



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Central African Republic Country Brief

September 2020



Operational Context

The humanitarian crisis in the Central African Republic (CAR) remains one of the deepest, most acute and 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

3,358 mt of food distributed

USD 1.9 million cash-based transfers

USD 72.9 million - six-month (October 2020 – March 2021) net funding requirements

981,856 people assisted in September 2020



Operational Updates

- WFP continued providing lifesaving and livelihood building responses to vulnerable populations through food distribution and cash-based transfers (CBT). Although WFP was forced to reduce food rations to reach more beneficiaries, 209,363 targeted beneficiaries could not be reached because of limited stocks, logistics challenges and funding constraints. Some of the activities affected were emergency school feeding, food assistance for asset creation and assistance to pregnant and lactating women.
- The preliminary results of the Integrated Food Security Classification (IPC) analysis (September 2020), estimates that in the period between September 2019 to April 2021, some 1.9 million people (41 percent of the population) are acutely food insecure. Some 1.5 million people are in Phase 3 (crisis) and 400,000 in Phase 4 (emergency). In the period from May to August 2021, the number of food insecure people is expected to increase to 2.3 million (48 percent of the total population) due to the lean season and in the absence of food assistance. The worrying situation calls for urgent action to save lives and protect livelihoods.
- WFP completed the third round of cash-based assistance to COVID-19 patients in Bangui, Bria, Bambari and Paoua. Plans are underway to extend the response to Berberati and Bouar in October.
- More than 3,286 households in 11 villages were affected by flooding in the north of Ndélé. The flooding destroyed about 15,000 hectares of crops. An interagency mission identified the need for food, medical supplies and shelter. The affected villages are located in hard-to-reach areas and remain difficult to access. However, WFP is finalising the beneficiary list to launch its response.
- The locality of Ouadda, in the prefecture of Haute-Kotto is facing armed clashes which forced many people to flee and seek refuge in the bush. WFP and Plan International airlifted food items from Bria to Ouadda to assist 1,500 people with emergency food assistance and 100 malnourished children following an interagency mission. A rapid screening of 40 children aged 6-59 months conducted revealed a severe acute malnutrition (SAM) rate of 17.5 percent and a moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) rate of 70 percent in the area.

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Main photo

Credit: WFP/Amaya Amigo

Caption: A beneficiary at a WFP distribution site in Bangui.

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)
224.2 million	130.4 million	72.9 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.
- Provide an integrated assistance package for the treatment of malnutrition to children aged 6 to 59 months, PLW, girls and provide food by prescription to ART patients in crisis affected areas.

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 stunting among children aged 6 to 23 months and Pregnant and Lactating women, including social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) and promote good Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices
- 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 ETC services to government, UN and NGO partners, to run effective field operations and provide for staff security
- 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)
- Provide common logistics and coordination services to UN and NGO partners to ensure the delivery of humanitarian assistance

- A fourth budget revision to the Interim Country Strategic Plan (ICSP 2018–2020) has been approved to extend operations for two additional years (1 January 2021–31 December 2022). This extension will allow WFP to align with the United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework (2023–2027) and the government’s National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan (2023–2027).
- The WFP-managed **United Nations Humanitarian Air Services (UNHAS)** continued to provide logistical support to the humanitarian community in CAR. UNHAS transported 1,540 passengers and 60 mt of freight. The contract for the helicopter mobilised by UNHAS for the rainy season will terminate at the end of October. However, given the increased needs, UNHAS will need USD 450,000 to extend the contract by a month.
- Through the **Global Fund Project**, WFP provided ‘GeneXpert’ cartridges adapted to COVID-19 tests which have now made COVID-19 testing available in four regions outside the capital Bangui; Bouar (Nana-Mambéré), Berberati (Mambéré-Kadéï), Bambari (Ouaka) and Bangassou (Mbomou). The GeneXpert cartridges are originally used for the detection of Tuberculosis. WFP also delivered medicines to 421 health centres on behalf of the Global Fund project against AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.
- **COVID-19 Updates:** As of 4 October, 4,852 cases have been confirmed, including 1,921 recoveries and 61 deaths. So far, 32,596 people have been tested for COVID-19. All the seven regions of the country have recorded cases of COVID-19. However, the capital Bangui is the epicentre. The Ministry of Health and Population reported that the virus is mostly spreading through community transmission. The chances of transmission are exceptionally high at overcrowded collective IDP sites such as in Bria, Haute-Kotto Prefecture, where some 50,000 people live.

Funding

- The situation in CAR remains critical due to the growing needs during the 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 adequate food and nutrition assistance to vulnerable families. In past months, the lack of funding has prevented WFP from providing a full month food ration to the beneficiaries.
- **USD 72.9 million** is needed to provide food and nutrition assistance to crisis affected and vulnerable people for the next six months (October 2020 - March 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.