

**April 20, 2012**

**ATTN: Dr. Rajiv Shah, USAID Administrator, Washington, DC**

Copied: USAID Representative in the Central African Republic, Bangui

**Subject: Insecurity in Mbomou and Haut-Mbomou Prefectures, CAR**

We, civil society organizations of the Central African Republic, write to USAID to present our request regarding the security, sociopolitical, and economic situation in Mbomou and Haut-Mbomou prefectures.

The region comprising Mbomou and Haut-Mbomou prefectures, in southeastern CAR, borders the Democratic Republic of Congo and is far from CAR's capital, Bangui. This region has experienced a multi-sectorial crisis for a decade, with growing insecurity due to the presence of the Lord's Resistance Army. This uncontrolled force operates completely undisturbed, preying on peaceful citizens. From one day to the next, we record cases of rape, looting, burning of villages, killings and murders, kidnapping of adults and children, forced recruitment of children into the LRA, and more. Following abuses by men loyal to Joseph Kony, the LRA leader, parts of the two prefectures have become inaccessible.

Indeed, in a recent joint declaration by civil society organizations from DRC and CAR, a "Call for Solidarity," signatories alluded to the region's isolation, a factor Joseph Kony exploits to do as he pleases and remain elusive.

In order to help save lives in a community nearing collapse after attacks by LRA troops, we hope that certain proposals by civil society actors would be indispensable, in addition to the current emergency humanitarian actions. Desirable actions include:

- Rehabilitation and re-opening of road sections:
  - Bambouti – Bangassou traveling through Obo – Mboki – Zemio – Rafai
  - Zemio – Djemah and Obo – Djemah
  - Djemah – Dembia
- Installation of modern mobile telephone networks in the area, covering Djemah, Zemio, Mboki, and Rafai.
- Installation of high-frequency radios in Bambouti, Djemah, Zemio, Banangayi, Obo, Derbissaka, Mboki, and Rafai, Dembia, Ngouyo, and Selim, which are strategic locations for the LRA.

The rehabilitation of these roads will not only improve civilian protection and assistance to communities affected by the LRA's atrocities, but it will also facilitate the capture of Joseph Kony by government forces. The installation of communication networks allows communities to strengthen social ties, make contact with the outside world, and give hope to people at risk.

We thank you in advance for your helping hand in carrying out the highest-level advocacy for the benefit of our children and future generations. We will long remember your actions.

For civil society organizations of the Central African Republic:

- ADRAF: Association pour le Développement de la Ville de Rafai
- APICOZ: Associations pour l'Initiative et le Développement Communautaire
- Association des Victimes de la LRA, Obo
- Association des Volontaires Unis pour la Protection des Enfants Orphelins de Djemah
- CEEC: Communauté des Églises Évangéliques en Centrafrique
- JUPEDEC: Jeunesse Unie pour la Protection de l'Environnement et le Développement Communautaire
- UAOZ: Union d'Assistance aux Orphelins de Zemio
- VUDZ: Volontaire Unie pour le Développement de la Ville de Zemio