Knowledge Institutions in Africa and their development 1960-2020

Central African Republic

Introduction

This report about the development of the knowledge institutions in the Central African Republic was made as part of the preparations for the AfricaKnows! Conference (2 December 2020 – 28 February 2021) in Leiden, and elsewhere, see www.africaknows.eu.

Reports like these can never be complete, and there might also be mistakes. Additions and corrections are welcome! Please send those to dietzaj@asc.leidenuniv.nl

Highlights

1   The Central African Republic's population increased from 1.5 million in 1960, via 2.8 million in 1990, to 4.8 million in 2020.

2   CAR's literacy rate is low, only 37% (15 years and older, 2018).

3   The so-called education index (used as part of the human development index) improved somewhat between 1990 (earlier data not available) and 2018: from 0.214 to 0.353 (it can vary between 0 and 1).

4   Regional inequality is high throughout the period. Performing best overall is Bangui, though it has the slowest development rate. The region with the fastest development is RS III (Ouham-Pendé, Ouham).

5   The Mean Years of Schooling for adults improved between 1990 and 2018, from 2.1 years to 4.3 years. There is very high regional inequality.

6   The Expected Years of Schooling for children improved between 1990 and 2018: from 5.2 to 7.6 years. There is high regional inequality throughout the period.

7   CAR has had higher education institutions since the late 1960s. Currently there are three tertiary knowledge institutions in CAR, all public. There are probably around 15,000 students in CAR, as well as around 1,800 at universities abroad.

8   CAR's universities are not in the 4icu top 200 of African institutions.

9   Think tanks: there is one operational Think Tank.

10   Museums: CAR has two museums, one in Bangui, one in Bouar.
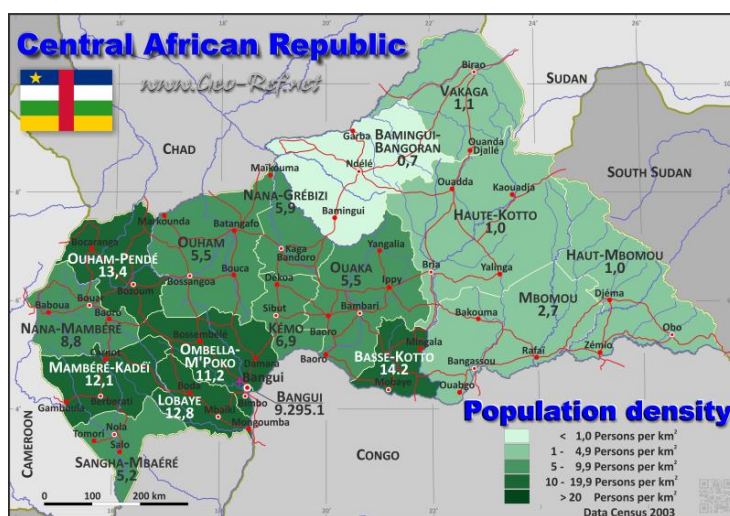
Part 1: The Story

Central African Republic's demographic and education development

The Central African Republic (CAR; Sango: Ködörösêse tî Bêafrîka; French: République centrafricaine (RCA)) is located in Central Africa. It is bordered by Chad, Sudan, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of the Congo and Cameroon.
CAR came under French rule in the late 19th century. It was part of French Equatorial Africa from the early 20th century onwards, under the name Ubangi-Shari. Independence from France was gained in 1960.

Despite its significant mineral deposits and other resources, as well as significant quantities of arable land, the Central African Republic is among the ten poorest countries in the world, with the lowest GDP per capita at purchasing power parity in the world as of 2017. As of 2019, according to the Human Development Index (HDI), the country had the second-lowest level of human development (only behind Niger), ranking 188th out of 189 countries, and the country had the lowest inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI), ranking 150th out of 150 countries. It is also estimated to be the unhealthiest country as well as the worst country in which to be young.[1]

CAR's population increased from around 1.5 million in 1960 to 4.8 million in the second half of 2020. In 1960, only 20% of the population lived in cities (only 302,200 people), while the urban population has increased to 43% or 2.1 million people. CAR's largest city is the capital Bangui (population 542,400). With 622,984 km2 CAR ranks 21th on area size on the African continent. CAR has an average population density of 8/km² (compared to about 511/km² in the Netherlands). The population is unevenly distributed. The population density in Bangui is 13,272/km².

Source: http://www.geo-ref.net/en/caf.htm

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[1] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_African_Republic

CAR's life expectancy increased from 36 years for males and 39 years for females in 1960 to 52 years for males and 57 years for females currently. The median age first decreased from 21.7 years in 1960 to 17.1 years in 2015 (lowest year). Since then, it started to increase slightly and is presently 17.6 years. In 1960 an average woman gave birth to 5.75 live-born children, which increased to 5.95 in 1975. Since then, the fertility rate is decreasing and currently an average woman gives birth to 4.75 live-born children[2].

Literacy and enrolment

CAR's adult literacy rate is (2018) 37%: men 50% and women 26%. Of the youth (15-24 years old) 263,922 males and 359,523 females were regarded as illiterate in 2018. For the adult population as a whole these figures are 642,926 for males and 984,428 for females.

CAR's population of primary school age children (6-11 years) is 817,678 children[3]. Education is compulsory from age 6 to age 15 (10 years). 66% of the primary school age group attended primary school in 2012 (later data unavailable). 840,173 children are of the age to attend secondary school (12-18). 13% are attending secondary school according to the latest figures (2017): females 10% and males 16%. Finally, 416,333 people are in the age category to attend tertiary education (people between 19 and 23). The gross enrolment rates for tertiary education is 3% in 2012, with females at 1.6%, and males at 4.4%. This would mean that there are about 15,000 students in CAR's higher education institutions. According to Campusfrance there were around 1,800 students in international mobility in 2017. The most popular destinations are France (though percentages are dropping), Benin, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey.[4]

Regional differentiation of education results, 1990-2018
The information provided by the Globaldatalab about the subregional human development index, its components and its indicators (https://globaldatalab.org/shdi) provides data for the period between 1990 and 2018, for six regions of the Central African Republic:
Bangui
RS I (Ombella-M'poko, Lobaye, Kémo, Nana-Grébizi)
RS II (Mambéré-Kadéï, Nana-Mambéré, Sangha-Mbaéré)
RS III (Ouham-Pendé, Ouham)
RS IV (Ouaka, Haute-Kotto, Bamingui-Bangoran, Vakaga)
RS V (Basse-Kotto, Mbomou, Haut-Mbomou)

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[2] https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/central-african-republic-population/
[3] http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/cf
[4] https://ressources.campusfrance.org/publications/mobilite_pays/en/rca_en.pdf

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:CAR_map_of_prefectures.svg

The Globaldatalab provides data about the education index (one of the three indexes that together form the Human Development Index), and about two relevant indicators: mean years of schooling, showing the average education level of the adult population per region, and expected years of education, showing the expected number of years current children will attend schools. This excludes the religious schools and only deals with the official, state-based, school system.

We present the data for the years 1990 (earliest year available), 2000, 2010, and 2018 (the latest year available at the moment). See tables 1-4 in part 2 ('the data').

Education index
The education index in nearly all of CAR's departments improved between 1990 and 2000 (see table 2 in part 2). Performing best throughout the whole period is Bangui which, however, had the slowest development rate at the same time. The fastest development took place in RS III (Ouham-Pendé, Ouham). Performing worst in most years is RS V (Basse-Kotto, Mbomou, Haut-Mbomou). Regional inequality is very high in 1990 and 2000. It dropped after 2000 but it remains high.

There could be a correlation between the education index and population growth. The region performing best throughout, Bangui, also has the highest population, though not the highest population growth. One of the two regions with the fastest population growth, also has also had the fastest development. We compare 1990 with 2018. See table 2 in part 2.

Mean years of schooling for adults
According to UNESCO, 'Mean Years of Schooling' is an indicator about the "average number of completed years of education of a country's population aged 25 years and older, excluding years spent repeating individual grades".[5]

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[5] http://uis.unesco.org/en/glossary-term/mean-years-schooling

The educational standard of the adult population of CAR has improved in all of the departments in the period 1990-2018 (see table 3 in part 2).

Regional inequality has been very high throughout the whole period. As with the education index, performing best overall is Bangui, which also had the slowest development. RS III (Ouham-Pendé, Ouham) has experienced the fastest development, though it performed the worst throughout the whole period.

Expected years of schooling for children
UNDP defines the 'expected years of schooling' as the: "Number of years of schooling that a child of school entrance age can expect to receive if prevailing patterns of age-specific enrolment rates persist throughout the child's life".[6]

For CAR's children educational prospects have improved in all of the regions (see table 4 in part 2). Regional inequality has been high throughout the period. Performing best overall is Bangui. The region with the fastest development is RS III (Ouham-Pendé, Ouham).

Historical Development of Private and Public Universities in the Central African Republic
CAR currently has three institutes for tertiary education, all public. CAR does not feature in the 4icu top 200 of African institutes.

Type	1960	1970	1980	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Public	0	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Private	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

(Sources: see part 2)

Public Universities

CAR currently has three public institutions for tertiary education. There are two official universities, Université de Bangui, and Pôle Universitaire Euclide.

Université de Bangui[7]

The Université de Bangui was established in 1969, after the Foundation for Higher Education in Central Africa (FESAC), in which several former French colonies including CAR (with an

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[6] http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/expected-years-schooling-children-years
[7] Source: https://presidence.govcf.org/tag/universite-de-bangui/

agricultural institute), took part, dissolved.

The Pôle Universitaire Euclide was established in 2008. It is an international intergovernmental organization (IGO). As of 2019, EUCLID serves 12 Participating States spanning 4 continents (Africa, Americas, Asia, Australia-Pacific).

Private Universities
CAR has no known private institutions for tertiary education.

Regional distribution of CAR's Universities
All three institutions for tertiary education are located in the capital Bangui. See also part 2, table 6.

Think tanks and other knowledge institutions
According to the 2018 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report there are two think tanks in the Central African Republic though the document does not provide any additional information. Internet search resulted in one operational think tank: Centre de Recherche pour le Développement Economique (CEREDEC), located in Bangui.

Museums in the Central African Republic

Musée Barthélémy Boganda[8]

Musée des Ancêtres de Bouar[9]

According to Wikipedia there are two museums in CAR. One in Bangui, the other in Bouar (RS III) (see part 2, table 8).

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[8] Source: https://momaa.org/directory/boganda-national-museum/
[9] Source: https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fichier:Mus%C3%A9e_des_Anc%C3%AAtres_de_Bouar_(29146626411).jpg

Part 2: the data

Map: Administrative areas in the Central African Republic

Bangui
Ombella-M'poko, Lobaye, Kémo, Nana-Grébizi = RS I (west-central)
Mambéré-Kadéï, Nana-Mambéré, Sangha-Mbaéré = RS II (extreme west)
Ouham-Pendé, Ouham = RS III (northwest)
Ouaka, Haute-Kotto, Bamingui-Bangoran, Vakaga = RS IV (northeast)
Basse-Kotto, Mbomou, Haut-Mbomou = RS V (southeast)

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:CAR_map_of_prefectures.svg

Table 1: Central African Republic: changes in regional population between 1990 and 2018; population numbers in millions

Region	1990	2000	2010	2018	2018/1990
Bangui	0.62	0.73	0.84	0.90	1.50
RS I	0.58	0.73	1.02	1.09	1.88
RS II	0.47	0.72	0.77	0.82	1.74
RS III	0.51	0.67	0.90	0.96	1.88
RS IV	0.31	0.37	0.35	0.37	1.19
RS V	0.32	0.42	0.50	0.53	1.66
Total	2.81	3.64	4.39	4.67	

https://globaldatalab.org/shdi/, 4.0

Table 2: Central African Republic: Education index 1990-2018[10]

Region	1990	2000	2010	2018	2018/1990

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[10] The HDI data, and its components go from 0 (worst level) to 1 (best level). We present the figures x 1000. The inequality figure is the highest value divided by the lowest value in a particular year.

Bangui	0.363	0.413	0.479	0.554	1.53
RS I	0.217	0.251	0.310	0.357	1.66
RS II	0.149	0.183	0.237	0.273	1.83
RS III	0.138	0.168	0.243	0.278	2.01
RS IV	0.189	0.210	0.262	0.301	1.59
RS V	0.156	0.166	0.231	0.265	1.70
Total	0.214	0.243	0.307	0.353	1.65
Inequality	2.6	2.5	2.1	2.1	

https://globaldatalab.org/shdi/ , 4.0

Table 3: Central African Republic: Regional data for 'mean years of schooling'

Region	1990	2000	2010	2018	2018/1990
Bangui	4.35	5.75	6.48	7.77	1.79
RS I	1.92	2.90	3.72	4.46	2.32
RS II	1.45	2.18	2.73	3.28	2.26
RS III	1.05	1.66	2.26	2.71	2.58
RS IV	1.67	2.41	2.98	3.57	2.14
RS V	1.35	1.78	2.32	2.78	2.06
Total	2.06	2.86	3.70	4.28	2.08
Inequality	4.1	3.5	2.9	2.9	

https://globaldatalab.org/shdi/, 4.0

Table 4: Central African Republic: Regional data for 'expected years of schooling'

Region	1990	2000	2010	2018	2018/1990
Bangui	7.85	7.97	9.48	10.6	1.35
RS I	5.51	5.56	6.71	7.51	1.36
RS II	3.61	3.96	5.27	5.90	1.63
RS III	3.71	4.07	6.05	6.77	1.82
RS IV	4.80	4.66	5.86	6.56	1.37
RS V	4.00	3.84	5.53	6.19	1.55
Total	5.23	5.30	6.76	7.57	1.45
Inequality	2.2	2.1	1.8	1.8	

https://globaldatalab.org/shdi/, 4.0

Table 5: Public universities in the Central African Republic

University	Year of establishment	Location	Rank 4icu (2019)
Ecole nationale d'Administration et de Magistrature (ENAM) (https://enam-rca.org/)	1962	Bangui	Not referred
Université de Bangui (https://www.univ-bangui.org/)	1969	Bangui	Worldwide 11213 Country 1
Pôle Universitaire Euclide (https://www.euclid.int/academicstandards.asp) International intergovernmental organization.	2008	Bangui	Not referred

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(Sources: Wikipedia: Universities, https://www.4icu.org/, World Higher Education Database (https://www.whed.net/results_institutions.php); google, and the websites of the institutions, if available).

Table 6: Regional distribution of universities in the Central African Republic

Department	Public	Private	Total	Number per million inhabitants
Bangui	3	0	3	3.33
RS I	0	0	0	0
RS II	0	0	0	0
RS III	0	0	0	0
RS IV	0	0	0	0
RS V	0	0	0	0
Total	3	0	3	0.64

For the last column we used the population numbers as given in table 2.

Table 7: Think tanks in the Central African Republic

Think tanks	Year of establishment	Location
Centre de Recherche pour le Développement Economique (CEREDEC) (http://ceredec.org/)	?	Bangui

Table 8: Museums in the Central African Republic

Museums	websites	Location
Musée Barthélémy Boganda		Bangui
Musée des Ancêtres de Bouar		Bouar (RS III)

(Source: Google) Not included: cultural centres

This report was made by Maaike Westra, African Studies Centre Leiden. The project was supervised by Ton Dietz, also ASCL.