Central African Republic

The complex humanitarian crisis in the Central African Republic is entering its eighth year. Over 580,000 people are internally displaced and 606,000 people are living as refugees outside of the country.6 While 350,000 people returned in 20193 — often to devastated villages — one in five Central Africans has fled conflict. Despite the signing of a peace agreement in early 2019, an estimated 2.6 million people, including 1.2 million children,1 will need humanitarian assistance in 2020, representing 59 per cent of the country’s population. Acute needs are expected to increase during the year, from 1.6 million to 1.7 million people, due to continuing violence and destruction, diminishing capacities for resilience, limited access to basic services, underfunding, access constraints and insecurity.4 In 2020, over 49,000 children under 5 years will need treatment for severe acute malnutrition (SAM) — a 14 per cent increase from 2019 — and over 1 million children will lack access to safe water.5 Fifteen per cent of the country’s schools remain closed due to conflict, and half a million children will be out of school.8 Low levels of immunization may give rise to new epidemic outbreaks. Almost 800,000 children will need protection, including from gender-based violence.7

Humanitarian strategy

Working with partners in the country’s most troubled areas, and using pre-positioned supplies, UNICEF will prioritize child-centered life-saving interventions and risk reduction for crisis-affected, displaced and returning people in the Central African Republic. Working through the Rapid Response Mechanism, UNICEF will conduct assessments on new crises and provide essential household items and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) support to vulnerable people newly affected by shocks. In coordination with partners, UNICEF will provide complementary responses in child protection, health and/or education, as well as follow-up WASH interventions and SAM treatment, using mobile approaches when relevant. Child protection support will include psychosocial support and services addressing gender-based violence and children’s release from armed groups and reunification with their families. Out-of-school and other vulnerable children will be supported to access safe learning spaces and quality education. UNICEF will continue to lead the nutrition, WASH and education clusters and work with line ministries to reinforce the Government’s capacity in humanitarian coordination and response, while increasing its focus on accountability to affected populations and cash-based interventions.8 As much as possible, UNICEF will ensure that humanitarian assistance is followed up on with recovery and development-oriented community-based programming.

Results from 2019

As of 31 August 2019, UNICEF had US$32.3 million available against the US$59 million appeal (55 per cent funded).9 In 2019, UNICEF and partners delivered critical emergency assistance to conflict-affected populations across the country, including in the most hard-to-reach and insecure areas. The UNICEF response has been increasingly multi-sectoral, with 70 per cent of Rapid Response Mechanism interventions for essential household items and WASH complemented by at least one other sector.10 By August, the Rapid Response Mechanism had assisted 161,000 people with non-food items and 56,600 people with WASH support. UNICEF co-led the response to the polio epidemic, reaching 650,000 children with vaccination, and ensured SAM treatment for over 18,000 acutely malnourished children. UNICEF and partners released 955 children from armed groups and assisted nearly 1,200 women and girls who were victims of gender-based violence – in both cases surpassing 2018 results. UNICEF reached 76,000 crisis-affected children with education and supported the Ministry of Education to set up and deploy an Emergency Response Team. Despite dedicated fundraising efforts and consistent support from an increasing number of donors, UNICEF is unlikely to reach its 2019 targets in some sectors – particularly sanitation and education – due to underfunding.

2020 programme targets

**Nutrition**
- 39,418 children aged 6 to 59 months with SAM admitted for treatment
- 155,705 caregivers of children reached with infant and young child feeding counselling

**WASH**
- 306,000 crisis-affected people accessing safe water
- 103,500 people accessing appropriate sanitation facilities

**Child protection**
- 100,000 children reached with psychosocial support, including access to child-friendly spaces
- 3,000 women and children accessing gender-based violence response interventions
- 1,500 children released from armed groups accessing reintegration support

**Education**
- 120,000 children accessing formal or non-formal education
- 360,000 children receiving individual learning materials

**Rapid Response Mechanism**
- 225,000 vulnerable people newly affected by the crisis rapidly provided with essential household items
- 100,000 people benefiting from WASH interventions
- 5,000 households (25,000 people) receiving cash transfers

**Communication for development**
- 2,600,000 people reached with key life-saving/behaviour change messages on epidemic-prone diseases16
- 125,000 people accessing mechanisms to voice their needs/concerns/feedback
### NUTRITION
- Children aged 6 to 59 months suffering from SAM admitted for treatment: 30,570
- Caregivers of children reached with infant and young child feeding counselling: 71,975

### HEALTH
- Children under 5 years vaccinated against polio: 750,957
- Children under 5 years vaccinated against measles: 700,000
- Children under 5 years and women accessing primary health care in crisis-affected areas: 82,068

### WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE
- Crisis-affected people with access to safe water for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene: 771,224
- Crisis-affected people accessing appropriate sanitation facilities: 428,900
- Crisis-affected girls/women accessing menstrual hygiene management services: 210,000

### CHILD PROTECTION
- Children reached with psychosocial support through child-friendly spaces: 145,000
- Children released from armed forces/groups reached with reintegration support: 5,550
- Women and children reached with gender-based violence prevention and response interventions: 1,500

### EDUCATION
- Children in crisis-affected areas accessing education: 160,000
- Children who received learning materials: 590,000

### RAPID RESPONSE MECHANISM
- Acutely vulnerable people rapidly provided with non-food items after a shock: 250,000
- People who received rapid WASH assistance after a shock: 150,000

## Funding requirements
Pending the finalization of the 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan, UNICEF is provisionally requesting US$58.2 million to meet the humanitarian needs of children in the Central African Republic. This amount is globally stable compared with 2019, but includes a significant increase for the nutrition component due to the deteriorating situation, which will require treating more acutely malnourished children and expanding prevention and counselling efforts. Without sufficient and timely funding, UNICEF will be unable to support the national response to the country’s continuing crisis and provide critical life-saving assistance to conflict-affected displaced people, returnees and host communities.

### Sector 2019 targets | Sector total results | UNICEF 2019 targets | UNICEF total results
---|---|---|---
Nutrition | 12,900,000 | Health and HIV and AIDS | 3,100,000 |
Water, sanitation and hygiene | 6,800,000 | Child protection | 8,000,000 |
Education | 10,500,000 | Rapid Response Mechanism | 12,900,000 |
Communication for development | 2,500,000 | Cluster/sector coordination | 1,500,000 |
Total | 58,200,000

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1 Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). July 2019; and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), August 2019.
2 OCHA, July 2019.
3 This figure is provisional and subject to change upon finalization of the inter-agency needs and planning documents. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, ‘Central African Republic: 2020 Humanitarian Needs Overview’ (draft), OCHA, October 2019.
4 Ibid. Three humanitarian workers were killed in 2019 and 28 were wounded.
5 Ibid.
6 Ibid.
7 Ibid.
8 Including through UNICEF’s participation in the inter-agency Common Cash Systems pilot initiative.
9 Available funds include US$24.4 million received against the 2019 appeal and US$11.9 million carried forward from the previous year.
10 This includes food distributions by World Food Programme (WFP) partners.
11 This figure is provisional and subject to change upon finalization of the inter-agency needs and planning documents. ‘Central African Republic: 2020 Humanitarian Needs Overview’ (draft).
12 Ibid.
13 This figure is the rounded sum of the number of children under 5 years targeted by the national polio campaign in the regions where UNICEF will lead (472,722); and the number of children aged 5 to 17 years targeted to receive individual learning materials (86 per cent of 360,000 = 309,600). This includes an estimated 391,000 girls and 391,000 boys. Government of the Central African Republic.
14 Programme targets are provisional and subject to change upon finalization of the inter-agency 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan.
15 This includes 2.3 million people reached through radio programming or blast SMS (U-Report) and 300,000 heads of households reached through door-to-door visits.
16 Figures are provisional estimates. Financial requirements are subject to change upon finalization of the inter-agency appeals/planning documents.

### Who to contact for further information:
- **Christine Muhigana**
  - Representative, Central African Republic
  - Tel: +236 70 55 02 05
  - Email: cmuhigana@unicef.org
- **Carla Haddad Mardini**
  - Director, Public Partnership Division (PPD)
  - Tel: +1 212 326 7160
  - Email: chaddadmardini@unicef.org
- **Manuel Fontaine**
  - Director, Office of Emergency Programmes (EMOPS)
  - Tel: +1 212 326 7163
  - Email: mfontaine@unicef.org