



**WFP Central African Republic
SPECIAL OPERATION SO 200643**

Country:	Central African Republic
Type of project:	Special Operation
Title:	Response Capacity and Staff Security Augmentation in Support of PRRO 200315 (Assistance to Populations Affected by Armed Conflicts in CAR and the Subregion) and the Humanitarian Community
Total cost (US\$):	5,310,683
Duration:	12 December 2013 – 30 June 2014

Executive Summary

Given the complexity of the crisis in Central African Republic (CAR) and the level of violence, banditry and looting which has further escalated in the past week – it is critical that investments be made immediately in order to ensure WFP's ability to respond to the life-saving needs of displaced and affected populations, and to ensure the safety and working conditions of staff who are operating under extremely difficult conditions.

The SO plans for the deployment of staff, set-up of sub-offices, acquisition of vital security and telecommunications capital and equipment to allow WFP to carry out its activities, and to support the initial establishment of cross-border humanitarian flights.

Project Background

1. Rebellions, coups d'états, and inter-communal fighting and sectarian violence over the past three decades have contributed to widespread socio and political instability in Central African Republic. Banditry and looting is extensive and on the rise in the capital Bangui and across the country.
2. In December 2012, Seleka forces took over major areas of the North and centre of the country. The situation in the country has dramatically deteriorated since March 2013, when Seleka forces took over Bangui and led a coup d'état. Militias calling themselves anti-Balaka have formed to fight the ex-Seleka, and this has contributed to increased levels of violence.
3. As of end November it was estimated that inter-communal and sectarian violence and reprisals have displaced an estimated 415,000 persons internally and 65,000 more have fled to DRC, Chad and Cameroon. Then on 5 December 2013, a new wave of violence began, when clashes broke out in the Bangui killing an estimated 400 persons and displacing up to 127,000 persons to more protected areas of the city; movement of populations within the city remains highly dynamic. In parallel, new clashes were reported in Bossangoa, an area north-west of the capital which has been entangled in violence in the past three months.

4. On 5 December, the UN Security Council approved a resolution for the deployment of additional troops to CAR, amidst escalating violence. France has increased its presence of troops three-fold, to support African peacekeepers to restore order in Bangui and Bossangoa. Two French soldiers have been killed.
5. The conflict and its impact on trade and livelihoods is dramatically exacerbating the already precarious food security situation; according to the October emergency food security assessment, one-third of the population is food insecure; and it is anticipated the situation will only worsen over the coming months.
6. The situation in CAR is further complicated by the presence of the Lord's Resistance Army, which has taken refuge in the eastern part of the country, and by armed nomads crossing between Chad and CAR to carry out seasonal raids.
7. Ongoing violence is a challenge to unimpeded and continuous humanitarian road access and response in some areas, and the safety and well-being of staff both in Bangui and the field is of utmost concern.

Project Justification

8. On 14 May 2013 the crisis was declared a Level II Corporate Emergency. The aggravation and extreme complexity of the crisis prompted that on 11 December 2013, the crisis was upgraded to a Level III Emergency.
9. The aggravation and extreme complexity of the crisis requires WFP to significantly invest human resources and equipment now, in order to continue to build the capacity to respond to the deteriorating situation, ensure the security of colleagues in the field, and mitigate any reputational risk.
10. This time-bound Special Operation (to end June 2014) provides for the immediate investments required to support implementation of WFP's humanitarian response carried out under parallel PRRO and supporting SO operations.

Project Objective(s)

11. The objective of this Special Operation is to reinforce operational response and safety of staff. This will be done through the:
 - A. Augmentation of human resource capacity at the country and sub-office level;
 - B. Reconstruction and set-up of sub-offices;
 - C. Establishment of flight connections between Bangui and Douala; and
 - D. Ensuring the immediate availability of security and telecommunications equipment.

Project Implementation

12. Given the complexity and fast deterioration of the situation, WFP seeks to augment its human resource capacity to ensure that sufficient staff with necessary skills are in place to support the humanitarian response. Staff on Temporary Duty (TDY) and consultants with experience in conflict environments and complex crises will reinforce the programme, logistics,

coordination, ICT, aviation, security, and communications units at the country office and field level. The temporary deployment of a Deputy Emergency Coordinator will support the overall crisis response and coordination with the various actors on the ground.

13. With the events in recent months, infrastructure outside of Bangui is destroyed. In order to ensure WFP's ability to assess and respond quickly to the dynamic situation in the areas reporting the greatest need, the re-construction and re-opening of the Bambari and Kaga-Bandoro sub-offices, and the establishment of a new office in Bossangoa is critical. In addition, in order to accommodate the additional staff, office space in Bangui will be expanded through pre-fabs for up to 24 WFP staff.
14. In the current context of looting, banditry, and clashes, security of staff is of the utmost importance. The SO will allow for the immediate acquisition and deployment of armored vehicles, helmets and ballistic vests to be airlifted from UNHRD. Currently the office does not have the sufficient telecommunications equipment necessary to meet MOSS compliance and support the scale-up, and so the SO also plans for satellite phones, VHF/HF radios, and laptops to ensure communication.
15. Lead time to reach land-locked CAR can take months. The SO accordingly plans for one strategic airlift from Brindisi for the quick deployment of security, ICT and necessary sub-office set-up equipment.
16. Additionally, the operation will support the initial one-month phase of the establishment of an air-service between Bangui and Douala, because the fluid security situation has led commercial airlines to cancel regularly planned flights. Safe transport of the humanitarian community from Bangui to the closest better-served international airport and improved medical facilities in Douala, Cameroon is thus critical.
17. Given the rapidly evolving situation on the ground, the plan will be revised as necessary over the implementation period.
18. The Emergency Coordinator, based in the Regional Bureau, and Deputy Emergency Coordinator, on duty in Bangui, will manage the overall coordination of the complex crisis response with the Country Team, under the guidance and support of the Deputy Executive Director.

Risk Assessment and Mitigation

19. This special operation aims to mitigate some of the key risks to operational response and staff security, namely: insecurity and banditry; limited in-country staff for the complexity of the crisis; inadequate office structure at country and field level; challenges to easy access to medical facilities and international air connections; and the long lead time for the arrival of necessary equipment. Violence will continue to present the major risk for the safe and unimpeded movement of humanitarian convoys and staff, and security mitigation measures as well as the additional field security officers planned for in this SO are of utmost importance. The complex nature of the crisis and high media attention also raises concerns of reputational risk where response is slow or communication insufficient.

Project Management

The Country Director will be the fund manager for this Special Operation. The Head of Finance will be the allotment manager.

Project Cost and Benefits

20. The Special Operation has a total cost of US\$ 5,310,683. This is expected to provide the necessary human resources, telecommunications and security equipment, and office support to guarantee WFP's ability to respond to the complex crisis in Central African Republic and to ensure staff safety.

Monitoring & Evaluation

21. Key performance indicators include:
- a. Number of sub-offices set-up/re-opened;
 - b. A temporary flight service is established between Bangui and Douala;
 - c. 100% of requested equipment transported through airlift; and
 - d. Number of staff provided with access to secure telecommunications equipment.

RECOMMENDATION

This Special Operation covering the period from 12 December 2013 to 30 June 2014 at a total cost to WFP of US\$ 5,310,683 is recommended for approval by the Executive Director with the budget provided.

APPROVAL

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Ertharin Cousin
Executive Director