



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Central African Republic Country Brief July 2020



Operational Context

The humanitarian crisis in the Central African Republic (CAR) remains one of the deepest, acute, and damaging in the world. It is among the top five humanitarian crisis in the world 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

2,276 mt of food distributed

USD 1.9 million cash-based transfers

USD 76 million - six-month (August 2020 – January 2021) net funding requirements

825,379 people assisted in July 2020



Operational Updates

- In July, WFP reached 825,379 people - 79 percent of the planned 1,044,661 beneficiaries for the month with food and nutrition assistance through general food distributions, nutrition, and resilience-building activities. WFP distributed 2,276 mt of food and transferred USD 1.9 million in cash assistance. The total beneficiary reached increased by 23 percent in comparison with the total achieved in June. WFP continued to conduct distribution under strict COVID-19 prevention measures.
- WFP launched its support to vulnerable people (IPC phase 3) affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in Bangui through cash-based assistance worth USD 532,456 to 51,214 beneficiaries in Bimbo, Begoua, and the 3rd, 6th and 7th *arrondissements* (districts) of Bangui. Furthermore, WFP supported 350 in-patients in hospitals across the country. This assistance is expected to mitigate the immediate negative socio-economic impact of the pandemic on households.
- A myriad of factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic, renewed fighting in the prefectures of Ouham-Pende and Nana-Mambere, the worsening security situation across the country as the date of elections approaches and the resulting new population displacements have led to an increase of humanitarian needs in the country. However, because of a lack of resources, funding gaps and logistics constraints, the food rations distributed in July covered only 50 percent of the daily per capita energy requirement (2,100 kcal).
- The activities of armed groups especially the Retour, Reclamation, Réhabilitation (3R) and the resulting military operations in some areas particularly in the south-west and north (Markounda, Bocaranga, Ndim, Ngaoundaye, Alim, Besson, Koude) and along the Bouar-Cameroon border significantly affected operations in July. The use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) on some axis by the 3R movement presents a new security challenge, which affected WFP's ability to reach beneficiaries in the area. The beneficiaries in Obo, Rafai and Zemio (South-East) did not receive assistance due to logistics constraints — poor road conditions.
- Following the outbreak of COVID-19, all schools in the country have been closed since 27 March. However, on 10 July, the Ministry of Education announced their reopening from 15 July, for final year students preparing for the end of school examinations.

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Main photo

Credit: WFP/Bruno DJOYO

Caption: WFP distribution site

WFP Country Strategy

Transitional Interim Country Strategic Plan (ICSP 2018-2022)

2020 Total Requirement (in USD)	2020 Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
228 million	115 million	76 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 centre 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)

- In compliance with COVID-19 preventive measures, WFP provided take-home rations (THR) to 18,808 primary schoolchildren (24 percent of the planned 105,000) from crisis-affected families, as a substitute for on-site school meals.
- To reinforce the resilience of women and households in vulnerable communities, WFP and its partners trained more than 2,000 women on soap making and dressmaking in Bimbo and Samba.
- WFP opened a new supply route to speed food delivery in the Central African Republic. With support from the United States, WFP received the first badge of food items (600 mt) transported from Congo Brazzaville through the Ubangi River. The new supply route from Brazzaville to Bangui is an alternative and complementary supply line that will make live-saving food assistance available more quickly in C.A.R
- **COVID-19 Updates:** The Central African Republic (CAR) has 4,620 confirmed cases of COVID-19, 1,641 recoveries and 59 deaths as of 4 August. The increase in the transmission is happening at the peak of the lean season when hunger and malnutrition are most severe. In response to this, WFP is providing direct food assistance to COVID-19 patients and people under quarantine in Bangui, Paoua, Bambari, Bria, to mitigate the immediate negative socio-economic impact of the pandemic on their households. In July, WFP supported 350 in-patients in hospitals across the country. Furthermore, to support vulnerable people (IPC phase 3) affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in Bangui, WFP provided cash-based assistance worth USD 532,456 to 51,214 beneficiaries in Bimbo, Begoua, and the 3rd, 6th and 7th *arrondissements* (districts) of Bangui.
- The WFP-managed **United Nations Humanitarian Air Services (UNHAS)** continued to provide logistical support to the humanitarian community in CAR. UNHAS transported 1,391 passengers and 45.8 mt of freight. To maintain operations during the rainy season, UNHAS has leased a helicopter to provide humanitarian access to locations that have become inaccessible by road or air (fixed wing).

Challenges

- WFP CAR continues to face challenges in importing food items through the Douala corridor (Cameroon). In July, insecurity across the country affected humanitarian access and the transportation of food in the country. As a result, WFP distributions were interrupted by limited food stocks, which led WFP to reduce rations.

Funding

- The situation in CAR remains critical because of the growing needs during the ongoing lean season, the security context, and the impact of COVID-19, all affecting the food security in the country. WFP urgently needs USD 76 million to ensure operations can continue unimpeded over the next six months (August 2020 -January 2021).

Donors

Donors to WFP CAR in 2020 include Canada, European Commission, France, Germany, Japan, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and USA. Additional support has been provided by UN Country-Based Pooled Funds.