



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

# WFP Central African Republic Country Brief

August 2020



## Operational Context

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

**2,393 mt** of food distributed

**USD 2 million** cash-based transfers

**USD 65 million** - six-month (September 2020 – February 2021) net funding requirements

**769,148 people assisted** in August 2020



## Operational Updates

- Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, WFP continues to provide food and nutrition assistance to ensure critical support reaches vulnerable people in need. In August, WFP reached 769,148 people (67 percent of the planned beneficiaries) through food and nutrition assistance, of which 514,319 people were assisted with in-kind food rations and 254,929 people with cash assistance. Over 2,393 mt of food was distributed representing 78 percent of the 3,051 mt planned for distribution. Because of a lack of resources and logistics constraints, the food rations distributed in August covered only 50 percent of the daily per capita energy requirement (2,100 kcal). This reduction caused a 7 percent decline in the total number of beneficiaries reached in comparison with the total reached in July.
- WFP provided take-home rations to 2,180 primary school children from crisis-affected families as a substitute for on-site school meals. The distribution reached 16 percent more beneficiaries than the planned 1,815 for the month with a total of 4.5 mt of food. WFP also rolled out take-home rations for home-grown school feeding in 51 WFP-supported schools and reached 1,056 schoolchildren with 2.7 mt of food.
- WFP assisted 5,337 children aged 6-23 months under acute malnutrition prevention activities. For the treatment of acute malnutrition, WFP distributed 44 mt of specialized nutritious foods to 10,229 children aged 6-59 months. As a result of the ongoing shortage in Super Cereals, assistance to pregnant and lactating women (PLW) was not provided. However, under the food by prescription (FbP) programme, 8,821 antiretroviral therapy (ART) patients received nutritional assistance through cash vouchers worth USD 69,134.
- Through resilience-building activities, WFP assisted 178,493 beneficiaries (65 percent of the planned 273,534) with 334 mt of food and USD 377,740 in cash transfers to cope with the impact of the lean season and COVID-19. Also, through the seed protection activities with FAO, WFP assisted 16,800 households to continue the maintenance of the farmed lands and avoid early harvests.
- WFP has been providing technical training to women in Bimbo and Samba to strengthen their resilience to the social-economic impact of COVID-19. In August, 3,131 women received training for the production and distribution of soap and local masks.

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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)
<b>228 million</b>	<b>118 million</b>	<b>65 million</b>

#### 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)

- 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, Kounde) and along the Bouar-Cameroon border continued to affect WFP operations. The restriction of movements in these areas did not allow WFP and its partners to reach internally displaced persons in these locations.
- **COVID-19 Updates:** As of 9 September, CAR has recorded 4,736 cases of COVID-19, with 1,825 recoveries and 62 deaths out of the 31,345 people tested. The Government is gradually easing lockdown measures for a resumption of normal activities while maintaining the need for social distancing, masks, and handwashing. WFP continues to provide food assistance to COVID-19 patients and people under quarantine in Bangui, Paoua, Bambari and Bria to mitigate the immediate negative socio-economic effect of the pandemic on their households.
- The WFP-managed **United Nations Humanitarian Air Services (UNHAS)** continued to provide logistical support to the humanitarian community in CAR. UNHAS transported 1,535 passengers and 45 mt of freight. Following the resumption of commercial flights to Bangui, UNHAS discontinued the Global Air Services to CAR.

### Challenges

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

### Funding

- The situation in CAR remains critical due to 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. The operation is facing a serious funding deficit with a high risk that WFP will be unable to deliver food and nutrition assistance to vulnerable families. In past months, the lack of funding prevented WFP from providing a full month food ration to beneficiaries.
- **USD 65 million** is needed to provide food and nutrition assistance to crisis-affected and vulnerable people for the next six months (September 2020 -February 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.