



WFP Central African Republic Country Brief

May 2020

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



Operational Context

The humanitarian crisis in the Central African Republic (CAR) remains one of the most acute and damaging in the world. It is among the top five humanitarian crises in the world when considering the proportion of the people in humanitarian need and the total population.

The country is grappling with numerous challenges with poverty remaining widespread and high. The country ranks 188 out of 189 countries in the 2018 Human Development Index, with 75 percent of the population living under the international poverty line (USD 1.90 per day). Basic services are non-existent, and, in many areas, people depend entirely on humanitarian assistance for basic services and livelihood opportunities. These aggravating factors have multiplied the impact of the crisis which has rendered one in four citizens displaced and chronically food insecure.

CAR has a population of 4.8 million people, about half of which needs food assistance. The 2019 National Food Security Assessment (NFSA) shows that 44 percent of the population (2.1 million) are food-insecure, including 6 percent (300,000), who are severely food insecure.

WFP operations are focused on life-saving interventions to improve food and nutrition security for the most vulnerable crisis-affected people. WFP helps communities by distributing food – including specialized nutritious foods, supporting smallholder farmers in restoring and enhancing their productive assets, as well as building resilience to future crises. WFP maintains a crisis response operation while simultaneously supporting recovery programmes in areas of relative security and providing Government capacity strengthening. WFP has been present in CAR since 1969. On 13 March, CAR recorded its first case of COVID-19.



Population: **4.8 million**

2018 Human Development Index: **188 out of 189**

Income Level: **Low income**

Chronic malnutrition: **38% of children between 6-59 months**

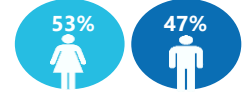
In Numbers

3,490 mt of food distributed

USD 513,126 cash-based transfers

USD 137 million six-month (June – November 2020) net funding requirements

649,822 people assisted in May 2020



Operational Updates

- In May, WFP reached 649,822 people (95 percent of the targeted beneficiaries for the month) with food and nutrition assistance through general food distributions, nutrition, and resilience building activities. Over 3,490 mt of food was distributed and USD 513,126 in cash assistance disbursed, which represented 30 percent of the planned cash transfers only due to the lack of resources. This affected WFP's capacity to reach 45,500 beneficiaries with cash assistance.
- As a result of the closure of schools, nearly 155,000 schoolchildren across the country are not receiving school meals under WFP's school feeding programme. WFP is considering the possibility of providing take-home rations to ensure that schoolchildren continue to receive the support that meets their food and nutritional needs. The COVID-19 pandemic has also interrupted the implementation of resilience building activities such as food assistance for assets (FFA). WFP was able to distribute only 2.1 mt of food to 742 people for resilience building activities.
- In May, WFP resumed nutrition assistance for the prevention of acute malnutrition after several months of interruption because of a shortage in Super Cereals. WFP assisted 10,084 children aged 6-23 months under acute malnutrition prevention activities. For the treatment of acute malnutrition, WFP distributed 32 mt of specialized nutritious foods to 18,226 children aged 6-59 months and provided cash-based assistance of USD 74,896 to HIV patients under antiretroviral therapy.
- COVID-19 Updates:** The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the Central African Republic (CAR) increased sharply in May, rising from 64 on 31 April to 1,888 on 9 June, with five deaths. The highest number of cases are recorded in Bangui, the capital. However, local transmission is increasing and rapidly spreading to remote parts of the country, where the already vulnerable population face challenges such as poor nutrition and limited access to health services.

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Main photo

Credit: WFP/Bruno DJOYO

Caption: WFP Beneficiary in Ndelé after distributions in May

WFP Country Strategy

Transitional Interim Country Strategic Plan (ICSP 2018-2020)		
2020 Total Requirement (in USD)	2020 Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
228 million	70 million	137 million

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Crisis-affected households and communities in targeted areas can meet their basic food and nutrition needs both during and in the aftermath of crises.

Focus area: Crisis Response

Activities:

- Provide general food distributions.
- Distribute emergency school meals to primary school children.

Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

Strategic Outcome 2: Vulnerable groups, including children, pregnant, lactating women, and malnourished ART patients living in target regions, have an improved nutritional status in line with national targets by 2020.

Focus area: Resilience Building

Activities:

- Implement BSFP for the prevention of MAM among children aged 6 to 59 months.
- Provide a comprehensive package for the prevention and treatment of malnutrition to children with MAM aged 6 to 59 months, PLW, girls and provide food by prescription to ART patients.
- Provide capacity strengthening to health district authorities, health center staff and community health workers (CHW).
- Provide nutritious school meals to school children.

Strategic Result 3: Smallholders have improved food security and nutrition

Strategic Outcome 3: Food-insecure women and men living in targeted areas of CAR have enhanced livelihoods to support the food security and nutrition needs of their households and communities by 2020.

Focus area: Resilience Building

Activities:

- Provide smallholder farmers with transfers to support asset creation and technical assistance to increase their access to markets, including purchases from WFP supported school meals.

Strategic Result 5: Countries have strengthened capacities to implement the SDGs

Strategic Outcome 4: National and subnational institutions have strengthened capacities to establish an adequate social protection system and manage food security and nutrition policies and programmes by 2020.

Focus area: Root causes

Activities:

- Provide capacity strengthening in zero hunger policies, strategic planning and delivery of programmes to public officials.
- Provide capacity strengthening to the government to establish a national social safety net platform.

Strategic Result 8: Sharing of knowledge, expertise and technology, strengthen global partnership support to country efforts to achieve the SDGs

Strategic Outcome 5: Humanitarian community (partners and donors) have enhanced capacity to reach and operate in areas of humanitarian crisis all year-round.

Focus area: Crisis Response

Activities:

- Provide common logistics and ICT services to the humanitarian community and the government
- Provide UNHAS services to all partners
- provide bilateral logistics services to partners for in country supply chain for three health programmes (malaria, TB and HIV/AIDS)

- As a result of the increasing number of confirmed cases and the widespread transmission of the virus across the country, WFP is developing a mid-term programme strategy to respond and mitigate the impact of the pandemic in CAR. The strategy will focus on strengthening lifesaving programmes, enhancing social protection through school-based programmes, and strengthening food systems through the protection of livelihoods. Through this strategy, WFP will also leverage its operational expertise to support the government and humanitarian partners to mitigate the impact of COVID-19.
- The security situation in the country has deteriorated sharply, with increased fighting and renewed clashes in areas such as Batangafo, Birao, Bria, Ndélé, and Obo. This resulted in significant population movements, restrictions on the movement of humanitarian organizations and constraints in the delivery of assistance. During the renewed clashes in Ndélé, the central market and several shops were burnt, putting local families' food access and livelihoods at risk. WFP provided food assistance to 18,649 people — IDPs in camps and host families — to help them meet their basic food and nutritional needs.
- **UNHAS:** WFP continued to provide logistical support to the humanitarian community in CAR. The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS), transported 1,002 passengers and 49 mt of freight. Following the violent clashes in Ndélé and Obo, some humanitarian staff were evacuated for security reasons.
- WFP commenced a regional passenger air service to ensure the humanitarian community and medical personnel can rapidly reach the areas where they are most needed, in full compliance with public health procedures. The flight service which started in May links Bangui to Accra.

Monitoring

- WFP is assessing the effects of COVID-19 on food prices and the food security implications through its regular price monitoring system. In May, the findings indicate that food prices are stabilizing as compared to the beginning of the COVID situation. The analysis also shows the absence of generalized speculation but rather localized speculation specific to certain food items on certain markets in Bangui. Traders are facing supply issues for imported food items like fish, chicken and rice. In order to better understand the extent to which COVID-19 will affect food and nutrition security in the country, WFP is supporting the World Bank to conduct household surveys to inform the COVID-19 response.

Funding

- As WFP is strategizing to scale up its emergency assistance to provide critical support to already vulnerable people affected by the COVID-19 situation, funding is urgently required to cover the additional needs. For the next six months (June – November 2020), WFP requires USD 137 million to sustain operations.

Donors

Canada, European Commission, France, Germany, Japan, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, UN Country-Based Pooled Funds, USA.