

# INTRODUCTION: CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

What had once been a centuries-old tradition of harmonious coexistence between Christians and Muslims can now be seen as one of terror and disaster. As international attention has turned towards the Syrian Refugee Crisis, the Central African Republic's (CAR) Refugee Crisis has become one of the most underfunded and unnoticed crises currently existing. Since the mid-1990s, when civilian rule was first implemented, violent conflict and political instability has raged through the CAR. The sectarian violence can be traced to the 2003 ex- CAR Christian Militia President, General François Bozizé's attempts to remain power by delegitimizing the newly formed Muslim rebel coalition, Séléka. Due to various acts of systematic brutality and human rights abuses, one of the first waves of mass displacement occurred. Despite alleged targeting on both the Muslim and Christian community, Christians were highly targeted. In opposition, Christian anti-Balaka militias formed in 2013 to target the Séléka and Muslim civilians, thus leading to more displacement and what has been referred to as an ethnic cleansing against Muslims.

In the past three years, the number of innocent civilians caught and affected in the fight between the Séléka and anti-Balaka militias has increased rapidly, as more than 425,000 people are displaced inside their own country, and nearly 1 million men, women, and children fleeing as refugees to surrounding nations. With 50% of reported refugees being children, there are over 20,000 refugees in Republic of Congo; 68,000 refugees in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; 93,000 refugees in Chad; 240,000 refugees in Cameroon, and hundreds of thousands more refugees in other surrounding countries. Evidently, this urgent crisis no longer just pertains to the CAR as a country, but is a crisis that pertains to all of Central Africa as the ethnic and religious balances in the surrounding countries are being damaged, education and health facilities are strained, natural resources are depleted, and environmental issues are exacerbated. This crisis is in urgent need of funding, aid, and international attention.

Not only is short-term humanitarian relief needed, but long-term assistance is required to help returnees restart their livelihoods. Though the refugee crisis has been a major humanitarian and political struggle for the CAR, the mass displacement of Muslims and insecurity has led to the country's agricultural output to plunge more than 37%, as most of the CAR's traders had been Muslim. Thus, more than 1.6 million people urgently need food in the CAR. Additionally, despite the EU and UN's various peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance efforts, poor infrastructure and insecurity have proven to hinder the ability to distribute said aid. Thus, hundreds of thousands are left in dire circumstances, as many communities are still far from humanitarian aid's reach and staff members of international nongovernmental organizations are

now targeted in violent attacks as well. With peacekeeping efforts being unsuccessful in reducing the violence, disarmament of the Séléka and anti-Balaka stands as a crucial element to restoring security.

## HISTORY

The root of the Central African Republic's (CAR) issues began in 1960 after the country's independence from France. Ever since, CAR has suffered under the corrupt leadership of those who achieved power through violent coups. Most notably, army commander Jean-Bedel Bokassa, who declared himself emperor of the CAR and gained the reputation as one of Africa's most brutal dictators. In 1992, the country became a democracy, but the elected leaders were overthrown in 2003 by rebel leader Francois Bozize. Bozize's attempt to remain in power and the resulting consequences led to the formation of the Muslim-based Seleka militia and terrorist group. In 2012, Seleka fighters captured north and central regions of CAR, forcing civilians to relocate and initiating the refugee crisis.

In March of 2013, Seleka, led by Michel Djotodia, seized the capital of Bangui and dissolved Bozize's administration. After coming to power, Seleka began committing systematic human rights abuse through acts of terror and brutality; especially towards the CAR's Christian population. Seleka also seized control of the diamond industry and important trade routes, along with recruiting civilians, mainly children for their organization. However, in September, Djotodia dissolved the coalition, after being accused of having no control over them. Seleka branched off into smaller terrorist groups where ex-Seleka fighters continued attacking communities, burning crops, and killing.

In response to Seleka, the anti-Muslim, Christian-based Balaka rebel group formed. They took revenge on Seleka by targeting former members and the new Muslim militia groups, along with Muslim civilians. As Balaka gained power in the CAR, they seized former Seleka territory, looting and setting fire to villages, raping, torturing, and killing. These horrific acts caused thousands to flee and become displaced, over 90% of the affected estimated to be Muslim. Within the first six months under Djotodia's leadership, approximately 121,000 people were forced to seek refuge in mosques, churches, and non-Balaka controlled areas of the country. In January of 2014, President Djotodia resigned due to criticism about his failed attempts to reduce violence.

By June of 2014, the escalating conflict between the Ex-Selekas and Balakas led to the displacement of over 914,000 civilians. Over 37,000 of the displaced went to the capital of Bangui, where numerous reports of civilians being shot and stabbed to death began occurring. Many refugees chose to

live in inadequate, hastily assembled, vulnerable shelters, easily damaged by weapons, and harsh weather. Shelters were lucky to obtain any resources from neighboring countries or international organizations because many small, rural ones received almost no humanitarian aid.

As chaos spread within the country, international assistance did little to relieve the refugees or control the fighting. This led to refugees finding help in neighboring countries. More than 250,000 refugees entered Cameroon, 94,000 in Chad, 58,000 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and 16,000 in the Republic of Congo (ROC). Over half were children. The incessant rate of refugees and the dire conditions they arrived in, starved, dehydrated, injured, and traumatized, overstrained the limited resources. The basic necessities of food, water, and access to medicine quickly became unavailable due to influx of demand and the inability to obtain more. It was estimated about 20% of the refugees in camps had special medical needs, but most were unable to access proper attention or treatment. Additionally, refugees who traveled great distances to reach camps were severely malnourished, injured, or sick. In Cameroon, there were reports of polio outbreaks in camps, causing much panic and distress. Food shortages made the UN World Food Program (WFP) go from feeding 27,000 refugees to 70,000 between June and December of 2014. Even with more food being distributed, more than half of refugees in camps faced starvation. Consequently, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) requested 551 million (USD) to help fund international aid, a 120% increase from the original amount. OCHA planned to use a third of the money for food security. However, only 30% of the proposed amount was raised.

## PAST ACTION

The deeply impoverished Central African Republic has been embroiled in a 33 month long humanitarian crisis that is being largely ignored by both the international media and donors, thus making it of vital importance to address. International humanitarian organizations in the United Nations have a critical role in providing basic human rights to displaced persons.

The UN has long made efforts to both stabilize the conflict in the CAR as well as provide aid and relocation support to displaced persons. The United Nations had deployed peacekeeping forces since 2010 with a mandate to consolidate peace and strengthen democratic institutions through the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office (BINUCA). The Security Council later passed Resolution 2121 (2013) which reinforced and updated the mandate of BINUCA to strengthen its field presence and encouraged support to the International Support Mission to the Central African Republic (MISCA). Concerned with the

security, humanitarian, and political crisis rising in the CAR, the UNSC later passed Resolution 2149 to transfer authority from BINUCA to the newly established UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in CAR (MINUSCA). MINUSCA was created with the protection of civilians as its utmost priority in addition to facilitating humanitarian assistance, the protection of human rights, and the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation processes. Numerous military contingencies have been deployed by both the UNSC and the EU to strengthen peacekeeping efforts over the last few years.

The UNHCR, along with numerous other aid agencies, have helped Muslims leaving the country and organized relocation efforts as well. Due to a lack of humanitarian aid, however, these peacekeeping troops and aid organizations have often been attacked by anti-Balaka militia. In order to combat the lack of funding, the Strategic Response Plan for 2014, prepared by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), had revised its requirement for international assistance to USD \$551 million, an increase of more than 120 percent relative to the original plan, but secured funding remains inadequate. In order to further increase funding from the private sector, the UN Global Compact in partnership with the UNHCR, launched a Business Action Pledge to encourage the private sector to support existing efforts and provide solutions to the widespread societal disruption. The Humanitarian Response Plan established by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, underlines the need for greater financial support as it has only secured approximately 28% of total funding required to date.

## CURRENT SITUATION

Currently, the UNHCR has commissioned money for all of the countries surrounding the CAR that are accepting refugees. The large influx has caused drastic issues for these nations, including Chad, Cameroon, Sudan, and Congo. The money promised, varied for the number of refugees within the nation, has not been fully distributed due to the lack of awareness surrounding this problem, leaving this refugee situation the most underfunded crisis globally. Only 24.4% of the allocated 497.3m dollars has been given, and as the situation grows increasingly dire, this is becoming a critical issue.

The refugees face various issues as the fighting occurs in their nation, leaving them no choice but to flee. Within the CAR there are over 412,000 internally displaced persons, and nearly a million have fled to surrounding nations. The sporadic conflict that is taking place between the various religious groups, and the disorganized government that is unable to prevent it, has created a hostile environment within most of the CAR forcing many to abandon their homes.

Camps and settlements are generally underfunded and overcrowded, leaving refugees malnourished, ill, and uncomfortable. Humanitarian organizations are trying their best to assist, but are often unsure on where to begin. As the number of Central Africans leaving their homes rises, the situation both within the CAR and in surrounding countries becomes increasingly urgent. Cameroon has more than 250 thousand refugees from the CAR, 60% of which having arrived after conflict in 2013.

An estimated 2.2 million people are in need of aid in the CAR, and after recent attacks on and safety issues surrounding humanitarian workers organizations are struggling to provide this support. Without being able to insure the safety of their volunteers, many relief operations have been suspended since late July, leaving thousands without access to nutritional and medical services.

Various serious diseases are running rampant, including malaria and yellow fever, and without proper access to vaccination clinics they are spreading quickly.

## BLOC POSITIONS

### **The Central African Republic**

The Central African Republic (CAR) is emerging from a crisis that began when rebels overthrew the national government in 2013, ushering in a chaotic and violent period. Militias that have targeted civilians on the basis of religious and ethnic identity continue to operate in much of the country, posing challenges to governance, reconciliation, and accountability. Violence has caused large population displacements, weakening an already tiny economy and placing strains on finite international aid and peacekeeping resources.

### **Affected Neighboring Countries**

The regional spill-over of the crisis remains significant as well, with over 480 000 refugees in Cameroon, Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republic of Congo. An estimated 94,000 people have fled to Chad, straining already scarce aid resources. The Chadian government earlier this year established an air bridge and a humanitarian corridor in order to support the refugees. Moreover, almost 58,000 refugees fled to the neighboring Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), to already destabilized regions such as Orientale Province; around 16,000 refugees are located in the Republic of Congo (ROC).

## Aid Countries

The US response to the crisis has included humanitarian assistance, aid funding for conflict mitigation, peacebuilding, and diplomatic and financial support to MINUSCA. With over €355 million provided in 2014 and its overall support in 2017 was nearly €254 million since the beginning of the year, the European Union is the largest donor of humanitarian assistance to CAR. The European Commission alone has provided €111.5 million (in addition to over €37 million for Central African refugees in neighbouring countries) in humanitarian aid since December 2013. However, funding in total for the CAR has remained low and is inadequate for its humanitarian plan, as the wealthier countries are already stretched thin in funding numerous UN projects and humanitarian missions.

# CASE STUDIES

## Case Study #1: European Union

Though remaining severely underfunded, the CAR's largest donor of humanitarian assistance is the European Union (EU) and its member states. Targeting assistance in health, nutrition, water, emergency shelter, sanitation, and civilian protection, the EU has provided €129 million total in humanitarian aid since December 2013. The EU has also provided an additional €38 million for the refugees in neighboring countries. The EU's relief assistance is focused on the displaced people outside and inside of the Internally Displaced Person (IDP) camps, over the refugees in surrounding countries.

The national health system in the CAR is no longer existent due to the widespread looting, violence, and destruction of public infrastructure. To address this, the EU has funded various humanitarian projects to make primary health care service available and accessible to civilians. Most have been through mobile clinics that focus on controlling infectious epidemic-prone diseases, and life-saving interventions. Other efforts at preventing epidemic outbreaks in the crowded IDP camps include Hygiene practices (WASH) have also been promoted in addition to the re-establishment of sanitation facilities and providing of potable water. Additionally, with there being no national ability to assist those affected, the EU has invested in other projects intended to offer children with a protective environment and provide other psychosocial and legal support to victims, along with other essential services.

Furthermore, with nearly 2.4 million people in the CAR needing humanitarian assistance and 2.1 million of those being food insecure, the EU has made food assistance a priority, as they provide relief efforts to combine cash transfer initiatives when commercial activities continue with in-kind assistance. The

EU has also brought non-food items like blankets and mosquito nets to the IDP camps for families to use. Emergency shelter options have also been developed.

Starting this year, the EU has supported the UN Humanitarian Air Services (UNHAS) in which it transports humanitarian personnel to remote locations where the people had previously no access to available aid due to poor infrastructure and insecurity. Thus, the EU is continuing to play a large role in trying to help as many IDPs as possible within the dire circumstances.

## **Case Study #2: Cameroon**

Cameroon is currently housing one of the most refugees from CAR crisis: over 240,000. With the large sudden influx of refugees, many villages in Cameroon have doubled in size and the strain of hosting the refugees has led to serious economic, social, security, and political ramifications for certain communities. Resources available to Cameroon civilians are growing limited as the number of refugees increase, and host communities along the CAR border face increased insecurity over the years due to looting from CAR's armed groups. Some Cameroonians have even had to face temporary displacement, and many pastoralists in Cameroon have also been severely affected due to the refugee crisis as their normal livestock transnational migration is prevented. For the most vulnerable host communities where resources are quickly depleting, food distribution and various projects for self-reliance are conducted; community resources for education, water, and health care are improved to benefit the host communities and their refugees. In all transfer sites, refugee sites, and host communities, there are various precautions taken to prevent further conflict and improve social cohesion, such as community-based dialogue.

In order to aid Cameroon's efforts, \$4 million has been sent to Cameroon from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) in order to meet the needs of the CAR refugees there. As newly arrived refugees have been through weeks or even months of walking, having subsisted merely on leaves and roots found along the way, they are incredibly weak and rely completely on humanitarian assistance. Thus, with the minimal amounts of humanitarian aid available, the local strain on Cameroonians is large, as they share all of their resources with their neighbors in need. Eventually, due to the local poverty in Cameroon as well, the inability to provide for food assistance for many of the refugees has led to refugees continuing to move to different bordering countries. More than 40% of the children who arrive in Cameroon suffer from acute malnutrition. Nutrition, shelter, and health are the priority responses in helping the new refugees. Most refugees are concentrated in the Adamawa and

East regions, where there are temporary communal tents, shelters, and basic sanitation assistance available. Once registered in these tents, refugees are transferred to formal aid sites, where basic assistance, family tents, and protection is provided. Schools, water points, and health centers are also made available. Returnees with family in Cameroon, and TCNs are often exposed to precarious conditions, as they await their relocation to their communities or countries of origin. However, Returnees who have no family link in Cameroon receive a comparatively more comprehensive livelihood support package.

## GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. What is the best strategy for the distribution of aid within the CAR? What should the priorities be?
2. How can aid be delegated without total dependence of the CAR on other countries?
3. How can the violence and refugee overflow into neighboring countries from the CAR be addressed?
4. What key sources of aid can be established?
5. What additional strategies or systems can be created to cut the overall funding required for the CAR?



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