

Central African Republic – Complex Emergency

DECEMBER 8, 2023

SITUATION AT A GLANCE

6.1 MILLION	3.4 MILLION	2 MILLION	490,868	748,873
Estimated Population of CAR	Estimated Number of People in Need of Humanitarian Assistance	Projected Number of People Facing Acute Food Insecurity from September to April	People Internally Displaced Across CAR	Number of Refugees from CAR Residing in Neighboring Countries
<i>UN – November 2022</i>	<i>UN – May 2023</i>	<i>IPC – May 2023</i>	<i>UNHCR – September 2023</i>	<i>UNHCR – October 2023</i>

- An estimated 2 million people in CAR are projected to experience Crisis—IPC 3—or worse levels of acute food insecurity from September 2023 to March 2024.
- USAID/BHA partners distributed in-kind food and relief commodities to heavy rain- and flood-affected populations in Bangui in late November.
- The number of new arrivals to CAR from Sudan has slowed since early October, according to the UN. Asylum-seekers, refugees, and CAR returnees who have arrived in CAR from Chad and Sudan since March remain in need of humanitarian assistance, and access challenges continue to limit relief actors' ability to reach these communities.



¹ FY 2023 funding for the Central African Republic Complex Emergency will be included in future products when committed/obligated. For information on the U.S. Government (USG)'s funding toward the response in FY 2023, refer to Central African Republic Complex Emergency Fact Sheet #4 released on September 30, 2023, available on the USAID website at <https://www.usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work>.

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Approximately 2 Million Central Africans Likely to Face Acute Food Insecurity Between September 2023 and March 2024

Approximately 2 million people across Central African Republic (CAR) will likely experience Crisis—IPC 3—or worse levels of acute food insecurity from September 2023 through March 2024, largely due to elevated staple food prices, according to a November IPC analysis.² Of these 2 million people, the analysis projects that 360,000 people will face Emergency—IPC 4—levels of acute food insecurity in Haute-Kotto Prefecture’s Yalinga Sub-Prefecture and Haut-Mbomou Prefecture’s Bambouti, Djema, Obo, and Zemio sub-prefectures during the period. Notably, the 2 million people experiencing Crisis or worse levels of acute food insecurity from September 2023 to March 2024 represents a decrease of approximately 400,000 people from the March to September period due to seasonal harvests. High prices for staple foods, such as cassava, corn, and peanuts—related to armed actor activity that disrupts market functionality—are driving high levels of food insecurity in conflict-affected areas of CAR’s east and northeast prefectures, reducing vulnerable households’ ability to purchase sufficient amounts of food, according to the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET). The IPC analysis projects that the prefectures with the highest proportion of the population facing Crisis or worse conditions through March 2024 will be Haut-Mbomou, Mbomou, and Nana-Mambéré.

Moreover, high levels of acute food insecurity and the spread of acute watery diarrhea and measles—as well as limited access to health and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services—are adversely affecting nutrition conditions in CAR, according to the IPC report. An estimated 177,000 children ages five years and younger and 162,000 pregnant and lactating women (PLW) are projected to experience Serious—IPC AMN 3—or worse levels of acute malnutrition between September 2023 and August 2024, representing a 41 percent decrease and 15 percent increase, respectively, compared to estimates from the same period in 2023, according to the IPC analysis.³ This includes more than 45,000 children who will likely experience Critical—IPC AMN 4—levels of acute malnutrition in Ouham-Pende Prefecture’s Kouï Sub-Prefecture and Vakaga Prefecture’s Birao resettlement camp. Additionally, IPC analysis predicts the nutritional situation to worsen during the April-to-August 2024 period, with five sub-prefectures shifting from Serious levels of acute malnutrition to Critical levels. Relief actors attribute the projected increase in acute malnutrition to a worsening security environment and poor health and WASH conditions—including the consumption of unsafe drinking water—that continue to undermine efforts to improve nutrition outcomes for children and PLW.

Flooding Drives Displacement, Affecting More Than 55,000 People in November

Despite the end of the May-to-October rainy season, heavy rain and resultant flooding adversely affected approximately 15,000 people in CAR’s capital city of Bangui and more than 40,000 people in the surrounding area on November 24 and 25, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The rains damaged or destroyed agricultural fields, critical infrastructure, and hundreds of houses in and around the city, exacerbating existing humanitarian needs. USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA)

² The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is a multi-partner initiative that developed a standardized scale to classify the severity and magnitude of food insecurity. The IPC scale, which is comparable across countries and time, ranges from Minimal—IPC 1—to Famine—IPC 5—for acute food insecurity. IPC Phase 5 is referred to as “Catastrophe” when classifying a household and “Famine” when classifying an area. Famine conditions occur when at least 20 percent of the population in a given area face an extreme lack of food; the Global Acute Malnutrition prevalence, measured by weight-for-height z-score, exceeds 30 percent; and the mortality rate exceeds two people per 10,000 individuals per day.

³ The IPC is a multi-partner initiative that additionally developed a standardized scale to classify the severity of acute malnutrition. The IPC Acute Malnutrition (IPC AMN) scale, which is comparable across select countries and time, ranges from Acceptable—IPC AMN 1—to Extremely Critical—IPC AMN 5—for acute malnutrition.

partners IOM and the UN World Food Program (WFP) provided assistance to affected populations in late November, though relief actors reported that many affected areas were inaccessible due to flooding.

Additionally, heavy seasonal rains and floods resulted in several deaths and affected nearly 1,500 people in Ouham's Bouca Sub-Prefecture and Bamingui-Bangoran's Bamingui Sub-Prefecture between early August and early October, according to the Central African Red Cross. In response, a USAID/BHA partner distributed emergency relief commodities—including blankets, hygiene kits, kitchen sets, mosquito nets, soap, and tarps—to more than 1,700 people in Bouca and rehabilitated four water access points between October 3 and 9. Affected individuals sheltering at schools and with host community members require emergency relief commodities and food, shelter, and WASH assistance as of late October, relief actors report.

Explosive Devices Adversely Affect Civilians and Humanitarian Access

Nearly 65 incidents involving landmines and other explosive devices have resulted in the deaths of at least 18 civilians between January and November 18, representing a continued upward trend in explosive device incidents countrywide since April 2021, according to the UN. As of November, the number of deaths related to explosives in 2023 has doubled compared with 2022, and the number of explosives-related incidents has increased by 15 percent. Across CAR, explosive devices threaten the safety and security of civilians, who accounted for nearly 75 percent of victims of explosive devices during 2023 as of November, according to the UN. Additionally, while partners continue to provide assistance in the most-affected regions, the increased presence and suspected presence of explosive devices compounds the impact of persistent insecurity on humanitarian access, limiting the number of people relief actors are able to reach. The areas most affected by landmines and other explosive devices include CAR's western prefectures of Mambéré-Kadei, Nana-Mambéré, Ouham, and Ouham-Pendé, where nearly 940,000 people require urgent humanitarian assistance as of October, the UN reports.

Shelter and WASH Assistance Remain Priorities for 449,000 IDPs in CAR

Approximately 449,000 individuals remain internally displaced in CAR as of September, many of whom have high shelter and WASH assistance needs, according to an IOM assessment released in September. Among the more than 4,000 localities hosting internally displaced persons (IDPs) assessed by IOM, more than 25 percent of IDPs reportedly live in damaged or partially destroyed shelters constructed with dilapidated tarps. Additionally, more than 50 percent of assessed localities lack access to safe drinking water and functional latrines, exposing individuals to waterborne diseases and encouraging widespread open defecation. Priority WASH needs include improved access to safe drinking water; infrastructure rehabilitation and maintenance, including of boreholes and water-points; and construction of new latrines, according to IOM. While overall levels of humanitarian needs among IDPs have remained stable or decreased slightly between 2019 and 2023, the scale of urgent shelter and WASH assistance needs remains a primary concern for relief actors, according to a REACH multi-sector needs assessment conducted between June and September across 16 of 20 prefectures in CAR. Moreover, the share of households who reported having access to safe drinking water has improved slightly from 70 percent in 2022 to 74 percent in 2023, according to REACH. However, ongoing violence has continued to drive displacement in several sub-prefectures of Haut-Mbomou, Haute-Kotto, and Ouaka prefectures, further deteriorating humanitarian conditions in these communities. Safe drinking water and functional WASH facilities remained scarce as of September due to widespread destruction of WASH infrastructure during armed clashes, according to IOM.

New Arrivals from Sudan Stabilize, Partners Reprioritize Assistance

Approximately 25,700 CAR returnees and Sudanese refugees have arrived in CAR's Bamingui-Bangoran, Haute-Kotto, and Vakaga prefectures between mid-April, when conflict in Sudan escalated, and early December, according to the UN. The influx of new arrivals has slowed since early October, and many of the 4,700 CAR returnees who have returned to CAR since the start of the Sudan crisis have likely returned to their areas of origin, relief actors report. However, relief actors noted that displacement along the CAR–Sudan border region remains fluid and that it is difficult to confirm the numbers of refugees and returnees. New arrivals largely remain in Haute-Kotto and Vakaga, where WFP and other USAID/BHA and U.S Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM) partners continue to provide support, according to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). However, physical access constraints, including inaccessible roads due to the May-to-November rainy season, limited relief actors' response capacity and led UNHCR to suspend facilitated relocations in July. Despite the pause, 1,500 people self-relocated to the Korsi displacement site outside of Vakaga's capital city of Birao, bringing the total number of individuals sheltering at Korsi to more than 2,400 as of early December, according to the UN. Relief actors are providing education, health, and protection services at the Korsi site, and had built more than 630 shelters and 200 latrines and showers in Korsi and Vakaga Prefecture's Am-Dafock town as of early December, UNHCR reports. Overall displacement figures in areas along the CAR–Sudan border remained fluid as improved security conditions permitted Sudanese refugees and Central African returnees to access markets and basic services in Sudan, according to a June IOM survey. As a result of slowing arrivals from Sudan, USAID/BHA supports partners to shift resources to meet emerging needs experienced by the more than 37,000 Chadian refugees residing in northwest CAR, most of whom fled to Ouham-Pende's Paoua Sub-Prefecture between April and September due to armed group violence in Chad along the CAR–Chad border, according to the UN.

KEY FIGURES



265,000

People reached by
USAID/BHA partner
WFP in August



7

USAID/BHA-funded
partners supporting
health and nutrition
activities

U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

FOOD SECURITY

USAID/BHA supports WFP to provide emergency food assistance—including cash transfers, locally and regionally procured food, vouchers redeemable for food in local markets, and U.S.-sourced rice, split peas, and vegetable oil—to food-insecure populations throughout CAR, including host communities, IDPs, refugees, and returnees. USAID/BHA also supports nongovernmental organization (NGO) partners to provide emergency food assistance to populations in need across the country. Further, USAID/BHA partners provide agricultural inputs and training to bolster food security and facilitate livelihood rehabilitation for CAR's most economically vulnerable households.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

USAID/BHA supports NGO partners to conduct supplementary feeding programs for children ages five years and younger and PLW by creating community referral pathways to identify and treat cases of malnutrition. Through the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), USAID/BHA also provides emergency nutrition assistance to children, mothers, and caregivers.

Additionally, USAID/BHA supports NGOs to provide health assistance, including diagnostic treatments, the operation of mobile clinics, and referral services for disease and injury. USAID/BHA NGO partners also provide essential medical commodities and training to community responders and clinics.



2

USAID/BHA-funded partners supporting critical logistics operations

LOGISTICS SUPPORT

USAID/BHA partners provide critical logistics services for the humanitarian response in CAR. Due to insufficient road access across the country, USAID/BHA supports the UN Humanitarian Air Service to provide humanitarian transport for personnel and cargo across CAR and to provide air service to NGO partners. In addition, USAID/BHA NGO partners provide common logistics and storage management for response organizations. USAID/BHA has also funded efforts to improve logistics platforms in Bangui to strengthen the response capabilities of UNICEF-managed Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) partners, enabling relief actors to quickly dispatch supplies to crisis-affected areas.



8

USG-funded partners supporting WASH activities

WASH

USAID/BHA partners provide critical WASH assistance to populations in need across CAR, including displaced individuals sheltering in camps and returnees. USAID/BHA also supports the UNICEF-managed RRM, which delivers WASH assistance through the construction of latrines, distribution of hygiene kits, organization of hygiene awareness sessions, and rehabilitation of water points throughout CAR. State/PRM-supported activities rehabilitate safe water sources and support water distribution systems within communities in need.



8

USG-funded partners supporting protection activities

PROTECTION

USAID/BHA and State/PRM partners continue to implement protection programs for CAR's most vulnerable populations by bolstering child protection services; conducting community awareness-raising sessions on protection risks; delivering emergency case management and referral services for gender-based violence survivors; and providing individual psychosocial support services.



3

USAID/BHA-funded partners supporting shelter and settlement activities

SHELTER AND SETTLEMENTS

USAID/BHA supports NGOs and UN agencies providing individualized shelter assistance to IDPs, returnees, and conflict-affected host communities in CAR. USAID/BHA and State/PRM partners distribute emergency shelter kits and improve IDP camp coordination and camp management (CCCM) services across CAR. USAID/BHA also supports IOM, which co-leads the CAR CCCM Cluster—the coordinating body for humanitarian CCCM activities, comprising UN agencies, NGOs, and other stakeholders—to pre-position emergency shelter kits throughout the country. With USAID/BHA support, IOM collects mobility tracking data and provides transitional

shelters to IDPs returning to their place of origin.

CONTEXT IN BRIEF

- In December 2012, the Séléka armed alliance advanced across CAR in opposition to then-President François Bozizé. On March 24, 2013, Séléka fighters entered Bangui, effectively seizing control of the country and triggering a period of widespread violence. Security conditions deteriorated further in December 2013, when clashes erupted between the now-dissolved Séléka alliance and anti-Balaka groups composed of armed fighters that opposed ex-Séléka forces.
- Following a nearly three-year transitional period, CAR held presidential elections in December 2015 and February 2016, resulting in the election of President Faustin-Archange Touadéra, who assumed the office of the presidency on March 30, 2016.
- After more than six years of conflict, the Government of CAR (CARG) and 14 armed groups signed the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation on February 6, 2019.
- An outbreak of election-related violence began in December 2020 between armed groups from the Coalition of Patriots for Change (CPC), CARG, UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in CAR, and bilateral security forces supporting the CARG. Conflict exacerbated the widespread deterioration of humanitarian conditions throughout the following year, including numerous human rights violations attributed to the presence of armed groups.
- On January 18, 2021, the Constitutional Court validated the results of the December 27, 2020, election, resulting in President Touadéra assuming a second term in office. Leading up to and during the election, armed groups aligned with former President Bozizé, whom the Constitutional Court had determined ineligible for candidacy, made a concerted effort to disrupt voting and seize major urban areas.
- On October 15, 2021, President Touadéra declared a unilateral ceasefire, which was agreed to by all but two of the parties to the conflict, including the CPC.
- On October 6, 2023, U.S. Ambassador Patricia A. Mahoney renewed the declaration of humanitarian need for the complex emergency in CAR for FY 2024 due to the scale and severity of ongoing humanitarian needs in the country related to conflict impacts, climatic shocks, food insecurity, and refugee influxes from neighboring countries.

¹ Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds. Funding figures reflect total publicly announced USAID/BHA funding as of September 30, 2023; State/PRM funding will be updated with final FY 2023 figures when available.

² Total value of food assistance and associated costs adjusted from estimated to actual values.

PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for disaster responses around the world can be found at [interaction.org](https://www.interaction.org).
- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed, often in the affected region; reduce the burden on scarce resources, such as transportation routes, staff time, and warehouse space;

can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietarily, and environmentally appropriate assistance.

- More information can be found at:

- USAID Center for International Disaster Information: cidi.org
- Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at reliefweb.int.

USAID/BHA bulletins appear on the USAID website at [usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work](https://www.usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work)