



World Food Programme

SAVING
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WFP Central African Republic Country Brief

March 2023

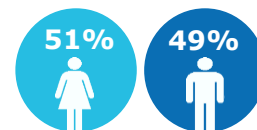


In Numbers

331 mt of food assistance distributed

USD 74.7 million six-month (April – September 2023) net funding requirements

46,600 people assisted in March 2023



Operational Updates

- WFP delivers food and nutrition assistance through its general food distributions (GFD), school feeding, nutrition, and resilience-building activities in the Central African Republic (CAR). In March, WFP slowed down most of its distributions to prepare for the effective implementation of its country strategic plan (CSP) 2023 – 2027, planned to start in April.
- Cash-based transfer scale-up:** WFP is preparing April's transfer of USD 3 million planned for GFD, nutrition treatment, and food assistance for assets activities. WFP is developing its capacity-strengthening annual plan on the use of its beneficiary and transfer management platform (SCOPE) for WFP and partners.
- General food distributions (GFD):** 40,000 people received unconditional food assistance in March. Coping with the lack of commodities in-country, WFP distributed rations of 70 percent of the full ration (cereals, oil, and salt only), with variations depending on availability in sub-offices stocks.
- Nutrition:** WFP and the Ministry of Health and Population provided an integrated package for the treatment of malnutrition to 250 children with moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) aged 6-59 months, pregnant and lactating women (PLW) and anti-retroviral treatment (ART) clients, for whom targeting for cash assistance was done in Bangui and Paoua (northwest). WFP is working with the Ministry of Health and Population to improve the nutritional assistance and prevention of chronic malnutrition by increasing the coordination of nutrition interventions at national and decentralised levels, and strengthening the monitoring, evidence generation, nutritional surveillance and nutritional knowledge of the population. A memorandum of understanding should be signed end of April 2023.
- School feeding:** The critical lack of school-feeding-specific food in-country since January, combined with insecurity and access constraints, hampered the full implementation of school-based programs in all the seven targeted prefectures: only 6,330 school children (6 percent) received nutritious school meals. WFP expects 600 mt from Douala while it is working with the Ministry of National Education on the new schools targeted for 2023.
- Resilience and livelihoods:** WFP purchased almost 1,000 mt of cowpea from umbrella organisations of smallholder farmers as part of its support to smallholder agricultural market support (SAMS), while training on the post-harvest losses and the delivery of related equipment are being organised (expected in May) in six sub-prefectures, as part of the PRUCAC (Projet de Réponse Urgente à la Crise Alimentaire en Centrafrique) project, in support of seed protection and links to market opportunities.

Operational Context

The Central African Republic (CAR) is a landlocked country of 6.1 million people. The volatile security climate, combined with intercommunal conflicts and political instability, led to further displacements and significantly impacted households' access to food and livelihoods. There are over 1.9 million displaced people within CAR and in neighbouring countries, including 516,000 internally displaced persons.

The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) for September 2022 – March 2023 confirmed **2.7 million people facing high acute food insecurity**, including 642,000 people in Emergency (Phase 4). These figures remain among the highest CAR has ever seen and may reach almost 3 million between April - August 2023 if no assistance is provided. While the prevalence of severe acute malnutrition decreased by 53 percent compared to 2019, the prevalence of chronic malnutrition of 36.7 percent at the national level remains at a very high threshold according to the World Health Organization.

Situated on a fertile plateau and abundant in water resources, CAR has considerable agricultural potential and a wealth of mineral resources. However, the impact of the Ukraine crisis, compounding the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic downturn, has worsened households' vulnerability. Relevant socio-economic development indicators show a poor standing with 71 percent of the population living below the international poverty line (USD 1.90 per day).

Implemented in CAR since 1969, WFP's operations focus on life-saving interventions to improve the food and nutrition security of the most vulnerable crisis-affected people while addressing the root causes of vulnerability and strengthening the capacities and systems for the prevention and resilience to future shocks, including climate shocks. Since March 2023, WFP has been implementing its new country strategic plan for 2023 – 2027, aiming to further integrate its crisis response into early recovery activities, to accompany some of the vulnerable people out of crisis situations towards conditional assistance. WFP is using mobile vulnerability analysis mapping data to monitor food security trends and food prices on the market.



Population: **6.1 million**

Income Level: **Low income**

Human Development Index 2021: **188 out of 191**

Chronic malnutrition: **36.7 percent of children aged 6-59 months**

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Photo: Claudia Ziranome, beneficiary of P4P project in Paoua (Photo credit: WFP/Bruno DJOYO)

Funding

- WFP requires **USD 75 million** in the next six months to continue providing life-saving food and nutrition assistance to the most vulnerable people in CAR.
- WFP is concerned about the lack of resources to cover malnutrition activities (87 percent of requirements) and resilience and livelihoods (70 percent of requirements) from April, especially since the early recovery will become a more important part of WFP's integrated response under the new CSP 2023 – 2027.

Country Strategic Plan (2023-2027)

Total Requirement 2023 (in USD)	Available Contributions 2023 (in USD)	Six-month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
206.4 m	56.1 m*	74.7 m (57%)

* Representing 43 percent of the total requirement for 2023

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Crisis-affected populations are able to meet their food and nutrition needs both during and in the aftermath of crises.

Focus area: Crisis Response

Activities:

- Provide life-saving assistance to crisis-affected populations to meet their basic food and nutrition needs and support their early recovery.
- Provide an integrated assistance package for the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition to children 6–59 months of age and pregnant and lactating women and girls (PLW-G) and provide nutrition assessment, counselling and support for people living with HIV and tuberculosis clients receiving anti-retroviral therapy and directly observed treatment in crisis-affected areas.

Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

Strategic Outcome 2: Nutritionally vulnerable and shock-affected populations (including indigenous peoples), with or without disabilities in targeted areas have improved nutrition, health and education and enhanced access to safe and nutritious diets and school feeding in line with national standards by 2027.

Focus area: Root Causes

Activities:

- Provide a comprehensive health and nutrition package to targeted children aged 6–23 months, PLW-G for the prevention of malnutrition.
- Provide nutritious school meals to schoolboys and schoolgirls in targeted areas in a way that promotes local production, school retention and reduces gender and ethnic discrimination.

Strategic Result 3: People have improved and sustainable livelihoods

Strategic Outcome 3: Food-insecure and shock-affected populations in targeted areas have improved livelihoods and more resilient and sustainable food systems by 2027.

Focus area: Resilience Building

Activity: Provide livelihood support and resilience building to targeted populations, including indigenous peoples and communities, through productive asset creation and value chain development.

Strategic Result 4: National programmes and systems are strengthened.

Strategic Outcome 4: National institutions and partners have strengthened capacities to manage food and nutrition programmes and strengthen the social protection system by 2027.

Focus area: Resilience Building

Activity: Provide technical assistance and policy support to national institutions and partners in the areas of gender-transformative food and nutrition security, social protection, emergency preparedness and response and disaster risk management.

Strategic Result 5: Humanitarian and development actors are more efficient and effective.

Strategic Outcome 5: The Government and humanitarian and development partners in the Central African Republic can reach populations in vulnerable situations and respond to emergencies throughout the year.

Focus area: Crisis Response

Activities:

- Provide United Nations Humanitarian Air Service services (passengers and light cargo) to the Government and humanitarian partners.
- Provide on-demand data and telecommunication services to the Government, humanitarian and development partners and the assisted population.
- Provide information management, coordination services and facilitate access to extra logistics service capacity for the humanitarian community and partners through the Logistics Cluster.
- Provide bilateral logistics services to partners to support in-country supply chains for health programmes (malaria, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and COVID-19) and other needed commodities and services.

- The **UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS)**, managed by WFP, connects Bangui to 34 destinations. In March, UNHAS supported 115 organisations by transporting 2,200 passengers and 33.4 mt of light cargo. UNHAS is facing a critical funding shortfall and expects only 50 percent of its total budget for 2023, while the helicopter has already been removed from the fleet in January 2023. UNHAS is designing a transition strategy to maintain air services to all partners, while USD 10 million are still required to cover 2023 activities.

- In March, WFP delivered 113 m3 of health products for the **Global Fund Project** against AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, to 210 health facilities. As of 31 March, 1,754 m3 of medical items (four programs) had been stored in the WFP-managed warehouses. After a fire destroyed three out of five medical storerooms and the stock of medicines for HIV and TB they contained, since January 2023 all resources have been concentrated on the emergency delivery of health facilities that could not be delivered previously.

Logistics

- In March, WFP delivered 1,260 mt of commodities to partners (26 percent) and advanced delivery points (74 percent) for upcoming response. 577 mt of commodities were received through the Douala corridor to Bangui and Bouar. A training on the commodity tracking system (LESS) was organised to ensure proper management and commodity reconciliations in the system.
- The **Logistics Cluster** facilitated the transport of 153 mt of cargo by road and almost 15 mt by air, while 15 mobile storage units were made available for the clusters' partners. Two trainings were organised on "fleet management and local transport" with the partner Première Urgence Internationale to 14 partners, and "initiation to humanitarian logistics" to eight national organisations.

Challenges

- **Supply chain:** heavy rains started late March, urging the need to finalise food prepositioning prior to the rainy season. As of 31 March, 1,800 mt of commodities were prepositioned in Birao (north). However, for 2023, WFP has only dispatched 50 percent of the commodities to cooperating partners due to access constraints, lack of commodities and lengthy customs procedures.
- **Market prices** of basic foodstuffs drastically increased and remain higher than the last five-year average, while 2023 is marked by a critical decrease in supply for markets due to higher transport prices, poor road conditions, insecurity and localised decline in supply from local markets. Markets in remote localities in Mbomou, Haut-Mbomou (east), Vakaga (north-east) and Ouaka (centre) are particularly affected by the drop in supply. This negatively impacts households' purchasing power in CAR, as nearly 1.9 million Central Africans have developed negative crisis strategies to respond to their minimum food needs.
- The **security situation** severely hinders humanitarian access especially in the west, north-west and east, where violence by armed groups against civilians increased in 2023, including along the key trade corridor linking Douala to Bangui, regularly used by the UN and partners. Movements of armed group are also intensifying in the east (Vakaga) and the reinforced presence of rebel groups from Chad was reported in the west and centre of the country, accompanied by population displacements and crimes against the civilians. The security situation is aggravated by a volatile context due to the permanent fuel shortage, inflation and reduced peacekeeping military rotation and escorts.

Donors

Top five donors for CSP 2023 – 2027: USA, European Commission, Japan, Canada and Germany.

Additional support has been provided by UN Country-Based Pooled Funds, regional or TF allocations and the Central African Republic (World Bank).