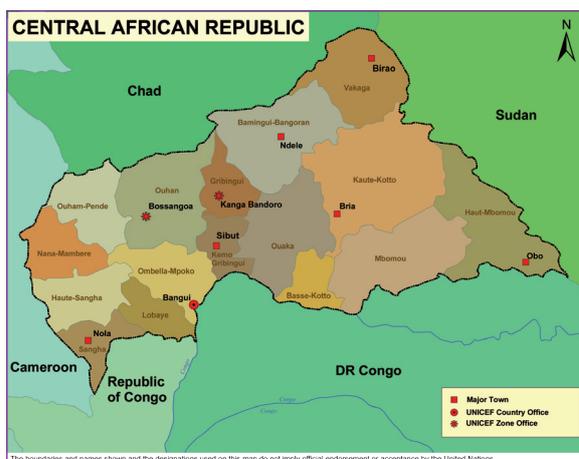


UNICEF HUMANITARIAN ACTION CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC IN 2009



Core Country Data	
Population under 18 (thousands)	2,137
U5 mortality rate	172
Infant mortality rate	113
Maternal mortality ratio (2000–2007, reported)	540
Primary school enrolment ratio (2000–2007, net, male/female)	53/38
% U1 fully immunized (DPT3)	54
% population using improved drinking-water sources	66
Estimated adult HIV prevalence rate, 2007	6,3
% U5 suffering moderate and severe underweight/stunting	29/38

Source: *The State of the World's Children 2009*

The Central African Republic (CAR) is an emergency country with huge challenges. In terms of emergency preparedness and response, one great challenge is the occurrence of frequent epidemic diseases, mainly in the northern zones. Additional challenges include high prices of food and other essential commodities that have exacerbated food security; restricted access to many areas due to insecurity; limited resources against huge needs; and the lack of effective implementing partners with significant expertise in emergency situations. Sufficient funding for the planning and implementation of emergency programmes in CAR will certainly help address most of these challenges. The funds raised through the *Humanitarian Action Report 2009* will benefit a total population of 487,360 persons, among them 170,200 children.

Summary of UNICEF Emergency Needs for 2009*	
Sector	US\$
Health and Nutrition	6,743,990
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	1,990,040
Education	1,072,900
Child Protection	1,839,400
Shelter and Non-Food Items	835,000
Total**	12,481,330

* Funds received against this appeal will be used to respond to both the immediate and medium-term needs of children and women as outlined above. If UNICEF should receive funds in excess of the medium-term funding requirements for this emergency, UNICEF will use those funds to support other underfunded emergencies.

** The total includes a maximum recovery rate of 7 per cent. The actual recovery rate on contributions will be calculated in accordance with UNICEF Executive Board Decision 2006/7 dated 9 June 2006.

1. CRITICAL ISSUES FOR CHILDREN AND WOMEN

The Central African Republic (CAR) is a politically and economically unstable country where poverty is ravaging and social infrastructures providing basic services are almost non-existent. Among other factors, the armed conflict could be considered as a major reason for the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in the country. Since 2005, fighting between the national army and other armed groups, as well as increased banditry, has led to the displacement of great numbers of population both inside and outside the country. According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in CAR, as of September 2008, the conflict-affected population stands at approximately 197,000 (108,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs), 85,000 returnees and 3,139 Sudanese refugees from Darfur). Additionally, some 108,000 Central African refugees reside in neighbouring countries, mainly in Cameroon and Chad. There are health and safety fears for the displaced populations. Large numbers live in makeshift shelters without protection or access to health-care facilities. Malnutrition (the nutrition survey conducted in Vakaga in January 2008 showed 4.7 per cent of global acute malnutrition (Z-score) and 2.0 per cent of severe acute malnutrition) and epidemic diseases (measles, meningitis, hepatitis, yellow fever, poliomyelitis etc.) are common in most of these conflict-affected areas. In response to this situation, the humanitarian actors operating in the region are currently providing emergency health care, including immunization and non-food items (NFIs), and supporting education services.

Prior to the actual crisis, 50 per cent of school-aged children were at school. As a result of the conflict, the school population was reduced to one-third. Efforts in 2008 aimed at bringing 150,000 children back to school in communities where people are returning home in north, central and north-east CAR. UNICEF in close collaboration with field partners working in the area of education was able to get 151,076 children (94.05 per cent) back to school – 74,000 in the north and 67,076 in the centre and north-east. Nevertheless, as more families are returning home due to relative security in the conflict areas, more children will need to resume schooling in 2009. In general, enrolment is still low and drop-out rates remain above 30 per cent.

Despite the new peace accords and efforts to reunify territories controlled by different groups, the recruitment of children by armed groups continues. It is estimated that over 700 children are still associated with armed groups, with the most concerning situation in northern prefectures, but also in southern Haut-Mbomou due to the presence of rebels from the Ugandan Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Reports of sexual violence are increasing.

On the political front, the recent peace agreement between the Government and rebel groups, signed in Gabon on 21 June 2008, is in difficulties and rebels announced a suspension of their participation in the peace process scheduled to culminate in an all-inclusive political dialogue. This could have a further negative impact on the political and security situation of the country already in trouble.

2. KEY ACTIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2008

In close collaboration with the national government, local NGOs, faith-based organizations and international partners – Action contre la Faim (ACF), Comité d'aide médicale (CAM), Cooperazione Internazionale (COOPI), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), International Medical Corps (IMC), International Rescue Committee (IRC), Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), Médecins sans Frontières (MSF), Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Solidarités, Triangle Génération Humanitaire – and UN agencies, UNICEF has continued to respond to the humanitarian needs of the CAR population affected by the war. It has mainly focused on the priority areas of health and nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), education and child protection.

In the area of health, in response to two outbreaks of the wild poliovirus, three rounds of National Immunization Days (NIDs) were organized, reaching more than 740,000 children under age five. In addition, a three-round maternal and neonatal tetanus (MNT) immunization campaign was conducted throughout the country. More than 1 million women of childbearing age were vaccinated during each round. The first round of the MNT campaign was associated to vitamin A supplementation and deworming with Mebendazole, reaching 68 per cent of children aged 6–59 months. Finally, close to 65,000 persons (75 per cent of affected people) were vaccinated against meningitis in response to an outbreak occurred at Nana Gribizi Prefecture during the first quarter of 2008. UNICEF supported all operational costs.

In the area of nutrition, UNICEF ensured the provision of therapeutic foods, micronutrients and essential drugs to support six therapeutic feeding centres and three outpatient treatment centres in 2008. A monthly average of 100 severely acutely malnourished children was treated in each centre (coverage estimated at 45 per cent).

In the education sector, learning conditions were improved through the distribution of school materials (52,500 textbooks, 912 'school-in-a-box' kits, 1,640 school benches and 9 motorcycles) as well as the supervision and follow-up of field activities. Approximately 74,000 children went back to school throughout northern CAR. Partner NGOs reopened public schools and established bush schools for displaced children.

UNICEF, in cooperation with OCHA, the United Nations Peace-Building Support Office in the Central African Republic/ Department of Political Affairs/Department of Peacekeeping Operations (BONUCA/DPA/DPKO), the Office of the Special Representative to the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict (SRSG-CAAC) and other partners also achieved and/or initiated activities for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of child soldiers formerly associated with the Union of Democratic Forces for Unity (UDFR) and the Popular Army for the Restoration of Republic and Democracy (APRD). These efforts led to the demobilization and reintegration of over 400 children formerly linked to UDFR rebel group, while similar actions are underway with APRD.

UNICEF and its partners provided access to drinking water to more than 197,000 persons (targeting almost all IDPs at the rate of 500 persons per water point (according to Sphere standards), through the rehabilitation of 345 water points and the construction of 49 new ones. UNICEF re-established, trained and equipped 122 village water management committees; reached 156,337 persons with hygiene messages; distributed WASH kits (jerrycans, soap and cups) to 15,615 IDPs; installed 75 improved ventilated pit (VIP) latrines in schools and health centres; and provided 2,004 households with home-based rainwater catchments and water filtration kits (plastic sheeting and PVC pipes). Other members of the WASH cluster reached an additional 257,136 persons with WASH interventions.

3. PLANNED HUMANITARIAN ACTION FOR 2009

Coordination and Partnership

UNICEF is an active member of the UN Country Team and is represented in all planning and coordination events. UNICEF participates in UN Thematic Group Meetings supporting the Government in the different sectors assisted by UN agencies, including communication. UNICEF is also strongly involved in the cluster approach coordination where it leads the nutrition, WASH, education and NFI clusters. UNICEF co-leads the protection sector with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and contributes to other clusters. UNICEF additionally participates in the Inter-Agency Coordination Group with other UN agencies, NGOs and bilateral agencies. UNICEF contributed to a number of inter-agency evaluation missions in several prefectures both in southern and northern belts.

Linkages of HAR with the Regular Programme

Since the Central African Republic is considered as an emergency country, the Country Programme has strong emergency components. Also, in parallel with emergency preparedness and response planning, all emergency-related activities are mainstreamed in the sectoral annual work plans in order to respond effectively to all eventual crises. The Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) is another linkage to our emergency appeal.

During 2009, UNICEF's emergency programme will improve the emergency preparedness and response capacity of the CAR Country Office in order to mitigate the suffering of the conflict-affected population; build the capacity of UNICEF staff and partners on effective emergency preparedness and response to the crisis; forge strong partnerships; and coordinate UNICEF-supported activities with all stakeholders to better reach vulnerable groups, mainly women and children.

Health and Nutrition (US\$ 6,743,990)

For 2009, the overall goal is to minimize the impact of the ongoing crisis on the health and nutritional status of children under age five and to ensure that pregnant women in affected areas are identified and provided with micronutrient supplementation. A total population of 298,000 (including 49,500 children) IDPs and host and vulnerable communities will benefit from the following key activities:

- Procure and distribute essential emergency drugs and equipment to 55 health centres;
- Distribute impregnated mosquito nets to 4,000 households;
- Train community volunteers in 100 villages on home-based management of malaria, pneumonia and diarrhoea;

- Train 85 matrons in safe delivery and distribute safe delivery kits to 100 health centres;
- Support the organization of immunization riposte campaigns in the event of measles/yellow fever outbreaks;
- Support eight therapeutic feeding centres and six outpatient treatment centres;
- Train 150 health staff in treating severe malnutrition, conducting nutrition surveys/assessments in inaccessible zones and setting up a nutritional surveillance mechanism.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (US\$ 1,990,040)

For 2009, the overall goal is to assist the population in need with WASH facilities by focusing 135,000 persons (66,690 children and 67,770 women) who will benefit from the following key activities:

- Distribute WASH-related supplies (jerrycans, hygiene kits, soap, water purification tablets etc.) to 50,000 persons;
- Promote the construction of improved family latrines for 3,230 families (16,150 persons) and household safe water treatment/storage;
- Construct new water points equipped with handpumps in the vicinity of schools, handwashing facilities and two blocks of ventilated improved pit (VIP) latrines per school with one for the exclusive use of girls;
- Train masons, pupils, parent-teacher committee members, village-level caretakers and pump mechanics for water management and the proper use and maintenance of new facilities;
- Establish a safe hygiene environment and promote good personal and domestic hygiene practices among people living in the project area;
- Foster the coordination of the WASH sector and gear up emergency preparedness activities;
- Develop policy/standards, infrastructures and school sanitation and hygiene education (SSHE) clubs mapping.

Education (US\$ 1,072,900)

For 2009, the overall goal is to ensure that 13,000 children resume schooling in Bamingui Bogoran Prefecture and to reduce drop-out rates. To reach this goal, there will be intensive sensitization of communities on the need to encourage schoolchildren to remain in school until they complete the primary cycle. A total of 13,000 displaced and war-affected children and 260 teachers will benefit through the following key activities:

- Supply basic scholastic materials, including notebooks, pencils and erasers, for 13,000 primary schoolchildren;
- Procure and distribute recreational kits and school supplies for 13,000 children;
- Train 260 primary schoolteachers, with particular attention to HIV/AIDS prevention and peace education;
- Train 100 members of parent-teacher associations in leadership and school management;
- Rehabilitate and equip eight primary schools (reaching 4,800 children).

Child Protection (US\$ 1,839,400)

For 2009, the overall goal is to protect, demobilize and help reintegrate some 1,100 children associated with UFDR and APRD rebel groups (of which 400 are already demobilized), prevent the recruitment of 40,000 children at risk, and support orphaned and other vulnerable children (OVC) affected by armed conflict, through the following key activities:

- Demobilize at least 500 children associated with armed forces and/or groups (CAAFG), APRD rebels and auto-defence militias, and reintegrate them back in their families/communities through 'back-to-school' campaigns, life skills training, HIV/AIDS prevention, income-generating activities etc;
- Develop 20 new child-friendly spaces for 6,000 children in APRD- and UFDR-controlled areas and four transit care centres for children demobilized from APRD;
- Support community early recovery efforts by rehabilitating 80 community-based basic social services infrastructures;
- Train 700 teachers and 500 health staff on prevention and response to all forms of violence/abuse;
- Support the reintegration through schooling and/or vocational training for 6,000 (15 per cent) war-affected and displaced children;
- Support the identification, documentation, tracing, care and reunification of an estimated 500 (45.5 per cent) separated children;

-
- Provide psychosocial support and vocational training to over 1,000 demobilized CAAFG and other vulnerable children affected by armed conflict, including survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV);
 - Monitor and report on grave child rights' violations under UN Security Council Resolution 1612;
 - Develop and support community-based care and protective models, social welfare services and legal assistance for orphans, children working and/or living on the street, children accused of witchcraft as well as the Peulh minority in war-torn areas;
 - Develop and expand the inter-agency child protection database system (unaccompanied minors, OVC, CAAFG etc);
 - Develop community-based monitoring/protection/referral mechanisms to redress and access basic services in conflict-affected areas.

Shelter and Non-Food Items (US\$ 835,000)

For 2009, the overall goal is to help improve the living conditions and security of the 197,000 IDPs, returnees and refugees through the distribution of essential non-food items (NFIs). UNICEF, UNHCR and other partners will cover the shelter/NFI needs of the majority (147,000 persons) of the affected population through the 2009 CAP and through their respective regular programmes, while the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) will cover the needs of the remaining 50,000 persons. UNICEF and other cluster members will aim to achieve this through the following key activities:

- Conduct needs assessment and monitor the humanitarian situation of conflict-affected population;
- Standardize the shelter/NFI kit in CAR and provide appropriate kits to the needy population;
- Prepare NFI distribution plan by taking into consideration the target population's perception of needs;
- Supervise and report on distribution of NFIs and monitor and evaluate project activities as well as their immediate impact on the target population;
- Increase shelter and NFI cluster coordination and regular monitoring of sector activities.