

The Central African Republic

Global Appeal 2026 situation overview

Countries affected: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, DRC, South Sudan, Sudan



After fleeing airstrikes in Sudan while nine months pregnant, Wifak and her husband Adam rebuilt their lives in Birao, Central African Republic. With support from UNHCR, they created a welcoming home and reopened their bakery, restoring hope and community ties.
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2026 Population planning figures

2 million forcibly displaced and stateless people

Refugees and Asylum-seekers
75,000

Returnees (Refugees and IDPs)
340,000



The Central African Republic (CAR) is experiencing a long-standing displacement situation, further affected by ongoing arrivals from the conflict in Sudan. Insecurity persists in some areas, and the fragile economy is strained by seasonal floods, increasing humanitarian needs. Gender inequalities and discrimination remain widespread.

By September 2025, the CAR hosted 442,000 internally displaced people (IDPs), a 6% decrease compared to December 2024 due to improved conditions in areas of return. The CAR also hosts 62,600 refugees and asylum-seekers as of September 2025, over half of whom, 39,000 people, have been displaced by the conflict in Sudan since April 2023. More than 6,300 Central Africans have also spontaneously returned home from the Sudan since the start of the conflict.

UNHCR projects an estimated total of 2.1 million people under its mandate in the CAR by the end of 2026, with continuing arrivals from Sudan and an estimated 1.1 million people at risk of statelessness according to a 2020 national census.

Nearly 668,000 CAR refugees remain in neighbouring countries, with Cameroon hosting 42%, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) 31%, Chad 21% and 6% in the Republic of Congo, the Sudan and South Sudan.

Under the CAR Solutions Support Platform, 300,000 Central African refugees are expected to voluntarily return home by 2028, including 60,000 in 2026. Around 69,000 returns have occurred since 2017, with the highest in 2024, comprising 19,750 people and including 16,265 facilitated by UNHCR. Returns since January

2025 are estimated at 15,000 and will likely exceed the 2024 figure by December. This increasing intention to in returns is largely due to improved security conditions in certain areas, local peace agreements, and efforts to restore basic services and governance.

In 2026, UNHCR will continue supporting the operationalization of the national durable solutions strategy, to align humanitarian, peacebuilding and stabilization efforts, particularly in priority return and reintegration areas. It will support the implementation of tripartite agreements enabling safe, dignified, and informed returns of Central African refugees, while enhancing post-return mechanisms by providing basic services infrastructure and self-reliance opportunities.

UNHCR's strategy for the Central African Republic integrates sustainable responses across all sectors, aligned with restructuring efforts since funding cuts in 2025. The strategy focuses on: support to legal and policy frameworks; responding to emergencies while advancing solutions from the start; and strengthening self-reliance and socio-economic inclusion.

In 2026, UNHCR will strengthen support to the Government to reinforce laws and institutions for displaced people, advancing accession to the statelessness conventions, domesticating the Kampala Convention, and expanding access to asylum rights and civil documentation. Supporting the National Commission for Refugees will be central to transferring responsibilities for registration and documentation.

UNHCR will continue responding to immediate needs particularly for arrivals from Sudan. UNHCR will maintain emergency response capacity through contingency planning and stronger coordination with the Government, UN agencies, humanitarian and development partners. UNHCR will scale up cash assistance, advance community-based protection systems and support local authorities to lead return and reintegration efforts, ensuring a transition from humanitarian response to long-term recovery.



Budget needs for the Central African Republic situation in 2026, inside the CAR and in neighbouring countries:
\$223 million

Community engagement and peaceful coexistence will be promoted by strengthening the capacities of community-based structures to reinforce resilience systems. UNHCR will ensure a tailored response to the needs of the most vulnerable groups, by identifying specific needs and adapting programmes based on direct engagement with the concerned communities.

UNHCR will sustain engagement with the Government, development actors, and the private sector to improve conditions in return areas for refugees and IDPs through construction of basic services infrastructure and through the Baoro Development hub in Nana Mambéré. The project aims to promote resilience, social cohesion, and long-term growth, serving as a model for other return zones.

UNHCR will promote self-reliance and socio-economic inclusion, by expanding access to finance, vocational skills, and social protection schemes, drawing from the World Bank safety net and other mechanisms.

Gender equality will be promoted across all sectors, while prevention and response to violence against women and girls are strengthened through safe spaces, a hotline and in-person services for survivors.