Operational Context

The Central African Republic (CAR) is facing a large-scale humanitarian crisis, characterised by protracted armed conflict, which has left thousands of people displaced and suffering from alarming levels of hunger. The effects of the violence and insecurity, coupled with non-existent basic services, is undermining the population’s resilience. In many areas, people depend entirely on humanitarian assistance for basic services and livelihood opportunities.

The country is grappling with numerous challenges, including the socio-economic impact of COVID-19, which has left more people unable to meet their basic food needs. All relevant socio-economic development indicators in CAR show a very bad standing, and systematically the country ranks among the ten worst performers. The Human Development Index (2019) ranked CAR at 188 out of 189 countries. Widespread poverty is characteristic of CAR, with 75 percent of the population living under the international poverty line (USD 1.90 per day).

CAR has a population of 4.8 million people, about half of which needs food assistance. At the end of 2020, the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance grew from 2.6 million in 2020 to 2.8 million. This includes 2.3 million people who are considered food insecure. The country’s longstanding conflict resurged after recent elections leading to further displacements and increased humanitarian needs. More people are at the stages of crisis (IPC Phase 3) and emergency (IPC Phase 4). Without assistance, this could deteriorate further during the lean season.

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 specialised 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 relative secured areas and strengthening government capacity. WFP has been present in CAR since 1969.

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Main photo: Credit: WFP/Amaya Amigo
Caption: A beneficiary of WFP cash-based assistance in Bangui showing her SCOPE card

In Numbers

3,915 mt of food assistance distributed
USD 3.2 million cash-based transfers made
USD 61.3 m six months (May-October 2021) net funding requirements
754,440 people assisted in April 2021

Operational Updates

- In April, WFP reached 754,440 people — 80 percent of the planned beneficiaries for the month — with food and nutrition assistance through general food and/or cash distributions, nutrition activities, school feeding and resilience building activities. WFP distributed 3,915 mt of food and transferred USD 3.2 million in cash assistance. Given the surge in COVID-19 cases in Central African Republic (CAR), WFP continues to conduct food distributions under strict compliance with COVID-19 preventive measures to mitigate the health risks at food distribution sites.

- As a result of the increased attacks by armed groups, insecurity and unavailability of escorts, access is severely limited in several areas particularly in Bambari, Bria and the southwest. Consequently, distributions did not take place in some areas including Birao, Koui, and Sido/Kounago.

- In line with plans to scale-up cash-based operations in areas where it is feasible, WFP, and its partner; Plan International launched the electronic vouchers and cash-in-hand modalities. In April, 451,019 people received cash-based assistance.

- To address the prevalence of child stunting in CAR, WFP launched in April the prevention of stunting programme at the community level, targeting children aged 6-23 months, and pregnant and lactating women. Through nutrition activities, WFP reached 52,786 children aged 6-59 months, antiretroviral patients, and pregnant and lactating women in April with specialised nutritious food to prevent and treat malnutrition.

- WFP continued its food-assistance-for-assets (FFA) programme, reaching 73,795 people with food and cash assistance to promote self-reliance among crisis-affected populations and support the building and rehabilitation of productive assets.
WFP Country Strategy

Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2021 Total Requirement (in USD)</th>
<th>2021 Available Contributions (in USD)</th>
<th>Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>202 m</td>
<td>96.9 m</td>
<td>61.3 m</td>
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**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:**
- 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 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:**
- 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 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)

- Through the Global Fund Project against AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, WFP also delivered 21 mt of medicines to 60 health centres, 6,800 mosquito nets to 6 districts and 800 COVID-19 PCR tests in Bambari, Bangassou, Berberati, Bossangoa, Bangu and Paoua.

According to the 2020 CAR Annual Country Report, in 2020, WFP provided food and nutrition assistance to 1.2 million (53 percent women and 47 percent men). Over 30,000 mt of food was distributed and USD 15.5 million disbursed through cash-based assistance. To address the food insecurity situation exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, WFP adapted its operations to prioritize lifesaving activities and was able to provide immediate food and nutrition assistance to the most vulnerable including about 65,806 persons with disabilities.

Common Humanitarian Services

- WFP continued to provide logistic support to the humanitarian community in CAR. The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS), transported 2,054 passengers and 26 mt of essential cargo. UNHAS ensured humanitarian safety and well-being through security and medical evacuations by carrying out 49 security relocations and 8 medical evacuations (including one for COVID-19). The most travelled destinations were Bangassou, Paoua and Bria.

**Challenges**

- Insecurity across the country continue to impact food delivery to many parts of the country resulting in commodity shortfalls in some WFP offices.

**Funding**

- WFP’s funding requirements have significantly increased in view of the COVID-19 context, and growing insecurity which risks having devastating effects on the livelihoods and food security of the most vulnerable populations. With the approach of the lean season and 2.3 million people projected to be in IPC phase 3 and above, WFP requires USD 61.3 million for the period May-October 2021.

**Donors**

Top 5 donors to WFP CAR CSP 2018-2022 include USA, Germany, Canada, Japan, and the European Commission. Additional support has been provided by UN CERF, UN Country-Based Pooled Funds and OCHA.