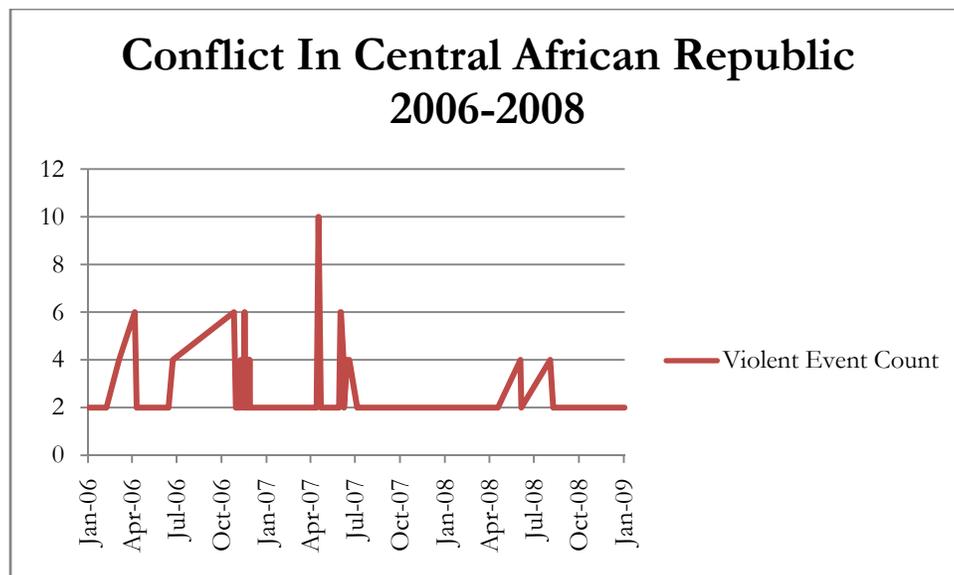


ACLED Report for Central African Republic February 2009

I: Introduction and overview of violence in CAR from 2006-2008

This report will survey the conflicts in the Central African Republic from 2006-2008. The overlapping crises in Central African Republic, Chad and Sudan have displaced approximately 800,000 people and left more than one million living in chronic poverty and insecurity. Although rebels and governments are believed to be working toward a coalition government, the potential for conflict in CAR remains very high. Armed groups are believed to be making plans to return to violence. Fighting broke out in mid-January between national and rebel forces in the city of Ndele near the Sudanese border and several people were killed and wounded. It was the first rebel attack since peace talks began last month (and believed to be perpetrated by The Popular Army for the Restoration of the Republic and Democracy (APRD)), a group with a stronghold in the North-West. French military assistance has been particularly helpful to President Bozize in retaining power.



The current government led by Prime Minister Faustin-Archange Touadera was formed in January 2008. President Francois Bozize had agreed with rebel and opposition leaders, including former President Ange-Felix Patasse, Union of Democratic Forces for Unity (UFDR), and the Popular Army for the Restoration of the Republic and Democracy (APRD), on the formation of a consensus government to rule until the 2010 presidential elections. It would also cement an existing ceasefire and include provisions for demobilization and disarmament of former rebels. But this government was basically dissolved in January 2009. Outside threats remain a considerable issue: the CAR has reinforced its security along the Southern border in fear that LRA would enter its territory. LRA is suspected to have killed 400 civilians in northern DR Congo in previous weeks, possibly in retaliation of military action taken against them. Furthermore, armed militias/bandits in CAR, known as the "Zaraguinas", have become stronger and better organized than government forces, leaving local people increasingly vulnerable to grave human rights abuses including kidnapping, murder and scorched earth tactics.

CAR is in a particularly precarious situation. The International Crisis Group regards CAR as a phantom state with limited control in periphery since 1972 when Jean Bedel Bokassa declared

himself president. A phantom state occurs when government institutions stop working outside the capital. CAR has suffered 11 mutinies and attempted coups (diamond and uranium enriched country). In 2007, per cap GDP was 260 Dollars.

Ethnicity has played a critical part of governance patterns in CAR. The northern and southern divide has resulted in regimes characterized by exclusion and marginalization of ethnic communities throughout the state. Ethnic polarization intensified and resulted in a failed coup in 2001. As a result, defectors from the army created an opposition force called 'the Forces of Francois Bozize'. Fighting was heaviest in Bangui and SE CAR. In 2003, Bozize overtook the government from bases in northern CAR. After Bozize was installed by France and Chad in 2003, he quickly lost control of the situation. Security forces are accused of human rights abuses in the remote northeast, a stronghold of former president Ange-Felix Patasse. Human rights groups claim over 100,000 people have fled into forests and surrounding areas. Meanwhile, Chad's refugees (and Sudan's) are going into this NE area. An EU force has to retrain military and stem flood of refugees across borders.

II. Conflict Patterns and Types across Space in 2006

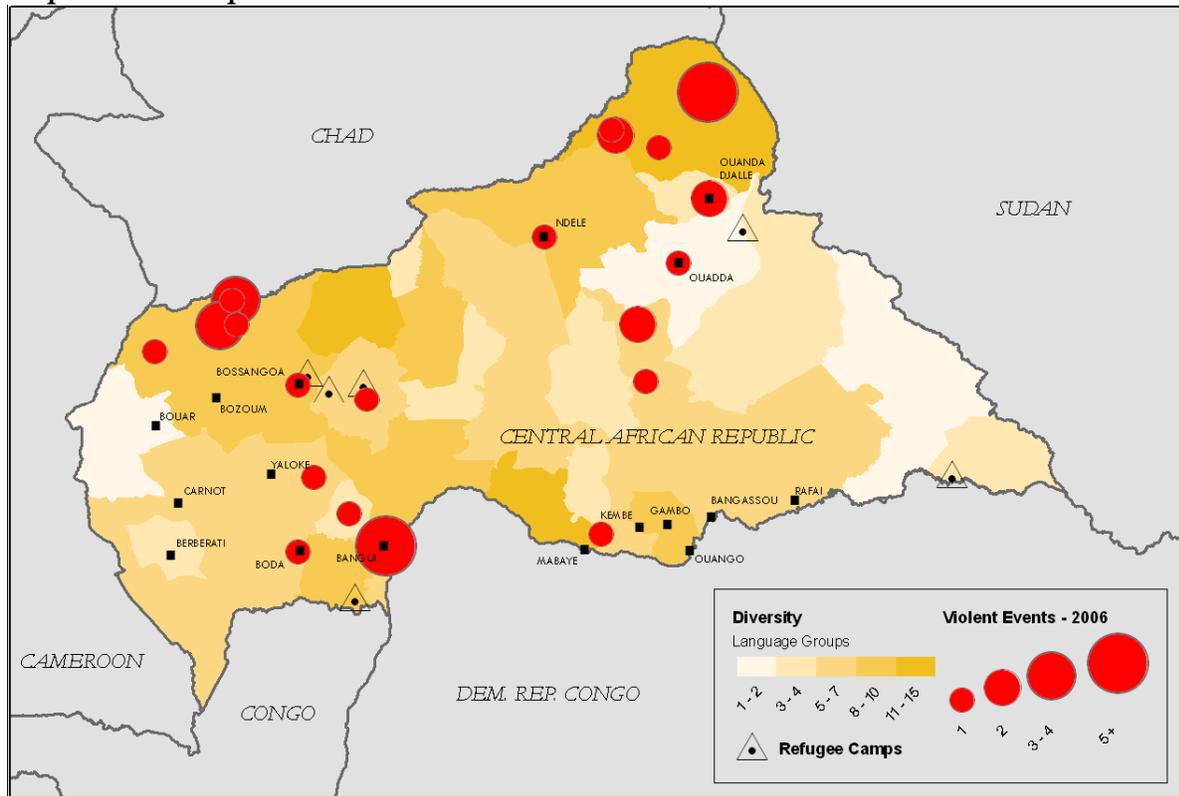
Violence patterns in 2006 were clustered in the home areas of the new rebel groups. Two clusters of violence, in the NW and NE grew from local support for the rebel groups in these locations. During this time, the separate rebel organizations were taking advantage of separate and related neighboring instability.

A note on following maps: two types of map are displayed here. One is a count of the number of events, the second breaks up that number into the 'type' of event at that location. White events (type 1) are battles between rebel and governments, and rebels against rebels; purple events (type 2) involves a battle in which rebels gain control of the territory; blue (type 3) records when governments regain territory from rebels in battle; green (type 4) records non-violent rebel activity, including recruitment, meetings, presence etc; finally red (type 7) is violence against civilians by either rebel or government forces.

Armed violence began in the NW (Poaua) in the latter half of 2005. The *Popular Army for the Restoration of the Republic and Democracy*- APRD- is situated in the NW, and most members are from the former President's presidential guard. APRD claim government has neglected NW and is unable to control bandits or "Zaraguinas", who exploit and kidnap Fulani traders. French forces intervened in 2006 to dislodge rebels who seized an area in Birao in the NE region.

In October 2006, a rebel group called *Democratic Forces for Unity* –UFRD-took up arms against Bozize insisting that the government solely represents the political ethnic base, and has marginalized other ethnic communities. The fighting is mainly centered in the northern area of CAR (Vakaga Province) bordering Chad and Sudan. Rebels are using CAR to travel from Chad to Sudan and vice versa, as a proxy war between these two states persist. President Bozize consistently accuses Sudan of supporting UFDR rebels.

Map 1: Violence patterns in 2006

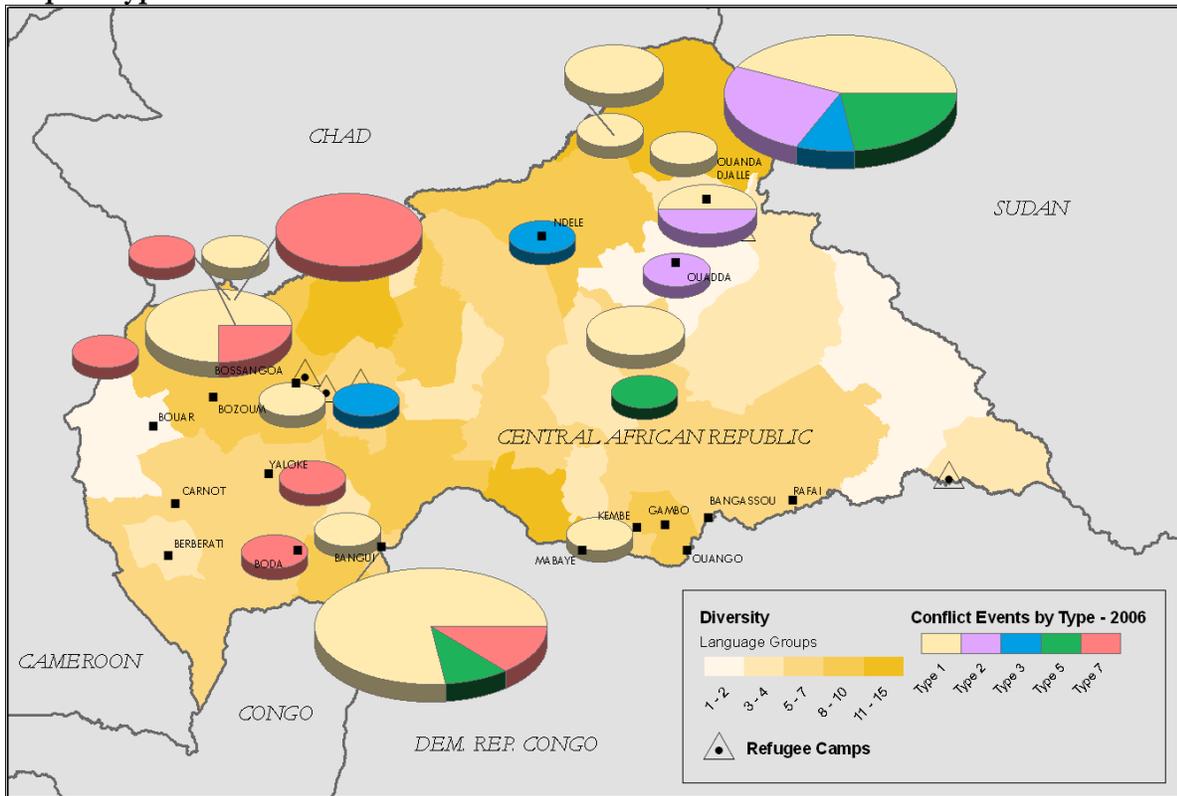


In the NW, APRD rebels are exploiting Chad's crisis (focused in the east of that state), while in the NE, rebels (UFDR) are taking advantage of Sudanese support. Sudan is believed to be instigating unrest in Chad to destabilize the Bozize regime, which is supported by President Deby of Chad. As map 1 displays, conflicts take place in a number of the more linguistically/ethnically mixed areas of the state, although both are homelands to the current and previous Presidents. Violence around refugee camps is widespread.

The types of violence map (2) show high frequencies of violence against civilians in the NW area of the state, where the APRD rebel group is active. Former President Patasse is from this area. In the NE, violence is mainly relegated to battles with government forces and civilian attacks.

In 2006, Chadian forces previously stationed at the border moved to secure the Eastern zone. CAR rebels took advantage, launching attacks on border communities from September-December. Fighting finally spread to the Kaga-Bandoro-Kabo corridor. Although four rebel groups were recognized by the UN Security Council in 2006, only two (see below) were active.

Map 2: Types of Violence 2006

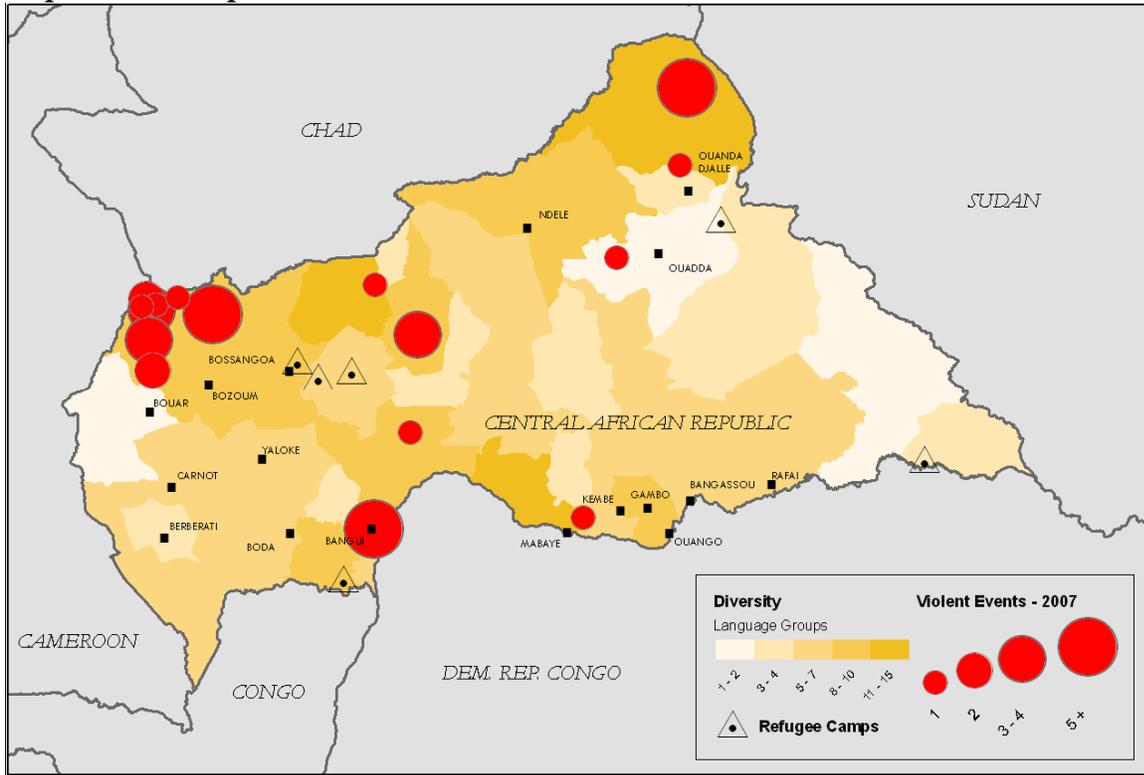


III. Conflict Patterns and Types across Space in 2007

Violence during 2007 again mainly clustered in the NE and NW, as the two main rebel groups continued activities there.

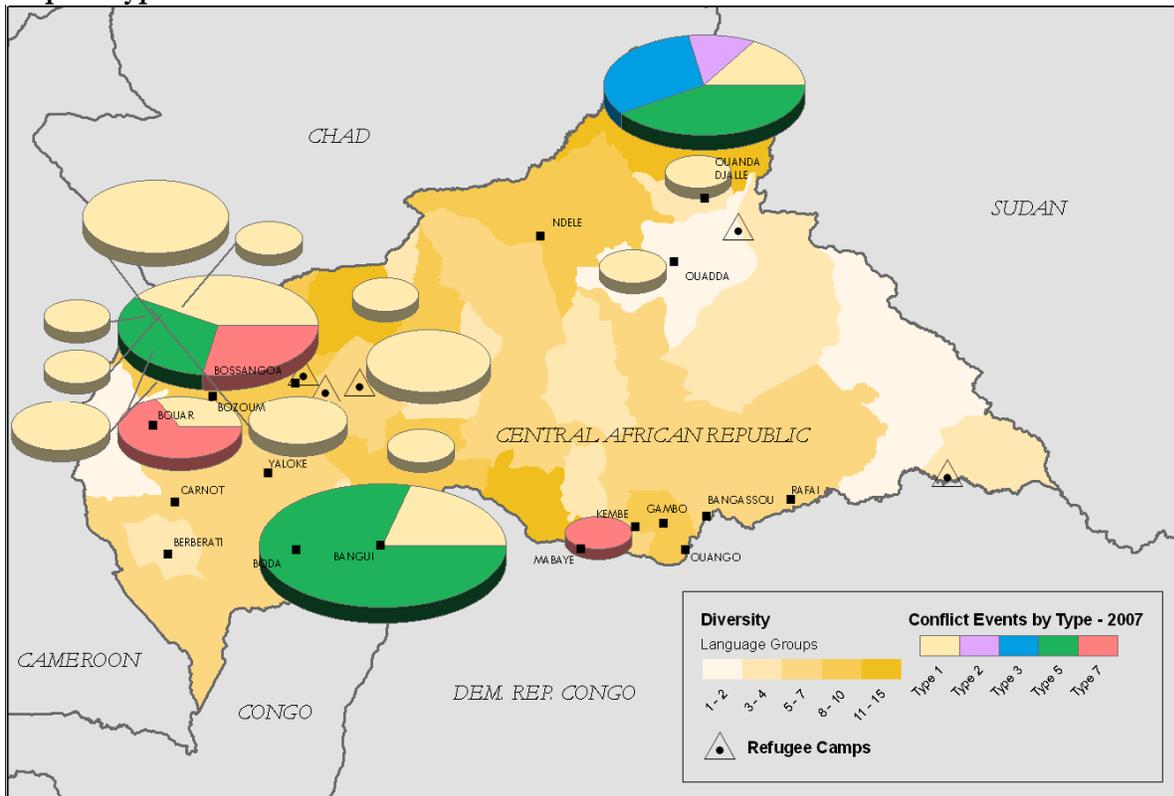
During this time, the APRD remains the most conflictual group, while UFDR signed a peace agreement in April 2007. The attacks in January of 2007 in the NW and NE caused massive civilian displacement. UNHCR estimated 50,000 fled into Chad; internal displacement is even greater (approximately 150,000 people).

Map 3: Violence patterns in 2007



The types of violence observed in 2007 display a quite different pattern across groups. In the NE, the UFDR signed a peace agreement, allowing governments to regain territory there (blue events) and engage in non-violent interactions with rebels (green events). In the NE, the APRD held out on peace talks, but the civilian based violence lessened during this year, and most events in the NE generally were battles between rebel and government forces.

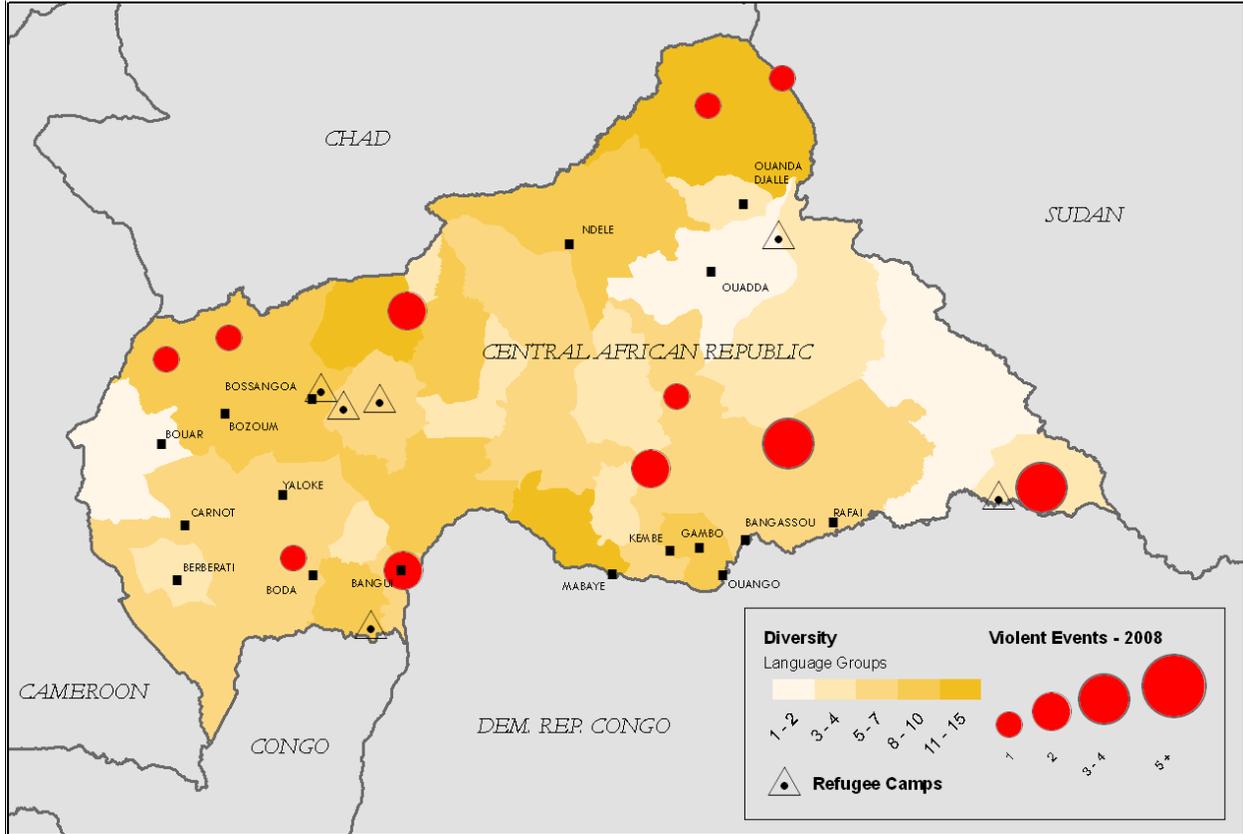
Map 4: Types of Violence in 2007



IV. Conflict Patterns and Types across Space in 2008

In 2008, the number of events stayed relatively similar, but the locations varied slightly. Although violence continued to be reported in the base areas of both rebel group (Vakanga for APRD and Ouham-Pende Prefectures for UFRD). More conflict events were reported in the south-east of the state in Bria city, and Mbomou and Haut-Mbombo prefectures.

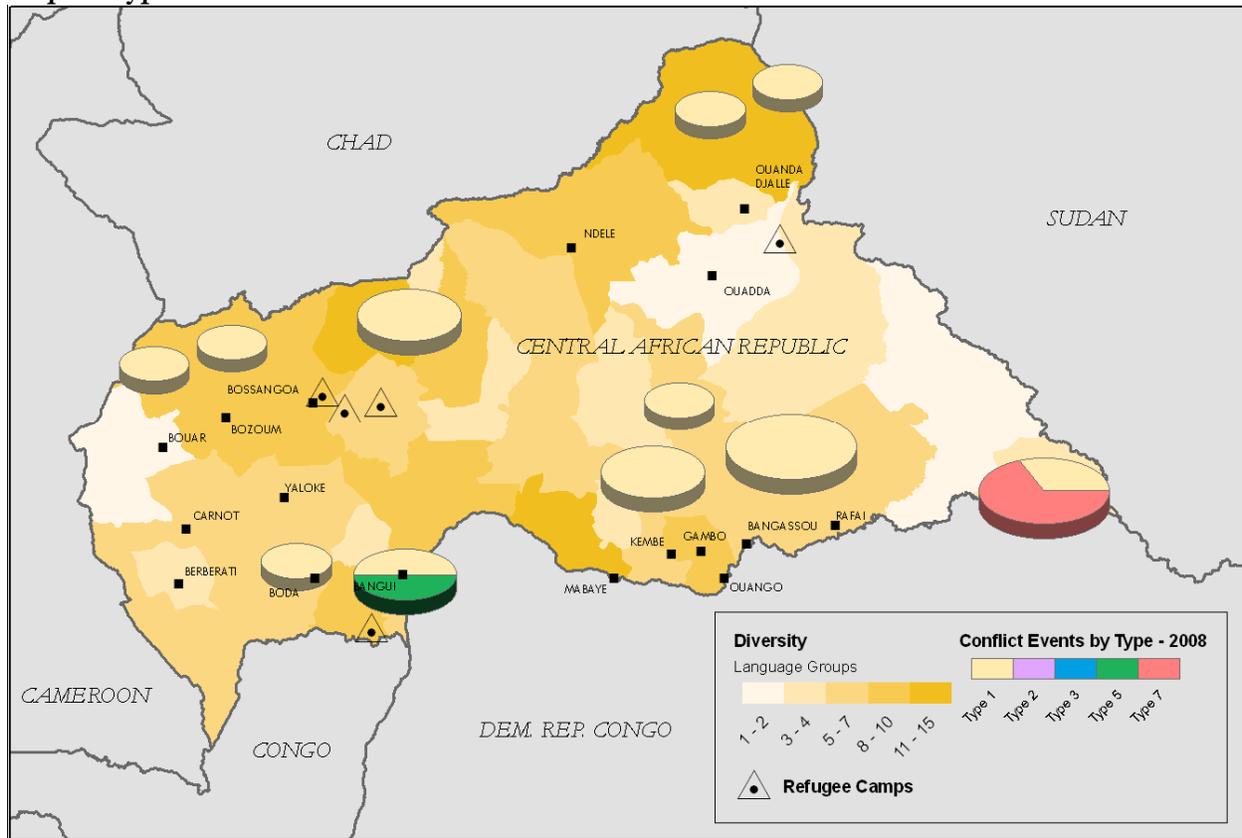
Map 5: Violence patterns in 2008



The region has recently seen inter-ethnic fighting between the Ronga and Goula peoples over land ownership near Baidou, about 600km north-east of Bangui, while rebel groups have also been blamed for attacks, although there is no independent confirmation of this.

The type of violence experienced in 2008 was almost entirely battles against rebel factions and government troops. Violence against civilians was concentrated in the south east of the state, and generally refugee camps were free from rebel attacks. The battles in the centre of the state reflect the growing communal violence there.

Map 6: Types of violence in 2008



V: Actors

Table of CAR Rebel Actors since 2006*

Rebel**	Dates of Activity	Features	Location	Support
Union des Forces democratique pour la rassemblement (UFDR)	2006-Present	Against general corruption of Bozize's government. From same area as president.	North East (Gordil and Tiringoulou)	Sudan
Mouvement pour la paix, la reconstruction, et le developement (MPRD)	Active	Chad	North East	CAR
Armee populaire pour la restauration de la republique et la democratie (APRD)	2005-Present	Demands Bozize shares power. Believed to be co-opting bandits in the area.	North West Paoua	Sudan Secret Service
Union des forces republicaines (UFR)	2006-2008	Protect areas from state sources and has allegiance to Patasse.	North West Paoua	
Front democratique de peuple centrafrican (FDPC)	Possibly incorporated into UFDR	Potentially linked to APRD	North East Unknown	Possibly Sudan
Mouvement Patriotique	Possibly	No longer cohesive	North East	Possibly Sudan

pour la restauration de la republique centrafricaine (MPRC)	incorporated into UFDR	force	Bossanga	

*This table is adapted from the Human Security Baseline Assessment January 2007, Number 5

**Please see below for more information on specific groups

The Popular Army for the Restoration of the Republic and Democracy (APRD)

Rebels, consisting mostly of loyalists of the deposed president Félix Patassé and local self-defense formations, have engaged in widespread extortion and forced taxation, looting of livestock, kidnappings for ransom, beatings of civilians, and have been blamed for the killing of a civilian and an international humanitarian aid worker. This group was formed in 2005 to protest against what it termed bad governance and marginalization of the north by the government.

The APRD is led by a former gendarme, Lt Bedaya N'Djadder, and is said to be active in northern CAR near border with Chad. The rebels are present around Nanga Boguila, Paoua, Betoko, Bemal and Bozoum areas. The national army has been accused of carrying out scorched earth policies in these regions. In October 2006, the military reportedly burnt down 10 villages around Paoua in a bid to flush out the rebels. A November 2006 report by the private Le Citoyen newspaper argued that the APRD's effectiveness has been undermined by the combined onslaught of the CAR and Chadian armies as well as French fighter jets. The group has also been linked to Andre Ringui Le Gaillard, a former minister under ex-President Patasse. (Its spokesman, Jacques Larmassoum, was in August 2006 sentenced to life imprisonment after linking Patasse to the group. This explains the constant government claims that Patasse is behind the group). Gaillard was one of the rebel chiefs who signed the Libya peace accord. There has been no official communication from this group in regards to the accord and it is also not clear under which capacity Gaillard signed the agreement. APRD recently attended peace talks and signed an agreement with the Government of CAR, but was however disappointed with the appointments made by CAR government after an alleged "reshuffling." In 2007, it claimed to have 1000 men.

Union of Democratic Forces for Unity (French: Union des Forces Démocratiques pour le Rassemblement (UFDR)

Rebel group fighting against the government in the Central African Republic. The CAR has accused UFDR of being backed by the government of Sudan. UFDR participated in recent peace talks, however it has signed peace agreements in recent past and those have failed to hold.

The rebel organization is believed to be an umbrella organization for several armed groups, including Chadian, Sudanese and Central African fighters. It is made up primarily of three groups- the Group d'action patriotique pour la liberation de Centraafrique; the Mouvement des liberateurs centrafricains pour la justice, and the Front Democratique centraafricain. This group is mainly based in Vakaga province (as is Chad's Mouvement pour la paix). It is unclear to what extent Sudan supports these rebels, or how many fighters are conscripted (in 2006-2007)

In April 2007, UFDR signed a peace agreement with the government. In early 2008, estimates for this group ranged from 500-1000. UFDR is populated by the cross border Gula group, a discriminated group in the NE. This group once allied with Bozize and now protest limited power since.

A number of loose collectives also operate in areas away from the state's reach.