



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

WFP Central African Republic Country Brief May 2023

In Numbers

384,000 m people assisted
in May 2023



1,585 mt of food assistance distributed

US\$ 1.2 m cash-based transfers made

US\$ 85.5 m six months (June – November 2023) net funding requirements

Operational Context

The Central African Republic (CAR) is a landlocked yet situation on a fertile plateau. It has considerable agricultural potential and a wealth of mineral resources. However the volatile security climate, inter-communal conflicts, and political instability have led to further displacements, significantly impacting households' access to food and livelihoods. There are over 1.9 million displaced people within CAR and in neighbouring countries, including 489,000 internally displaced persons.

According to the *Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC)* for April – August 2023, **2.4 million people are facing high acute food insecurity in April – August 2023**, including 622,000 people in Emergency (Phase 4). 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.

The impact of the Ukraine crisis, compounding 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). Since May 2022, the crisis in Sudan has displaced 14,000 Sudanese refugees and Central African returnees in the north and northeast of CAR, considerably worsening food needs in these areas where resources are already limited, and which will be isolated throughout the rainy season.

Implemented in CAR in 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 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**

Operational Updates

- In May, **384,000 people** received food and nutrition assistance through general food distributions, school feeding, nutrition, and resilience-building activities. Ninety percent were residents.
- General food distributions (GFD):** 220,000 people received unconditional food assistance in May. Coping with the lack of commodities in-country, WFP distributed 70 percent rations (cereals, oil, and salt only). With the onset of the rainy season, WFP has transferred US\$ 704,000 in May and will prioritize cash-based transfers in isolated areas where markets are functioning (southeast).
- Nutrition:** WFP still faces critical funding gaps, especially for the prevention of malnutrition for which US\$ 6.4 million are urgently needed. WFP and the Ministry of Health and Population provided an integrated malnutrition treatment package to only 18 percent of the planned children with moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) aged 6-59 months, pregnant and lactating women (PLW), and anti-retroviral treatment (ART) clients. Through partner *Action Humanitaire Africaine*, 7,300 children aged 6-23 months were assisted through active screening and nutrition education. The pilot of the simplified approach to acute malnutrition shows a cure rate of 86 percent. WFP also aims to strengthen its assistance to people living with HIV and the synergy with other activities.
- School feeding:** WFP supports the Ministry of Education in implementing the National School Feeding Strategy, focusing on home-grown school feeding to improve the livelihoods of local communities while increasing the participation and retention rates of girls and boys in school. However, the lack of specific food commodities in-country since January combined with insecurity, and access constraints hampered WFP school-based programs: only 66,000 school children (46 percent) received nutritious school meals in May.
- Resilience and livelihoods:** 89,000 people received food assistance for asset creation and livelihood-strengthening activities covering April – May. This includes activities in support of seed protection and links to market opportunities for smallholder farmers (PRUCAC). WFP also aims to strengthen its cooperation with Bangui University to increase the technical support provided by the university, facilitate knowledge-sharing and jointly build the next generation of technical experts on food security in CAR.
- Response to Sudanese refugees:** WFP supported UNHCR in providing life-saving assistance to 9,725 Sudanese refugees and Central African returnees through distributions of hot meals and dry-rations in the Vakaga prefectures (northeast).
- Lean season response:** Due to funding constraints, WFP will provide general food assistance to 490,000 people located in IPC 4 areas, representing only 31 percent of the 1.6 million people in need of food assistance in areas prioritized during the lean season.

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Further information: www.wfp.org/countries/central-african-republic

Photo: resilience and livelihood activities in Kaga Bandoro, February 2023 Credit: APADE

Country Strategic Plan (2023-2027)

Total Requirements (US\$)	Total Received (US\$)
1.1 billion	8.3 percent
2023 Requirements (US\$)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$) (June-Nov 2023)
206.4 million	85.5 million

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 and pregnant and lactating women and girls (PLW-G). Provide nutrition assessment, counselling and support for people living with HIV and tuberculosis clients receiving anti-retroviral therapy and 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 on gender-transformative food and nutrition security, social protection, emergency preparedness and response, 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 May, UNHAS supported 102 organisations by transporting 2,340 passengers and 32 mt of light cargo, including the response to the Sudanese refugees. UNHAS had to reduce its daily flight planning due to unavailability of the 10-seater Caravan. UNHAS is facing a critical funding shortfall and requires USD 18.9 million to pursue its operations in 2023. UNHAS will add the helicopter to its fleet in July 2023; this will be key to supporting the prepositioning and access to remote areas in the rainy season.

- In May, WFP delivered 53 m3 of health products to 102 health facilities for the **Global Fund Project** to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, in support of the Ministry of Health and Population. As of 31 May, 1,330 m3 of medical supplies (four programmes) were stored in the WFP-managed warehouses.
- The **Emergency Telecommunication Cluster** supported UNHCR with the installation of rapid kits to provide humanitarian actors with basic internet access in support to the response to Sudanese refugees in the Vakaga prefecture.

Logistics

- Operating under critical access and security constraints, WFP increased the food prepositioning and delivered 3,300 mt of commodities to partners and advanced delivery points, including 851 mt for the response to Sudanese refugees and Central African returnees only.

Challenges

- **Supply chain:** heavy rains urge the need to finalise food prepositioning however WFP is facing a low level of stocks at the capital level (Bangui). The increasing insecurity and access constraints, combined with poor road conditions and lengthy customs procedures are delaying the transport of commodities.
- **Market prices** for staple food drastically increased and remain higher than the average over the last five-year, while 2023 is marked by a critical decrease in market supply due to higher transport prices, poor road conditions, insecurity, and a localised decline in supply from local markets. Markets in remote localities in Mbomou, Haut-Mbomou (east), and Ouaka (centre) are particularly affected by the drop in supply, while the Vakaga prefecture (northeast) is impacted by the disruption of the South Darfur supply line following the Sudan crisis. This negatively impacts households' purchasing power in CAR, as nearly 1.9 million Central Africans have developed negative coping strategies to meet their minimum food needs.
- The **security situation** severely hinders humanitarian access, especially in the west, northwest, and east, where violence by armed groups against civilians increased in 2023, including along the key trade corridor regularly used by the UN and partners. Movements of armed groups 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 civilians. The security situation is aggravated by a volatile context with persistent fuel shortage, inflation and reduced peacekeeping military rotation and escorts.

Funding

- WFP requires **US\$ 85.5 million** in the next six months to continue implementing food assistance to the most vulnerable people in CAR. WFP is now prioritizing selected life-saving interventions using food and cash-based transfers to provide support to beneficiaries in IPC 3 and 4.

Donors

Top five donors for CSP 2023 – 2027: [USA](#), [European Commission](#), [Japan](#), [the Central African Republic \(World Bank\)](#) and [Canada](#).

Additional support has been provided by [Germany](#), [Norway](#), [private donors](#), [regional or TF allocations](#), [Russian Federation](#), [Switzerland](#) and [UN Country-Based Pooled Funds](#).