



**WFP Central African Republic  
SPECIAL OPERATION SO 200646**

Country:	Central African Republic (CAR)
Type of project:	Special Operation
Title:	Strengthening Food Security Cluster Coordination in Central African Republic
Total cost (US\$):	US \$ 1,003,918
Duration:	6 months (13 December – 13 June)

### **Executive Summary**

The recent attacks in Bangui have further exacerbated an already dramatic humanitarian situation resulting from the Central African Republic (CAR) conflict. Simultaneously there has been renewed violence in other parts of the country including Bossangoa, Bozoum, Bouar and Damara provinces<sup>1</sup>. The CAR context is expected to remain volatile and unpredictable in 2014, despite the deployment of additional international military forces<sup>2</sup>.

As of 9 December, it is estimated that some 2.6 million<sup>3</sup> persons are in immediate need of assistance including some 533,000<sup>4</sup> are internally displaced persons. The humanitarian needs are expected to continue to rise with the deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation in the country. This scale of the humanitarian needs will be more evident when access increases.

United Nation Agencies are scaling up effort to assist the vulnerable communities. WFP and FAO have joined other agencies and declared the CAR crises as a L3 corporate emergency.

Consequently, food security activities have to be scaled up and the priority for the Food Security Cluster (FSC) partners will be to provide:

- Immediate life-saving assistance targeting the most vulnerable populations suffering from the consequences of armed conflict<sup>2</sup> and;
- Emergency support to livelihoods protection, rehabilitation and assets creation<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> OCHA “Humanitarian 100 day Plan Central African Republic Priority Actions December – March 2014 Draft

<sup>2</sup> OCHA “Humanitarian 100 day Plan Central African Republic Priority Actions December – March 2014 Draft

<sup>3</sup> United Nations “Alarming deterioration of the Humanitarian Situation in the Central African Republic (CAR)”

[https://car.humanitarianresponse.info/en/system/files/documents/files/OCHA%20CAR%20PR%20December%202013\\_EN.pdf](https://car.humanitarianresponse.info/en/system/files/documents/files/OCHA%20CAR%20PR%20December%202013_EN.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> OCHA CAR “OCHA Central African Republic (CAR) Flash Update 3” Armed Conflict, 9 December 2013

Through this Special Operation, WFP and FAO as the co-leads of the FSC will support relief efforts in CAR by:

- Coordinating food assistance and agricultural sector activities at the national and sub national level, through effective support of key stakeholders implementing programmes in the sector
- Managing information flows including data analysis and reporting
- Guiding the sectoral global support response including direct assistance to coordination teams, to OCHA and other partners assessments and reporting initiatives, IASC liaison and surge support

## **Project Background**

1. The Central African Republic is a landlocked country with a population of 4.6<sup>5</sup> million. The country ranked 180 out of 187 countries in the 2012 UNDP Human Development Index<sup>6</sup>, despite its wealth in mineral and natural resources. Rebellions, coups and inter-ethnic fighting during the last three decades<sup>5</sup> have resulted in a deep socio-political instability hampering development
2. The rebel coalition ‘Seleka’ launched their first offensive against the Government in December 2012, followed by a coup d’etat in March 2013 which ousted President Francois Bozize’s. African leaders proposed the formation of an inclusive transitional council which saw the election of the ‘Seleka’ leader Michel Djotodia as interim president in April 2013<sup>7</sup> and formally sworn in August 2013 which led to the formal dissolution of ‘Seleka’ in mid September 2013.
3. The deteriorating security and humanitarian situation is a result of increased clashes and violence in early December 2013 which further increases pre-existing access constraints and the humanitarian community’s ability to address the full scale of humanitarian needs in country.
4. As a result of the crises there are some 533,000<sup>8</sup> Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in country. Some 64,750<sup>9</sup> have fled since December 2012 to seek refuge in neighboring countries. Moreover, CAR is influenced by the effects of neighboring countries’ conflicts and hosts refugees from these conflicts.
5. Average rainfall benefited crops in 2013 however the escalation of the ongoing conflict has disrupted agricultural activities in parts of the country<sup>10</sup>. Furthermore the increase in food prices in 2013, due to disruptions in trade and marketing

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<sup>5</sup> OCHA “Mid-year Review of the Consolidated Appeal for Central African Republic 2013”

<sup>6</sup> WFP Central African Republic Special Operation SO 200605 “Logistics support to WFP operations, and Logistics & Emergency Telecommunications Cluster Augmentation in Central Africa Republic”

<sup>7</sup> WFP: “Budget increase to Central African Republic Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation 200315 – Assistance to populations affected by armed conflicts in the Central African Republic and the sub-region – Budget Revision No. 3”.

<sup>8</sup> OCHA CAR “OCHA Central African Republic (CAR) Flash Update 3” Armed Conflict, 9 December 2013

<sup>9</sup> WFP: CAR Crises, Task Force 21 November

<sup>10</sup> FAO GIEWS Country Brief: “Central African Republic” 29 October 2013

activities, inflation and, the spread of conflict has contributed to the continuous decline of the food security situation.

6. The Agriculture sector represents 53% of the national GDP and employs a large share of the population<sup>11</sup>. The deteriorating security situation has reduced access to fields, seeds and other productive assets, impacting the agricultural production/outputs and farmers income and consumption levels.
7. Furthermore, assessments undertaken in April and May 2013 highlighted that large numbers of households lacked seeds for planting as result of looting and/or household consumption<sup>8</sup>.
8. During 2013, three Emergency Food Security Assessments (EFSA) and an Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) analysis were conducted however; the recent events in CAR will modify the results and the Food Security vulnerability. New population displacements, looting of assets, and reduced access have been reported in the last few days.
9. The EFSA's have confirmed the overlapping of multiple shocks related to insecurity and unstable food availability and the related consequences of low consumption levels, shrinking food sources; the increased risk of malnutrition intensifies communities vulnerability<sup>12</sup>.
10. Households have lost food reserves, farming tools, seeds, revenue and livestock<sup>13</sup>.
11. Logistics access and constraints provide a challenge and resulted in SO 200605 with one of its objectives being to repair the looted and damaged infrastructure.

### **Project Justification**

12. Following a gFSC mission in CAR early September 2013, a cluster coordinator and an information manager have been deployed (November) and have already been able to reshape the FS cluster. They have been at the forefront of the first reaction after the recent eruption of violence. There is a need for a coherent, coordinated and comprehensive approach on food security interventions that avoids duplication and gaps. The current sectoral infrastructure must be reinforced and further developed. It is anticipated that in addition to the national coordination hub in Bangui there will be a sub national team/s required to provide coordination at the regional level.
13. Joint strategic response planning will take place with the key stakeholders including the food security cluster partners, other clusters and donors. This will strengthen the response and accountability to the affected populations.

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<sup>11</sup> FAO GIEWS Country Brief: "Central African Republic" 29 October 2013

<sup>12</sup> WFP: "Budget increase to Central African Republic Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation 200315 – Assistance to populations affected by armed conflicts in the Central African Republic and the sub-region – Budget Revision No. 3".

<sup>13</sup> WFP: "Budget increase to Central African Republic Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation 200315 – Assistance to populations affected by armed conflicts in the Central African Republic and the sub-region – Budget Revision No. 3".

14. The FSC will be the platform whereupon food security needs are jointly assessed (as appropriate data aggregated by gender, age, disability and diversity), analyzed and disseminated to all relevant stakeholders for appropriate response targeting. The FSC will work closely with the other clusters especially Nutrition, Health, WASH and Protection cluster. The coordination team currently in CAR is participating in inter-cluster coordination meetings. Protection will be a very significant component of the analysis and the response, as inter-community tensions remain high and atrocities have been reported.
15. The FSC will endeavor to coordinate all elements of the IASC project cycle including assessments, data analysis, response analysis, AAP and monitoring and evaluation.
16. Global coordination and collaboration is essential amongst and between IASC partners and clusters. A surge support capacity has been and will be deployed from the Global Support Team as and when required.

### **Project Objective(s)**

The main objectives of this operation are to:

- Deliver predictable and accountable leadership and coordination in the food security sector;
- Ensure the coordination of response and recovery actions at national and sub national levels through the development of strategic action plans that include inter-sectoral assessments, assessment analysis, response analysis, IPC and M&E.
- Ensure mapping of food security interventions (4W), identification of gaps and partners support in implementing responses.
- Strengthen existing national and local humanitarian management and coordination systems, building on local capacities through the active participation of women and men from the affected population.
- Optimize collaboration and partnerships with UN agencies, NGOs, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, donors and other stakeholders to ensure a holistic response.
- Provide a platform to share sectoral standards and guidance for food security interventions
- Provide surge support for coordination and information management needs and other technical expertise as required.

### **Project Implementation**

17. WFP and FAO, the co-leads for the FSC, will strengthen existing coordination teams which already work closely with the humanitarian communities and affected populations to identify needs and eventual gaps and duplications in the humanitarian response.

18. This special operation accommodates the essential FSC requirements to ensure the appropriate coordination and information management support to the humanitarian community.
19. On-going assessments, updates from partners and their presence at regional level will determine the establishment of sub-national coordination hub(s).
20. Feedback collected through monitoring, evaluation and feedback mechanisms is continuously used to self-correct and deliver results.
21. The FSC will serve as a platform to strengthen the ongoing Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) analysis.

### **Project Management**

22. The Country Director will be the fund manager for this Special Operation. A National Cluster Coordinator has been appointed as project manager. The Head of Finance will be the Allotment Manager.

### **Project Cost and Benefits**

23. This Special Operation has a total cost of US\$ 1,003,918. This is expected to provide the necessary FSC support to ensure that food security needs for individuals and communities in humanitarian crises are effectively coordinated.

### **Monitoring & Evaluation**

24. The key performance indicators are:
  - Development of a strategic plan for both the short-term and medium term response
  - Coordination of assessments and responses and provision of strategic response guidance
  - Mapping (4W), monitoring, gaps identification and reporting
  - Application of technical standards and collection/dissemination of best practices
  - Strategic Response Plan will be prepared with all stakeholders for national and sub-national coordination.
  - Advocacy and resource mobilization
  - Strengthening the capacity of humanitarian actors through effective coordination, introduction of IPC and the resolution of technical issues.
25. The above performance indicators will be monitored and reported back through
  - The IASC Cluster activation Checklist. This is a performance checklist on cluster activation and implementation to manage the commitments of the cluster to be completed at 2 weeks, 1 month and 2 months after declaration of an L3.

- Coordination performance monitoring report will be conducted by partners at a later stage. This is a self-assessment tool for the FSC in order to improve its performance of its coordination functions

### **Risk Assessment and Mitigation**

- A number of factors could impact the implementation of the Special Operation. The political and security environment present in the Central African Republic creates numerous challenges when operating in country.
- The FSC will undertake the following mitigation activities to address key risks:

#### Contextual Risks:

- The deteriorating security situation in country as well as the inaccessibility of some regions may hinder effective implementation of the food security response.
- Protection of staff is at stake due to the volatile political circumstances and inadequate capacity and infrastructural resources.

These risks will be mitigated by:

- Liaising with UNDSS to monitor the security situation and receive regular notifications on accessible and secure areas.
- Requesting the HC to intervene or resolve issues with the appropriate authorities on behalf of FSC.
- Advocating to the UN, Humanitarian and Donor Community for basic human rights, humanitarian access, stability and security.

#### Programmatic Risks:

- Lack of access for staff due to heightened insecurity in country, may restrict access of FAO, WFP and partners for assessments, implementation and monitoring.
- Inadequate funding of co-lead agencies' and partners' response plans
- Access and capacity constraints render it difficult for humanitarian actors to actively coordinate and share information on actual and planned operations which may lead to potential over or under support to affected populations, gaps and overlaps.

These risks will be mitigated by:

- Regular and informative cluster meetings, involving the humanitarian community and ensuring that the FSC is capturing and reporting on all food security related activities and comparing this against the estimated caseloads from assessments.
- Regular donor briefings with the donor community highlighting the current level of coordination with FSC members and resource constraints and other access related challenges.

- Engagement of local and regional NGOs as much as possible to reinforce the inclusive nature of the FSC.

Institutional Risks:

- Reputational risk for FSC co-leads agencies and partners, if coordination responsibilities are not managed properly.
- Accountability to the donor community if the operation does not meet the required expectations and results.
- Politicization of UN humanitarian efforts affecting the engagement of non-governmental and international organizations in cluster coordination.

These risks will be mitigated by:

- Promoting an effective governance structure that encourages buy-in from different stakeholders and is conducive to consensus-building.
- Participating and engaging in broader coordination fora to raise awareness of the value added services provided by the FSC to humanitarian agencies responding to food insecurity within the Central African Republic.
- Increased response capacity to respond to UN demands – co-lead agencies, including: (i) Humanitarian Needs Overview and Strategic Response Plan; (ii) mid-year reviews; (iii) CHF management; (iv) Programme reporting requirements; and (v) participation in all coordination forums.

**Exit Strategy**

26. It is anticipated that this Special Operation will come to an end in mid June 2014 however, gFSC will continuously reassess the needs and structure of the cluster and determine the most appropriate set up.

**RECOMMENDATION**

This Special Operation covering the period from 13 December 2013 to 13 June 2014 at a total cost to WFP of US\$ 1,003,918 is recommended for approval by the Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer, under the Executive Director’s delegated authority, with the budget provided.

**APPROVAL**

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Amir Abdulla  
Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer