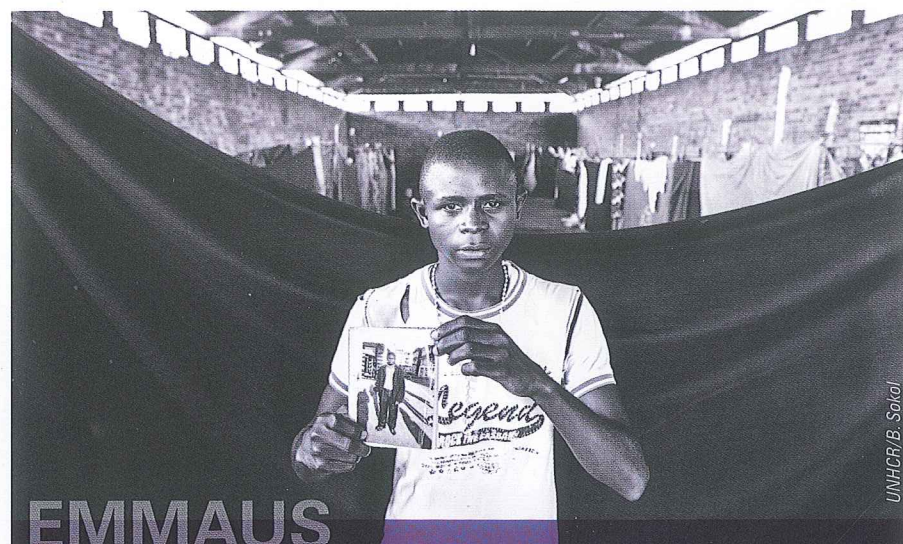


## THE MOST IMPORTANT THING

# What would you take if you were forced to flee?

More than 280,000 people have fled the Central African Republic to neighbouring countries since December 2012, including 60,000 into northern Democratic Republic of the Congo. For the majority, there was no time to pack before escaping. They fled extreme violence and chaos and arrived exhausted and traumatised. They could take only the most essential and lightest belongings.



EMMAUS

Emmaus, aged 17, holds a photograph of his father, who was murdered just weeks before in their home by a group of armed men. In a panic, Emmaus stuffed some belongings into a small bag and ran into the night. "This photo is important to me because I love my father. I love him very much."



LUCIE

Lucie has lived with disability since she was a girl, unable to straighten one of her legs. Italian doctors had recently performed surgery aimed at restoring mobility, but before the cast could be removed, rebel fighters attacked her village. The family fled, with Lucie clutching her most important possession – a Bible. She says her precious Bible "guides me in my life."

When 13-year-old Fideline saw a man being executed on the street in her hometown, she sprinted home screaming. Her family immediately decided they had to leave, and fled for their lives. Fideline was able to bring along her notebook and pen. "We have suffered so much. I want to study so that I can become someone."

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FIDELINE

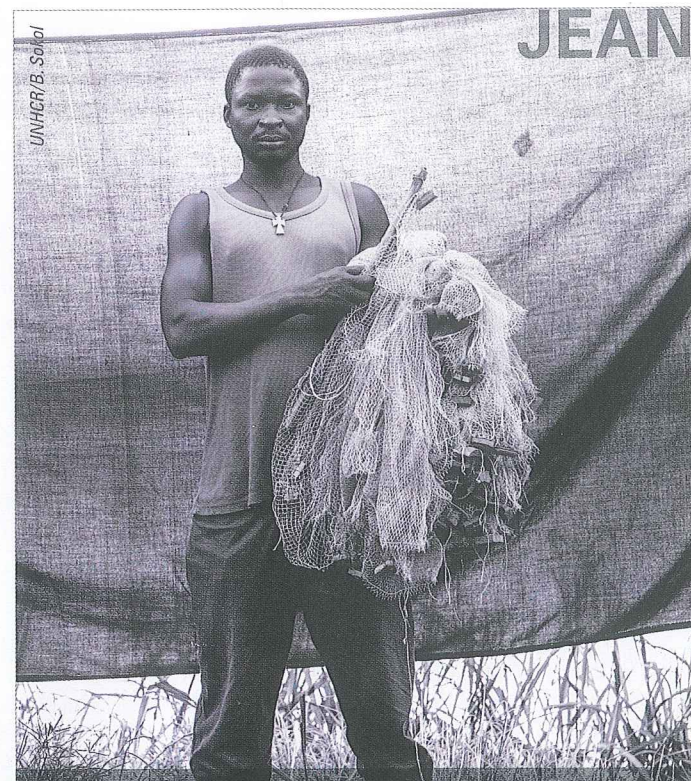
Benjamin poses behind his sewing machine, which he says "is my life, it is my blood. I use it to be able to buy food for my family." Benjamin decided to flee after seeing a rebel fighter shoot dead a merchant after an argument in Bangui's port area. He collected his family and grabbed the sewing machine before fleeing the country.

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BENJAMIN

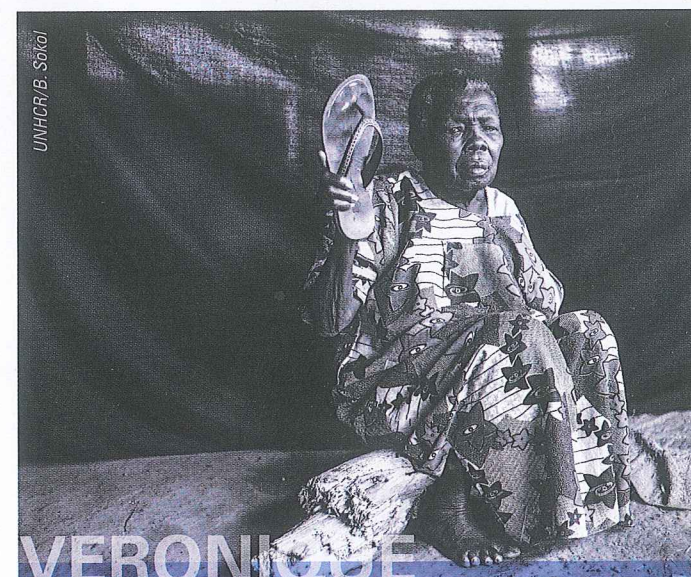
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JEAN

Living on the banks of the Oubangui River, 36-year-old Jean made his living as a fisherman. When he fled his home after Seleka fighters broke into his house and slit his mother's throat, he took with him his precious fishing net. "Some of the fish I sell, some we eat. Many people have suffered. Mine is just one story."

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VERONIQUE

Veronique lived almost all her life in the riverside village of Zinga in the Central African Republic, but it is now too dangerous for her to go back. She fled when armed men "arrived in cars and trucks, shooting and killing along the road." She carries a sandal, which helped her run away.