



● Methodology:

Acts of sexual and gender-based violence have not been sufficiently documented in the Central African Republic (CAR). Furthermore, the methodology used to document incidents – using mostly public secondary sources – did not enable the Mapping Project to reflect appropriately the prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence in the first chapters of the report. The Mapping Project therefore decided from the outset to gather general information and documents, such as specific studies establishing that sexual violence was committed in certain contexts, rather than seeking to corroborate each individual case. This approach showed that, while the phenomenon has been underreported, sexual and gender-based violence was recurrent and widespread. This specific form of violence therefore requires particular attention from all transitional justice mechanisms, both judicial and non-judicial.

● Conflict related sexual violence:

Information examined by the Mapping Project showed that nearly all parties to the various armed conflicts in the Central African Republic between 2003 and 2015 committed sexual and gender-based violence.

MAIN PERPETRATORS

Members of the CAR security forces, armed rebel groups, and foreign government forces were the main perpetrators.

PERPETRATORS

Members of forces of the African Union and peacekeeping forces mandated by the United Nations to protect civilians were also identified as perpetrators of sexual and gender based violence.

VICTIMS

The victims were mainly women and girls. Men and boys also suffered sexual violence, albeit to a lesser extent.

VICTIMS AGE

The age of the victims ranged from five years to 60 years and above.

GANG-RAPES

A high percentage of the rapes were gang-rapes committed in some instances by up to 20 perpetrators against a single victim.

When acts of sexual violence are linked to a military or political objective and intended to serve a strategic aim of the conflict, they amount to the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war. The report documents several forms of conflict-related sexual violence, notably:

rape of women **because of their religion, or ethnicity**: (including the rape of women because they were Muslim and thus suspected of supporting a rebellion, the rape of ethnic Gula suspected of supporting rebels from their ethnic group, the rape of ethnic Haoussa women because they belonged to the ethnic group of a rival rebel movement, the targeting of Christian and animist women rape, and the rape of women because they were suspected to have Muslim husbands or partners);

rape of women **as punishment for their suspected affiliation or collusion with an enemy group** (including the rape of women during searches in neighbourhoods known to be inhabited by rival politico-military groups, and rapes of women accused of colluding with the enemy);

rapes committed **in public, in front of family members, and community members**;

gang rapes on a victim, involving sometimes 10, and as many as 20 attackers;

rape of **very young girls and boys**, including those below 10 years of age;

rape of **male victims**, including gang rape;

rape of **girls enlisted into armed groups** by members of their own rebel or militia groups, and sexual exploitation of girl recruits by rebel commanders;

forced marriage of women to fighters usually after abducting the victims;

abduction into sexual slavery, including women held in captivity for prolonged periods against their will, as sex slaves or in forced marriages.

rape, sexual exploitation and abuse of **women, girls, and boys in particularly vulnerable situations**, notably by members of the multiple foreign forces, peacekeeping troops, and other security forces deployed to the CAR to protect civilians.



● Entities whose members are mentioned in incidents or allegations of sexual violence or sexual exploitation

The report documents incidents or allegations involving the Mouvement de Libération du Congo (MLC) and other forces loyal to President Patassé; General Bozizé's rebel fighters; national security forces under President Bozizé; Union des Forces Démocratiques pour le Rassemblement (UFDR); Convention des Patriotes pour la Justice et la Paix (CPJP); Séléka / ex-Séléka; Anti-Balaka; Front Populaire pour le Redressement (FPR); Lord's Resistance Army (LRA); the Zaraguina (organized armed banditry groups); Armée Nationale Tchadienne (ANT); Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF); Sangaris (French force deployed to the CAR); members of the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA); members of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA).

● Conclusion and recommendations to address sexual violence in transitional justice mechanisms, including prosecutions

The armed conflicts created an environment in which perpetrators of sexual and gender-based violence enjoyed unbridled impunity as a result of dysfunctional or collapsed institutions. In order to bring justice to the thousands of victims of this violence and ensure a future where women and girls can enjoy the rights accorded to them under international and national laws, *it is incumbent on the authorities of the Central African Republic, with the support of the international community, to urgently adopt and implement judicial, political, psycho-social, economic and educational measures to protect and promote the rights of women and girls in the country.*

Acts of sexual violence should be given particular attention by all future transitional justice mechanisms, both judicial and non-judicial.

Victims are especially in need of a **functional justice system, which is efficient and gender-sensitive**, as well as other mechanisms which enable the perpetrators of such violence to be brought to justice and their victims afforded reparations. The national ordinary courts and the Special Criminal Court will need to prioritize investigations into sexual and gender-based violence and ensure protection for victims and witnesses of such violence.

Furthermore, it is essential to take measures and **establish mechanisms to put an end to sexual violence and the resulting impunity.**

Legal and other reforms, as well as education, are also urgently required to end gender-based violence.

Reparations - individual as well as collective - will have to be provided to victims of conflict-related sexual violence. Such reparations programmes should be victim-based and transformative in design, implementation and impact, and seek to subvert instead of reinforce pre-existing gender hierarchies and inequality that enabled the violations to occur.