

Central African Republic



Population: 4,511,488 (2010 est.)
Population Growth Rate: 1.491% (2010 est.)
Birth Rate: 32.75births/1,000 population (2010 est.)
Life Expectancy: total population: 44.47years
Literacy Rate: Total Population: 48.6%
male: 64.8%
female: 33.5% (2000 est.)
Net Migration Rate: NA
Unemployment Rate: 8% (2001 est.)
Gross Domestic Product per Capita: \$700 (2009 est.)
Religions: indigenous beliefs 35%, Protestant 25%, Roman Catholic 25%, Muslim 15%
Languages: French (Official), Sangho (lingua franca and national language), tribal languages
Ethnic Groups: Baya 33%, Banda 27%, Mandjia 13%, Sara 10%, Mboum 7%, M'Baka 4%, Yakoma 4%, other 2%
Capital: Bangui¹

Trafficking Routes

The Central African Republic is a source, transit, and destination country mainly for children trafficked for forced labor, sexual exploitation and child soldiers. Trafficking is mostly internal. However, individuals have also been trafficked from CAR to Cameroon, Nigeria, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.²

Factors that Contribute to the Trafficking Infrastructure

Due to severe internal conflict and civil unrest which started with the political coup of 2003, the people of Central African Republic are highly vulnerable to trafficking in persons. The ongoing conflicts between government and rebel groups of CAR, mainly the Presidential Guard (PG), the Central African Armed Forces (FACA), Union of Democratic Forces (UFDR), and the Popular Army for the Restoration of the Republic and Democracy (APRD), has caused the widespread displacement of peoples throughout the nation making civilians far more vulnerable to attacks. Many of these groups kill, rape, burn homes and are known to kidnap large numbers of children to be recruited as soldiers.³

¹ CIA, THE WORLD FACTBOOK, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ct.html>.

² CIA *supra* note 1

³ Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2008: Central African Republic*, http://www.childsoldiersglobalreport.org/files/country_pdfs/FINAL_2008_Global_Report.pdf

Forms of Trafficking

Children are trafficked both domestically and regionally, primarily between Cameroon, Nigeria and other neighboring countries. Trafficked children engage in domestic servitude, sexual exploitation, agricultural work and forced labor in shops and commercial labor activities.⁴ Border towns of the CAR are regularly attacked by various rebel groups who kidnap and rape the vulnerable in vast numbers. On October 12, 2010, a Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) attack was reported in the CAR border town of Birao, kidnapping mainly girls in the attack. The LRA, a Ugandan rebel group, has kidnapped at least 700 CAR civilians since February of last year. The group's leaders are known to kidnap young boys as child soldiers and young girls as sex slaves. Attacks like these are frequent and create vast numbers of vulnerable civilians, especially children who are trafficked. Child soldiers appear to be the most frequent type of trafficking along with the enslavement of children in various other non-combatative roles within the military or rebel groups.⁵

Government Response

The Central African Republic does not have a law prohibiting trafficking in persons. Anti-trafficking laws were drafted in 2006 but have not gone further since then. There is also no national law to criminalize the use of child soldiers or child labor by the government's army.⁶

Non-Governmental and International Organizations Response

Although there are many NGOs working in CAR, there are no known nongovernmental agencies that work expressly to combat trafficking.

Multilateral Initiatives

The Central African Republic has ratified two International Labor Organization Conventions to ban forced labor. The first, 1930 "Convention Concerning Forced or Compulsory Labor," was ratified October 27th, 1960.⁷ The second convention, "Convention Concerning the Abolition of Forced Labor,"⁸ was created in 1957 and ratified on June 9th, 1964; this was also a result of the General Conference of the

⁴ International Trade Union Confederation, *Report for the WTO General Council Review of the Trade Policies of the Central African Republic*, June 2007, < <http://www.ituc-csi.org/report-for-the-wto-general-council.5336.html>>.

⁵ *LRA Rebels Attack C. African Town, Abduct Girls*, Associated French Press, Oct. 12, 2010, available at: <http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20101012/wl_africa_afp/centraficaunrestrebelsira>.

⁶ Freedom House, *Central African Republic*, 2009, available at:

<<http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=363&year=2009&country=7583>>

⁷ Convention concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour (ILO No. 29), 39 U.N.T.S. 55, entered into force May 1, 1932.

⁸ Abolition of Forced Labour Convention (ILO No. 105), 320 U.N.T.S. 291, entered into force Jan. 17, 1959.

International Labor Organization. In 2010, the International Organization for Migration, the African Union, Economic Commission for West African States, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime together launched the implementation of the Ouagadougou Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking. This plan was made to provide AU members with support from these institutions and to streamline efforts against trafficking by bringing together the laws and drafts that now exist in each nation. As a member of the African Union, this measure is an important step for aiding the Central African Republic in formulating a uniform response to trafficking in persons. The agreement also fosters increased cooperation between African nations.⁹

⁹ Press Release, International Organization for Migration (IOM), IOM, AU, ECOWAS and UNODC Joint Launch of Ouagadougou Action Plan to Combat Trafficking, Mar. 23, 2010, *available at*: <http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/media/press-briefing-notes/pbnAF/cache/offonce;jsessionid=C9754894BC251516203E29A3D9E5F6E5.worker01?entryId=27139>.